

WORKER SAFETY

Portland ironworker killed in crane mishap in Seattle

An ironworker from Seattle Local 86 was also killed in the accident at Google's new campus project

Two union ironworkers were killed April 27 when a tower crane they were dismantling at Google's new downtown Seattle campus collapsed. Travis Corbet, 33, was a member of Portland Iron Workers Local 29, and Andrew Yoder, 31, was a member of Seattle Iron Workers Local 86.

Both men were in the crane when it toppled from atop the building onto a busy downtown intersection.

Also killed were Sarah Wong, a 19-year-old college student, and Alan Justad, 71, a retired deputy director of Seattle's Department of Planning and Development. Both were in vehicles that were crushed.

Four others were injured.

News reports from Seattle said investigators opened a probe into five companies — general contractor GLY, Northwest Tower Crane Service Inc., Omega Rigging and Machinery Moving Inc., Morrow Equipment Co. LLC, and Seaburg Construction Corp.

At press time investigators were still trying to figure out what caused the tower crane to fall. Witnesses told several media outlets that wind gusts had picked up at the time of the accident.

At one point during construction, three large tower cranes were on the Google project. Two of the cranes had already been disassembled.

Joe Bowers, business manager of Local 29, said Corbet had traveled around the country erecting and dismantling tower cranes.

He said Corbet joined the union in 2009 and was a graduate of the union apprenticeship program. He was a veteran and newly wed. His wife Samantha had just completed nursing school, and the couple planned to go on their honeymoon in June.



Travis Corbet

HELP FOR THE FAMILIES

Ironworkers USA Credit Union has set up a donation account to assist the Corbet and Yoder families during the tragedy. To contribute, visit ironworkersfcu.org/ironworker or call 1-877-769-4766.

Eilidh Lowery for Board of Education Portland Public Schools, Zone 7



"Workers deserve to be compensated fairly and at a living wage. Part of why I'm running for school board is to ensure that all students, no matter their dreams, are able to work, live, and contribute to society. Unions help to ensure that all workers have the opportunity to do just that."

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Remembering those killed on the job

Workers Memorial Day ceremonies were held throughout the world the week of April 28 — including in Portland and Salem. Below, Oregon-OSHA Director Michael Wood raises a flag, one of 50 raised at a ceremony held April 22 by the Northwest Oregon Labor Council prior to its monthly delegates' meeting in remembrance of the 50 workers killed on the job in Oregon in 2018. Right, Colleen Kelly and Phil Ginter hold a flag in honor of their daughter, Tyresa Monaghan. Monaghan was killed Aug. 14 after being struck by a drunk driver while working as a traffic flagger on Highway 11 near Athena, Oregon. The 49-year-old Kennewick woman was a member of the Laborers Union. Workers Memorial Day — an international day of remembrance and action for workers killed, disabled, and injured on the job — takes place annually on April 28.



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