

**INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION
OF MACHINISTS AND AEROSPACE WORKERS**
**ASSOCIATION INTERNATIONALE DES MACHINISTES
ET DES TRAVAILLEURS ET TRAVAILLEUSES
DE L'AÉROSPATIALE**



Office of the Canadian General Vice-President • Bureau du Vice-président général canadien

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December 2020

Sisters and Brothers:

As we approach the end of 2020, I take this opportunity to wish all IAM members and their families the very best for this Holiday Season! On behalf of the IAM Executive Council, and all the Staff and officers across Canada, I bring Seasons Greetings.

In December last year as I wrote this message, the Canadian Territory of the IAM was riding on a high wave of optimism. We had won the first annual International President's organizing award, recognizing us for the most new members brought into the Union. Over the preceding four years, from 2015 to 2019, our Organizers and activists had brought some 5,000 new members into the Union.

And we were working hard on the numbers for 2020, in order to continue the work of bringing the benefits of IAM membership to the unorganized in communities across the country.

A year ago, none of us had heard of Covid-19 or had any clue of where the future would take us. Words like pandemic and lockdown belonged in disaster movies or in the pages of a science-fiction novel. Yet we soon found ourselves living through just such a once-in-a-lifetime experience. This year has impacted us all in many ways, and it has certainly had a devastating effect on our active working members in many IAM workplaces. Many found themselves laid off by the dozens and hundreds and thousands.

None of our Business Representatives, General Chairpersons or Grand Lodge Representatives had ever worked in an environment like 2020. We went from that high wave of organizing and record numbers of working members to record numbers of IAM members on furlough. At its worst, we had some 13,000 members on layoff across Canada.

And it all happened overnight!

They say necessity is the mother of invention, and our advocates and representatives and IAM membership very quickly adapted to the new reality of Covid-19. We put together the resources necessary to push governments and employers to do the right thing for our members. It was a huge lobbying effort, and an incredible research and communications effort.

We have all adapted (out of necessity) to this new way of doing business. As travel – especially air travel – became virtually nonexistent, we found ourselves on endless video conferences and phone calls in our efforts to stay in touch across the country. “Face-to-Face” contact has become “Mask-to-Mask” and a six-foot distance, with the hand sanitizer kept near at hand. And at every new turn or surprise, our advocates and our members have stepped up to help one another along.

Now we see there is a vaccine on the horizon. As I write these words, in Great Britain they have administered the first vaccines to their elders, and soon vaccination programs will begin across Canada. I am confident that over the opening months of 2021, we will see progress in defeating this virus, and our lives will begin to resume normalcy. Borders will open, and we will soon be able to travel freely once again.

Throughout 2020, despite the odds, we have continued to organize new members into the IAM – primarily in the Healthcare and Aerospace sectors. We continue to pursue the goal of again winning the recognition of our Union sisters and brothers across the IAM at the 2021 International President’s organizing presentation.

Throughout 2020, our Business Representatives, General Chairpersons and Grand Lodge Representatives, have been fighting hard at the bargaining table and in the boardrooms (both virtual and actual) to win improvements for our membership across Canada. And they have fought some hard-won gains in grievances and arbitrations. I am proud of the way our BR’s and GC’s have stepped forward despite the odds.

Throughout 2020, we have been lobbying our Federal Parliament and also in our Provincial Legislatures. We are constantly pushing for improvements on behalf of all workers, at every level of governance. Whether it is the fight for \$15 and Fairness, or pandemic pay for front line workers, or the demand to change contract flipping laws, the IAM has continued to be a force advocating for justice.

Next year we will look forward to our 2021 Grand Lodge Convention, where Canadians delegates will certainly be present and will be a force within our own Union, building for the future. As you will all know, the Covid-19 pandemic forced the delay of the 2020 convention, but we are looking forward to the convention resuming in the coming year. And, together with our sisters and brothers across North America, we will forge a strong Union for the coming years.

I know the IAM membership will recover from 2020, and we will grow and be strong once again. I want to again thank every IAM member for the leadership and support you provide to the Union Officers and Representatives who represent you.

To our many retirees: thank you! Every generation of IAM leaders works hard on behalf of the members we represent, and we owe a debt of gratitude to those who laid the groundwork and taught us what it means to be Union.

Many new challenges lay ahead for the IAM in 2021: Organizing new members, representing our membership in existing workplaces, and hard negotiations at the bargaining table. I look forward to continuing our work together.

Enjoy the holiday season with your family and friends. And please, Stay Safe!

In friendship and Solidarity,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Stan Pickthall', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Stan Pickthall
General Vice President