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**Our Websites:**
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- www.icgmagazine.com
- www.ecawards.net

**Member Services:**
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**Part III**

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2011 Edition
History and Structure.

How We Became IATSE Local 600.

In the early days of the Motion Picture Industry, before coast-to-coast air travel and lightweight mobile camera equipment, there were three centers of film production: New York, Chicago and Los Angeles. Three separate camera Locals represented the camera crews in those areas: IATSE Local 644 in the East, Local 666 in the mid-West and Local 659 in the 13 Western states.

As travel became easier, equipment more mobile and crews began to shoot more often on distant locations, jurisdictional disputes became a problem among the locals. Producers began playing one local against another to drive wages down and camera crews found themselves crossing each other’s picket lines. Finally, in 1996, IATSE President Thomas C. Short merged the three Locals together, creating IATSE Local 600, the International Cinematographers Guild (ICG), covering the entire United States and Puerto Rico.

At the time of the merger, a new Constitution and By-Laws for IATSE Local 600 was adopted by representatives from the three former Locals appointed by the presidents of those Locals. To facilitate the representation of members across the country, a National Office was established in Los Angeles, which also covers the Western states, a Central Region Office, covering territories between Chicago and the Gulf Stream and an Eastern Region Office covering productions in New York and other Eastern states.

Since the merger, camera crews may now work anywhere in the United States. That means you may work as a local employee within sixty miles of home and, depending upon the region in which you reside, in one of the two main production cities (New York or Los Angeles) and elsewhere provided the producers pay the costs of transportation, housing and per diem.

In January of 2002, the Publicists Guild merged into the ICG and we now represent Publicists nationwide, as well as camera crews.

Structure of the Union

The parent organization, the International Alliance of Theatrical and Stage Employees and Motion Picture Technicians, Artists and Allied Crafts of the United States, its Territories and Canada, represents over 100,000 workers in motion pictures and legitimate theater, as well as workers in the exhibition, trade show and convention industries.

The IATSE International President is the exclusive bargaining agent for all national film and TV contracts, including the Basic Agreement. The IATSE has organizing, theatrical, stagecraft, tradeshows divisions and a division devoted to Motion Pictures and Television Production.

The IATSE is divided into districts. For example, California, Arizona, Nevada and Hawaii are part of District 2 while New York is part of District 10, which also includes New Jersey. Each Local elects representatives to attend IATSE District and International Conventions.
IATSE Local 600’s governing body is the National Executive Board (NEB) comprised of members elected from each classification and region, plus seven National Executive Officers: the President, Secretary-Treasurer and 2nd Vice President from the Western Region, the National Vice President and Assistant Secretary Treasurer from the Eastern Region and the 1st Vice President and Sergeant-at-Arms from the Central Region.

In addition to the NEB, each region has its own elected Regional Council made up of their National Executive Board members and the next highest vote getters from that region.

While the NEB meets at least twice a year, Regional Councils generally meet on a monthly basis.

Elections to serve on the NEB and the Regional Councils are held every three years and all members in good standing may vote or run for office.

The Local also has a professional staff, headed by a National Executive Director and a Director for each region. The National Executive Director and the three Region Directors oversee Business Representatives, who monitor contract enforcement on the sets, as well as professional staff, who conduct the day to day business of the Guild and help members with their questions.

About the Contract Services Administration Trust Fund (CSATF)

CSATF is rather like an escrow company, serving as the “middleman” between the Producers and the IATSE to administer programs agreed to by both parties. These programs include the Safety Pass Training Program (which all members must take in order to work in the state of California) and the Industry Experience and Commercial Rosters.

The Industry Experience Roster

The Industry Experience Roster ("IER") lists the names of individuals who have acquired a certain amount of work experience within their specific craft as outlined in each of the Local Unions’ collective bargaining agreements. The IER encompasses over 125 job classifications that span the jurisdiction of 19 unions within the motion picture and television industry. Individuals whose names appear on the IER may receive preference of employment as producers, signatory to the Basic Agreement and/or the Basic Crafts agreements, utilize the IER as an employment resource. It is important to note that you must be placed on the Industry Experience Roster to work under an IATSE collective bargaining agreement if hired from, or working in, the thirteen Western states.

Here is how the roster works: in order for a member to become eligible to be placed on the IER, the member must furnish proof of 100 days paid work in a specific classification on any combination of projects, union or non-union within three years from the date of the application, or proof of 30 days paid work on an organized production in a one year period. Applications for IER placement must be submitted to CSATF and must be supported by payroll and production records and/or employer letters verifying employment. CSATF processes applications for IER placement and determines IER placement eligibility.

To assist you in requesting that employment veri-
ication letters be sent to CSATF on your behalf, please refer to the Payroll Company Contact Sheet. A completed Industry Experience Roster Application Form can be mailed to CSATF via U.S. mail (see http://www.csatf.org/ier.shtml)

**ALWAYS KEEP COPIES OF ALL OF THE DOCUMENTATION PROVIDED TO CSATF!**

Making application for IER placement is a separate and distinct process from applying for union membership and does not automatically trigger union membership or vice-versa. It is your responsibility to initiate BOTH procedures.

Once CSATF has verified that a craftsperson have met the requirements for placement on the IER, he/she may become a member of Local 600 by putting a down payment on the initiation fee and by attending a new member orientation meeting. Roster placement is not a requirement for membership in Local 600. However, in the Western Region, you may not work under a contract that includes IER requirements unless you have received roster placement. The IER does not affect membership or work opportunities in the Central and Eastern Regions, unless a member is hired from one of the 13 Western states and/or transported to those regions.

**Television Commercial Roster**

The 1996 Television Commercial Agreement between the International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees ("I.A.T.S.E.") and signatory commercial production companies provides that individuals working at least thirty (30) days in a job classification covered by the Agreement are eligible to have their names added to the Television Commercial Roster ("TCR"). Only employment with signatory commercial production companies qualify as employment experience for placement on the TCR. Additionally, all qualifying experience must have been worked during the 365-day period immediately preceding the date of application for TCR placement.

**Placement Process:** CSATF processes applications for placement and determines TCR placement eligibility. Applications for the TCR must be submitted to CSATF with payroll and production records and/or employer letters verifying employment. To assist you in requesting that employment verification letters be sent to CSATF on your behalf, please refer to the Payroll Company Contact Sheet on their website. Also, you are welcome to complete the Television Commercial Roster Application Form (also available to download on their website) and mail it to CSATF. (Faxed and emailed applications will not be accepted.) (Both available at http://www.csatf.org/tcr.shtml)

**Please Note:** Once you have accrued at least thirty (30) work days, do not delay in applying for placement on the TCR. CSATF will only consider employment experience with signatory commercial production companies within the 365-day period immediately preceding the date of application for placement.

**Advancement to the Industry Experience Roster:** Placement on the Television Commercial Roster means that you may work on commercials only. However, individuals whose names have been placed on the TCR are thereafter eligible to apply for placement on the Industry Experience Roster applicable to their job classification once they have accrued an additional 90 work days under the Television Commercial Roster. CSATF administers the Industry Experience Roster and requires verification of the additional work days on which such eligibility for placement is based.
What the Union Does for You.

The primary job of the IATSE is to negotiate the contracts under which we all work and to protect members’ safety and well being from producer exploitation. It also provides a means of receiving pensions and continuous healthcare, despite working for a variety of employers. This is a rarity in a freelance industry, and we are fortunate to have well funded pension and health plans, which are among the best benefit packages to be found anywhere in the country. The Motion Picture Industry Pension and Health Plans remain strong because of residuals from IATSE made films which are licensed into secondary markets.

Negotiating Contracts

IATSE IS THE BARGAINING AGENT:
As per the IATSE Constitution & By-laws, the International President is the exclusive bargaining agent for all the Los Angeles based Local Unions including national Locals such as ICG and the Editors Guild.

THE BASIC AGREEMENT:
Until fairly recently, there was only one Basic Agreement covering feature and television production. However, because more and more independent, low-budget projects were being produced, and because pay and basic cable television was rapidly expanding, it became apparent that not all productions had the budget to adopt the Basic Agreement. Many productions were produced without being covered under a contract, and consequently, did not make benefit contributions on their crews’ behalf. Therefore, new IATSE Agreements were developed for lower budget productions and projects with alternative modes of distribution. The new agreements enabled members to accrue benefit hours for pensions and health plan qualifications even on productions with budgets under one million dollars.

No member may work for lesser pay or conditions than those specified in the union contract under which he or she is works, though anyone may negotiate higher wages and better conditions.

The Health and Pension Plans

These are administered by Motion Picture Industry Pension and Health Plans
http://www.mpiphp.org/

Most Local 600 members working on Motion Pictures, including theatrical features, television series, commercials and music videos, are employed by companies that are signatory to IATSE contracts requiring that benefit contributions be made into the Motion Picture Industry Pension and Health Plans.

The Retirement Plans

Local 600 members participate in two parallel retirement plans funded completely by producer contributions. The first is a Defined Benefit Pension Plan, in which, after a certain number of years and hours worked, the member is entitled to receive a defined benefit each month for the rest of his/her life.

The second plan is called the Individual Account
Plan (IAP), a defined contribution plan in which 30.5 cents is contributed to an account for every hour worked or guaranteed, as well as an additional percentage of one’s scale wages (currently 5-1/2%) above and beyond what is earned, which is invested by the Motion Picture Plans until retirement. Whatever the amount is at retirement age may then be taken as a lump sum or rolled over into a monthly annuity.

Qualifying for the Retirement Plans:
1. **The Motion Picture Industry Pension Plan (MPIPP)**
   MPIPP is a defined benefit plan, which means that based on the number of hours and years a member works, he/she will receive a defined benefit each month of retirement. To become vested in the MPIPP, a member must work five (5) qualified years; to earn a qualified year, a member must work at least four hundred (400) hours in a calendar year. Normal retirement age for full pension payments is 65 years of age, though under certain circumstances a member may receive benefits as early as age 60 (check the Plan’s booklet, website or office for details).

2. **The Individual Account Plan (IAP)**
   The IAP is a defined contribution plan (currently at 30.5 cents per hour, plus 6% of scale wages for all hours worked or guaranteed) paid by the producers. To vest in the IAP, a member needs to work one (1) qualified year. Although the IAP does not guarantee a benefit, the lump sum a member receives at the time of retirement is based on the amount of money producers have contributed into the account, plus the investment results for the IAP as a whole. When members retire, he/she may collect a lump sum payment which may be rolled over into an Individual Retirement Account (IRA), have the Plans put the payment into an annuity that pays benefits in conjunction with a pension or used however the member wishes.

3. **Retirement with Health Benefits**
   If a member works for 15 qualified years and 20,000 hours (with three of those years after age 40 and at least one year after the year 2000) he or she can retire as early as age 62 with full retiree health care.

4. **Reduced Early Retirement Pension**
   A member may retire with a Reduced Early Retirement Pension as early as age 55 if the member meets certain eligibility requirements. Monthly early retirement benefits will be lower than a full pension depending on age when the date of retirement.

   You are eligible for a Reduced Early Retirement Pension, if you have: 20 or more Qualified Years in the Plan and are age 55 or older, or you have 10 or more Qualified Years in the Plan and are age 62 or older.

**The Health Plan**
The Motion Picture Industry Health Plan (MPIHP) is the best in the industry. It is the only health plan in motion pictures and television that does not require participants to copay the cost of the insurance premiums. The health plan offers comprehensive major medical, dental and optical benefits that are among the best in the country.

The MPIHP is funded largely by IATSE negotiated residuals, under which the Plans receive a percentage of the gross revenues of any films sold into secondary markets such as video and DVD sales.
and rentals, cable and network TV, in-flight movies, foreign markets, etc.

If organized, even a low budget film has the potential to bring in significant contributions to the plans when it is licensed into secondary markets for rental, sale or for free or pay television.

Qualifying for the Health Plan:

To initially qualify as a participant in the Motion Picture Industry Health Plan, a craftsperson must work 600 hours within a twelve (12) month period. Once a member initially qualifies, he or she will be eligible for benefits in each subsequent six month Eligibility Period provided that he or she works or are guaranteed a minimum of 400 hours during the corresponding Qualifying Period.

Bank of Hours:

If you earn more than 400 hours in each Qualifying Period following Initial Eligibility, you may bank up to a maximum 450 hours. If hours earned in a subsequent Qualifying Period do not equal 400, you may draw the required number of hours from the Bank needed to reach 400 in total to establish eligibility for the new benefit period. Any remaining hours will stay in the member’s bank for subsequent eligibility. In each subsequent Qualifying Period, if the combination of hours worked and bank hours equals or exceeds 400, you will remain eligible.

However, if hours worked and Bank hours do not equal 400, all remaining Bank hours will be canceled and you will have to re-qualify by working 400 hours or more in one Qualifying Period. If you do not qualify for five or more consecutive Eligibility Periods, you must meet the 600-hour requirement again.

Once you qualify, you can check the number of hours credited in your bank of hours at the MPI website at: http://www.mpiphp.org

Safety: Another Benefit of Working Under Union Contract

Every member employed in the state of California is required to take safety classes so that he or she will be better trained to identify situations that could be hazardous to the crew’s health and safety.

When working on any project covered by a contract which has a potentially hazardous situation (smoke, noise, cranes, insert cars, explosives, fatigue, etc.) a member is not only guaranteed wages and conditions that are outlined under the agreement, but safety conditions that are also of utmost importance. NO job is worth injury or death. Because some productions may be indifferent to the safety and well-being of their employees, crew members must be vigilant and monitor the safety of the sets and locations while at work. It is crucial that members contact their regional office to intercept and correct hazardous situations before anyone is harmed.

If dangerous situations are identified before the shot, these hazardous set-ups require a small bump in pay and an additional life insurance policy.

Often when a crew member encounters a possible unsafe condition on the set, he or she is afraid to raise the issue to the producers for fear of reprisals. Because this situation could exist on sets, the
Local has established a “hot line” for members to use 24 hours a day 7 days a week to assist in dealing with this type of problem.

ICG HOTLINE (877-424-4685) has been established so all members of the Local may have contact with a Business Representative who can deal with these issues. If you feel that a situation exists that is potentially unsafe and these concerns are not being addressed on the set, you should call the Local for assistance. These calls can be anonymous if desired so the producer cannot accuse a member of “calling the union.”

Safety is everyone’s responsibility, so please use the “hot line” if there is a potentially hazardous condition that could place a crew member in harm’s way.

(877-424-4685 or 877-ICG HOTLINE)

NEVER JEOPARDIZE YOUR SAFETY
What the Union does for You

Other Benefits of Being a Member of Local 600.

The International Cinematographers Guild offers many other benefits for membership including:

Our Publications

ICG Magazine highlights members’ achievements and skills and is Local 600’s face to the outside world.

Camera Angles is the members’ internal newsletter with information about contracts, guild news and important information all members need to know.

The Membership Directory provides contact information, credits, special skills and awards received.

Our Website

www.cameraguild.com is a comprehensive site with both public and private (password) sections that allows members to pay their dues online, add themselves to the Available List, and search Member Profiles. The website includes everything from Local 600 Training and Events, Safety Bulletins, Negotiation Updates, Industry and Guild News, Political Action and the IATSE Yellow Pages.

Job Listing Service by Below The Line is available at a discount to Local 600 Members. Information can be found in the "members only" section of the website.

Available List allows members, producers, or production managers to search for members needing work. Add yourself to the Available List at www.cameraguild.com.

IATSE Yellow Pages is a service on the Local 600 website which helps members when they are not working but have services or products they can offer to other union members. From personal event coverage and headshots to gifts, classes and legal aid - a wide variety of products and services are offered.

Health Preserver List is for members who are a few hours short of qualifying for benefits. Add yourself to the Health Preserver List, where other members can check when looking for additional crew.

Member Services

Training and Technical Seminars: Local 600 provides a series of technical seminars to keep the members on the cutting edge of new technologies as they emerge. Companies sponsor training for IATSE Local 600 members and the Local’s most distinguished Directors of Photography participate in annual lighting workshops. Recent seminars have included training in the latest digital cameras and technology. Feel free to contact the guild with suggestions for seminars and training.
Screenings: The guild offers monthly screenings of first-run films in Los Angeles and New York, and often has the Director of Photography present to answer questions afterward.

Scholarships: The union offers yearly scholarships to the children and grandchildren of members with outstanding academic records. Completed applications are due each year on Jan. 31.

The Emerging Cinematographer Awards: Every year, Local 600 holds a celebration of the best short films made by camera crew members other than Directors of Photography. Up to one hundred films are judged by an independent committee across the country. The top entries are shown at a Gala Celebration in the fall. This is a chance for members to show their unique talents and receive recognition and attention. The films are then shown around the country and have been screened at the Cannes Film Festival - an unparalleled opportunity.

Networking Events: To facilitate Local 600 members’ ability to network with each other, there are numerous social events throughout the year, including annual golf tournaments, deep sea fishing trips, holiday parties and special screenings for members’ families.

AFL-CIO Union Privilege Program: Provides credit cards and discounts to major attractions.

The Interguild Federal Credit Union: Provides low cost loans in conjunction with the DGA, WGA, SAG and other unions.

“Working Advantage”: Supplies deep discounts on movie, theater, theme park and sporting event tickets and shopping discounts.

The Annual Publicists Luncheon: The ICG Publicists Awards honor the year’s outstanding publicity and marketing campaigns for movies and television, with awards to senior industry executives, publicists, press, media and still photographers.

Political Action

Sometimes members wonder why the union would become involved in politics and the answer is because every member’s well being and future depend upon it. IATSE contracts can easily be undermined by anti-union legislation.

IATSE Local 600’s political action is not based upon political parties, but on what legislation and which legislators are pro-labor and which are not. Unions are the only voice working people have, so Unions must speak up when their members’ standard of living, health or safety is potentially threatened. The IATSE and Local 600 monitor what is happening politically and will inform members when there is legislation or an election that will impact labor’s future.

We encourage you to register to vote and to stay informed.
Your Duties as a Member of Local 600

Dues, Assessments and Initiation Fees.

The Union’s ONLY source of income is from initiation fees and dues from its members.

Without membership support, the Local cannot exist and there would be no representatives in the field to protect members’ rights or provide the many services unions offer.

If a member experiences financial difficulties, come in to consult with the staff to create a workable payment plan.

Dues credit may be earned by helping organizing efforts on striking shows.

Reporting All Work

This is an absolute requirement of membership. Whether the job is union or non-union, all Local 600 members are required to report their job.

The union will not stop a member from accepting non-union work but every member must report the job to the union office.

Members benefit from productions that are organized because a signed agreement with the producers may provide valuable hours toward health and pension coverage and the residuals that help support the health and pension plans.

A phone call to the union will never be revealed to the producers. A member’s position on the crew will not be jeopardized. The IATSE sends representatives from various Locals to organize – it is NOT just Local 600 doing the organizing and a member will never be singled out as having helped the process.

Do not assume that any production is too low budget or insignificant to report. There are even contracts adaptable to projects below $500,000.

Never Undercut the Contract

On union projects, always find out which contract the production is working under so that the contractual provisions can be upheld and not undermined. It is illegal for Producers to ask a member to waive any provisions listed in a signed contract. Though a member may negotiate for higher wages or better conditions, it is a violation of the constitution and by-laws for that member to work for less than scale or for lesser conditions than specified in the contract. If there are suspicions that a contract is being violated, whether it is in wages, conditions or other crew members performing work that is in Local 600’s jurisdiction, call the nearest Local 600 office and let Business Representatives investigate and/or correct the situation.
Never Jeopardize Your Health and Safety

If a member is working on a production that regularly has hours exceeding 14 hours a day, call the regional business representatives. If possible, they will intercede on your behalf. Fatigue is the leading cause of accidents, both on the set and on the road going home.

If a member has worked an exceedingly long day and the production company offers him or her a hotel room for the night, the member should accept it. Additionally, all members should carry extra clothing and personal items in the event that they must use the accommodations provided by the production company.

A member is entitled to hazard pay and an additional life insurance policy if asked to film a shot that is potentially hazardous, so long as the member asks for the hazard pay and insurance policy to be instituted before the shot and be confirmed before the end of the shift. Let a regional Business Representative assist you in the negotiations with the production company for the hazard pay adjustments if necessary. If Business Representatives know when hazardous situations are likely to arise, they can take the heat from the producers in order to protect the membership they serve.

Safety Bulletins should be attached by the production company to the call sheet for that day’s shooting. Be sure to check the safety bulletins whenever there are scheduled shoots that could present a hazardous situation: gunfire, smoke, scaffolding, explosives, insert cars, cranes, etc.

Supporting All IATSE Strike Actions

If the union determines that a show can be organized and asks the crew for authorization cards, it is every member’s duty to sign an authorization card.

When a strike is called, withdraw from the set and do not cross the picket line under any circumstances. This is the bottom line of union membership. Most shows organize very quickly; a few require extended strikes, but whatever the circumstances, support IATSE’s union organizers and IATSE and Local 600’s Business Representatives.

Remember

As a member of the IATSE, you represent the finest entertainment workers in the world, so respect your fellow crew members and be professional at all times. Do not hesitate to call in any circumstances that could jeopardize your safety or the safety of others. No entertainment is worth being disabled or killed. If you have questions about the contract under which you are working or problems on the set, do not hesitate to call your business representatives. They are here to help you.
NATIONAL OFFICERS

President: Steven Poster, asc
Email stevenasc@aol.com

Vice-President:
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Email: lrothenberg@comcast.net

First Vice-President:
Paul Varriau
Email: pvarriau@mac.com

Vice-President:
John Toll, asc
Email: JToll7@aol.com

Secretary-Treasurer:
Alan M. Gitlin
Email: filmeralan@yahoo.com

Assistant Secretary-Treasurer:
Bruce MacCallum
Email: bmaccallum@earthlink.net

Sergeant-at-Arms:
Michael St. Hilaire
Email: mikesaint@aol.com

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Western Region Director:
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Western Region Business Representatives:
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Patrick Delaney
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National Administrator, Member Services:
Ellen McCrea
National Office: 323-876-0160

Central Region Director:
Rusty Burrell
Central Region Offices:
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Florida 305-538-9226, Fax 305-538-9259

Central Region Business Representative:
Justin Conway
Phone 312-618-2560
Email: JTConway3@yahoo.com

Jack Nealy
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Email: jacknealy@ipgla.com

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