



# Teamsters for a Democratic Union

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## Election Won—Again—in Local 639

For the second time in a year the Members United Slate has been elected the officers of Washington, D.C., Local 639. Their election victory on October 27 put an end to one of Hoffa's more desperate attempts to undermine a local union election.

Members United won their first election last fall, beating out IBT Trustee John Steger and his Concerned Members slate.

While Local 639 members got on with the job of strengthening their union, Steger and Hoffa maneuvered in the background to have the election overturned. This was after the ballots were counted, and later tampered with, while in the Steger group's custody.

Hoffa ordered a rerun of the Local 639 election and gave Steger another leg up by imposing a temporary trusteeship and reinstalling the old officers.

It didn't work. When the votes were counted the 10,000 members of Local 639 elected all fifteen officers and business representatives of the Members United Slate. They expect to be installed and working for the members by mid-November.

Newly elected Local 639 Business Agent Anthony Smith, of the Members United Slate, spoke to the TDU Convention on October 23 a few days before his slate's victory in the Local 639 rerun election. Here are excerpts from his remarks:

I bring greetings from WashingtonD.C. slate members, 15 strong officers, agents, and trustees—the duly elected officers, agents, and trustees of Local 639. Another story of 'Vote Till You Get it Right.'

We're the second largest local in the East with over 10,000 members. Four of the incumbent BA's split off to form a coalition slate. We came from diverse backgrounds within the union: some leaning Hoffa, some TDU sympathizers, others less familiar with International politics.

As a group, our slate was not running to become a reform local in the Teamsters, in the broader picture of the Teamsters. We were just looking to reform the local, to make the local better for the members.

[Incumbent President] John Steger is on the International General Executive Board. He's one of the people we beat.

Steger commented on a number of occasions that they would be invincible because after

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they merged-in Local 246, the local would be too large for anybody to be able to take them on.

But a funny thing happened on the way to the dance—members took a look at their date and rejected them.

As you heard we're doing 'Vote Till You Get it Right.' We ran a stronger, less conservative campaign the second time around, even more face-to-face, out there in the streets, meeting the people. We're quite confident that we've won again.

TDU has earned great respect in our local and I was told to bring thanks from some of those people who would not have even talked to TDU in the past.

There will be no support in 639 for Hoffa in this next campaign, there's no doubt about that anymore.

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