

IN COORDINATION WITH THE AMERICAN HEART ASSOCIATION

# Industrial Athlete campaign to launch at Intel jobsite

**ABOUT THE INDUSTRIAL ATHLETE**

TOGETHER WE CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE!

**Professional Athletes vs. Industrial Athletes**

Use Body to Make a Living	✓
Work with a Nutritionist/Dietitian	✓
Regular Workouts	✓
Career Length	3-10 vs. 20-40

**JOBSITE BASED PROGRAMS**

- Know Your Numbers**: There are nearly 80 million Americans with hypertension.
- Rethink Your Drink**: Sugar sweetened beverages are the #1 source of added sugar in the American diet.
- Construction/Corporate Recess**: While construction workers have physically demanding jobs, over 22% do not get any physical activity outside of work, compared to 18% of all industries.
- Eat Smart Month**: While construction workers have physically demanding jobs, over 71% are overweight or obese, compared to 69% of Americans.

Starting the week of Sept. 24, the American Heart Association will be launching a year-round Industrial Athlete campaign for construction workers at Intel's massive jobsite in Hillsboro.

The Industrial Athlete campaign is focused on improving the health of the construction industry, which is disproportionately affected by heart disease and stroke. The program focuses on the habits found within the construction industry that increase risk for heart disease, including: sugar-sweetened beverages (soda, Gatorade, energy drinks, coffee), physical inactivity, sleep deprivation (long commutes, odd hours), poor nutrition (food choices offered on jobsites and in vending machines), tobacco (smoking, vaping, and chewing) and stress (long hours, quick deadlines, physically demanding).

"We talk a lot about job safety issues, but not a lot about personal health," said Bart

Dickson, president of On Electric Group, one of the largest union electrical contractors in the Northwest. Dickson spoke at the Oregon State Building and Construction Trades Council convention last month in Sunriver.

"We will combine our expertise and resources over the next year to empower construction workers to better health, while providing engaging education, innovative and impactful awareness messaging, and actionable steps to measure and improve health," Jana Boyle, senior business development director of the American Heart Association in Portland, told the Labor Press.

Additional Industrial Athlete programs will be launching this fall throughout the Portland metro area.

Look for Industrial Athlete campaign messages in future issues of the NW Labor Press.

## How healthy are you?

The American Heart Association has developed My Life Check, a program that can evaluate your overall heart health based on seven key risk factors for cardiovascular diseases and stroke – including the three risk factors referenced above.

Visit [MyLifeCheck.org](http://MyLifeCheck.org) to get your free heart score today.

## ... Robert Camarillo

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multiple generations of sons following fathers into the trade. Camarillo had none of that background.

"I didn't have the right last name, or know the right people," he recalls.

Turned away by the union, he worked on the industry's nonunion side. As a structural ironworker, his job was to lay metal decking, tie rebar, and hoist and weld the steel beams that form the skeletons of buildings. He loved the work, and was happy with the pay. But like so many nonunion workers, he didn't realize he was being robbed of wages he was legally entitled to.

On public construction projects like schools and fire stations, contractors are required to pay a specified hourly rate known as the prevailing wage. The rule is meant to take wages out of competition so that contractors can compete on their efficiency and quality, not on who can pay workers the least. But as every building trades union representative knows, cheating by nonunion contractors is rampant on prevailing wage projects.

Camarillo's nonunion em-

ployer used those higher-than-usual-wage public construction jobs as a reward for the company's hardest workers. Camarillo was one of them, and was thrilled to get the premium wages those jobs offered. What he didn't know was that his boss was paying him the prevailing wage rate for laborers, not the rate for iron work — the work he was doing.

As time went on and his employer began competing against union contractors for prevailing wage work, Local 29 organizers Bob Clerihew and Jeff Carlson began dropping by construction sites to talk to its workers. Some co-workers gave them a hostile reception, but Camarillo met with them. They told him about the prevailing wage law, and showed him how he had been cheated.

The union hadn't wanted him in 1997. Now it was 2001, and the organizers courted him for months. One night over dinner at the Tony Roma's at Mall 205, they clinched the deal: He would join the union, and start from scratch in the union apprenticeship program.

Now, as a Local 29 member, he was able to file a wage theft complaint with the union's help. The state agency known as BOLI

(Bureau of Labor and Industries) investigated, and in the end ordered the company to pay him \$7,000 in back pay for work he'd done on West Salem High School and other public projects.

Several hours into Camarillo's first day as a union member working on a union job, Clerihew and Carlson showed up to ask if he'd help them talk to nonunion iron workers.

"I was willing to do whatever it took," Camarillo says.

While continuing to learn the trade, he volunteered many other times to help the union in its outreach to nonunion iron workers. Meanwhile, he earned a reputation for hard work, and found that contractors kept him on from job to job.

"When I came in," Camarillo recalls, "there weren't a lot of women or people of color. It was a predominantly white workforce. I had to prove myself every day, every job site."

In 2005, after a four-year union apprenticeship, he became a journeyman iron worker at the age of 28. The following year, Local 29 brought him on staff as a full-time business rep and organizer. In the years to come he served as a union vice president, president, and a member of the Examining Board, which evaluates appli-

cants for membership. He was appointed a delegate to the Columbia-Pacific Building Trades Council, which is the local council of construction unions for the Portland metro area. There, he got to know the leaders of other construction trades unions. In 2014, he became its president. In 2016, he went to work for the Iron Workers international.

His union's full name is the International Association of Bridge, Structural, Ornamental and Reinforcing Iron Workers. Ironically, Camarillo never did get to work on a bridge while his tools were spud wrenches and bull pins, but he helped as a rep to win bridge work for union contractors, and now at the state building trades council he'll help secure funding for bridges and other infrastructure.

Colleagues and co-workers describe Camarillo as dedicated, dynamic, and driven — a hard worker deeply committed to the wellbeing of working people.

He approaches his new role with the mindset of an organizer. He'll look for new allies, and seek closer collaboration with all the unions. And he'll try to get Oregon's political leaders better acquainted with building trades unions, both by bringing construction workers into the halls of

the State Capitol, and by inviting legislators, agency heads and policy-makers to tour job sites and union training centers.

"I want them to know what our issues are, so that they can better understand where we're coming from and see that we're not being unreasonable," Camarillo said.

And he'll appeal to lawmakers to get serious about combating wage theft. In fiscal year 2016-17, BOLI responded to hundreds of wage theft claims in the construction industry alone, and collected more than \$600,000 in unpaid wages for workers. Having seen wage theft first hand, Camarillo knows far more than that go unreported.

He also hopes his example will inspire people of color and women to seek leadership positions in their unions.

Finally, he says he'd like to see affiliates ramp up their commitment to organize.

"If you look at the preamble of every constitution of every craft in the building trades, they all say something about organizing all workers in our trade or our craft," Camarillo said. "All. It doesn't say we will only organize some."

"Organizing," Camarillo says, "is what built our unions."