



# **New Member Orientation Package**

Pursuant to Articles 4.07 – 4.09



UNITED STEELWORKERS LOCAL 2010  
REPRESENTING QUEEN'S UNIVERSITY STAFF  
& ACADEMIC ASSISTANTS

## Welcome to the United Steelworkers, Local 2010

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Members of the **United Steelworkers (USW)**<sup>1</sup> work in every sector of Canada's economy in every kind of job. In the Education sector the USW represents staff at the University of Toronto (USW Local 1998), The University of Guelph (USW Local 4120) and since our certification in 2010, and the ratification of our first Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) in 2012, here at Queen's University in Kingston. Other universities and colleges in the United States are also slowly seeking to certify with the USW. With over 9,000 members employed as staff in universities in Ontario, the USW has a strong record of representation in post-secondary education.

The USW is a global union that has forged links with labour and community groups in other countries. The result has been 'strategic alliances' with these organizations in a variety of sectors — both internationally and in Canada — where sharing expertise and expanding labour power can help workers beyond the union's own ranks.

The USW, North America's largest private sector union, and **Unite**, the largest labor organization in the United Kingdom and Ireland, joined forces in August 2008, to become the world's first global union, called **Workers Uniting**.



Workers Uniting will draw on the energies of the two unions with more than three million active and retired workers from the United States, Canada, Great Britain and the Republic of Ireland who work in virtually every sector of the global economy, including manufacturing, service, mining, education and transportation.

We are a diverse and socially responsible union, working together with many community groups to ensure the public and elected government representatives are aware of the benefits that unions bring to the economy of our province and country overall. We believe that everyone can make a difference and invite you to learn more about the USW.

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### OUR LOCAL'S HISTORY

Our Local is comprised of mostly administrative and technical support staff. Some of our middle and upper management colleagues hold non-bargaining unit positions outside of Local 2010.

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<sup>1</sup> Our organization is known as United Steel, Paper and Forestry, Rubber, Manufacturing, Energy, Allied Industrial and Service Workers International Union (to be known in short as the "United Steelworkers" and by the acronym "USW").

In the past the **Queen's University Staff Association (QUSA)** represented all the support staff as well as the Research, Grant and Contract staff (RG&C) at Queen's. In 2008 the Unionization Steering Committee was struck and so began the road to the unionization of Queen's University support staff (not RG&C). In March 2010, our members voted in favour of union certification.

During this time, USW was also successful in certifying our Academic Assistant colleagues as Local 2010-01. This unit is comprised of approximately 60 members.

Until the spring of 2014 QUSA remained the representative body of all the staff members who were deemed not to belong to the newly formed USW 2010 Local. However, Queen's University management informed QUSA they are no longer welcome at the negotiating table and that they are no longer officially recognized by the University's administrative authorities.

These remaining non-unionized staff members (RG&C) have begun their own process to acquire legal standing at the bargaining table by working toward union certification with USW.

**As members of USW Local 2010, all of us, together, are the Union.**

Our Union exists to promote democratic and collective action to improve working conditions and the standard of living for us as workers.



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## WHY UNIONS?

To most workers, a union represents security in the workplace, dignity on the job and the means to a better life. The Union represents us collectively and we believe that by working together through our Union, we can negotiate with our employer from a position of strength and cooperation and have an effective voice in determining our working conditions.

In Canada, the union concept of “**strength in unity**” came into existence in the early 1800s. Through collective action, workers formed unions so they could have a voice in deciding wages, working hours and conditions, and dealing with the many problems that arise in the workplace. To this day, unions continue the fight to achieve better contracts and improved legislation.



Unions are more than just organizations trying to get better working conditions for their members. People who don't have union protection also benefit from union activities. If you look back at Canada's history, you'll observe that many of the rights and benefits we all enjoy were initially fought for and won by unions. The labour movement was in the forefront of the struggles for public health care and education, minimum wages, weekends off, holidays and decent employment conditions.

Unions have lobbied for, and won legislation, to end the exploitation of child labour, to regulate daily and weekly hours of work, to guarantee paid vacations, to provide workers' compensation

for the injured, insurance for the unemployed, health and safety rights and pensions for the elderly.

This is an important record of “non-contract” achievements and an inheritance which unions proudly guard and continue to fight for today.

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## **BENEFITS OF BELONGING TO A UNION**

### **Collective Bargaining**

Our ability to win better working conditions and salaries depends on the strength we have as a group.

In the collective bargaining process, the two sides meet and negotiate for their basic interests. Each side eventually gets somewhat less than it wanted, but at a level that each can agree upon and live with for a while. At that point, a collective agreement is signed outlining the terms of the settlement. It is during this negotiating procedure, called Collective Bargaining that new salaries, benefits, etc., are determined and many of the other articles of the Agreement are discussed and amended.



**The Collective Bargaining Agreement is your Contract of Employment with the Employer.** It is a legal and binding contract under labour law. Each Collective Agreement has a specified term and must be renegotiated each time it expires.

Collective bargaining agreements (CBAs) between unions and employers contain many provisions that our members should be aware of. For instance, the CBA regulates the number of hours employees may work each day and each week, and other provisions such as notice of any overtime to be worked and how much pay will be received for overtime. The collective agreement also covers the grievance procedure, which is the mechanism we use for resolving disputes with the employer. Other important issues bargained include wages and holidays, job security (e.g. redeployment), benefits and paid leave.

### **Grievance Procedure**

A grievance procedure ensures an orderly and timely process for resolution of a problem in the workplace. USW Local 2010 is our sole and exclusive bargaining agent. Our Stewards and Union Reps must ensure the conditions in our agreement are followed by the members and by the Employer. When we become aware of a violation of our contract, a grievance is initiated. If you become aware of a violation of the contract, notify your Steward as soon as possible. The list of Stewards can be found on our web site at: <http://usw2010.ca/stewards-list-published/>.

### **Seniority & Service**

The Union movement fought long and hard to establish the principle of seniority. Seniority is your length of continued service within the bargaining unit as a member in good standing of

Local 2010. As you earn more seniority and service you are entitled to increased job security and benefits such as redeployment, as well as severance pay and increased vacation entitlements.

### **Pensions**

In the area of pensions, unions have consistently negotiated improvements in their private pension plans and worked toward greater control of these plans by the workers involved. As of 2011, Stats Can reports<sup>2</sup> that only 38.4 percent of employed Canadians (36.9 percent of men and 40.1 percent of women) belong to company pension plans – including the plans that governments establish for their own employees. All others must rely only on the Canadian Pension Plan (CPP), Old Age Security (OAS), or Quebec Pension Plans.

Since the mid-1970s, a major debate on pension reform has been taking place. Labour organizations, women's and retiree's groups together have called for:

- increases in the benefits under Old Age Security and Guaranteed Income Supplement to make sure that all older Canadians have income above the poverty line
- changes to the design of the Canada Pension Plan to improve its fairness to women and homemakers
- changes to the regulations governing company pension plans

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## **LABOUR'S SOCIAL OBJECTIVES**

The social objectives of the Canadian labour movement are a reflection of the aims and desires of a large segment of the country's working population. The interest of the organized labour movement in social issues goes back many years. A desire to put in place social changes was one of the strongest influences in bringing about a working relationship between individual unions and the development of central labour organizations.

As early as the late 1800s, Canadian trade unionists were actively seeking legislative changes which would improve working conditions, not only for themselves but for all workers. They wanted factory laws to control and improve working conditions and safety practices; the abolition of piece-work and the elimination of "sweat shops"; an end to the use of prison labour in competition with other workers; abolition of child labour and the imposition of regulations covering the employment of women; and shorter hours – the eight-hour day and six-day week.

But the interests of the movement were not restricted to conditions of employment and working conditions. There were resolutions for expansion of educational facilities, including the introduction of some form of technical education.

The trade union movement has always seen itself as a spokesperson for ordinary working Canadians in these issues.

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<sup>2</sup> Source: <http://www.statcan.gc.ca/tables-tableaux/sum-som/101/cst01/labor26a-eng.htm>, Percentage of Labour force and employees covered by a registered pension plan (RPP)

## Poverty and Regional Disparities

The labour movement has continually drawn attention to the unjust disparities existing among various sections of Canadian society and among different regions. In an effort to establish a degree of equality lobbying efforts have included:

- a full employment program for all those able and willing to work, complemented by a meaningful manpower program;
- a guaranteed annual income;
- a major revision, strengthening and expansion of the present inadequate social security and transfer payment program;
- improvements in minimum wage legislation to guarantee a living wage for all Canadians.

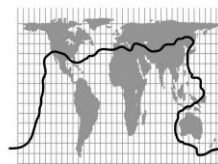
## Human Rights

The Steelworkers' union has devoted considerable effort to combating discrimination and protecting basic human rights. To this end, there has been a continual effort to support those who have been discriminated against and to educate our members about human rights issues.

## For two pennies an hour – The Steelworkers Humanity Fund

The USW is also committed to active solidarity with those fighting poverty and joblessness around the world. Our tool is the

**Steelworkers Humanity Fund (SHF)**, created in 1985, the first union-based international development organization of its kind. Through funds bargained by union members through their employers, the Humanity Fund provides more than \$1million



Steelworkers Humanity Fund  
Fonds Humanitaire des Métallos

a year to support international relief, anti-poverty, and labour development programs, as well as a portion allocated to relief efforts in Canada (food bank donations and natural disaster assistance like the Saguenay and Winnipeg floods, and the 1998 ice storm). Many other unions now follow the Steelworkers' lead with this initiative.

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## POLITICS

The USW is a very politically active union and has carried out lobbying campaigns on a number of important issues, from health and safety (including success with the historic Westray Bill) to trade policy, pension protection, labour law reform, and much more. Among the union's lobbying initiatives is the campaign to increase funding for post-secondary education in Canada, especially in Ontario [<http://cfsontario.ca/en/section/97>]. No other union has come close to the Steelworkers' record of political engagement on this issue. The USW is also a staunch supporter of the New Democratic Party (NDP) both provincially and federally, and played a major role in the party's formation. USW believes that the NDP shares its commitment to better laws and policies that put people first.



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## AFFILIATIONS

USW Local 2010 is a significant part of the labour community. We are a Local of a large International Union, the United Steelworkers, which is itself part of the first global union called **Workers Uniting**. Within the United Steelworkers, we are members of the **Eastern Ontario Area Council**, a regional council with representatives from the USW locals across Eastern Ontario (e.g. Port Hope, Belleville, Kingston, Cornwall, Hawkesbury, etc.).

Local 2010, as many other Locals, is eligible to become members of the Canadian Labour Congress (CLC). The CLC is made up of 2.4 million affiliated members and represents an important national labour voice. As affiliates of the CLC we could also become members of the Ontario Federation of Labour (OFL), and the Kingston and District Labour Council (KDLC).

Currently Local 2010 is affiliated with the KDLC. As our Local continues to grow and expand, these additional affiliates will be considered.

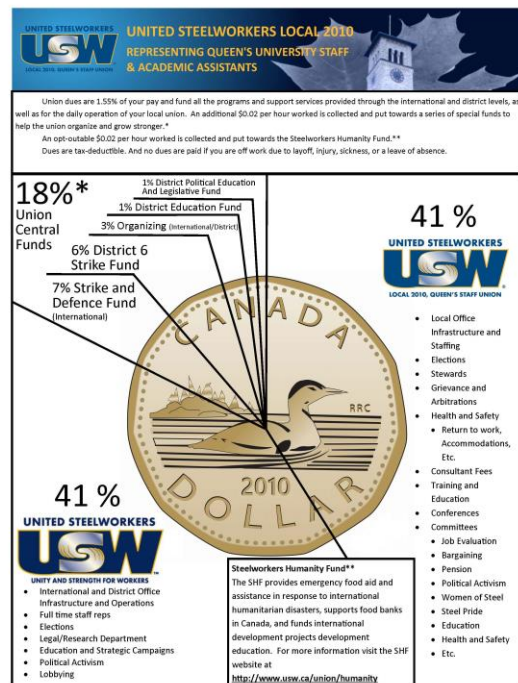
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## DUES

Union dues are a small percentage of total earnings, which amounts to only cents per day, or 1.55 % of earnings.

Union dues pay for the education programs, health and safety services, research and legal expertise, bargaining support, lobbying work, all specialized services, as well as the daily operations of your local union and overall union administration. A special organizing fund ensures the union keeps growing and gets stronger. The USW dues structure also supports strike and defense funds. Those funds are there when members need them the most.

Dues are tax-deductible. No dues are paid if you are off work due to layoff, injury, sickness, or a leave of absence.



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## COMMITTEES

In addition to your local union executive committee, your local has union stewards who will be your first avenue for union information and support in your workplace. We also have many other committees to help us build power and meet the needs of our members. These committees

present an opportunity for many of our members to be actively involved in your union. Some of our committees include:

- Health & Safety
- Job Evaluation/Pay Equity
- Women of Steel
- Communications Committee
- Education Committee
- Collective Bargaining Committee
- Labour Management Committee
- Steel Pride Committee

If you wish to become active in your Union by sitting on a committee that interests you, please email [contact@usw2010.ca](mailto:contact@usw2010.ca) for more information.

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## UNIONS ARE A DEMOCRACY

A Steelworker member belongs to one of the world's most democratic unions. Our members run our union. All union officers are elected by the members. International officers, national, and district directors are elected by a **one-member-one-vote** secret ballot every four years. In most other unions, officers are elected by a select number of delegates at a convention. You vote for your local union officers by the same kind of 'direct democracy' every three years.

Steelworkers make decisions about the union's policies, direction and programs at several levels -- at the Canadian National Policy Conference (last held April 2013), and at the International Convention (last held August 2014).

As well, each geographic District, to which there are 13, holds regular conferences, and there are ongoing meetings on everything from human rights to health and safety, and conferences bringing together workers in a common industry. Many local unions are also grouped into Area Councils that provide yet another level where your voice is heard.

Local 2010 is part of District 6 – the next conference for D6 will be held August 2015.





## **STRUCTURE OF THE UNITED STEELWORKERS**

### **International Officers**

Leo W. Gerard, International President  
Stan Johnson, International Secretary-Treasurer  
Thomas M. Conway, International Vice President (Administration)  
Fred Redmond, International Vice President (Human Affairs)  
Ken Neumann, National Director for Canada  
Carol Landry, International Vice President At Large  
Jon Geenen, International Vice President  
Gary Beevers, International Vice President  
And all **13 District Directors**

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Canada National Office

**Canadian Director** – Ken Neumann

### **District 6**

**Director** – Marty Warren

There are 13 Districts within the International Union.  
3 of those are in Canada; District 3 (Western Canada),  
5 (Quebec) and 6 (Ontario & Atlantic Provinces)

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### **Eastern Ontario Area Council**

Peggy McComb, Area Coordinator

Staff Representatives also provide service to the locals  
Local 2010 Staff Representative – Peggy McComb

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### **Local 2010 Executive Board**

President – Kelly J. Orser  
Vice-President – Briana Broderick  
Recording Secretary – Karen Topping  
Financial Secretary – Natasha Redknap  
Treasurer – Brenda Wood  
Guide – Denise Cameron  
Inside Guard – Christina Salavantis  
Outside Guard – Heather-Ann Thompson  
Trustee – Heather Carter  
Trustee – Jill Hodgson  
Trustee – Cheryl Power

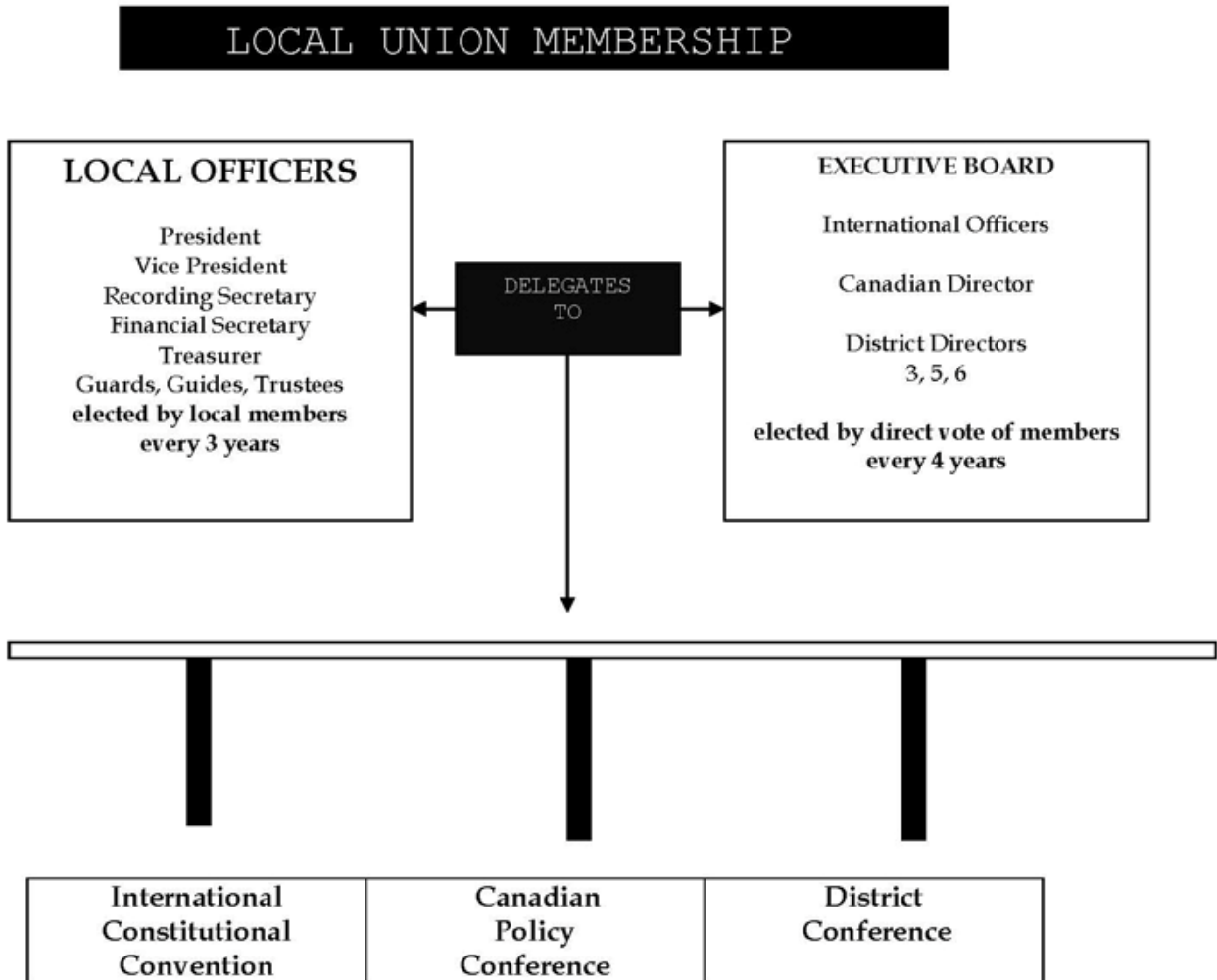
### **Local 2010-01 Unit** (Academic Assistants)

Chairperson – Jane Russell Corbett

*And most important –*

# Local union members

## Union Elections



Delegates to these policy making conventions and conferences are elected by local union.