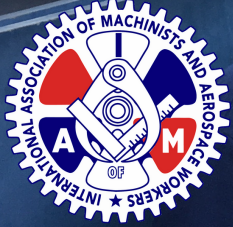


# 141



# IAM COMMUNITY

## IAM141 COMMUNITY ACTIVIST IS RECOGNIZED AT PHL LABOR DAY CELEBRATIONS

Eric Price  
PHILADELPHIA — **IAM141 Member Derrick Monk was among those recently recognized by the United Way of Southeastern Pennsylvania for his community activism.**

Derrick was presented with the Irv Sannit Labor Volunteer award at the 2017 Labor Day celebrations in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, before a crowd of hundreds of labor activists.

The United Way recognizes the contributions of local donors, community activists and volunteers who work to improve educational opportunities for young people, improve financial stability for families, and help care for seniors who would like to live a dignified life in their own homes.

Derrick is the Senior Pastor at the Divine Covenant Outreach Center, and quietly conducts modest bible studies at the Philadelphia Local on Sundays. In late 2008, he and another pastor, Chauncey Phillips, were approached by Local 1776 president Richie Howell and AGC Gil Simmons about putting together a community service program for Philadelphia.

Initially, the goal was to help families deal with the loss of a loved one. "We would visit them at home," Derrick said, "we would go to the hospital with them. We would speak for them as they were laid to rest."

Ordained ministers, Derrick and Chauncey would ensure that grieving families would know that they were cared for. "These are our friends. We wanted them and their families to know that we weren't just coworkers, we are brothers and sisters."

By the following year the team had created their own non-profit, the Solid Hearts Foundation. The foundation would help provide emergency funds for dislocated members who suddenly found themselves unable to bring in a paycheck. Later, the Foundation added a scholarship program, named in honor of Danny A Schwarz, the legal expert that helped guide them as they built the nonprofit.

"My passion is people," Derrick said. "If someone needs help paying a bill, or needs help putting a meal on the table, or needs to further their education, I want to be there for that person. I want to help."

Patrick Eiding, President of the Philadelphia Council AFL-CIO, praised the work that Derrick has done on behalf of his community before a crowd of unionists at the Labor Day celebrations in Philadelphia. "Derrick Monk does significant work for his local, Local 1776. When we were looking for someone to chair



Top, From left: Local 1776 (PHL) President, Richie Howell, Derrick Monk, and AGC Gil Simmons. Bottom, the Irv Sannit Award.

our Community Service Committee, Derrick stepped up. Derrick has been putting his time in for the past six years, plus." Speaking about the Irv Sannit award, President Eiding said, "It's my pleasure to have that award given to him in recognition of his work in the community."

When asked what made him want to become a community activist in the first place, Derrick simply responded, "It was in my heart."