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IBEW Local 103 names new staff appointments

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Boston, MA IBEW Local 103 is recognized as one of the fastest-growing IBEW locals in the international union and it's showing no signs of slowing down. Local 103 created two new staff roles that will add capacity to its already robust and strategic organizing and recruitment initiatives, specifically focusing on increasing diversity, equity and inclusion at all levels of the organization.

Bernard Sharpe will be brought into the business manager's office as a full-time organizer, while Josué Pierre will serve as the union's first full time DEI coordinator, a dedicated and instrumental part of the new Empower DEI program. In their new roles, Sharpe and Pierre will work to increase Local 103's membership and the NECA Greater Boston union electrical contractor base, with an emphasis on Minority-owned (MBE) and Women-owned (WBE) businesses.

IBEW Local 103 business manager/financial secretary Lou Antonellis believes that increasing IBEW Local 103's organizing capacity and focus and adding new, dedicated staff are steps toward achieving the union's vision for a truly diverse, equitable and inclusive electrical construction industry.

"Our union is strong, and growing every day. We're very grateful for our hard-earned success, and it's time that we take things to the next level," said Antonellis. "It's part of our mission to expand life-changing opportunities in our union to as many local families as possible, and now with our growing team and through our new Empower DEI program, we'll be able to focus on strategic recruitment and organizing with the specific intention of building a better, more diverse union for future generations."

The Empower DEI program is a groundbreaking new initiative jointly founded by IBEW Local 103 and NECA Greater Boston electrical contractors. The program was created and designed to support new and existing MBE and WBE union electrical contracting companies and to enable them to leverage resources and mentorship to gain a foothold in the competitive electrical construction industry. The program's ultimate goal is to increase diversity on the ownership/management side of the industry in order to create a more equitable union, industry, and local economy overall.

Pierre joined the Local 103 research team in 2013 and became an analyst three years later. As an analyst, Pierre developed data collection and analysis techniques, coordinated with public agencies, tracked project developments, and worked closely with Local 103 business agents and business development teams in communications with project developers. In his role as DEI coordinator, Pierre will serve as the main point of contact for MBE and WBE contractor program participants, with

a large focus on identifying business development opportunities and providing guidance on how to pursue and win the project bidding process. Pierre will also work to connect participants with established industry mentors based on their needs, as well as training and resources in administration, finances and operations.

“I’m honored to be selected as the union’s first ever DEI coordinator and to help organize and lead the DEI efforts of one of Boston’s largest unions,” said Pierre. “IBEW Local 103 does so much good for our communities and has a lot to offer new and aspiring MBE and WBE contracting businesses. It is critical for our community and for local families that the opportunities our union creates are available to everyone.”

“I look forward to collaborating with Empower DEI program participants, with our partners, and with Local 103, NECA and all our departments to empower people from all walks of life to gain a foothold in this industry and more importantly, to start creating generational wealth for people of color throughout the Greater Boston region,” Pierre said.

Sharpe has worn numerous different hats in his 23 years as a Local 103 member, including steward on many large construction projects, executive board member, and now organizer. As a new business agent and organizer, Sharpe will work closely with Pierre in outreach to MBE and WBE electrical contractors, offering the new Empower DEI services in addition to the full suite of benefits available to union signatory contractors. Sharpe will also continue the union’s ongoing efforts to recruit more women and people of color into the union’s industry-leading apprenticeship programs, which offer students the opportunity to learn a priceless, in-demand skill set free of charge, while also earning family-sustaining wages and benefits.

“When unions are strong, it’s good news for all workers,” said Sharpe. “We set the standards for wages, benefits and working conditions across our industry and beyond, and it’s clear from our growth and retention that more and more people are understanding that. I’m ready to hit the ground running and to get our message out there. If you’re in the electrical construction industry, especially if you identify as a woman or person of color, you should be part of IBEW Local 103. No where else can guarantee you the standards that we can for you, your family, and your company.”

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