



FACTS ABOUT THE UNION

How A Union Works

How does the union work?

A union is a democratic organization of a majority of the employees in a facility. The basic idea of a union is that by joining together with fellow employees to form a union, workers have a greater ability to improve conditions at the work site. In other words, in unity there is strength.

Who runs the union? My company says the union is just a bunch of outsiders – a third party?

You run your own union. You elect your own negotiating committee and prepare your own list of improvements for a union contract. You elect your own officers. The union is not “outsiders,” it is you, the worker. The Animation Guild’s 16-member Executive Board is elected every three years from the membership – working professional artists like yourself!

What benefits can the union guarantee?

The Union can only guarantee one thing; with the support, strength and unity of the workers, working together we will win the best wage and benefits package possible.

If I vote to organize, will I lose the benefits I have now?

No, it is against the law for the company to take away any benefits you now have in order to punish you for voting for a union.

What about union corruption and dishonesty?

The company would like you to think that all union officials everywhere are corrupt. The truth is that most unions are decent, honest organizations dedicated to improving the lives of working people. Unions aren’t perfect – nothing is. At least union officials are elected, and bad ones can be voted out. Remember: you – the employees – are the union.

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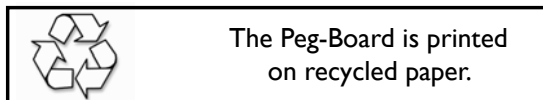
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Union Dues

How much are union dues?

The dues will depend upon what the local needs to operate efficiently and effectively. However, the dues will be set by you, as a local union, with the exception of the International portion of the dues, which is set and voted on by all local unions at the international convention every four years. However, no dues are paid until the majority of workers vote to accept a contract they helped to negotiate. As of this writing, the maximum annual dues for the Animation Guild are about \$470. That is less than \$40 per month!

Where do union dues go?

The union dues are divided between the international union and the workers' own local union, which will have its own treasury. Dues are used to run the union and keep it strong. At the Animation Guild, the dues that are kept are used to pay office staff salaries, maintain the building and pay for utilities, fund defense of the contract and resolution of workplace issues as well as to fund organizing campaigns to expand the number of union studios.

Negotiations & Strikes

Will the union make us go on strike?

No one can force you to go on strike. There can only be a strike at your company if a majority of the union workers at your company vote to go on strike. Over 98% of all union contracts are negotiated without a strike. Wise unions only strike when they know they can win.

Does the company have to negotiate if the union wins?

Yes, the law requires the company to bargain "in good faith" with the committee that the employees elect. It is called the "duty to bargain", and is overseen by the National Labor Relations Board, an independent federal agency with the power to safeguard employees' rights.

Joining the Union

Can I get fired for helping the union or for attending union meetings?

It is illegal for you to be fired, punished, or harassed for attending union meetings or for supporting a union. The law protects your right as a worker to act together to try to improve your pay and working conditions.

Will my studio close if I vote for a union?

It is against the law for the company to close or threaten to close because of union activity. Remember, companies go out of business because people stop buying their product, not because their workers are treated fairly.

What if my employer can't afford a union contract?

No one wants your company to close, especially a union. If the company says they can't afford the wage and benefit increase the workers want, we say it must prove its poverty by showing the union its financial records. Then, we can make decisions together based on real information instead of company propaganda.

What can we expect the company to do to try to get us to vote against the union?

Usually, the company tries to influence employees with scare-talk, anti-union speeches, and letters. On the other hand, be prepared for the company to be on their best behavior until the campaign is over. Some companies even make improvements during a union campaign, hoping employees will forget about their past problems.

Is it easy to unionize a workplace?

No, it takes the work of employees who are dedicated to helping their coworkers. Also, it takes the active involvement of as many employees as possible.

**BOOKMARK THE
TAG BLOG**

<http://animationguildblog.blogspot.com>



the **animation** guild

IATSE LOCAL 839

NEW!

The Animation Guild
will be hosting free
CHILD CARE
at General Membership Meetings!

We are excited to be able to offer this new service
to our members! Here's how it works:

- **Advance sign-up is necessary.**
- Care will be offered on an as-available basis to members in good standing.
- Children must be potty-trained. No children in diapers can be accommodated.
- No sick kids please - children must be free of any illness for 48 hours.
- Parents must be present at The Animation Guild, reachable by cel phone at all times.
- Children must be retrieved within ten minutes of the end of the meeting.

To sign up for Child Care
for the next General Membership Meeting
or for more information, **contact:**

Vice President KC Johnson
310.985.4035
kc.johnson@tag839.org

**NEXT
MEETING:**

TUES.

**JULY
25**

7PM
DOORS OPEN
@ 6:30

FROM THE BUSINESS REPRESENTATIVE JASON MACLEOD



Don't Be Fooled By Myths About Unionizing

If we organize, we'll all be laid off, and the work will go out of town.

Union or not, there's no guarantee that a company will remain in business for the future. But honestly, so many studios seem to be doing just fine with a union crew, is the union really an issue? These studios all have contracts with the Animation Guild and pay for our union benefits:

- Disney TV Animation
- DreamWorks
- Warner Bros. Animation
- Cartoon Network Studios
- Nickelodeon Animation Studio
- Marvel Animation Studios

Smaller studios have union crews, too – not just the large ones:

- Bento Box
- Wild Canary
- Titmouse/Robin Red Breast
- Six Point Harness/Six Point 2

The union hates the studios and complicates things for them.

Nothing could be farther from the truth. Our signatory studios are our partners. We work very closely every day with studios to make them as successful and profitable as possible while preserving due process, fair wages, and good working conditions for artists. The more successful they are, the better wages and benefits we can negotiate. It's a true partnership. We negotiate a fair, competitive agreement that sets out the rules clearly for both parties. We can only negotiate good wages and benefits if union artists are productive, efficient, and professional . . . AND if the entertainment the studios produce is successful.

Union dues are high and unions are corrupt.

A local union needs funds to operate just like any other organization. We fund our local by paying union dues. These funds are established by the membership at a union meeting by majority vote. We ALL pay these dues and obviously want to keep them as low as possible. The Animation Guild is a democratic organization, and each member has a voice and a vote. Everything done is approved by the body. The Animation Guild has always been and will continue to be fiscally responsible. Every year we publish a public document (called an LM-2) that details how money is spent. Does your employer make their books public?

If we organize, everyone will be making the minimum contract wages, even if they were making more at a non-union shop.

Not true. Wage minimums are just that: minimums. Language in the agreement allows for “better conditions” and workers can always negotiate for a higher rate, just like you do with a non-union employer.

I do more than one thing, but the union will not allow people to work in other job categories or crafts.

Language can be included in the agreement that specifically allows the practice of interchange if necessary, but even so our current ontracts do not hinder interchange between job categories or crafts. You can work as a prop designer AND a color stylist, and still do freelance work as an animation director in your spare time.

The union will not allow members to work in non-union shops.

Working at a union shop means that you’ll be earning health and pension benefits for every hour you work, so it’s worth your while to work at studios that have collective bargaining agreements with the Guild. The Animation Guild is not against you working at a non-union shop. In fact, members working at non-union shops are our best organizers!

My employer will fire people if we try to join the union.

Organizing a union in your workplace does seem intimidating and can seem like an impossible uphill battle. It takes courage, but it is worth it in the end; and thousands of workers do organize each year. Rough Draft, Nickelodeon’s CG Department, and Rick and Morty are three recently unionized workplaces. The fact is, it is illegal for an employer to threaten, intimidate, or coerce workers who are exercising their right to unionize. By law, it is your right to act together in solidarity.

Check out this link to learn about protected group activity:

<https://www.nlr.gov/rights-we-protect/protected-concerted-activity>

However, many employers will try to discourage you from organizing, and may violate the law in doing so. That's where the nearly 125 years of experience that the IATSE (our parent organization) has in organizing is useful. In the event that an employer violates the law, the full resources of the IATSE will be brought to bear on them. The Animation Guild – IATSE Local 839 – will support workers who want union representation; including fighting in court to defend the lawful rights of workers.

There are many more misconceptions out there. Do yourself a favor and find out the facts for yourself! Keywords to search for are “NLRB”, “protected concerted activity”, and “duty to bargain”.

For more information email, call or stop by the Guild office:

Jason MacLeod, Business Representative

The Animation Guild, IATSE Local 839

1105 N Hollywood Way

Burbank, CA 91505

818-845-7500

jmacleod@animationguild.org

All calls and emails are confidential.



An important aspect of staying healthy and achieving optimal wellness involves early diagnosis and treatment of potential health problems. Comprehensive Physical Exams and discounts on health clubs and yoga studios are all offered through The Wellness Program. If you are a participant in MPI's PPO plan (Blue Cross), you are entitled to an annual Comprehensive Physical Exam. Participants and their eligible dependents ages 18 and older who live in Los Angeles County and wish to use this benefit must use one of the MPTF Health Centers.

<https://www.uclahealth.org/mptf/locations>

No voucher is necessary. Simply call the Health Center of your choice and make an appointment. MPTF Primary Care Physicians are experts in preventive care and will discuss general health issues and ways you can lead a healthier life.

Don't Ask What The Union Can Do For You; Ask What YOU Can Do For The Union

An Opinion By David Chlystek

I started working in animation in 1996, and by 1997 I was working for my first union shop, Sony Animation. I remember vividly my very first experience with the Union: I was threatened with termination because I was negligent in paying my initiation fee. I grudgingly paid, and being forced to join something I didn't freely choose really left a bad taste in my mouth. I grew up in Pittsburgh, where many people think union greed and overreach destroys families and lives.

As the years went by I was grateful for the health benefits, but being young, healthy, and without kids at the time, I never truly appreciated those benefits for what they are. I complained when productions ended, naively feeling that the union should do something to better protect the artists from outsourcing. I also had friends who were on the negotiation committee who openly complained about the lack of leadership on the board, and who allowed the producers to "screw us over" on salary and schedule. I complained as well, and we all had the same lament: "Why isn't the union doing more?"

Fast forward a decade or so: I now had a family. I had contributed to our 401(k) on the advice of a financial advisor and had a pretty good nest egg. My statements from the Guild showed that I was building a good pension. And thankfully my health benefits saw me through some down times between jobs. I began to realize that maybe it wasn't so bad to be in a union after all.

A little over three years ago, I ran for the Executive Board. I felt that I had no right to complain if I wasn't willing to get my hands dirty. I was passionate about several issues and had some ideas on how to fix them, so I volunteered to serve on the Negotiation Committee, where we actually did some good. Sadly, though, there are still many problems left to solve, and even after working with some wonderful people, I see that there are many who complain, but very few who are willing to actually dedicate time and effort to making things better.

We always ask, "Why isn't the union doing more?" The truth is that YOU are the Union. There is no magical unioncorn who will wave a wand and solve all of your problems. If you want change, find a way to get involved. Go to meetings, fill out surveys, join a committee. Do something, no matter how small. There are over 4000 of us, and when united we are strong. Bring some of the passion you have for your craft and apply it to efforts to improve your future. Get off the bench and become involved in your union's operations. You are more important and vital to the health of The Animation Guild than you realize!

CRAFT MEETINGS

Guild members with job categories in common can get together at these meetings and talk about the issues they face at work and goals for the next round of contract negotiations.

AGENDA

Review of the 2015-2018 Agreement, two years in • Review of production and staffing levels • New Media • Studio Tests • Uncompensated Overtime • Production Schedules • Piece Work • Animatics • Outsourcing and Incentives • All Agreements, All Studios

- [August 8th](#) – Designers, Background Artists (Designers and Painters), Color Stylists, 2D Layout Artists and Art Directors.
- [August 15th](#) – Animation Writers and Story Editors.
- [August 22nd](#) – CG Artists and TD's (including Layout) working on shows that do not outsource (most likely Feature).
- [August 29th](#) – Timing Directors and Animation Checkers.
- [September 7th](#) – Creative Managers - Animation Directors, Storyboard Directors, Art Directors and Department Heads.
- [September 19th](#) – Catch-up meeting for anybody working on TV/Video/New Media projects who missed a meeting.
- [September 21st](#) – Catch-up meeting for any working on Feature projects who missed a meeting.

Not sure which meeting is right for you? Pick one, come to more than one if you can, and invite your coworkers! We'll be happy to see you!

Please RSVP by e-mailing RSVP@tag839.org, with the date(s) of your chosen meeting(s) in the subject line. Letting us know you'll be there helps us order the right amount of food for meeting attendees.

All meetings start at 7 pm.

IN MEMORIAM

Shawnee Holt, 49, of Altadena, CA, passed away on June 10, 2017. After graduating from Brea Olinda High school, Shawn attended Fullerton College and Cal State Los Angeles, where she majored in fashion design.

She was creative from a very early age and loved to write and draw, and later in life loved her work as a cleanup artist and color stylist at Nickelodeon, Warner Brothers and Dreamworks. She was a free spirit and loved anything unique and different. Shawn was very proud to be part of the animation community and loved the people she worked with and the many friendships she developed during her short life.

Above all of the things in her life, Shawn loved and was most proud of her daughter Tatum Willow Holt. She was thrilled when Tatum was born and strove to teach her to look at the world from a different point of view, a view filled with love and acceptance. Shawn is survived by her daughter Tatum, her brother and sister, her parents Chuck and Sandee Miller and her former spouse Joseph Holt.

A GoFundMe page has been set up for her daughter Tatum. Help in any amount is appreciated: <https://www.gofundme.com/shawnee-memorial-for-tatum-holt>

Bernie Wrightson passed away on March 18, 2017. Bernie was 68 and is survived by his wife, Liz, and children.

Bernie worked at Tom T. Animation, Inc., as character designer and concept artist on the “Biker Mice From Mars” series re-boot and several animated horror films. His contributions in animation also include the “Captain Sternn” segment of the animated “Heavy Metal” film based on the character he created, as well as the design for a “Pegboard” masthead. In addition to his work in animation, Bernie was a true comic book legend (“Swamp Thing”), Stephen King’s favorite illustrator (“The Stand,” “Dark Tower”), film concept designer (“Ghostbusters,” “The Mist,” “Spider-Man”) and world class horror illustrator (“Frankenstein”).

An internationally renowned talent, Bernie was just as importantly a great guy to be around and humble about his skills. It was a true honor to have worked with and have spent time with him. A tribute book of his work is being published by Hermes Press, to be premiered at the 2017 San Diego Comic Con.

MPTF IS HERE FOR YOU



MPTF

MOTION PICTURE & TELEVISION FUND

As someone who works in the entertainment industry, you know how unpredictable life can be. Working on a movie or show doesn't always mean security for people in the industry and their families, which is why it's so important that **MPTF is always there.**

One of the best-kept secrets in the business, MPTF has been around for 96 years taking care of our entertainment family. By working in the business, we belong to MPTF already – an organization whose motto, **“We take care of our own,”** is as true today as when it was founded.

Here are three of the many ways MPTF can help you and your family:

Veterans Benefits: MPTF's Veterans Benefits Assistance Program helps entertainment industry veterans, their surviving spouses, and their families obtain VA pension benefits they are entitled to but may need help accessing for basic living expenses, caregiving and other critical needs. Email naomi.rodde@mptf.com.

Samuel Goldwyn Children's Center: Our Children's Center, operated by Bright Horizons with generous support from the Samuel Goldwyn Foundation, provides progressive day care for children ages eight weeks to six years of age. Early education professionals guide specialized programs for infants, toddlers, preschoolers, and kindergarten-age children. Call 310-445-8993.

Financial Assistance: Maybe money can't buy you love or happiness, but it can be the only lifeline when you're injured, taking care of a spouse, or trying to pay the bills. MPTF's financial assistance program offers a safety net complete with social workers who can jump in and help at a moment's notice. You can get in touch today by calling us at (323) 634-3888.

At the forefront of pioneering social services, **MPTF is the #1 place to go** if you're in need in the entertainment industry. Find out more today! Go to www.mptf.com call us toll-free at **(855) 760-MPTF**, or email info@mptf.com.

Uninstructed Life Drawing

2nd and 4th Fridays!

7 - 10 pm

Life Drawing Room in Back
@The Animation Guild

18 and older

\$15 General Admission

\$10 TAG Members

Cash Only

* drawing by Lisa Dosson

Brought to you with **Model Drawing Collective**



SEE US ON FACEBOOK ...
[FACEBOOK.COM/ANIMATIONGUILD](https://www.facebook.com/animationguild)

TWITTER ... [@ANIMGUILD](https://twitter.com/animguild)

AND THE TAG BLOG ...



HEALTH, WEALTH, LOVE AND HAPPINESS



Artwork by Andres Nieves III

at Gallery 839 in August

Opening Reception on August 4th, 2017, 6-9 pm



www.animmaker.com

UPCOMING EVENTS AT THE ANIMATION GUILD

July 25th – Local 839 General Membership Meeting.
6:30 pm Pizza, 7:00 Call To Order

July 28th – Uninstructed Life Drawing

August 4th – New Show Opening at Gallery 839

August 8th – Craft Meeting: Designers, Background Artists (Designers and Painters), Color Stylists, 2D Layout Artists and Art Directors. 6:30 pm Pizza, 7:00 Call To Order

August 11th – Uninstructed Life Drawing

August 15th – Craft Meeting: Animation Writers and Story Editors. 6:30 pm Pizza, 7:00 Call To Order

August 22nd – Craft Meeting: CG Artists and TDs (including Layout) working on shows that do not outsource (most likely Feature). 6:30 pm Pizza, 7:00 Call To Order

August 25th – Uninstructed Life Drawing

August 22nd – Craft Meeting: Timing Directors and Animation Checkers. 6:30 pm Pizza, 7:00 Call To Order



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