

USW Locals 2784-03, 5442, 6571, 7263, 8339, 8581, 8740, 8918, 9447-05,  
9452, 9777-29 and UAW Local 723

# UNITY COUNCIL

December  
2018

## Council, Locals Prepare for the Year Ahead



Local Union leaders from Gerdau facilities in the United States and Canada met in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania on November 28th and 29th. Strong participation demonstrated our commitment to work together and build solidarity.

The Council discussed Gerdau's practices of contracting out maintenance work instead of hiring more workers at some sites, time clock issues, and difficulties in hiring at most facilities.

John Catto, Canadian representative on the Gerdau Workers' World Council, led a discussion to respond to a world-wide survey about health and safety. Questions included policies and programs in place in the plants, what the reality is day-to-day on the shop floor, and union proposals.

"The meeting was informative," said Brandon Croom, Vice President of Local 9452 in Fort Smith. "We find out about what is happening at other Gerdau sites."

The Council also discussed a changing trade landscape that will impact our industry. Anna

Fendley from the USW Legislative Department spoke to the Council about the United States–Mexico–Canada Agreement, which is basically NAFTA 2.0 — an updated version of the trade agreement between the US, Canada, and Mexico. The three countries signed this new agreement on November 30, 2018 and it needs to be ratified by each country. As a next step, the United States, Canada, and Mexico will each take the agreement back and vote on it.

### Planning for Upcoming Negotiations

Local 9452 in Fort Smith, Arkansas, Local 7263 in Saint Paul, Minnesota and Local 8581 in Wilton, Iowa will begin contract negotiations soon. The contract covering USW members in Fort Smith will expire in March 2019; the contract at Saint Paul will expire in July 2019; and the contract at Wilton will expire in September 2019.

Gerdau has completed the sale of the Beaumont wire mill to Optimus and the sale of the Rancho Cucamonga mill to CMC.