



# *The Seventeenth Annual*

## *Working Class Women's Luncheon*

### *2018 Honorees*

*Aurora Alvarado*  
Federated Auxiliary 8 of the ILWU

*Martha Barba*  
Millwright Local 1607

*Shirley Ann Deckard*  
Marine Clerks Association ILWU Local 63

*Yolanda Nihi*  
ILWU Southern California Pensioners Group

*Jennifer Samaniego*  
ILWU Local 13

*Trinie Thompson*  
ILWU Local 63 OCU



# SHIRLEY ANN DECKARD MARINE CLERKS ILWU LOCAL 63



I am grateful and honored to have been chosen by Local 63 Marine Clerks and The Harry Bridges Institute for an opportunity to be a participant in the 2018 "Working Class Women's Award Luncheon".

The years have added up and retirement is approaching, I have been blessed to have had the opportunity of my lifetime uniting with the International Longshore and Warehouse Union. My journey has led me to become a member of this great union from a Casual worker to become a Local 63 Marine Clerk.

I was born in Shreveport Louisiana I'm one of seven children; six girls and one boy. Having been raised by a single parent my grandmother was very inspirational in helping my mother care for us. Making most of our clothing hand sewed, selling homemade quilts, baking and other homemaking jobs, my mother managed to make ends meet. The hard work and sacrifices of my mother and grandmother paid off with the move to Denver Colorado in June 1964; It was a new beginning for the family.

I began my 1964 school year at Cole Jr. High School, later continuing on to Manuel High School. While in the 11th grade I became pregnant and chose to finish the year at an alternative school. Because of the struggles of parenthood, I choose to drop out of school. Eventually I sought work through temporary agencies. I experienced many jobs with minimal pay. In September 1968 I was hired with American Can Company as a machine operator; that's when I joined the United Steel Workers Union. Having no experience but with determination and hard work, I soon learned to operate all equipment; which led to departmental elevations and opportunities. With the Women Liberation movements pushing for "equal pay for equal work" those jobs were hard to come by for women, especially for women of color. I was laid off November 1972 due to reduction in the workforce.

A visit to Long Beach California landed me an interview with Continental Can Company. I was hired; my previous experience had paid off. I began work with Continental Can Company in 1973, with hard work and determination I became a trained machine operator for Continental Can Company. As a member of the safety committee I assumed duties to assist in the training of new hires for machine safety in the shipping, assembly, and lithograph departments. Downsizing the workforce initiated a layoff.

Deciding to focus on my education, I requested my transcripts from Colorado, and enrolled in Wilson High School adult night classes. I received my high school diploma in June 1979; then obtained a certificate from Long Beach City College as a Data Entry Operator. I worked with temporary agencies which allowed a constant income.



I have had many experiences and awesome opportunities throughout the years working as a temporary employee, from modeling to data entry. I am most proud of two important contributions I have made like Lever Brother's Soap Manufactory Commerce California Production Scheduler for 325 employees and The U.S Air Force El Segundo as a Data Entry Operator & Inventory Control Clerk with Top Secret Clearance. The Air Force adopted a form I created to do their inventory. Form DD 1155 which is being used today. In December 1992 my name was placed in a lottery drawing of 3,000 women, for a position as a Longshoreman. It was hard to believe my number was 3000. I was not familiar with the docks, but with my union background I was aware once I pass all challenges I would become a union sister. Working the dock was like that trip to Denver it was like nothing



I ever experienced. I began by going to truck driving school where I obtained my certificate, Passing the clerks written test, UTR training, and lashing test. August 1995 I became an ILWU Local 13 Union Member with more training ahead. I passed the heavy lift, fork lift, top handler, side pick training and the general safety classes. I applied to be an instructor to train the new group of casuals coming into the Union. It was an opportunity to step up give back and make a difference.

February 2005 I transferred to the ILWU Local 63 Marine Clerks Union this was my dream job it had taken 13 years to get here. Many challenges ahead more testing, to become a Marine Clerk in In February 2006 I became qualified to which allowed me to perform my tasks with confidence which I continue to this day. On my journey as Marine Clerk opportunities has allowed me to attend conferences, union workshops, marches, and rallies even held banners in support of our union sisters and brothers in their fight for justice. I have the support of the union and the current local 63 business office staff, which has been very supported of me and my many projects. One in particular stands out the Revlon Cancer Walk, it was a great success.



**An injury to one is an injury to all,**  
 Meaning: If one part suffers, every part suffers with it;  
 if one part is honored, every part rejoices with it  
 (1 Corinthians 12:26)  
 Don't forget to tell yourself positive things daily!  
 You must love yourself internally to glow externally.  
 By: Hannah Bronfman

Little known fact about me is my Husband Arlan Ray Deckard Sr. of 45 years is everything to me. We have three awesome children daughter Michelle, son Ray Jr. and Erik James, three Grandsons, one Granddaughter and one Great Grandson. A proud member of Bethel A.M.E Church Los Angeles I've served as an Usher participated in special programs and I love Sunday school.

I'm known for sharing my famous Mrs. D's Homemade Candies "Those Famous Turtles" has made many smiles. My handmade hat collections "The Hat's 2 Have" I put together a successful fashion show and have donated to the Ronald McDonald Foundation contribute "Hat's 2 Have" to the Long Beach Memorial Hospital Gift Shop. I love creating, as you see I own a copyright of a 3D Art named "Wha'Tha" a unique whimsical Collections of Shadow Boxes, gift cards and a unique wine glass cover.

I do what I love and love what I do.

