

Construction Conference 2017 Washington D.C.

Call To DUTY

I attended the conference on March 30 to April 1, 2017.

We learned that the International Secretary-Treasurer, Sam Chilia will be retiring very soon and he delivered the most memorable story to delegates I ever heard.

He talk to us about his life and the American dream, "If you pull up on your straps and work hard and with a little luck you will live the American dream. "

Sam said "it isn't true anymore, or if it ever was." Sam told delegates that he lived the American dream and luck had nothing to do with it, the dream to provide for his family and earn a fair wage and benefits was possible for him when he joined the Union (IBEW). The Union fought for, safety, wages, training and benefits on workers behalf and help raise many workers from poverty to the middle class. The American dream is about the middle class. It was a personal story from someone I have met on several occasions and it touched everyone there. I will long remember his words.

One of Sam's responsibility is to managed and promote PAC the Political Action Committee. It was created to provide a voice for all workers, to fight for legislated protections for workers, to protect workers rights from Industry who lobby politicians who want to prevent or strike down laws that protect workers rights to bargain in good faith, safety standards etc. Sam received just over \$703000 dollars in donations from IBEW locals in the US for PAC.

Speaker Mark McManus from United Association told delegates that in his view IBEW major strength comes from it's support and actions of diversity, tolerance and welcoming approach to all workers.

I have heard this message constantly over the years from our elected leaders, quest speakers and testimonials that acknowledge it and thank IBEW.

As we have supported NB Map at NB Power, the Construction conference via the Hour Power Awards, recognizes Richard Shine, Instructor of the year, Michael Scott Wein, Journeyman Mentor and Howard Revard Apprentice each year. Many contribute to help create safe professionals at IBEW, great to stop and thank them all.

We discussed the Election procedures and importance to get it right. (Canadian Caucus)

Work shops covered many topics,

Organize, organize, organize.

Membership Development.

Code of Excellence success and future.

The conference ended with speaker and retired top cop in Boston during the Boston Marathon bombing. No amount of preparation will prepare you for something like that but it helps save lives. So study, plan and practice, practice, practice.

These are the highlights that impressed me the most at this years conference, more is available on the International' web site.

I appreciate the opportunity to attend and share.

Fraternally,

Claude