



# THE FINISHER

HAWAII'S CHOICE TO FINISH THE JOB!

SEPTEMBER 2024

**James Williams, Jr. and executive board members  
are sworn in by NABTU President Sean McGarvey**  
See story, Page 2 and 3



**General Election Endorsements**  
See page 4





By Ryden Valmoja  
DC50 Business Manager/Secretary-Treasurer

# State of the Council

**"Expressing a huge Mahalo to Robert Williams, BMST, DC16 for generously providing polo shirts for the western region delegates! Everyone looked sharp and together as "One Union!"**

## Aloha All!

### IUPAT General Convention

Held every five years, the IUPAT General Convention is a cornerstone event for our union where elected delegates meet to make critical decisions on resolutions that will make changes to the International Constitution for the future. This year's convention took place from August 26-30, 2024, in Orlando, FL. Key updates include equitable representation, fighting for workers' rights, enhanced member engagement, and strengthened union democracy.

The theme of this year's convention was "One Union, One Family, One Fight," which perfectly describes our union moving in sync as one unit. Delegates reaffirmed the leadership James "Jimmy" Williams, Jr., by decisively electing him as our General President.

The General Executive Board was also elected: Gregg Smith, General Secretary-Treasurer; Paul Canning, General Vice President (Eastern Region); Mike Gutierrez, General Vice President (Western Region); Charlie Meadows, General Vice President (Central Region); Simon Hazelwood, General Vice President (Canada); Mark Komaromi, General Vice President for Service; Shane Smith, General Vice President, for Organizing; and Liz



McElroy, General Vice President for Government Affairs. Please join me in congratulating Jimmy and his team.



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HAWAII'S CHOICE TO FINISH THE JOB!

International Union of Painters  
and Allied Trades

### District Council 50

2240 Young Street • Honolulu, HI 96826  
Phone: (808) 941-0991

#### Ryden Valmoja

Business Manager/Secretary-Treasurer

#### John D. Frigillana, Jr.

President

#### Robin Schlitzkus

Vice President

#### Angelo Canionero, Jr.

Trustee

#### Ikaika Lacson

Trustee

#### Casey Nihipali

Trustee

#### Kurt Nishimura

Trustee, Chair

[www.dc50.org](http://www.dc50.org)



## On the Cover: General Convention

# 33rd IUPAT General Convention: Uniting for the Future

The 33rd IUPAT General Convention took place in Orlando, FL, from August 26-30, 2024, under the powerful theme, “One Union, One Family, One Fight.” Held every five years, this convention sets the direction and priorities for the International Union of Painters and Allied Trades (IUPAT).

The journey to this convention began months earlier, with each local union nominating delegates in April. The number of delegates is determined by the size of the local's membership. These elected delegates, chosen at the May General Membership meetings, carried the collective voice of their local brothers and sisters to Orlando, where we had the responsibility to vote on critical issues that shape the future of our union.

One of the most significant roles of the convention is the election of our union's leadership. This year, General President James A. Williams Jr. was re-elected, alongside General Secretary-Treasurer Gregg Smith. The convention also saw the election of our General Vice Presidents: Paul Canning (Eastern Region), Mike Gutierrez (Western Region), Charlie Meadows (Central Region), Simone Hazelwood (Canada), Liz

MacElroy (Government Affairs), Shane Smith (Organizing), and Mark Komaromi (Servicing).

Throughout the convention, delegates addressed a wide range of resolutions. Among the resolutions passed was an increase in administrative fees. This decision was not taken lightly, but was deemed necessary to ensure the continued strength and effectiveness of our union.



The IUPAT is more than just a union, it's a family that includes painters, glaziers, caulkers, tapers, floor layers, convention and trade show decorators, sign and display workers, asbestos workers, and hazmat technicians. In some regions, our family also includes public sector workers such as bus drivers and cafeteria workers. This convention reinforced the idea that regardless of our specific trades, we are united under one banner, fighting for the rights and well-being of every member across the United States and Canada.

As we move ahead from the 33rd General Convention, let us remember that our strength lies in our unity. The decisions made in Orlando will guide us over the next five years, but it is up to each of us in every local across

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## State of the Council

*Continued from Page 2.*

### Labor Unity Picnic

We are thrilled to announce our participation in this year's Labor Unity Picnic! Last year's event saw a heartfelt decision from DC50's Executive Board to redirect donations of school supplies, canned goods, and monetary contributions to support those affected by the Lahaina wildfires. This year's Oahu picnic was held at the Waikiki Shell on Sunday, September 1, 2024, featur-



ing “ono” food, outstanding entertainment, union giveaways, and, most importantly, quality time with family and friends.

### Lahaina Strong!

Over a year has passed since the devastating wildfires in Lahaina, and many of our friends and families are still affected. Our thoughts and prayers remain with those impacted. The ongoing recovery efforts highlight the community's resilience, and we must continue to support these efforts to ensure a swift and safe recovery for all.

### Get Out the Vote!

A big “mahalo” to everyone who voted in the Primary Election! Thanks to your efforts, many DC50-supported candidates were elected. The General Election is fast approaching, and your vote is crucial. Voting is a powerful tool to make your voice heard and shape the future of our union and community. Let's make it a priority to participate and encourage others to do the same!

Please remember to attend membership monthly meetings, stay engaged, stay informed, and let's continue to work together for the betterment of all! Mahalo for all the hard work you all do every day – continue to work safely and if there's ever any questions please reach out to me!

*Ryden Valiga*





# 2024 DISTRICT COUNCIL 50

## INTERNATIONAL UNION OF PAINTERS AND ALLIED TRADES

### General Election Endorsements

**UNITED STATES OF AMERICA**  
**PRESIDENT** **KAMALA HARRIS (D)**  
**VICE PRESIDENT** **TIM WALZ (D)**

**US SENATE**  
**MAZIE HIRONO (D)**

**US HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES** **US HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**  
**OPEN** **JILL TOKUDA (D)**  
**CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT 1** **CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT 2**

#### HAWAII ISLAND

##### SENATE

DISTRICT 3 Dru Mamo KANUHA (D)

##### HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

DISTRICT 3 OPEN  
DISTRICT 4 OPEN  
DISTRICT 5 OPEN  
DISTRICT 6 OPEN  
DISTRICT 7 OPEN  
DISTRICT 8 OPEN

**MAYOR** OPEN

##### HAWAII COUNTY COUNCIL

DISTRICT 1 OPEN  
DISTRICT 3 OPEN  
DISTRICT 5 OPEN  
DISTRICT 6 OPEN  
DISTRICT 7 OPEN  
DISTRICT 9 OPEN

#### MAUI

##### SENATE

DISTRICT 6 OPEN  
DISTRICT 7 Lynn Pualani DECOITE (D)

##### HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

DISTRICT 11 OPEN  
DISTRICT 12 Kyle YAMASHITA  
DISTRICT 13 OPEN  
DISTRICT 14 OPEN

##### MAUI COUNTY COUNCIL

LANAI OPEN  
EAST MAUI OPEN  
WAILUKU-WAIHEE-WAIKAPU Alice L. LEE  
WEST MAUI OPEN  
KAHULUI Tasha KAMA  
SOUTH MAUI Tom COOK  
MAKAWAO-HAIKU-PAIA Nohe U'U-HODGINS  
MOLOKAI John PELE

#### KAUAI

##### HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

DISTRICT 15 OPEN  
DISTRICT 16 OPEN

#### KAUAI (continue)

DISTRICT 17 OPEN

**KAUAI COUNTY CITY (7)** OPEN

#### OAHU

##### SENATE

DISTRICT 12 OPEN  
DISTRICT 16 Brandon ELEFANTE (D)  
DISTRICT 18 Michelle KIDANI (D)  
DISTRICT 22 Cedric Asuega GATES (D)  
DISTRICT 23 Ben SHAFER (D)

##### HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

DISTRICT 20 Tina Nakata GRANDINETTI (D)  
DISTRICT 21 Jackson SAYAMA (D)  
DISTRICT 22 Andrew Takuya GARRETT (D)  
DISTRICT 24 Adrian TAM (D)  
DISTRICT 27 OPEN  
DISTRICT 29 Ikaika Lardizabal HUSSEY (D)  
DISTRICT 30 OPEN  
DISTRICT 31 OPEN  
DISTRICT 32 Micah Pookela Kim AIU (D)  
DISTRICT 34 OPEN  
DISTRICT 37 Trish LA CHICA (D)  
DISTRICT 38 OPEN  
DISTRICT 39 Corey ROSENLEE (D)  
DISTRICT 40 OPEN  
DISTRICT 41 OPEN  
DISTRICT 42 Anthony Makana PARIS (D)  
DISTRICT 45 Desire Aguste DESOTO (D)  
DISTRICT 46 Amy PERRUSO (D)  
DISTRICT 47 OPEN  
DISTRICT 48 OPEN  
DISTRICT 49 OPEN  
DISTRICT 50 OPEN

##### MAYOR

Rick BLANGIARDI

##### HONOLULU CITY COUNCIL

DISTRICT III Esther KIA'AINA

*\*OPEN – Indicates that candidate(s) who were interviewed and DID NOT support or align with the initiatives of the district council unions OR candidate(s) did not request an interview.*

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## IUPAT General Convention



North America to bring these resolutions to life. Together, we are stronger, and together, we will continue the fight for fair wages, safe working conditions, and a better future for all members of the IUPAT.

Let's carry the spirit of "One Union, One Family, One Fight" into our daily work and continue to build a union that we can all be proud of. 🙌

## Political Department Primary and General Elections

Thank you to all members who took the time to vote in the 2024 Primary Election! Your participation and support are always important in elections and can have an even greater impact in elections with low public participation, like the recent Primary Election.

Many of the candidates that District Council 50 endorsed in the Primary won their races and are now headed for the General Election in November. Recently, the Political Department reviewed the remaining candidates and chose the ones we believe will support our Unions. The list of DC50's General Election endorsements is included on page 4 of this edition of the Finisher. Again, please don't forget to register and vote in the November General Election.

## Federal Project Labor Agreements

One example of how national elections can affect us here in Hawaii is Federal construction projects. As you know, more and more projects are coming to Hawaii because of the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act signed into law by President Joe Biden in 2021. President Biden, who has been one of the most union-friendly Presidents in U.S. history, has issued an Executive Order requiring the use of Project Labor Agreements on Federal construction projects funded under the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act. President Biden's Executive Order will help ensure that union contractors have a fair opportunity to compete against non-union contractors on public construction projects.

This summer, the Political Department has been working with contractors on developing a standard form Project Labor Agreement that we hope can be used on all Federal construction projects. We anticipate that the new Project Labor Agreement will be used on two large, upcoming Federal construction projects at Fort Shafter and Pearl Harbor. 🙌

## Apprentice Floor Layers Contest

Anticipation is building for the Apprentice Floor Layers Contest set for November 2, 2024, at Honolulu Community College. This prestigious event will not only showcase the exceptional skills of emerging Floor Layers, but it will also determine



which apprentice will represent District Council 50 at "Surfaces 2025" – the IUPAT Floor Layers Apprentice competition held in Las Vegas.

This contest is more than a showcase of talent, it's a crucial step for apprentices aspiring to make their mark

on a national stage. With its engaging schedule and high stakes, the event will highlight the dedication and expertise of the next generation of flooring professionals.

Be sure to mark your calendars and support these talented individuals as they vie for the opportunity to represent District Council 50 and compete on a broader stage! 🙌

## District Council 50 Gives Back to Lahaina

After a year of being shut down due to the tragic Lahaina fire, Shane Awai, District Council 50 Multi-Craft Business Development Specialist, received a text asking if District Council members might be willing to volunteer to paint the exterior of the Lahaina Aquatic Center.

After a call was made to BMST Ryden "Bully" Valmoja, the project was a "go" and a call went out to DC50 members. On Saturday, August 10, about 30 eager members turned out ready



to go. Red Lighting, a non-profit organization, and its Lahaina members showed great appreciation for our services as we were able to complete all of the exterior painting before lunch. The beautiful Lahaina aquatic center was ready to receive the community, especially Kupuna who can return home to exercise, enjoy, and have some sense of normalcy. Winston Churchill once wrote: "We make a living by what we get, but we make a life by what we give." 🙌



# Young Workers Bring New Life to Unions

Lately, unions have been making a strong comeback, thanks to the energy and fresh ideas of younger workers. Many people think Millennials and Gen Z aren't interested in traditional jobs, but they're breathing new life into unions across different industries. These younger workers are showing a strong commitment to improving their workplaces and fighting for fairness through unionization.

One big reason for this renewed interest in unions is that they help solve the unique challenges that today's workforce faces. Many young workers deal with unstable gig work, low wages, and the rising cost of living. Unions give them a way to demand better pay, benefits, and working conditions, especially in industries where workers are often taken advantage of.

Younger generations are also bringing new ideas about how unions are organized. They're using digital tools and social media to gather support, spread the word, and coordinate actions more effectively than ever before. This tech-savvy approach has allowed unions to reach more people and connect with workers who might have been left out in the past.

## Congratulations Cameren!

District Council 50 extends its congratulations to Cameren Banis for being honored with the prestigious IUPAT Bud Raftery Scholarship. This accomplishment is a testament to Cameren's dedication, hard work, and exceptional achievements

as he continues his studies toward a degree in electrical engineering at Seattle Pacific University. Congratulations is also extended to Local Union 1791 painter, Rendell Banis, proud father of Cameren.

The Bud Raftery Scholarship, awarded by the International Union

of Painters and Allied Trades (IUPAT), recognizes individuals who demonstrate outstanding commitment and promise as they seek to further their education. Cameren's success is an inspiration to us all, reminding us of the power of perseverance and excellence. DC50 wishes him continued success in his future endeavors. Congratulations, Cameren! 🤝

## Meet Organizer Keaka N. Kamai

*Drywall Taper, Local 1944*

Keaka Kamai has been in the industry for 22 years. He started in 2002 as an apprentice Drywall Taper on the island of Oahu and became a journeyman several years later. He currently resides on the Valley Isle of Maui with his wife and three children. Keaka enjoys spending time with his family, volunteering in the community, and traveling. 🤝



The issues that younger workers care about are also shaping the new union movement. They're focused on things like protecting the environment, promoting diversity, and making sure everyone is included. Younger union members are pushing for green jobs, standing up for underrepresented communities, and making sure unions themselves reflect the diversity of the workforce. This change is turning unions into organizations that fight not just for better wages and conditions but also for broader social issues.

Young workers are proving that collective action is still powerful. As they continue to grow in influence, their fresh ideas and commitment to fairness will likely bring even more success to unions in the future. 🤝

## First Aid/CPR & AED Defibrillator

Garrett Russell and Alex Magnuson, two of our Tapers instructors were certified in First Aid/CPR and AED at the Finishing Trades Institute in Hanover, MD back in May 2023. These two instructors are now able to teach our apprentices at school and can offer journey person classes when needed or requested by our union contractors.

It was a very intense class. Garrett and Alex both needed to learn First Aid/CPR and then teach two classes to get their certification. They both completed all the requirements and got their First Aid/CPR certifications.

Joined by DC50 training coordinator Mario Manrique, the three instructors taught first semester apprentices on August 17, 2024. The apprentices got to use the new mannequins that are more human-like and the defibrillators walk users through the sequence of shocking the heart.

It's crucial that our instructors are certified in as many safety regulations as possible to keep our membership at the forefront of our industry. 🤝



## AGMT Update

The recent AGMT certification testing yielded great results that reflect the dedication and skill of our team members. A total of 12 technicians took the PBT (performance-based test). Eight

passed to become certified Glaziers, bringing our total to 51 AGMT-certified Glaziers.

This hands-on assessment tested the practical skills and craft-

manship required in the field, and the results demonstrate our team's capability in meeting industry standards. On the knowledge-based side, 25 applicants took the exam and 21 successfully passed – an impressive 84 percent pass rate. This portion of the certification tested the theoretical understanding of architectural glass and metal work and highlighted the depth of knowledge among our members. The next AGMT PBT and KBT testing will tentatively be held November 9-10 and November 16-17. 🤝



## DC 50's Goal: Recruitment, Retention, and Inclusion

Despite the ages old question, "When will it end?" the construction industry is revving up and will keep on growing with no signs of slowing down for several years to come. With



increased construction on the horizon, several considerations come to mind. With economic growth, more construction projects typically indicate increased employment opportunities. With that in mind,

recruitment and retention is a priority throughout the construction industry.

District Council 50 requires skilled construction workers such as Painters, Flooring Installers, Drywall Finishers, and Glaziers. There is a higher demand for these professionals. District Council 50 is investing in Training and Education, a new training facility, providing accessible training programs and apprenticeships that will equip individuals – journeymen as well – with the necessary skills

to enter the construction industry. DC50 promotes career pathways and opportunities from entry level positions to specialized roles in the finishing industry. Grants from the IUPAT and through the Trades apprenticeship, teach the value of skilled labor, advocate for workforce development initiatives, and ensure industry standards are upheld.

Upgrade programs help existing members adapt to new technologies, methodologies and industry trends ensuring they remain competitive and relevant in the forever evolving construction industry. Prioritizing workers safety and health by enforcing strict safety protocols with their Safety Training Programs and creating a culture of safety awareness on construction sites. These ideas alone, would encourage diversity and inclusion in the construction industry, and attract individuals from all backgrounds and enhance the prospective prospects with a variety of perspectives and skills.

A skilled labor force is essential for meeting the growing demand for the construction projects. By implementing these strategies and investing in the development of a skilled and diverse workforce, in the construction arena, District Council 50 can address the current workforce shortage, meet the demands of the upcoming projects, and enhance the overall productivity and quality in the increasing construction market. 🧐

## My Journey from Painter to Organizer

My name is Po'okela Banis-Chun, and I've been a union painter for the past seven years. It's a career that I've poured countless hours into, and it's shaped me in ways I never imagined. Now, I've taken on a new role as an organizer for District Council 50, and I can't help but feel incredibly blessed to be a part of this organization.

When I started as a painter, I was focused on mastering my craft, learning the techniques, understanding the materials, and taking pride in every project I worked on. Over time, painting became more than just a job – it became a passion. I found fulfillment in the work I've done.

As the years went by, I began to see the bigger picture. I realized that the work we do as union painters goes beyond the projects we complete. It's about standing up for our rights, ensuring that we are treated fairly, and maintaining the standards that protect our profession.



That's what led me to become an organizer with District Council 50. In my new role, I'm focused on advocating for my fellow workers, helping them navigate the challenges of our industry, and ensuring that we all have the support we need to thrive. It's a responsibility I take very seriously, and I'm committed to making a positive impact.

Being an organizer allows me to blend my love for painting with a passion for leadership and advocacy. I'm in a position where I can help shape the future of our industry, ensuring that the values we hold dear – like fairness, unity, and respect – continue to guide us. I feel truly blessed to be working for District Council 50. This organization has given me the opportunity to grow, not just as a professional but as a person. I'm excited about what the future holds and grateful for the chance to serve my fellow members. 🧐

## Hilton Waikoloa Village "Palace Tower"

On the West side of the Island of Hawaii (Big Island) resides the Hilton Waikoloa Village Hotel. Throughout the years, the property has been constantly been upgraded in order to



maintain the hotel's high quality expected by their guests. Both exterior and interior projects have kept our members busy.

The next project coming up is the "Palace Tower Renovation" that will include updates to 185 guestrooms and 18 suites. The project has been awarded to Hawaiian Dredging Construction Company as the General Contractor. Finishing contractors are Group Builders, Inc. for the drywall, WE Painting for painting and wallcovering, and Kahului Carpet & Drapery Products, Inc. for floorcovering. As this project gets underway, the Palace Tower will be transformed to fulfill the vision of the interior decorators that guests will enjoy for years to come. The ongoing maintenance of the hotel will also create jobs for our Big Island members. 🧐





International Union of  
Painters and Allied Trades  
District Council 50  
2240 Young Street  
Honolulu, HI 96826



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Permit No. 1838

**Wanted: Please submit news clips, photos and articles on special events to: [Lwoo@dc50.org](mailto:Lwoo@dc50.org)**

## District Council 50 Meetings

- Young Lions Committee meetings – Friday, January 19, 2024; Friday, April 19, 2024; Friday, August 23, 2024; and Friday, October 18, 2024, at 4:00 p.m., at the DC50 hall and via Zoom video conference.
- Women's Committee meetings – Wednesday, February 7, 2024; Wednesday, May 1, 2024; August 7, 2024; and Wednesday, November 6, 2024, at 5:00 p.m., at the DC50 hall and via Zoom video conference.

### SPECIALTY WORKERS LOCAL UNION 1941

- Membership meetings – Second Saturday of the month at 8:30 a.m., at the DC50 hall and via Zoom

### PAINTERS LOCAL UNION 1791

- Membership meetings – Third Wednesday of the month at 5:00 p.m., at the DC50 hall and via Zoom

### DRYWALL TAPERS FINISHERS LOCAL UNION 1944

- Membership meetings – Second Thursday of the month at 5:00 p.m., at the DC50 hall and via Zoom

### GLAZIERS, ARCHITECTURAL METAL AND GLASSWORKERS LOCAL UNION 1889

- Executive Board meetings – Second to the last Thursday of the month at 5:00 p.m., at the DC50 hall and via Zoom
- Membership meetings – Last Thursday of the month at 4:45 p.m., at the DC50 hall and via Zoom

### CARPET, LINOLEUM AND SOFT TILE LOCAL UNION 1926

- Membership meetings – Third Thursday of the month at 5:00 p.m., at the DC50 hall and via Zoom

## OFFICE HOURS

**MONDAY – FRIDAY:**

**7:00 A.M. – 5:00 P.M.**

**SATURDAY:**

**7:30 A.M. – 10:30 A.M.**

## District Council 50

Painters - LUI791	808-941-0991
Tapers - LUI944	808-946-6621
Glaziers - LUI889	808-946-3329
Floor Layers - LUI926	808-942-3988
SpecialtyWorkers-LUI941	808-941-0991
Toll-Free Neighbor Island	888-811-4020

DC 50 Joint Apprenticeship Training  
808-947-6606  
808-941-0991, Option 2

Trust Funds	808-523-9411
Toll Free Neighbor Island	877-523-9411

## IN MEMORIAM

**GEORGE ARELLIAND, GLAZIERS LU1889**

**ERIC H. MITSUI, PAINTERS LU1791**