

# UNITY, NOW!

## A Message from the General President

The day in late August of this year when the delegations of the IUPAT and the Sheet Metal Workers met via satellite at our conventions to pass, what was dubbed, the Unity Resolution, delivered an immense sense of solidarity. Representatives of the Iron Workers and Plasterers joined us on the stage, while the Asbestos Workers, Roofers' Union and other labor organizations joined us in spirit. The cheers that followed its successful vote were deafening and the applause still rings in the hallways and offices of this organization. It

of a much larger picture. As the markets expand, so do our opportunities and our responsibilities. We need each other.

When we were all at the height of our memberships and market shares, there were strong relationships between trade unions. Yet, ultimately, our success was our curse, and each union decided we could do even better by going it alone. Unfortunately, we could not have been more wrong. We need to understand that we require partners in this market, not just our employer partners, but other internationals like the Iron Workers. We need to work together now, more than ever.



**Iron Workers General President  
Joseph Hunt**

**SMWIA General President  
Michael Sullivan**

**OPCMIA General President  
John Dougherty**

was a moment that fully embodied the spirit of unionism. Separate internationals pledged to work together for the good of the combined membership. In the months following that significant day, many sheet metal worker representatives I met while on travel for business remarked how proud they were of what our unions accomplished together that day.

I now feel that we have to take this a step further, and that is by being leaders and working with all of the general presidents of the building trades.

Recently, I attended a meeting with General President Joe Hunt of the Iron Workers. We were making a joint presentation to the Permasteelisa Group, an innovator of new construction systems around the globe. Permasteelisa has an international agreement with both the Painters and the Iron Workers and it recognizes that our shared industries are no longer only on the local level.

That is how we must think of our relationships with other unions as well. We are all part

For too many years in Washington, labor leaders have not truly talked to one another outside of our usual meetings demanded by the obligations of our offices. This will change. In fact, it has already begun to change with the adoption of policies such as the Unity Resolution.

With such cooperation, we all can recapture lost market shares and do what we do best – represent, train and supply qualified labor for our employer partners. This is my mission. This is our mission.

Many challenges lie ahead of us, but we can find confidence in the fact that all of the unions within the United Unions Building, our headquarters, already have a better relationship now more than ever. And, each leader of these great organizations is working to strengthen these bonds. The Unity Resolution was only the first step on a road to revitalize the labor movement in the building trades, and I am proud to know that this union was one of the first to take that step. I promise you, there is more to come. ■