



**International Union, UAW**  
***The Basics***

# UAW -- THE BASICS

## International Union, UAW

The International Union, United Automobile, Aerospace, and Agricultural Implement Workers of America (UAW) was founded on August 26, 1935 in Detroit, Michigan.

## Our Purpose

The UAW Constitution is the supreme law of the Union. It has been adopted, and can be amended, only by a majority vote of the delegates at regular Constitutional Conventions or Special Conventions.

The Constitution requires each local to establish bylaws which must be approved by the International Executive Board.

The ruling body of each local union is the membership meeting (and in units of amalgamated locals; the unit membership meeting). Membership meetings are open to all members in good standing; they are held monthly.

The UAW's purpose is spelled out in the Constitution as follows:

## Constitution - Article 2 "Objects"

Section 1: To improve working conditions, create a uniform system of shorter hours, higher wages, health care and pensions; to maintain and protect the interests of workers under the jurisdiction of this International Union.

Section 2: To unite in one organization, regardless of religion, race, creed, color, sex, political affiliation or nationality, age, disability, marital status or sexual orientation, all employees under the jurisdiction of this International Union.

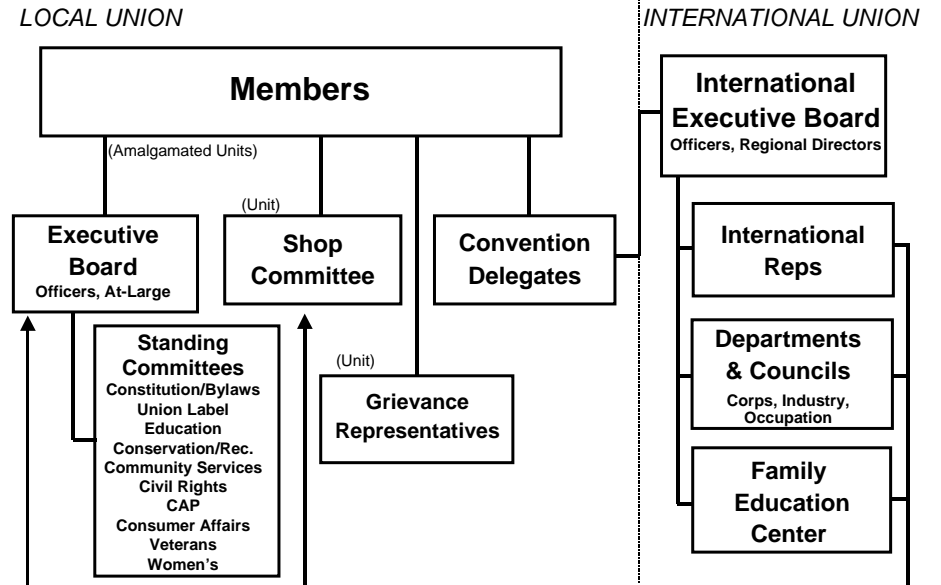
Section 3: To improve the sanitary and working conditions of employment within the workplace and in the accomplishment of these necessary reforms, we pledge ourselves to utilize the conference room and joint agreements; or if these fail to establish justice for the workers under the jurisdiction of this International Union, to advocate and support strike action.

Section 4: To educate our membership in the history of the Labor Movement and to develop and maintain an intelligent and dignified membership; to vote and work for the election of candidates and the passage of improved legislation in the interest of all labor...

Section 5: To engage in legislative, political, educational, civic, welfare and other activities which further, directly or indirectly, the joint interests of the membership of this organization in the improvement of general economic and social conditions in the United States of America, Canada, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico and generally in the nations of the world.

Section 6: To work as an autonomous International Union affiliated with the Canadian Labour Congress (CLC), American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations (AFL-CIO) together with other International Unions, for solidification of the entire Labor Movement...

# UAW UNION STRUCTURE



Looking at the chart, there are two major parts to the Union- the left side relates to the local union level and the right side to the International Union. Focusing first on the left side of the structure, the ultimate governing body of the union is the membership.

They elect the executive board to administer the local union. In some locals, there is an elected shop or bargaining committee which has the responsibility for negotiating the contract.

The membership also elects the convention delegates. They represent the membership at national conventions. The Constitutional Convention, held every four years, adopts policy for the union, amends the Constitution as needed, and elects the International Executive Board (IEB). (All regular delegates vote for officers; regions elect their own directors.)

Grievance representatives are sometimes called stewards or grievance handlers or committee people. They are the first level representatives at the workplace.

Standing Committees are elected or appointed. They reflect the role that the union plays in the greater movement for social and economic justice for all workers. They are a way for members to become involved in the union and to move its agenda forward. There is specific training available which helps Locals develop committees that can build the power of the union.

Moving over to the right side, the IEB consists of a president, secretary-treasurer, five vice-presidents, and eleven regional directors. They are the elected leadership team for the International and have responsibility for administering the International Union. They direct the staff to assist local unions and the membership.

International staff are appointed by the president and have a range of responsibilities including servicing, organizing, political action, education, etc.

There are a variety of departments and councils which are based on corporations (e.g., the GM Department), industries like I.P.S. (Independent Parts Suppliers, also known as Competitive Shop), or occupations like T.O.P. (Technical, Office and Professional Workers).

The Family Education Center, also known as Black Lake, is a residential education facility in northern Michigan where our members, staff, and families participate in union-related training programs.

## **Membership**

While our traditional base of manufacturing continues to be the solid foundation of our union, the number of our members working in service related fields such as technical, office or professional jobs is growing.

Among our members are assemblers, skilled trades people, nurses, lawyers, teachers, card dealers, writers, graphic artists, foundry workers, secretaries, prison guards, graduate assistants, and health care technicians.

We produce a wide variety of products and services. We make sports cars, SUVs and everything in between, refrigerators, cleaning products, tractors, airplanes, toys, busses, heavy trucks, and the parts that go into all of them. We produce beer and the cans it goes into. We write, graphically design, and physically produce books. We teach, take care of sick people, process insurance claims, run offices, and serve food. You would be hard-pressed to find a sector of the economy untouched by a UAW member.

Year-end average active membership for 2005 was 598,648.

### **Distribution of Membership**

Auto Manufacturers, including Office and Technical Occupations	40%
Auto Parts Manufacturers	22%
Technical, Office and Professional	15%
Other Manufacturing, Transportation, Repair and Logistics	15%
Aerospace, Heavy Trucks and Agricultural and Construction Equipment	8%

The top ten UAW states, measured by the number of active members, are Michigan, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, New York, Missouri, California, Wisconsin, Kentucky and Iowa.

### **International Executive Board (IEB)**

The IEB is composed of seven officers and 11 regional directors.

### **Officers**

Officers are elected by the voting delegates to the UAW's Constitutional Convention, who, in turn, are elected by the membership of each local union. The seven officers are:

President	Ron Gettelfinger
Secretary-Treasurer	Elizabeth Bunn
Vice-Presidents (5):	Gerald Holiefield Bob King Cal Rapson Jimmy Settles Jr. Terry Thurman

### **Regions & Regional Directors**

Regional directors are also elected at the UAW Constitutional Convention by delegates from the region they represent.

There are 11 regions within the UAW. The regions assist the local unions in handling the daily activities of the union. As necessary, the regions are assisted by the union's national departments. There are regional headquarters in each region, headed by the regional director with a staff of international representatives. There are sub-regional offices in areas where high concentrations of UAW members are distant from the regional office.

**Region 1**     **Director: Joe Peters.** Covers the following counties in Michigan: Huron, Lapeer, Macomb, Oakland, St. Clair, Sanilac, Tuscola and part of Wayne (including part of Detroit). Region 1 also includes Canadian UAW local unions.

**Region 1A**     **Director: Rory L. Gamble.** Covers most of Wayne County, Michigan (including part of Detroit), Monroe County and Washtenaw County, and extends to the Ohio border.

**Region 1C**     **Director: Dwane Zuckschwerdt.** Covers 11 counties in south-central Michigan including the cities of Flint, Jackson and Lansing.

**Region 1D**     **Director: Donald Oetman.** Covers 62 counties in western, central, and northern Michigan, including the Upper Peninsula. The Region includes the cities of Benton Harbor, Escanaba, Grand Rapids, Kalamazoo, Marquette, Muskegon, Saginaw, St. Joseph, and Traverse City.

**Region 2B**     **Director: Lloyd Mahaffey.** Covers the state of Ohio.

**Region 3**     **Director: Maurice Davison.** Covers the states of Indiana and Kentucky.

**Region 4**     **Director: Dennis Williams.** Covers the north central states of Illinois, Iowa, Minnesota, Montana, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota, Wisconsin, and Wyoming.

**Region 5**     **Director: Jim Wells.** Covers 17 states in the western and southwestern United States: Alaska, Arizona, Arkansas, California, Colorado, Hawaii, Idaho, Kansas, Louisiana, Missouri, Nevada, New Mexico, Oklahoma, Oregon, Texas, Utah, and Washington.

**Region 8**     **Director: Gary Casteel.** Covers the southeast, including Tennessee, Virginia, West Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Mississippi, Alabama, Georgia, Florida, District of Columbia, Maryland, Delaware, and the following counties of Pennsylvania: Franklin, Cumberland, Adams, and York.

**Region 9**     **Director: Joseph Ashton.** Covers western and central New York, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania, excluding counties: Franklin, Cumberland, Adams and York.

**Region 9A**     **Director: Robert Madore.** Covers eastern New York (including the New York City metropolitan area, the Hudson Valley and the Capital District area), Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Puerto Rico, Rhode Island, and Vermont.

### **Labor Affiliations**

American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations (AFL-CIO); Canadian Labour Congress (CLC); International Federation of Chemical, Energy, Mine and General Workers Union (ICEM); International Metalworkers Federation (IMF).

### **Headquarters**

The headquarters of the International Union is called "Solidarity House." It is located at 8000 East Jefferson Avenue, Detroit, Michigan 48214. Additional offices are located in the "Miller Building" at 8731 East Jefferson Avenue, Detroit, Michigan 48214.

The UAW Legislative and Governmental and International Affairs Department offices are located at 1757 "N" Street, NW, Washington, DC 20036.

### **International Trustees**

Daniel E. Norris  
Filipe Tito Sanchez  
Mike Watier

Elected at the Constitutional Convention for a three-term period (presently 12 years). The trustees serve on a part-time basis only.

### **UAW Presidents**

1935 - 36	Francis Dillon (appointed)
1936 - 39	Homer Martin
1939 - 46	R. J. Thomas
1946 - 70	Walter P. Reuther
1970 - 77	Leonard Woodcock
1977 - 83	Douglas A. Fraser
1983 - 95	Owen Bieber
1995 - 2002	Stephen P. Yokich
2002 -	Ron Gettelfinger

## **UAW Staff**

The UAW has approximately 535 appointed staff who provide general and specialized services to the officers, regions, local unions, and the membership. Specialized services provided include legal, actuarial, collective bargaining, public relations, and other necessary assistance. UAW membership is required for International Representative staff in most cases.

UAW staff members are represented by an independent union of international representatives, the UAW Staff Council.

The Public Relations staff is represented by the Newspaper Guild-Communication Workers of America, AFL-CIO (TNG-CWA Local 34022).

Clerical and maintenance employees are represented by the Office and Professional Employees International Union, AFL-CIO (OPEIU 494).

The members of the legal staff belong to the Staff Lawyers Union and the State Bar Association.

Outside Security are members of the International Union of Security, Police and Fire Professionals of America (SPFPA Local 119).

## **Local Unions**

The local union is an autonomous unit of self-government and administration in the union. A local union is made up of those members who are employed in the defined bargaining unit(s) of an employer(s). If more than one employer is involved, the local union is called an amalgamated local.

The local union membership is the highest authority in the local. Membership meetings are held each month. In amalgamated locals, depending on structure, unit meetings, general membership or joint council meetings are held. The Executive Board is empowered to represent the local union between membership meetings.

The Constitution requires each local union to establish bylaws which must be approved by the International President.

There are approximately 885 local unions in the US, Canada and Puerto Rico with 2,600 contracts.

## **Constitutional Convention**

Held every four years in the city selected by the IEB for the purpose of electing officers and regional directors and adopting resolutions that set forth the union's position on legislative and social issues and constitutional changes.

Delegates to the Convention are elected by local unions. The number of delegates from each local union is based on its membership size as are the number of votes available to each local union.

### **Collective Bargaining Convention**

Normally held every four years in the spring when Ford, DaimlerChrysler, General Motors and other major agreements expire. The purpose of this Convention is to develop a collective bargaining program for the entire union.

Delegates to the Collective Bargaining Convention are the delegates to the preceding Constitutional Convention. Presidents and Bargaining Committee chairs may, by local union membership action, be special delegates with voice but no vote.

### **Political Action**

In the United States, Puerto Rico and Canada, there is no direct relationship with a political party. UAW supports candidates based on their position on issues of concern to working people. We support those candidates whose voting records support labor's legislative agenda.

### **Union Dues**

As determined by the delegates to the UAW Constitutional Convention, the dues are two hours of straight time pay per month for hourly members. Salaried members pay 1.15% of their monthly income. The money is dispersed per the Constitution to the local unions and the International Union.

Public sector members who are prohibited from striking are not required to pay into the strike fund. Local unions have constitutional authority to establish dues exceeding the minimum.

## **Appeals**

The UAW Constitution contains a procedure under which individual member(s) may appeal to the Public Review Board (PRB) or the Convention Appeals Committee (CAC) any action, inaction or decision of a local union, or any of its units, committees, officers, committeepersons or stewards, the International Union, International Executive Board, international officers, regional directors, international representatives, or subordinate bodies.

The Convention Appeals Committee is composed of elected Constitutional Convention delegates. The committee members and a first and second alternate are selected by lot from the delegates of each UAW region as provided for in Article 33, Section 3(e) of the Constitution of the International Union, UAW. All decisions of the Convention Appeals Committee are final and binding.

The Public Review Board is composed of outstanding public citizens. The current members are:

**Professor Benjamin Aaron**, Emeritus Professor of Law, University of California (UCLA), Los Angeles, CA.

**Professor Janice R. Bellace**, Samuel Blank Professor of Legal Studies, Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia, PA.

**Professor James J. Brudney**, Professor of Law, Newton D. Baker-Baker & Hostetler Chair in Law. The Ohio State University College of Law, Columbus, OH.

**Professor James E. Jones, Jr.**, Emeritus Professor of Labor Law and Industrial Relations, University of Wisconsin, Madison, WI.

**Professor Theodore J. St. Antoine (Chairperson)**, James E. and Sara A. Degan Professor Emeritus of Law, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI.

**Professor Maria L. Ontiveros**, Professor of Labor and Employment Law, University of San Francisco School of Law, San Francisco, CA.

One spot currently open due to the retirement of Professor Paul C. Weiler.

All decisions of the Public Review Board are final and binding.

### **Educational Facilities**

The **Walter and May Reuther UAW Family Education Center** (FEC) is located on Black Lake in Onaway, Michigan, 260 miles north of Detroit. Walter Reuther's vision of a world-class workers education center guided the development of the FEC. It provides a place where members retreat to learn, reflect, and share experiences.

The Center generally operates approximately ten months of the year and accommodates up to 450 students.

Programs: One-week summer scholarship programs for members, spouses and children. The programs are designed to broaden understanding of the structure, function and ideals of the UAW and the labor movement. Children attend age-appropriate workshops to introduce them to labor history and how the union operates.

One-week Leadership Institute programs for local union officers and stewards, during winter months.

One-week summer and fall schools for regional union leadership.

Fellowship program for intensive union leadership training for one “fellow” from each region within the UAW. Operates in conjunction the Scholarship program during the summer.

Trailer Park Camp: Part of the complex which is available to UAW members and their families to utilize for up to 15 days. Reservation forms are available through the Family Education Center and each regional office.

Employees at Black Lake are members of the United Steel Workers (USW Local 2-100) and the International Security, Police, Fire Professionals of America (SPFPA Local 32). Golf course maintenance employees are members of the International Union of Operating Engineers (IUOE), and its food service workers are members of Hotel Employees and Restaurant Employees (HERE).

**Education programs and conferences  
conducted at the Family Education Center include:**

- ◆ Civil & Human Rights Conference
- ◆ Community Services Conference
- ◆ Family Scholarship Program
- ◆ Financial Officers Training
- ◆ Health and Safety Conference
- ◆ Joint Programs
- ◆ Local Union Leadership Institutes

- ◆ Local Union Press Association Conference
- ◆ Regional Education Programs
- ◆ Retiree Programs
- ◆ Veterans Conference
- ◆ Women's Conference

**Black Lake Golf Course:** UAW members receive a 20% discount and UAW retirees receive a 30% discount off public rates at this beautiful course, which has placed highly in Gold Digest's "100 Greatest Public Courses in America" since opening in 2000. The golf course, designed by Rees Jones, is an old-style classic course without mounds or moguls. The sweeps and natural grade create holes that blend with the natural terrain. Dining and accommodation packages are also available. For further information about the golf course, including rates and packages, call 1-989-733-GOLF or toll free, 1-866-UAW GOLF.

### **Pat Greathouse Center, Ottawa, Illinois**

Used for educational programs and seminars for local unions in Region 4.

In addition, summer schools, conferences and seminars are held on an ongoing basis in each region.

For more information, check the UAW website: [www.uaw.org](http://www.uaw.org).

Notes

Additional copies of this publication are available from the:

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8000 East Jefferson Avenue  
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The cost is 30 cents per copy.

Pub. #515  
Revised January 2007

