



# CONNECTED

IUOE 955 email update curated by Business Manager, Chris Flett

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## CONGRATS TO BUSINESS MANAGER, CHRIS FLETT - TOP 50 UNDER 50 - YOUR MCMURRAY MAGAZINE, 2025

For lifelong Fort McMurray resident Chris Flett, community and hard work go hand in hand. Born and raised in the region he still calls home, Flett has spent all 43 of his years deeply connected to the people and industries that make this place thrive. As the Business Manager for the International Union of Operating Engineers (IUOE) Local 955, he's built a reputation as a tireless advocate for workers, someone who moves comfortably from the trenches to the boardroom, always with one mission in mind: to fight for fairness, opportunity, and a better future for the region he loves.

"I spend most days fighting to raise the living standards and add economic benefit to the thousands of members I'm privileged to serve," Chris says. "And I do it with a focus on giving back to Fort McMurray through fundraisers, events, and community participation."



Chris's work is grounded in his belief that prosperity should be shared. He's watched the region evolve over the decades and knows firsthand the challenges that come with economic uncertainty, automation, and shifting industry priorities. "With the prioritization of share prices and corporate profits by the big Client Owners, the 'little guy' is being squeezed," he explains. "As automation continues to evolve, we need to remember that those were well-paid, tax-paying positions once filled by people. Our community needs champions who will fight for residents to get their fair share of the prosperity."

For Chris, that fight isn't just professional—it's personal. Growing up in Fort McMurray, he experienced both the struggles and the generosity that define the community's character. "There were certainly lean times," he says. "Members of my family and many of my friends accessed some of the amazing supports within our community. I've experienced firsthand the generosity of Fort McMurray and those who make it all possible. I try to share as much of that love and support as I've received."

That gratitude has shaped his approach to community involvement. While his demanding schedule makes it hard to commit to a single organization full-time, Chris uses his platform and connections to help amplify the efforts of others. He previously served on the board of the Justin Slade Youth Foundation (JSYF), an experience that left a lasting mark. "The JSYF board came about because we lost an amazing friend in Justin Slade," Chris says. "Justin's family was influential in my early years, and I wanted to give back to a friend who gave me so much. Little did I know the fire it would light from within."

Today, that fire continues to fuel his advocacy. Whether he's negotiating across a boardroom table or helping local charities reach their goals, Chris sees his role as both connector and protector. His time in leadership has also deepened his understanding of how interconnected every part of the community truly is. "Bargaining and conversations at the boardroom table have taught me a lot about how the greater economy works," he says. "It's also shown me how important it is to be engaged politically. Our organization is political, not partisan. We work with decision makers at all levels, regardless of party, to serve the interests of our membership. I think that's a fantastic metaphor for life: have a seat at the table, or be the dinner."

Looking ahead, Chris is focused on creating more opportunities for the next generation. "If we're not careful, the economic uncertainty in this region will chase young people away as they search for opportunity elsewhere," he says. "My goal is to grow good career opportunities here in Fort McMurray and across Alberta, so that our youth can build their futures right here at home."

Despite his leadership titles and professional achievements, Chris remains humble about what matters most. "While I'm incredibly proud of my career trajectory," he says, "my most important title is dad and friend. My family and my friends mean the world to me."

From the trenches to the boardroom, Chris Flett continues to fight for the worker and for the community that built him.



# FOUR DECADES OF IUOE 955 LOYALTY!

A huge congrats to Brother Tony Onucki, who recently received his 40-year IUOE 955 long service award in Edmonton.

Tony, who was last employed with Sterling Crane, has been enjoying a well earned - and pension backed - retirement since May 2009.

Tony, thank you for your decades of loyalty and service; it's a pleasure to have you in the growing 955 family.



## “NO FREE LUNCH” CAMPAIGN LAUNCHED

**“UNION MEMBER OR NOT, HAUL TRUCK DRIVERS DESERVE THE DIGNITY OF A 30-MINUTE PAID LUNCH FOR THE DIFFICULT, CONFINED WORK THEY DO.**

**“IT’S A MATTER OF RESPECT.**

**“IT’S A MATTER OF FOLLOWING THE RULES.**

**“YOU ARE WORTH IT.**

**“PLEASE JOIN THE FIGHT!”**

**- CHRIS FLETT  
IUOE 955 BUSINESS MANAGER**



In the haul truck world, we don't get to enjoy a lunch out, a warm lunch, a served lunch, or even a table and chair at lunch.

Our lunches are not a break from the worksite and should be paid time.

Why?

Because we don't get to leave the same space we perform our duties. We are confined to our work area and prohibited from leaving our cabs.

This seemingly goes against the rules around hours of work and rest laid out in Alberta's Employment Standards.

Learn more and join the fight:  
[nofreelunches.ca](http://nofreelunches.ca)



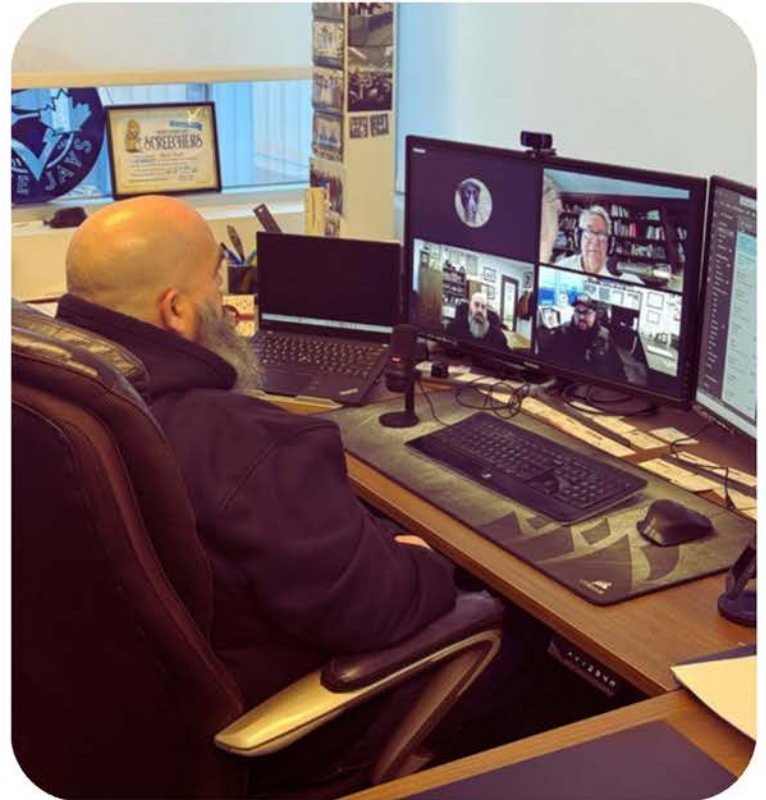
# IUOE 955 LEADERSHIP TALKS OEM DRIVE ON AMERICA'S WORK FORCE UNION PODCAST

They all wanna talk about the IUOE 955 OEM drive and the largest worker move away from CLAC in Canadian history.

We had a great podcast interview on Dec. 17 with America's Work Force Union Podcast out of Cleveland, Ohio, where Business Manager, Chris Flett and Assistant Business Manager and Director of Organizing, Anthony Noseworthy chatted about our union and told the story of the successful organizing drive at OEM Remanufacturing in Edmonton.

We sincerely appreciate the continued, positive response to the brave move these workers made.

Check it out at: [awf.labortools.com](http://awf.labortools.com)



## BUILDING OUR COMMUNITIES - SCOTIA PLACE, CALGARY



Check out these awesome shots of three IUOE 955 signatory crane companies working hard building Scotia Place (Calgary Events Centre), the city's new downtown home for sports, entertainment and more.

It's been a pleasure to work alongside the skilled Ironworkers Local 725 crew at Walters on this job too.

Big ups to Mammoet, CJM and Myshak for the good work they're doing, building this great addition to our community - set to open fall 2027.

Know a member who should be featured in IUOE 955's Connected, and on our social media? Email us!

[connected@oe955.com](mailto:connected@oe955.com)

**GOOD  
JOB!**



# NASER DARWESH, OJ INDUSTRIAL MAINTENANCE

Meet Naser!

Naser's worked with OJ Industrial Maintenance as a side boom operator since 2010 and has proudly served as an IUOE 955 Job Steward for the past 8 years.

Above this, he holds a university law degree, sits on IUOE 955's executive board as a guard, and is a great dad to five awesome kids.

Naser is the definition of a good union man and is always there to lend a hand when needed.



Thank you, Naser for the good and important work you do, every single day. We're proud to have you in the growing IUOE 955 family.

## IUOE 955 MEMBER SERVICES UPDATE



The dispatch and administration teams within IUOE 955 are the operational backbone of our member services depart.

With representatives from each department located in Edmonton, Calgary and Fort McMurray, they are the front line support we provide for our members.

From processing applications for new members, to delicately handling death benefits and a wide array of administrative tasks in between, the administration team prides itself on providing outstanding service for our valued members.

In addition to our administration department, our dispatch team works hard every day to place members in jobs across various industries throughout the province that align with their skillsets and work preferences.

They maintain strong relationships with all of the employers and ensure they maintain communication to provide them with highly qualified personnel.

Regan Crocker MBA, C.Mgr. - Member Services Manager



# IUOE 955 FINANCE DEPARTMENT UPDATE

Greetings, members! As we kick off the new year, I want to extend my warmest regards from your Finance Department.

We recognize that every dollar of your dues is an investment in our collective strength, and our team is committed to being the diligent stewards of those resources.

Right now, our key focus is on completing the 2025 Third Quarter (Q3) financial close and preparing for our independent external audit. This essential work ensures accuracy and transparency in our financial reporting, verifying that every union resource is strategically managed to support successful contract bargaining, robust training programs, and the long-term stability of your benefit funds.



We believe in maintaining the highest standards of financial stability and accountability. Also, a friendly reminder, please take a moment to confirm your address and benefit details are up to date with the office; this helps us deliver your benefits smoothly and efficiently. Your partnership keeps IUOE 955 strong.

Abhiraj Maliah, CPA - Senior Finance Manager

# OE955 HEALTH & WELLNESS AND PENSION UPDATE



This is my first piece in Connected and I look forward to commenting on current issues pensions or H&W face, either from our own plan's perspectives or general issues we see around the world. For this first piece, I wanted to write on the operations at the OE955 H&W and Pension Trust Office.

In the last few years, we've made significant investments in systems to provide a better member experience. Helping Trust Office staff to give members quick, accurate responses to the questions we face every day. We know the world is always changing and we'll continue to evolve the way we serve you to try and meet the expectations and preferences of our diverse membership.

In the Trust Office, we have a small but mighty team, with a blend of newer and experienced staff. The team balances the need to follow the plan rules with the human aspect of what our office provides every day, and I have seen firsthand the care the Trust Office staff have for the members. They handle each new phone call, e-mail or visit with courtesy, professionalism and thoughtfulness, knowing their interaction can be necessary to ensure someone's life saving medication can be dispensed or a mortgage payment made.

From all of us in the Trust Office, we hope you had a good holiday season and we look forward to what 2026 will bring.

Navin Peiris, Executive Director - Operating Engineers Local 955 Health & Wellness and Pension Trust Funds



# IUOE 955 TRAINING TRUST UPDATE

IUOE 955 Apprenticeship and Education is proud to report it has completed its first Mobile Crane Period 3 course. There were 12 IUOE members who attended, and we are happy to report all 12 successfully completed their exams and are on their way to achieving Journeyperson status.

This success has been the culmination of the good work done by the IUOE 955 training department, from creating the curriculum to ensuring students have access to cutting edge equipment and learning aids. We recognize all the hard work done to bring this dream to reality.

This year was extremely busy at the Budd Coutts Apprenticeship and Education Centre. The instructors and admin staff are proud to see our members and the public start and finish their technical training with IUOE 955. Our ability to offer students a 100% in-person and on site learning experience has ensured those who take Period 1 with us, return for Period 3. Good luck to all our students in their careers ahead.

Declan Regan, Interim Executive Director of Apprenticeship and Training



## BUDD COUTTS APPRENTICESHIP AND EDUCATION CENTRE FEBRUARY 2026

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	2 Forklift - Blended Learnir Feb 2 (0/6 taken) Mobile Crane Period One Jan 12 - Feb 23	3 Mobile Crane Period One Jan 12 - Feb 23	4 Articulated Haul Truck<s Feb 4 - Feb 5 (2/2 taken) Mobile Crane Period One Jan 12 - Feb 23 Standard First Aid - Level Feb 4 - Feb 5 (0/14 taken) Wheel Loader Basic<smal Feb 4 - Feb 5 (3/3 taken)	5 Articulated Haul Truck<s Feb 4 - Feb 5 (2/2 taken) Mobile Crane Period One Jan 12 - Feb 23 Standard First Aid - Level Feb 4 - Feb 5 (0/14 taken) Wheel Loader Basic<smal Feb 4 - Feb 5 (3/3 taken)	6 Mobile Crane Period One Jan 12 - Feb 23	7
	9 Fall Protection - ESC Feb 9 (1/16 taken) Mobile Crane Period One Jan 12 - Feb 23	10 Mobile Crane Period One Jan 12 - Feb 23 Skid Steer Recertification Feb 10 (0/6 taken) Telehandler Recertificati Feb 10 (1/4 taken)	11 Mobile Crane Load Chart Feb 11 - Feb 12 (1/12 taken) Mobile Crane Period One Jan 12 - Feb 23	12 H2S Alive - ESC Feb 12 (0/12 taken) Mobile Crane Load Chart Feb 11 - Feb 12 (1/12 taken) Mobile Crane Period One Jan 12 - Feb 23	13 Mobile Crane Period One Jan 12 - Feb 23	14
5	16	17 Mobile Crane Period One Jan 12 - Feb 23	18 Articulated Haul Truck Feb 18 - Feb 19 (2/2 taken) Mobile Crane Period One Jan 12 - Feb 23 Wheel Loader Basic Feb 18 - Feb 19 (3/3 taken)	19 Articulated Haul Truck Feb 18 - Feb 19 (2/2 taken) Mobile Crane Period One Jan 12 - Feb 23 Wheel Loader Basic Feb 18 - Feb 19 (3/3 taken)	20 Mobile Crane Period One Jan 12 - Feb 23	21
2	23 Mobile Crane Period One Jan 12 - Feb 23 Skid Steer Basic Feb 23 - Feb 24 (0/6 taken)	24 Skid Steer Basic Feb 23 - Feb 24 (0/6 taken) Telehandler Basic Feb 24 - Feb 25 (0/4 taken)	25 Telehandler Basic Feb 24 - Feb 25 (0/4 taken)	26 H2S Alive - ESC Feb 26 (0/12 taken)	27 Forklift - Blended Learnir Feb 27 (0/6 taken)	28