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A Division of the WV State Building Trades, AFL-CIO | Brad Winans, President | John Epperly, Secretary-Treasurer | Justin Williams, Director

## Trades Raise \$10,000 for HospiceCare Charity

On May 9th, the Charleston Building and Construction Trades, in partnership with the Kanawha Valley Builders Association, held the 31st annual Kanawha Valley Construction Labor-Management Golf Scramble. The event raised \$10,000 for HospiceCare, a non-profit organization that provides end of life services to patients in need.

This year's event was held at the Berry Hills Golf Club in Charleston, West Virginia and raised the largest amount of funds that has ever been raised in the annual fundraiser's history.

Representatives from HospiceCare estimate an aggregate total of more than \$100 thousand has been raised to support their work because of these annual efforts since 2002.

The charity fundraising event is part of a long-standing partnership between the Kanawha Valley Builders Association and the Charleston Building and Construction Trades Council to give back to the community.

"We believe it's important to give back, especially to such a great cause," said Fred Chandler, Business

Manager for the Charleston Building and Construction Trades Council. "By working together as labor and

management, we double our efforts to support this charity and build a  
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Luther Lasure (left), Executive Director of the Kanawha Valley Builders Association, and Fred Chandler (right), Business Manager for the Charleston Building and Construction Trades Council present Christopher Rawlings (center), Chief Executive Officer for HospiceCare WV, with a check for \$10,000 at the HospiceCare office in Charleston, West Virginia.

## Misclassifying Workers as Independent Contractors Costly for Workers & States

A new research study has found that workers misclassified as independent contractors lose out on critical protections, benefits, and labor rights including minimum wage, overtime pay, unemployment insurance, the right to form a union, and anti-discrimination protections in

most states.

The study, conducted by the Economic Policy Institute, also found that a typical construction worker, misclassified as an independent contractor, would lose as much as \$19,526 per year in income and job benefits compared with what they

would have earned as an employee.

Misclassification occurs when an employer wrongly classifies an employee as an independent contractor. The problem of workers being misclassified as independent contractors is pervasive and widespread.

An analysis from the National

Employment Law Project focusing on state-level reports on misclassification estimated that as many as 10–30% of employers misclassify their workers.

When a worker is misclassified as an independent contractor, they are

**Cont. on p. 2>>**

# Annual Tax Fraud Days of Action Held by Eastern Atlantic States Carpenters

From April 12-18, the Eastern Atlantic States Regional Council of Carpenters (EASRCC) held their annual Tax Fraud Days of Action to educate the public and protest construction employer tax fraud, wage theft, and abuse of workers in the United States and Canada.

Throughout the week, Carpenters locals across the country held more than 150 events, including rallies, legislative advocacy days at their state capitol buildings, and other public events to inform officials and the public of the growing issues related to tax fraud and wage theft.

According to a press release circulated by the Carpenters International, "state and federal tax losses reach at least \$8.4 billion a year due to schemes by perpetrators of fraud and...many employers deliberately misclassify workers as independent contractors or pay them off the books

to avoid paying employment taxes."

In addition, a 2023 study by the Century Foundation found that up to 2.1 million construction workers, or 19 percent, are misclassified as independent contractors or paid off the books.

Because of this, workers are deprived of \$1.9 billion in overtime wage theft, and working families suffer a \$5.1 billion tax increase because crooked employers shift their own responsibility to pay employment taxes onto their workers' backs.

However, there are solutions to the issue. According to their website, recommendations include: better enforcement of IRS tax laws already on the books; strengthening and expanding existing laws to ensure contractors who cheat are held accountable for their actions; comprehensive immigration reform to bring construction workers out of the shad-

ows; and requiring state and federal agencies, as well as banks and private sector entities, work together to address tax fraud and wage theft.

To learn more about this year's

events, and data surrounding tax fraud and wage theft in the United States and Canada, log on to [www.stoptaxfraud.net](http://www.stoptaxfraud.net) for additional information. ■

## Trades Raise \$10K

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stronger relationship together in the process."

HospiceCare provides end of life care for patients in 16 counties of West Virginia with services including 24/7 skilled nurses, pain management, and Certified Nursing Assistants that provide a full spectrum of personal care assistance for patients.

The organization has four in-pa-

tient care centers within its network including: Peyton Hospice House in Lewisburg, WV; Hubbard Hospice at Thomas Memorial Hospital, Hubbard Hospice House in Charleston, WV; and HospiceCare at CAMC in Charleston, WV.

For more about HospiceCare visit their website at [HospiceCareWV.org](http://HospiceCareWV.org). ■

## Misclassification

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no longer eligible to earn minimum wage or overtime pay; they are no longer eligible to participate in unemployment insurance systems or to qualify for workers' compensation insurance; they do not qualify for paid sick or family leave; they are not covered by the National Labor Relations Act; and they also must assume the full financial cost of Social Security and Medicare contributions, rather than split it evenly with their employer when classified as employees.

Losing these protections leaves independent contractors in a far more vulnerable position than employees when it comes to their basic rights on the job.

Some employers have argued that many workers prefer being classified as independent contractors because they value "flexibility" over fundamental labor rights. However, this so-called flexibility is often illusory,

given the degree of control many employers retain over workers and their schedules.

Earlier this year, leadership at the West Virginia Building and Construction Trades (WVBCT) pushed a bill at the West Virginia State Legislature to address worker misclassification in the state and create legal safeguards to help ensure misclassification happened less frequently.

While the bill did not pass, WVBCT leaders say the push for better policy is still ongoing.

"Worker misclassification has long been a problem in the construction industry," said George Capel, Government Relations Director for the West Virginia Building and Construction Trades Council. "While we were unable to pass [the worker misclassification bill] into law this year, we will continue to work with our friends at the legislature to tackle this issue." ■

## Winans Installed as WVBCT President



Last month, Brad Winans, Business Manager for Ironworkers 787 in Parkersburg, West Virginia was installed as the new President of the West Virginia Building and Construction Trades (WVBCT).

His predecessor Chuck Parker, Business Manager of IUOE 132, stepped down after being tapped for an expanded role with the International Union of Operating Engineers (IUOE).

"I look forward to serving all of our crafts in this role and doing all I can to help continue pushing the trades forward," said Winans.

As per the WVBCT Bylaws, the Executive Board voted to install Winans as President until a full vote can be held of all craft delegates at the next WVBCT Convention.

The 2025 WVBCT Convention will be held later this year in September.

# **\$23 Million Project WVU Medicine Reynolds Hospital Holds Ribbon-Cutting for New Operating Suites**

Earlier this month, WVU Medicine Reynolds Memorial Hospital unveiled a new set of operating suites, which amounted to an investment of roughly \$23 million.

The two-and-a-half-year-long project by Grae-Con Construction included the full renovation of five operating rooms and two procedural suites to bring facilities up to date with modern surgical technologies.

The completion of the renovation was commemorated with a ribbon-cutting in front of the hospital, and the "Pride of West Virginia" marching band kicked off the festivities.

WVU Medicine Reynolds Me-

memorial and Wetzel County hospitals President and CEO Tony Martinelli said behind the operating room entrance were five "state of the art" newly remodeled operating rooms in addition to two procedural rooms and fully-updated pre- and post-op facilities.

"The total number of rooms remains the same, but if you take a look through them, they look nothing like they did at the beginning of this project," Martinelli said. "They are beautiful spaces, totally up to date and with all the modern technologies you want if a loved one is having surgery."

Modern technologies included

in the new facility are the Da Vinci surgical robot and two Rosa Robotic-Assisted Orthopedic surgical robots. Martinelli said these pieces of technology would further aid the hospital's "heavy focus on orthopedics."

In addition to improved technologies, Martinelli noted the improved staff and patient spaces with the updates.

New staff break rooms and call rooms were included in the renovations, and the "latest in monitoring technology" in pre- and post-op areas.

"We have the ability to have more pre-op in the morning and more PACU in the afternoon as surgeries

come to a close, so you don't have wasted space," Martinelli added.

WVU Health System Northern Region President Douglass Harrison also noted the importance of local healthcare at the ribbon cutting.

"We want to keep healthcare local," Harrison said. "These staff here care for your loved ones, and you don't find that in big, nationwide systems. I truly believe that this hospital is a prime example of what others want to be when delivering local health care."

For more information on services at WVU Reynolds, log on to [www.wvumedicine.org/reynolds-memorial](http://www.wvumedicine.org/reynolds-memorial). ■

## **Appalachian Laborers Host Contractors Awareness Day**



Jessie King, President of the Appalachian Laborers District Council, welcomes signatory contractors to the Laborers' Training Center in Mineral Wells, West Virginia during their annual Contractor Awareness Day.

The event serves to strengthen the relationship between labor and management and gives contractors a first-hand view of the state-of-the-art training offered at the Laborers' Training Center.

"I want to thank everyone that attended the event this year," said King. "We look forward to continuing our work with our contractors and seeing everyone again next year."

## **Charleston Trades Attend Scott High School Career Fair**



Earlier this year, members of the Charleston, WV Building and Construction Trades attended a Career Fair event at Scott High School to educate junior and seniors at the school about a career in the trades.

In the picture above Dustin Vaughan, from IBEW 466 (left) and Tony Totten with Sheet Metal Workers Local 33 speak to students during the event.

This event is a part of a larger initiative by the trades to reach out to the next generation of construction workers to help strengthen the pipeline of skilled workers to the industry.

## Weston, WV

# Painters District Council #53 Holds Annual Coatings and Corrosion Exposition

The International Union of Painters and Allied Trades District Council 53 (IUPAT 53) held their annual Coating and Corrosion Expo at their training center in Weston, West Virginia on April 17.

The event offered a variety of activities to assist those who deal with the effects of corrosion in an industrial setting.

Classes and demonstrations were held and focused on pipeline contractors, the oil and gas industry, paint contractors, coating suppliers, technicians, chemical plant operators, and individuals working in DOT, tanks, bridges, concrete, and refining industries.

Class topics included Corrosion Basics and Fundamentals, Concrete Coatings, Pipeline Coatings, Bridge Assessment/Inspection, Coating Technologies for Tanks, Protective Coatings Inspection Basics, Coatings for Reducing Bridge Maintenance & Painting Costs, and many others.

The annual Expo began in 2013 to promote the IUPAT DC 53 apprenticeship program by bringing together players in the coating industry, which include paint suppliers and many others. Over the years, it has grown to attract over 200 attendees, including vendors who provide useful information on topics relating to coatings & corrosion, as well as other

industry-related business activities.

In addition to business and industry attendees, state and local public officials were on hand to tour the

how to properly deal with corrosion and apply coatings in the region," said Brian Stanley, Business Manager for the IUPAT DC 53.



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## Insulators Apprentice Wins Competition



Mike Russell, 4th year apprentice with Local 80 Heat and Frost Insulators, poses for a picture after winning the Central States Conference Competition.

This year, the Conference Competition was held in Toledo, Ohio from May 5, 2025, to May 7, 2025.

The Competition hosts 14 locals from 6 states including West Virginia, Ohio, Indiana, Kentucky, Tennessee, and Michigan.

The Competition consists of a written exam and two days of hands-on field work.

After winning the Central States Competition, Russell will now head to Chicago in June to compete in the National Master Apprenticeship Competition, hosted by the International Association of Heat and Frost Insulators and Allied Workers.

training site and learn about all the IUPAT 53 has to offer to West Virginia and the entire region.

"Our Expo has the most advanced training and demonstrations about

For more information on this year's event and to learn more about the IUPAT DC 53 apprenticeship program and training center, log on to [www.ftidc53.org](http://www.ftidc53.org). ■



Attendees of the 2025 Coating and Corrosion Expo visit vendor exhibits during the event at the Painters DC 53 Training Center in Weston, West Virginia.