



ADDRESS REPLY TO:  
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## EQUAL OPPORTUNITY IN APPRENTICESHIP COMMITTEE MEETING

### MINUTES

Wednesday – July 26, 2017 2:30 P.M.

- A. Call To Order/ Roll Call
- B. Commissioner Susan Anderson called the meeting to order at 2:34 a.m.

Members present: Susan Anderson, Nick Esquivel, Hector Velez, Richard Harris, Yvonne de la Peña, Frank Quintero, Christopher Christophersen, Jack Buckhorn, and DAS Chief Diane Ravnik

Members absent: Barbara Blake and Jim Hussey

- C. Review and approval of October 26, 2016 minutes

Commissioner Anderson made a motion to approve the October 26, 2016 meeting minutes. All were in favor. The motion carried.

- D. Presentation from Holly Brown, Local 3 of the Operating Engineers

Commissioner Anderson introduced the speaker Holly Brown. She stated that Holly attended the first tradeswomen delegation to India this year. She stated that Holly did not grow up wanting to be an operating engineer; she wanted to be a Police Officer or Firefighter. She attended school and got a degree in law enforcement and fire. She became a firefighter and worked as a fire fighter for 2 years. She met some tradesmen on a job site and after some discussion got interested in their line of work. She made this career change 19 years ago. In her current position that she has been in for over 10 years she has 98 apprentices under her supervision.

Commissioner Anderson stated that she had the pleasure of having lunch with Holly Brown, her supervisor and some of her colleagues and they said things like” She is very dedicated, she is a hard worker, she is a team player, she has friends all over the world, she is honest, true and driven.” Commissioner Anderson stated that Holly Brown was Solano County Woman of the Year. Holly also serves on the Solano County Workforce Investment Board and is a member of other numerous boards in the community.

Holly Brown stated that she applied for the apprenticeship program and started her career as an equipment operator in 1999 with Local 3. She stated that she currently has the

position as a coordinator, where she is able to recruit and help young men and women get in to well-paying careers. She stated that she speaks at career fairs, woman's conferences, high school and colleges and even prisons. She stated that she sees so many youth being told that college is the only way. This is leaving them with massive student loan debt and still without a good paying job or career. I tell them that are programs are free, no student loans and they can't take away your skills just like they can't take away your education.

Holly stated that she attended the 2016 Women Build Nations conference in Chicago last year. She stated that it was the first time it was held outside California and the conference drew over 1,500 attendees. The annual conference brought together tradeswomen from across the nation and four countries, as well as across crafts to gather, celebrate, and build community. She attended a global breakout session where she heard about woman from all over the world fighting for what we have already achieved in the United States. They were starting a Woman's delegation in different countries and she was selected to go to India.

On January 16, 2017, 15 U.S. delegates went to New Delhi. We came from all over the United States: California, Michigan, Missouri, Kansas and Massachusetts. The trades in attendance were operating engineers, carpenters, electricians, laborers and sheet metal workers. Except for one, we have all been through an apprenticeship program. Representing apprentices were 14 women and 1 man. The women in our group were active with their union or other organizations that supported women, minorities, or their communities.

Part of our mission was to educate officials about how women should have access to high skilled jobs in the industry. We visited New Delhi, Mumbai and Chennai. We met with workers, union leaders, policy makers, social workers, and advocates, and helped build relationships to advance dialogue and try to improve the lives of Indian women working in construction.

On January 17, we went to the VV Giri National Labor Institute in Noida. This was a two-day conference. Sri Rajeev Arora, Joint Labor and Employment, Government of India did the Inaugural address. The only construction workers in attendance from India were two young women. We gave them safety posters that we had made in Hindi and some financial support. The U.S. delegation shared their experiences and successes being skilled union tradeswomen. We talked about equal pay and equal training for women and men. We all talked about our careers, how we got started, and struggles with harassment. We had discussions and dialogue with government, trade unions, civil social organizations, academic researchers, senior organization and officers of the National Labor Institute. Construction in India is the largest nonagricultural form of employment. A construction worker's normal workday is 12 hours and over 90% of construction workers are classified as informal. This means they are paid cash for their work. Most workers do not know whom they are working for and rarely are they put on the working books, so they are not entitled to social benefits.

Next, we went to Mumbai on January 22, for a conference with the Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS). We were able to talk with various union advocates and other Mumbai and Pune-based stockholders and give them construction safety and health posters in Marathi, the language of Mumbai. These talks were a big help for us in understanding Indian culture. We discussed apprenticeship, cultural perceptions, harassment, best practices, policy

implementations, and the development of women in construction. From this, a more focused conversation emerged concerning why women cannot be masons in India. The Archana Women's Center in Kerala and the Self Employed Women's Association (SEWA), have both trained women in masonry. Even when fully trained to work, there was no work for them.

Our group raised over \$30,000 in funds to help pay for airline tickets to India, rooms, food, vans, etc. We also gave money to various groups to help with women in construction including unions, Mobile Crèches, Archana Women's Centre, TISS, VV Giri National Labor Institute and others. Thanks to everyone that helped with donations to make this all possible. She reported that they were not paid to attend this event and we all bought our own airline tickets and took time off from work to be a part of this life changing effort! The delegation is also trying to bring two women from India to the Chicago Women building the Nations Conference in October. The level of hospitality and openness we experienced from the people we met in India was wonderful. These amazing and resilient people work hard. This experience was humbling for all of us. She stated that she is now more committed to fighting for women's equality worldwide.

E. Other Items for Discussion

None

F. Comments

Kelly Jenkins-Pultz with the Women's Bureau, U.S. Department of Labor said thank you for the presentation and stated that she is working with a group in San Diego County. She encouraged any program that was interested in recruiting and retaining women in the trades please contact her at [jenkins-pultz.kelly@dol.gov](mailto:jenkins-pultz.kelly@dol.gov)

Commissioner Susan Anderson stated that if anyone knew of a great speaker for a upcoming committee meeting to please contact her.

G. Adjournment

A motion and a second was made to adjourn the meeting. All were in favor. The motion carried. The meeting adjourned at 3:17 p.m.