



# TEAMSTERS LOCAL CITY OF CHICAGO 700 Member Newsletter

RAMON D. WILLIAMS, PRESIDENT • ROBERT V. SANTANA, JR., SECRETARY-TREASURER

## Message From the President

Dear Members:

If one thing is for certain, it is that the Teamsters Local 700 City of Chicago membership is both vibrant and active within this Union. At every Local 700 event, there are City members that show their Teamster pride and are genuinely interested in seeing the Union succeed.

On behalf of the Local 700 Executive Board, thank you for being the strong Teamster members that you are and for always being proud of your Union roots. As your President, I encourage you to stay involved, stay proud and stay united. Local 700 would not be what it is today without you all.



Fraternally,

Ramon D. Williams  
President

## MTD Bob Allen Invents Truck Brake Releaser System

Before he was a Motor Truck Driver for the City of Chicago, Bob Allen drove semi-trailers for a living and would often travel across state lines. One afternoon, during a blizzard, he was driving through Indiana in whiteout conditions when his truck jackknifed. Without being able to stop, Bob was horrified that he had almost hit and killed a state trooper.

While jackknifed truck accidents can occur for a variety of reasons, one of the most common problems that may cause a truck to jackknife is improper brake maintenance or adjustment. When the brakes are not functioning properly, it causes the axles to lock up, particularly when braking hard. The truck then drags the trailer with locked brakes, so it is pushed out to the side of the cab.

For nearly 30 years, Bob had been thinking of creating a system that would make it easier for truck drivers to prevent frozen brake lines before trekking across the country. A few years ago, he finally put his idea on paper and borrowed half a million dollars to get the product into tooling to create a prototype. Unfortunately, Bob ran out of money to keep it

*Story continues next page*



***MTD Bob Allen holds up his invention of the Brake Releaser® which is designed to dissolve ice crystals in the air brake system.***

going, but instead of giving up, he received interest from Milton Industries and kept his dream alive.

Milton is the industry leader in high quality pneumatic accessories and fittings, covering a broad range of applications in various industries, such as automotive, fleet maintenance, construction, and manufacturing. Pneumatics is a branch of engineering that makes use of gas or pressurized air in systems. Milton took Bob's almost-finished product into retooling and development and soon after, the Brake Releaser® was born.

Bob's invention of the Brake Releaser® is designed to dissolve ice crystals in the air brake system and serves as a backup to the cab's dryer unit in freezing conditions. The Brake Releaser® is a portable device and can be used to either release already frozen brakes or pre-treat trailers to reduce the risk of frozen air brake lines.

"The product is geared more for independent drivers," said Bob. "If a driver breaks down, it could be a three or four hour wait to get a service call, plus the cost of service."

Bob made a licensing deal with Milton and the Brake Releaser® hit the market in 2019. The product has patents in both the U.S. and Canada and Milton just applied for a European patent.

In the City of Chicago, Bob's invention has been purchased in some of the Water Department yards and has been used on some lowboy trucks that carry the heaviest equipment. Several Local 700 members have used it while working and the product has already saved the City money by avoiding service calls.

A proud Teamster for more than 25 years, Bob still acts as an Ambassador for Milton while he works for the City. He is working on trying to get the Brake Releaser® mandated into Illinois state law so that it is required to be used by truck lines as a safety tool for drivers.

"I've personally known Bob for many years from working in the Water Department and his knowledge of trucking and his invention is a true testament of his character," said Teamsters Local 700 Secretary-Treasurer Robert V. Santana, Jr. "It should come as no surprise that a City of Chicago Teamster came up with a potentially life-saving invention for truck drivers. We are all very proud of Bob and commend him for his work and dedication to the trucking industry and his fellow Teamsters on the road."

"I've been driving trucks for nearly 35 years, and when I was out on the road and had to pull over for any reason, the only people that would stop and help me were Teamsters," said Bob. "Teamsters will always help other Teamsters."

*You can watch the video of Bob's demo of the Brake Releaser® as a Milton Ambassador on YouTube.*

# Dept. of Aviation Offers Passenger Endorsement Testing to MTDs

Recently, the City issued a memo to all the drivers (MTDs) within the Department of Aviation that stated come April of this year, the CDL Passenger Endorsement (P) is required for all MTDs to be able to work at either airport as a full-time employee.

After the City released the memo, Teamsters Local 700 immediately connected with the Illinois Secretary of State to organize testing sessions that would be free to the membership so those that needed to obtain the P endorsement could do it by the April deadline. Typically, a P endorsement test can cost an individual around \$1,000.

“We are pleased that every driver at Aviation that needs the P endorsement will have the opportunity to take the test within the time period as required by the City,” said Teamsters Local 700 President Ramon D. Williams. “We were fortunate that our brother and Trustee Hector Hernandez made the connection to the Secretary of State for us and that the City agreed to the testing sessions at O’Hare.”

“The Local 700 Executive Board is proud to make this happen for the drivers and we will continue to seek opportunities to provide favorable circumstances for our membership,” said Hector. “No one should have to worry about losing their job due to an old requirement that was resurrected out of the blue and we are grateful we could stop that from happening.”

The first round of testing for 40 MTDs took place on Feb. 4 at O’Hare and included some drivers from Midway. Each MTD is tested both on pre-trip procedures and a field test that is administered by a trainer from the Secretary of State.

There will be another round of testing next month for any MTDs that need it. If you are an MTD interested in the test, contact your Equipment Training Specialist to sign up: Wilson Vazquez at O’Hare and Iggy Garcia at Midway.



## UPCOMING EVENTS

### GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

6 p.m., Tuesday, Feb. 11  
Local 700 Meeting Hall  
1300 W. Higgins Rd., First Floor  
Park Ridge, IL 60068

### PRESIDENT'S DAY

Monday, Feb. 17  
Union office closed

### HOFFA SCHOLARSHIP DEADLINE

March 2, 2020  
*Visit [www.jrhmsf.org](http://www.jrhmsf.org) to submit an application online*

### GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

6 p.m., Tuesday, March 10  
Teamster City, Lower Level  
Meeting Room  
300 S. Ashland, Chicago, IL 60607

### JOINT COUNCIL 25 WOMEN'S COMMITTEE 8th ANNUAL GALA

Saturday, April 4  
Capri Banquets, 6240 Joliet Road  
Countryside, IL 60525  
*For more information and to purchase tickets, please visit [TeamsterWomen.com](http://TeamsterWomen.com)*

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# James R. Hoffa Scholarship for High School Seniors

The James R. Hoffa Memorial Scholarship Fund is now accepting applications for the 2020 school year.

Any sons, daughters and financial dependents of Teamster members can apply. Academic scholarships range from \$1,000 to \$10,000 for high school seniors planning to attend a four-year college or university and Training/Vocational program awards of up to \$2,000 for use at community colleges and trade schools.

**The deadline for scholarship applications is March 2, 2020.** Please visit [www.jrhmsf.org](http://www.jrhmsf.org) to apply online.

## College Tuition Discount Network

As a Teamster member, there is a college tuition discount program that is available to you and members of your family. The ISTS Tuition Discount Network (TDN) is a list of For-Profit and Non-Profit colleges and universities that offer reduced tuition. The amount of the reduction can vary by school and can sometimes be as specific as major. Make sure you identify yourself as a Teamster when applying.

The link to the TDN is <http://www.applyists.com/tuition-discount-network/>. Click on the school's logo to view the discount.

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