

Oregon governor names unionists to boards

Oregon Gov. Kate Brown recently appointed several union leaders to state boards and commissions.

One of the most prominent is the TriMet board of commissioners. There, she tapped **Keith Edwards**, a former business manager of IBEW Local 48 and IBEW international rep from Northeast Portland. Edwards is now retired, but remains active in community affairs. Also new to the board are Osvaldo Gonzales and Kathy Wai. Gonzales replaces Joe Esmonde, a retired IBEW Local 48 business rep.

Amalgamated Transit Union Local 757 represents about 2,400 TriMet employees. Local 757 spokesperson Andrew Riley said the union doesn't know much about Gonzales, but is cautiously optimistic based on what they've heard from community partners. Riley said ATU was pleased with Wai's appointment. She is an advocate at the Asian Pacific American Network of Oregon (APANO) and

has served on the North Clackamas School Board.

"Overall, we're pleased to see the governor taking diversity on the TriMet Board so seriously. It's been a good ol' white boys' club for a long time, and that has to change," Riley said.

Terms are for four years and start May 25.

Brown appointed **John Mohlis**, retired executive secretary of the Oregon State Building and Construction Trades Council, to the State Accident Insurance Fund (SAIF) board of trustees. Mohlis, of Oregon City, replaces Kevin Jensen, retired business manager of Iron Workers Local 29.

Kevin Billman, director of Legislative & Community Action at United Food and Commercial Workers Local 555, **Diana Winther**, staff attorney for IBEW Local 48, and **Ateusa Salemi**, a labor relations representative for Oregon Nurses Association in Umatilla, were reappointed to the Workers'

Compensation Management-Labor Advisory Committee. MLAC, as it is known, studies issues affecting the workers' compensation system and reports its findings and recommendations to the Oregon Legislature.

In other appointments:

- **Walt Caudle**, business manager of Insulators Local 36, was named to the Mechanical Board.
- **Randy Carmony**, business manager of Elevator Constructors Local 23, was tapped for the Electrical and Elevator Board. He succeeds Robert Pyne, a journeyman elevator constructor.
- **Thomas Engstrom** of the Boilermakers Union was appointed to the Board of Boiler Rules.
- **Karly Edwards** of the Oregon Nurses Association was named to the Government Ethics Commission.

All nominees must be confirmed by the Oregon Senate. The Senate Rules Committee is scheduled to meet May 22. Most of the appointments are for four-year terms.

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That's not going to happen, said Ron Baker, International Strategic Campaign Coordinator for the BCTGM.

BCTGM Local 364 Vice President Leo Lovato said he witnessed cleaning crew workers at the Portland bakery rip their letters in half and throw them in the garbage — in full view of their foreman. Local 364 members had already heard about the company's offer at an April 28 union meeting, so they knew what the letters were about.

"This is a baited offer," said Local 364 business representative Cameron Taylor. "It's giv-

ing it to you up front and then taking it away with increased health care costs and eliminated pensions."

Instead of making new pension contributions, Mondelēz is proposing to contribute an equivalent amount to a 401(k) retirement savings plan. The company says that's a better deal, because the union-sponsored multi-employer pension plan is 12 years away from insolvency, according to the latest projections. Once its assets are gone, retirees would get only a fraction of the benefits promised — funded by contributions from any remaining employers and from the Pension Benefit Guar-

anty Corporation. But BCTGM leaders are holding out hope that Congressional action could rescue pension plans like theirs. They say once workers lose the pension, they likely would never get it back.

If Mondelēz is allowed to withdraw from the pension, the company would be obligated to pay about \$28.5 million a year for 20 years in withdrawal liability.

Mondelēz cleared \$2.9 billion in net income last year. In November it sent its retiring CEO Irene Rosenfeld off into her golden years after paying her \$231 million for 11 years of leading the company.

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the larger group has voted several times against unionizing.

The case went all the way up to the Board in Washington, D.C., where a 3-2 majority of Trump appointees used it to overturn a major Obama-era NLRB decision known as Specialty Healthcare. Since 2011, business groups had derided the Specialty Healthcare ruling, saying it allowed "micro-unions." When the Board overturned Specialty on Dec. 16, it

directed the NLRB's Seattle regional director Ron Hooks to take another look at whether a welders-only unit would be appropriate at Precision Castparts.

Yes, it would, Hooks determined. In a May 4 decision, Hooks said that even under the pre-Specialty standards, the welders would qualify as an appropriate bargaining unit — as certified practitioners of a specialized craft. Members of the group are the only Precision employees to do what they do. They use gas metal arc welding,

gas tungsten arc welding, shielded metal arc welding, and plasma arc welding to repair defects in metal castings such as jet engine components.

"We're taking it as a victory," said Machinists Grand Lodge Representative Bill Anderson.

Will Precision Castparts now recognize the union and get down to bargaining a first contract? The company has until May 18 to request a review of the decision.

—Don McIntosh

UNIONIZATION → MAR-APR 2018

The following are Oregon and Southwest Washington workplaces where workers have decided whether to be represented by a union. The thumbs-up symbol means workers will be union-represented. Thumbs-down means they'll be on their own. The information comes from the National Labor Relations Board and the Oregon Employment Relations Board.

Union election results

Employer (Location) Union	Yes-No	
First Student (Elmira) Teamsters Local 206 ■ 6 monitors	4-1	👍
Reed College (Portland) Student Workers Coalition Local 1 ■ 52 housing advisors	34-14	👍
Mike Patterson Plumbing (Gladstone) Plumbers Local 290 ■ 14 employees who do plumbing installation work	5-7	👎
Burgerville (Portland) Industrial Workers of the World ■ 30 crew members at the company's 3504 SE 92nd Ave. restaurant in Portland	18-4	👍

Unionization by majority signup

Employer (Location) Union
Curry County Road Department (Gold Beach) Teamsters Local 206 ■ 16 employees, including engineers, mechanics, road crew and secretaries

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