

# The IBEW SPARQ

A quarterly newsletter highlighting IBEW values

Vol. 3 | Issue 1 | Winter 2019

## Putting IBEW Excellence on Display

At the IBEW, professionalism means different things to different workers. But in every case, it boils down to this: When our superior training and work ethic shine through; when we show our customers and stakeholders what IBEW excellence is all about—that's professionalism.

Professionalism can be showing up for an appointment on time and explaining the problem and how you'll fix it. Or maybe it's putting in that extra effort to satisfy an upset customer when he or she reaches a call center with a problem.

On a construction site, it's putting in a full day's work for a full day's pay and getting the job done right the first time.

For railroad members, professionalism is working safely and in a way that gets passengers and cargo where it's going without disruption.

It's also working together with management in pursuit of common goals and remembering that we're often the public face of the companies we work for.

When our utility members are the first on the ground after a natural disaster, as we saw with the California wildfires and Hurricane Florence last year, we're the professionals helping those in need.

It isn't enough to be competent. Putting our best face forward and showing why we're the right choice for a job is why companies and



Photo credit: Local 1245/John Storey

customers keep coming back to us. They recognize our professionalism.

Another plus for professionalism is that non-union workers notice and want to be a part of it.

East Windsor, N.J., Local 827 recently organized workers at three Altice USA locations in the state—Newark, Lodi and Oakland—which means more than 200 new members when contracts are finalized. The Altice workers noticed the professionalism of IBEW Verizon technicians, who they'd often run into on the job.

Altice has successfully fought attempts to organize at other locations, but credit for Local 827's success goes to persistence and to the newly organized members.

Ultimately, professionalism is about perception. It's about how other people see us and, with the right attitude and a lot of hard work, we can make our IBEW professionalism pay—with higher wages, bigger jobs, better benefits and more work opportunities.



What does SPARQ mean to you? Have an idea for the newsletter? Email [theSPARQ@ibew.org](mailto:theSPARQ@ibew.org)



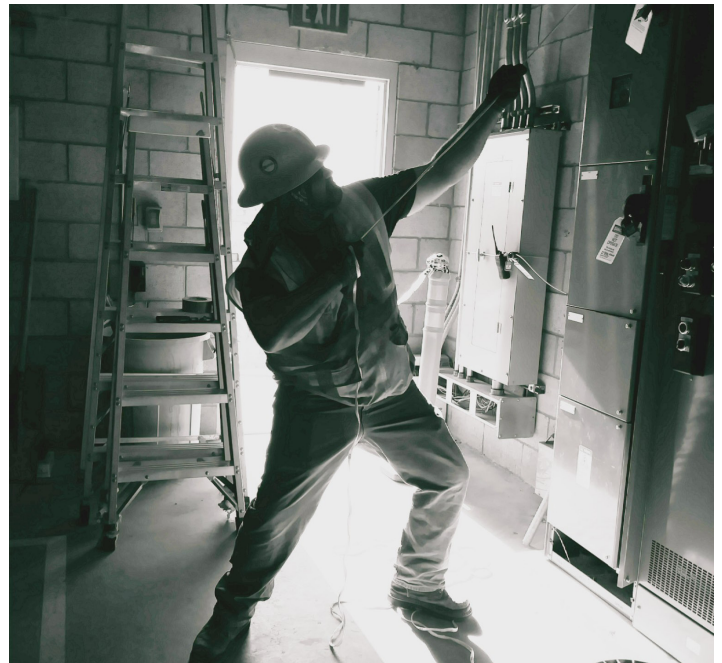
## A Formula for Success

IBEW wiremen and linemen have a built-in advantage over non-union construction workers: We are better trained and more productive.

But everyone has worked a job with someone who can do the work but is not always professional on the job—good hands, lousy attitude; can bend conduit, but is rigid and arrogant when dealing with other people. They can read a blueprint, but not a room; and they are forever making inappropriate or negative comments.

For the IBEW, the Code of Excellence sets a standard of professionalism that makes the IBEW the customer's first choice for all their electrical needs. But it's important to remember that they have a lot of choices. Getting the work done on time and on budget is incredibly important, but add to that our professionalism, and we have a winning formula.

In conversations with developers and general contractors, again and again, they let the IBEW know that what they remember most is the professionalism of our members. When asked, contractors and developers say that they measure professionalism in many ways; but being professional can largely be categorized by appearance, communication, performance and appreciation. IBEW members excel in



these areas, and that's why we get repeat business.

It's up to each IBEW member to be the kind of professional we'd want to hire for our own job. That's why, when we work with the Code as our guide, we can't lose.

## SPARQ GOES LOCAL



**The BP Oil Refinery in Whiting, Ind.**  
Gary and Hammond, Ind., Local 697 made a Code of Excellence presentation for M.J. Electric, a longtime signatory contractor in the area, to secure a bid at the local BP Oil Refinery. The presentation was a success; the contractor went on to use the Code to win the BP bid. The Code resonated, and now IBEW members at M.J. Electric are on the job at the refinery.