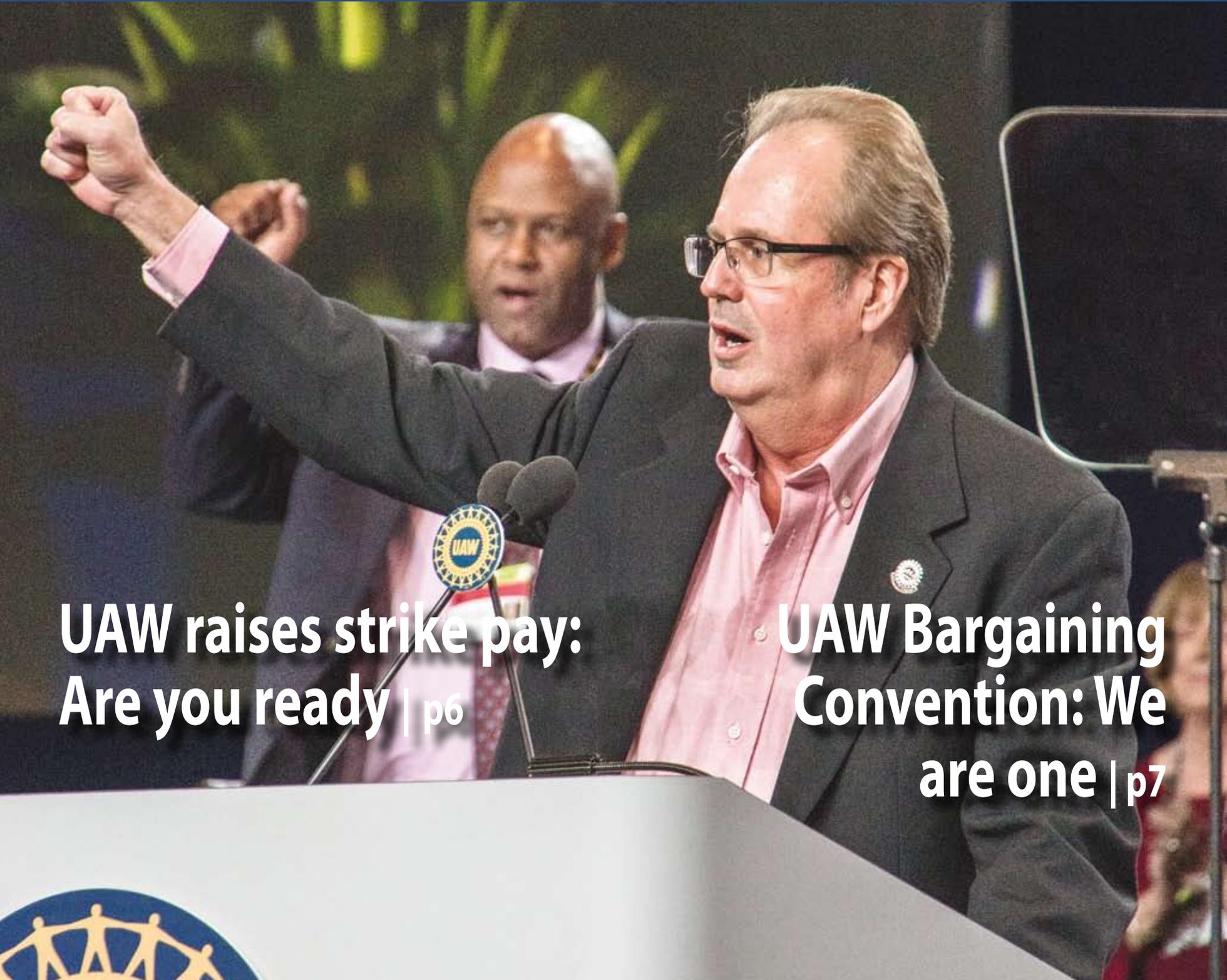


# FIRST LOCAL NEWS

Published by United Auto Workers Local 249—Kansas City, Missouri

April 2019



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Convention: We  
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**UAW International President Gary Jones spoke to delegates at the Special Bargaining Convention in Detroit March 13. Photo by Don Lehman.**



Carmen and Ray Wohler celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary at the March retiree meeting. Local 249 retirees meet each month at the union hall to share a meal and renew old ties. Photo by Don Lehman.



UAW Local 249 Veterans Committee donated a check to "Care packages from home" for goods to be sent to military personnel deployed around the globe.



Local 249 delegates Steve Chorbak, left to right, Jason Starr, Dana Davidson and Jim Fisher go over resolutions at the Special Bargaining Convention. Photo by Don Lehman.

## First Local News

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## UAW Local 249

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The Regular Membership Meeting of United Automobile Workers Amalgamated Local Union 249 is held on the third Sunday of each month at 2:00 p.m. in the local union hall, 8040 NE 69 Highway, Pleasant Valley, Mo. The Executive Board Meeting is held at 1:00 p.m. prior to the Regular Membership Meeting.

## UAW-Ford Joint Programs

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## Collective bargaining creates equality

By Gary Jones

**C**ollective bargaining is the process in which a group of workers comes together and negotiates the terms of their contracts with one voice. Making their demands, together. Making a promise that whatever is offered to one will be rejected unless it is offered to all.

Sounds simple, right?

But the process demands much — it requires dedication, hard work, preparation, and trust in your fellow worker.

This past week, delegates from across the country came together for the UAW's Special Bargaining Convention. We put together 40 resolutions on which we will build the foundation of our contracts. We prepared for our negotiation process, which requires every contract to come to a membership vote.

Our union represents people in almost every sector of the American economy. We work for over 1,000 employers, under 1,600 different contracts. Here is where our Special Bargaining Convention is unique — even though we represent so many diverse parts of the work force, we don't develop proposals for each contract, not even the major national level contracts. Instead, we collectively devise an agenda which will become the basis of every contract that is negotiated on behalf of all of the members of the UAW. This is what we are about as a union.

Collective bargaining isn't just about wages or health care, vacations days or profit sharing. It is also about protecting workers from violence in the workplace. Making sure that our contracts are addressing the fallout from the growing opioid crisis. Because collective bargaining doesn't take place in a vacuum, it is able to address the real and evolving lives of workers.

Collective bargaining levels the playing field. Want equal pay for women? Join a union. Want a wage that is, on average, 10 percent higher? Join a union. Want paid sick leave? Join a union.

Collective bargaining ensures more than just profit sharing, it ensures progress sharing.

Because what is fought for and achieved through collective bargaining becomes what is possible for other workers.

Collective bargaining takes place across the world. It is considered a fundamental human right. It is democratic, a function of self-government, by which workers come together to demand a voice in the process of establishing the rules that govern them. Workers come together and demand parity and equality.

Collective bargaining is not a new thing; workers realized during the Industrial Revolution that they could not beat management in a one-on-one fight. It is about leverage. It is about knowing that a whole is often greater than the sum of its parts.

Gary Jones is president of UAW International Union.

*This article originally appeared in the Detroit News Labor Voices column. Labor Voices columns are written on a rotating basis by United Auto Workers President Gary Jones, Teamsters President James Hoffa, Michigan AFL-CIO President Ron Bieber and Michigan Education Association President Paula Herbart.*

## Labor News From the World Wide Web

# The Picket Line

## I owe how much?

**M**any Americans are being caught off guard by their tax returns this year — and not in a good way.

After passing a sweeping tax reform bill in 2017 that gave a \$1.5 trillion tax cut to billionaires and wealthy corporations, Republicans did not keep taxpayers looped into how changes to the tax code would impact their filing process. As a result, many Americans are finding that they did not select the proper withholding amount from their paychecks, and will end up owing money rather than seeing a return this year.

With less than half of Americans having \$1,000 in their savings account, tax refunds are used by many to cover the cost of bills, food, and basic living expenses. With so much at stake for middle class families who were promised a large benefit from Republican tax reform, many people are worried that they may end up owing the IRS money that they simply do not have.

The truth is, middle class families are shouldering the burden of the Republican tax scam. — *UAW*

## UAW VP Rory Gamble on Ford Flat Rock investment

**"F**ord's \$900 million in investments, most of which is in the Flat Rock facility, sets up the downriver Detroit facility to be the center of electric vehicles for years to come. As we transition to new technology and future products, Flat Rock through this investment, is well positioned to be a world leader for decades to come in auto industry technology and production." — *UAW*

## UAW announces strike fund increase

**U**AW President Gary Jones announced that the union's leadership has raised the weekly strike fund pay from \$200 to \$250 per week effective March 2019. That number will increase to \$275 per week in January 2020.

"No one goes to the bargaining table expecting to strike. But the UAW goes to the bargaining table prepared to strike if our members need to strike," said Jones. "Raising the strike fund is an important symbol that we have their backs."

The UAW Strike and Defense fund totaled out at more than \$721 million in 2018. Delegates voted at the UAW's Constitutional Convention to keep a 2011 dues increase that funds the Strike and Defense fund until it reaches \$850 million — at which point the fund will trigger dues to go back down to pre-2011 levels. If the Strike and Defense Fund ever dips below \$650 million, the dues increase will kick back in.

"We are solid heading into the next four years of bargaining," said Jones. "And this extra security for UAW families carries us to the bargaining table united in our goals." — *UAW*

## UAW statement on ending workplace sexual harassment

**I**n honor of International Women's Day, the UAW, representing one million active and retired members is proud to support the call for the International Labor Organization (ILO) to issue a convention and recommendation to protect workers against sexual harassment and gender-based violence. While both women and men experience violence and harassment at work, unequal status and power result in women being at far greater risk: 35 percent of women — 818 million women globally — over the age of 15 have experienced sexual or physical violence.

The final text of the ILO standard will be debated and voted on at the 108th International Labor Conference, June 10-21, 2019. — *UAW*



The UAW represents so much more than just auto workers. Members include technical, office, and professional workers; casino workers in Las Vegas, Detroit, Baltimore, Cincinnati, Cleveland, Toledo, Columbus and Connecticut; workers at Miller Beer, Coors Beer, Bacardi Rum, and John Deere, Caterpillar and Colt. Members build everything from cars, trucks, SUV'S, and tractors, to battleships, firearms and whiskey barrels. We are diverse.

# The UAW umbrella is diverse & far-reaching

By Troy Starkey

**A**s I watched a recent video of the discussion of a proposal on the floor of the UAW Collective Bargaining Convention, a delegate rose from the attendees and made his way to the microphone. He introduced himself as Craig Smith, President of UAW Local 376 representing the employees of Colt Firearms Manufacturing. Say what? The UAW represents employees at Colt Firearms? Yes, the umbrella of the UAW is diverse and far reaching and growing every day. I knew there was a reason that I was partial to my Colt 1911, but upon hearing this, it made me think, just who does the UAW represent?

The UAW represents over 415,000 members, in the U.S., Canada and Puerto Rico. It has more than 600,000 retired members, with over 600 local unions, and holds 1,150 contracts with some 1,600 employers. I was surprised to find that about 40 percent of UAW members work outside the auto industry.

The UAW represents auto workers, technical, office, professional workers, casino workers in Las Vegas, Detroit, Baltimore, Cincinnati, Cleveland, Toledo, Columbus and Connecticut; workers at Miller Beer, Coors Beer, Bacardi Rum, John Deere, Caterpillar and Colt. Members build cars, trucks, SUV'S, tractors, battleships, firearms, coffeemakers, pizza ovens, and whiskey barrels.

When people hear the name UAW, they automatically think autoworkers.

The UAW is historically linked to the auto industry from its founding in the 1930's until today, but during the 1970's & 1980's the union experienced a steady decline in membership due to increased automation, decrease in labor use, and exportation of manufacturing overseas.

In the 1990s, the UAW began to focus on new areas of organizing both geographically (in places like Puerto Rico) and in terms of occupations, with new initiatives among university staff, freelance writers (through the subsidiary National Writers Union), and employees of non-profit organizations, including workers at Mother Jones Magazine and the Sierra Club.

"Sometimes there's a bit of an eyebrow raise when you say UAW. People ask, 'United Auto Workers?' But we chose the UAW because it represents

the most academic workers of any union in the country. And it bargains great contracts," said David Parsons, president of UAW Local 4121, representing more than 4,500 graduate and undergraduate students and researchers at the University of Washington.

"The UAW provides us access to labor lawyers, professional negotiators and training," said Anke Schennink, president of UAW Local 5810, which represents nearly 7,000 postdoctoral researchers on 11 University of California campuses. Labor observers question whether the UAW has lost its way, and loss of auto jobs has led to a narrative that it has lost its power. But the diversified membership keeps the union strong in size and money, providing financial resources, such as a healthy strike fund, that benefits the UAW overall.

Nearly 70,000 workers on college campuses are affiliated with Solidarity House on Jefferson Avenue east of downtown Detroit. In California alone, 33,000 postdoctoral researchers and academic student workers are affiliated with the UAW.

Since 2010, about 20,000 academic workers have joined the UAW: Full and part-time graduate workers, adjunct professors, postdoctoral re-

searchers, and a handful of support staff and maintenance workers are based on about two dozen public and private school campuses in California, Washington, Massachusetts, New York and Connecticut.

"Growing up in the Detroit area, I was acutely aware that the working conditions won by UAW members affected millions of other workers in other industries far beyond the auto sector," said Neal Sweeney, Vice President UAW Local 5810, a former neuroscience researcher at the University of California-Santa Cruz who studied how stem cells can be used to treat degenerative eye diseases such as glaucoma and macular degeneration.

Other academic workers represented by the union include computer scientists, microbiologists and engineers who make discoveries for public benefit rather than going into private industry.

Dennis Williams, former president of the UAW, said the auto industry's heavy shift toward technology and science suggests that college campuses are precisely where UAW recruiting should happen.

Upon further reflection, the UAW isn't just about autoworkers anymore, our union is strong and as diverse as the world we live in. We Are One.



*Sit-down strikers took over the Ford Winchester Plant in Kansas City on April 2, 1937 when the company attempted to fire UAW members. As a result of the strike, UAW members kept their jobs and a verbal agreement was reached to settle outstanding grievance at the plant.*

## 82 years ago: The battle is joined at Local 249

*By Pat Hayes*

**Local 249 members knew it was coming. They didn't know when, or even what, exactly, it would turn out to be, but they were determined to be ready when it did.**

They'd been secretly recruiting members at the Ford Motor Kansas City Assembly Plant for months, and they'd had some success. They were the first local to obtain a charter from the UAW at any Ford Motor location in the country. Pushed by brutal conditions at the plant, then located at 1025 Winchester Ave., new members were signing up and paying dues to the fledgling organization. They'd even elected officers to represent them when the time came.

They were gaining confidence, their spirits having been lifted by the success, weeks earlier, of the Flint Sit-down Strike. The agreement coming out of that strike on February 11, 1937 which recognized the UAW as the exclusive bargaining representative for GM's workers, demonstrated that

workers could win if they were willing to fight. The following month, 60,000 workers took up the challenge when they occupied every Chrysler plant in Detroit to win union recognition there. Those two victories left only Ford, of the largest automakers, unorganized.

Despite the victories elsewhere, the members of Local 249 had no illusions about the battles with Ford that lay ahead. The location of union meetings was moved each month to avoid detection. Sometimes meeting in a basement or a restaurant, but always as far from the prying eyes of Henry Ford's internal spy system as they could get to avoid detection before they were ready.

The Ford autoworkers were well within their rights. The Wagner Act

signed into law by President Franklin Delano Roosevelt in 1935 gave workers the legal right to organize or join unions and to bargain collectively with their employers. It also prohibited employers from interfering with these rights and refusing to bargain with union representatives.

But, for men like Henry Ford, those laws did not exist.

"We'll never recognize the United Automobile Workers union or any other union," Ford said.

Harry Bennett, the head of the Ford's Service Department, a private army of ex-boxers, wrestlers and street fighters, many ex-convicts, didn't mince words either. The Wagner Act, he said, "did not exist for him."

Despite all the union men's precautions, Ford bosses in Kansas City soon learned of the existence of the budding union local and hatched a plan to crush it.

Oddly, when Ford brought the hammer down, some 82 years ago this

month, it was the union men who were ready and the Ford bosses and Service Department thugs who were not.

"The moment of truth came," recalled Gene Minshall, on April 2, 1937.

"The orders came from the home office in Detroit to fire every worker in the plant who had signed a union card," said Minshall. "Plant guards, superintendents and general foremen began to move down each line in every department taking workers badges and telling them they were fired."

Union leaders in each department responded by pulling the fuses from each production line which stopped all production. Baron DeLouis, the president of Local 249 called for a sit-down strike.

"The company officials were so flustered over our quick moves they didn't know what to do," according to Minshall. "They had never seen all their damn production lines shut down all at one time. The sit-down strike was on."



We are one chanted the membership including the International Leadership pictured with Ray Curry, Secretary/Treasurer, left to right, Derrick Johnson, President of the NAACP, and UAW President Gary Jones at the recent UAW Special Convention on Collective Bargaining held at the Cobo Center in Detroit March 11. Photo by Don Lehman.

# UAW Bargaining Convention: We are one

By Gwen Starkey

**In a tradition that dates back decades, international leaders and elected delegates from UAW locals across the country met for a Special Convention on Collective Bargaining at Detroit's Cobo Center on March 11-15. The convention begins preparation for contract talks with the Detroit 3 with contracts set to expire on Sept. 15. The union elected bargaining committees at each of the three automakers and discussed and voted on proposed resolutions to set the bargaining agenda before contract talks with Fiat-Chrysler, Ford, and GM later this summer.**

UAW President Gary Jones welcomed delegates saying, "Collective bargaining is a diplomatic process. It requires participation from every single one of us. It requires us to work together and work as one. This tradition is what makes our union such a great union. What are we doing here? We are setting a bargaining agenda for the next four years."

"We are setting the bar high. We have thousands of contracts in the UAW. Our brothers and sisters drive the economy. We represent so many parts of that economy from gaming to higher education, from insurance to agricultural implements, from health care to heavy trucks, and we build the cars that really drive the economy. We set a standard. We set an agenda on

behalf of all UAW members. That is what our constitution demands of us. We are one."

Key bargaining issues discussed and voted on included reducing wage disparities. The UAW intends to eliminate tiered wages so workers doing the same job with similar experience receive the same rate of pay and improve progressions to reduce inequality between workers. "We all maintain a very specific and simple narrative that we have to work to eliminate wage disparity amongst our membership to shrink that grow in period from eight years to a legitimate process that everybody can and should be expecting," UAW Local 249 President Jason Starr said at the March union meeting. "It's not who we are, it's not where we want

to be." Resolutions included seeking wage increases that ensure earnings keep pace with or exceed inflation.

Political action and V-CAP was another important resolution discussed. The UAW is politically active because our ability to make progress at the bargaining table is tied to our ability to elect pro-labor candidates to office. Members help in this process by supporting V-CAP through V-CAP checkoff. V-CAP checkoff is a voluntary contribution process where members can pledge a monthly contribution made through automatic payroll deduction.

For the past 19 out of 20 years, Region 5 has won the V-CAP award. We were the first region to raise over \$1M and we have done it six times. We were the first region to raise over \$2M and we have done it twice. Region 5 director Vance Pierson accepted the V-CAP award saying, "I accept this award proudly for all the retirees, active members, and leaders of Region 5. We've done it again. We have a couple of secrets in Region 5 on how we are able to receive this victory every time. The first thing we do is we are not scared to ask. We ask each one of our members

to contribute. This does work. They will give, but they want to be asked. Thank you Region 5, we've got to work hard, keep up the work, and we are going to be accepting the award next year as well." UAW Local 249 members should be very proud to be part of this great achievement.

An issue important to all UAW members is profit sharing. Delegates spoke strongly on this resolution including UAW Local 249 Financial Secretary Dana Davidson. She did an amazing job as she spoke about how our temporary members, who work just as hard as we do every day, and don't receive the same benefits in pay. It's just not who we are as an organization.

"Integrity is what you do when no one is looking," Davidson said. I stand in support of the resolution on continued and improved formula for profit sharing because these profits are made on the backs of all our hard working UAW members. All of them. That includes the temps. Before I came up here I was figuring profit sharing for our members and we have some temps that serve on

[Continued on page 7](#)

# UAW raises strike pay: Are you ready

By Gwen Starkey

**U**AW President Gary Jones announced at the recent Special Convention on Collective Bargaining an increase in the strike pay from \$200 to \$250 per week sending a clear message to the Detroit Big 3. "We want management to understand solidarity, to understand that we are one, that when you attack one of us, you attack all of us," Jones said. The international executive board has decided to raise the strike pay from \$200 per week to \$250 effective immediately. It will raise again to \$275 per week beginning January 2020."

The UAW will provide health insurance to the workers and their families during strikes and the raise in strike pay and support will signal all our members that the international executive board has their backs. "We are ready to put in the work; we are ready to make the plans. We are ready to set the bar high. We are ready to gear up and fight for what is right. We are ready to fight for our brothers and sisters and we are ready to act as one because we know that we rise and fall together," Jones said. No one goes to the bargaining table expecting to strike, but the UAW goes to the bargaining table prepared to strike if our members need to strike. We don't fear it. We are solid heading into the next four years of bargaining, and this extra security for UAW families carries us to the bargaining table united in our goals." We are one.

The question is, are you ready? "The convention set the tone and the international executive board shares a lot of news here locally and we are probably going to hit the streets this fall," UAW Local 249 President Jason Starr said at the March union meeting. They outlined where the companies are on these issues, how they are not budging and they are doing things that they have never seen them do. We were told, "Get your folks ready, and get your membership ready, because if we are going to get these issues addressed, it's going to take some col-

lective action."

Cost of living (COLA) is a hot topic, which people obviously are in favor of trying to get back. "It took a 73 day strike to get COLA initially so we all have to ask ourselves are you prepared for a 73 day strike," Starr said. The companies aren't going to give these things free and anyone who thinks so is fooling themselves. Anyone who thinks there is a better deal just waiting on the other side is fooling themselves. We are going to have to kick and scream and claw to get everything we can from them so be prepared." Are you ready?

The local is taking steps to help. Beginning in May, they are offering strike awareness classes. Region 5 will be coming to train our local reps on the procedural component on strikes. The strike process is a very litigious process. The first thing the company will do is file an injunction on each local union limiting the number of strikers, the hours of striking, where you can strike and all kinds of other things.

"The local will provide this information as we go along," Starr said. We have many issues on our plate, a lot that we want to tackle; we need everyone's support and more importantly to engage them. Challenge folks to be engaged. This is the place to come get information if you have questions. We all need to be on the same page."

"Let us not forget," Jones reminded delegates, that what we have fought



The UAW recently increased the strike pay for members effectively giving companies notice that the UAW is ready. We are one. Photo by Don Lehman.

for it wasn't given to us. We came together and we took that power. How did we do it? How did we gain these victories? Membership, activism, and solidarity. Our activism and solidarity; that is what secures our ability to collective bargaining. Our activism and solidarity; that is what secures our gains in contract after contract. Our activism and solidarity; that is what secures our power. Even when we face setbacks, we know that we are one. So are our delegates who are down this week to prepare. We know that they are bringing new ideas, new energy and a recommitment to the principles that brought us where we stand today. We are one. The stakes are real brothers and sisters, the stakes are high. We know that we rise and we fall together. We want management to understand that too."

A poignant quote by A. Philip Randolph, an important leader in the Civil Rights and American Labor Movement taken from a speech that Derrick Johnson, President of the NAACP gave at the convention. "This is an important juncture not only for the UAW, but for this nation. What you are embarking upon is crucial to men and women across the country, Johnson said. This is a quote that I think you should consider as you navigate this process of negotiating. 'At the banquet table of nature, there are no reserved seats. You get what you can take, and you keep what you can hold. If you can't take anything, you won't get anything, and if you can't hold anything, you won't keep anything. And you can't take anything without organization.'" Randolph was a voice that would not be silenced, and neither should ours. We are one.

Continued from page 6

committees and I was sad that I can't give it to them because they don't get it from the plant. I thought that was disgraceful. If the companies are going to continue to utilize temps, instead of doing the right thing, the moral thing, and provide them with what they deserve, a permanent full time position, then they should absolutely receive profit sharing. These temporary workers also help the companies make these profits through their hard work. They must also provide an incentive for companies to start investing

more heavily in the US work force and operations instead of opening plants overseas to eliminate US workers and US jobs."

UAW Local 249 President Jason Starr spoke on the resolution on New Technology and New Jobs saying, "I rise in support of this resolution on New Technology and New Jobs. The UAW has a long proud history of working to secure new jobs and bringing good pay on many different jobs to their membership. As advanced technologies are introduced it is critical that we work together to secure an increase

in apprenticeship opportunities and workforce training to upscale our members to insure that we benefit from the advancements in our facilities. Through the collective bargaining process we can secure new jobs and a future that rewards productivity and ingenuity that helps advance a workforce in the world."

"I would like to personally commend our Bargaining Chair Jim Fisher for standing up in front of over 900 delegates and making everybody in the building aware of where we stand on temporary workers and the abuse

that they face and where we feel we need to go to address those issues," Starr said. Jim spoke of the grievance procedure and the lack of access to our temporary members and did a good job making sure that everyone knew right where Local 249 stands."

Other resolutions that were discussed and voted on throughout the rest of the week included Organizing, Benefits for Servicewomen, Servicemen and Veterans, Skilled Trades and Apprenticeships, Opioid Crisis and Addiction in the Workplace and Labor and Community.



UAW Local 249 delegates Dean Freed, left to right, Ed Skaggs, Scott Pyle, Tony Renfro, Jim Fisher, Sade Ott, Jason Starr, Dana Davidson, John Travers, Steve Chorbak and Leon Allen met at the Special Bargaining Convention held on March 11 at the Cobo Center in Detroit. Photo by Don Lehman.

# In times of peace, prepare for war

By Chrissy Kline

**B**y failing to prepare, you are preparing to fail. Wise words by Benjamin Franklin sum up the atmosphere and messages taken from the leadership conference in January and both the Special Bargaining Convention and financial conference in March. Region 5 Director Vance Pearson stated, "In times of peace, prepare for war." With upcoming contract negotiations looming overhead, members of the International UAW executive board as well as regional staff stressed the necessity of heeding these words. This has left many wondering, "What does that mean for us?" Brothers and sisters, it means it is time to prepare.

As an entry level employee working in a union shop for the first time, I have found I had a lot more questions than answers. Some answers have raised more questions, and others gave me peace of mind. First and foremost, attending these recent conferences allowed me the opportunity to see firsthand where our local leadership stood on many issues. When it comes to the use and misuse of temporary workers, and the subsequent lack of equality and overall treatment these brothers and sisters face. It was overwhelmingly clear to all that UAW Local 249 leadership's hearts are with our temps. During the Special Bargaining Convention, every opportunity to support a resolution was tied into the application of that same resolution to making temporary workers whole and delivered with fervor and passion. Many other delegates who spoke not only shared the sentiment of Local 249 but also reminded those in attendance,

a house divided against itself cannot stand.

Knowing where local leadership stands is important, as is knowing the difference between a local contract and the international contract. It is important to understand this difference so that a well negotiated local contract is not down voted simply because emotions are running high or there is a lack of understanding as to what can be legally negotiated. International contracts contain the hot button issues, such as compensation, use of temporary workers, product commitments, health coverage, retirement options, specifics related to our skilled trades, temporary employees and closing the gaps between membership that has divided us for too long.

The local contract handles the day to day issues of our assembly plant. This includes our calendar program, quality stop button procedure, overtime equalization, even things like heat

relief and when ice chests are stocked. It is important that we do not overlook the importance of a great local contract in an effort to gain in an international contract.

Lastly, but not least in importance, "What happens if we strike?" During a strike assistance class at the financial conference specific answers were given to that question. To start with, yes, temps will strike too. Yes, temps will receive strike assistance pay. Any member in good standing, current in their dues, is entitled to the strike assistance pay of \$250 per week. Eligibility begins on the eighth day of work stoppage, and the first payment is 15 days after the start of the strike. This means we all need to be prepared, as payments will take around two weeks into a strike to begin.

We cannot afford not to prepare. We will continue to receive medical benefits and prescription benefits, but not hearing, dental, vision or sick/accident coverage. Strike assistance pay operates similarly to unemployment in that if you work another job and gross what you would receive in strike assistance you are no longer eligible for the payout, but will retain medical benefits. Ways to prepare are to use your hearing, dental, and vision benefits prior to contract ending date as well as set prescriptions for 90 day refills to save on expenses when income is

tighter. Shop for frozen foods and non-perishables as they are on sale a few months prior to stock up on groceries and household necessities.

For me this helped to drive home the importance of early preparation and the seriousness with which our leadership is approaching these negotiations. I hope that we as members of UAW Local 249 can take a step back from any of the issues that distract us from the problems at hand and band together to get not just ourselves but those around us prepared. Talk to the people you work with. Set up a plan. Personally, part of my preparation beyond trying to save money has been to pull in those I am close with and discuss, "What do we need? How close to ready are we?"

From there we will plan buying groceries in bulk that we otherwise couldn't use in time ourselves, make plans to meet at one another's homes to prepare meals in advance for the freezer and to split costs of anything both our families can need. None of us are in this alone. If you feel you are prepared well enough, reach out to those around you and help get them ready. We are only as strong as our weakest link. Instead of judging another's circumstances, help them rise above those so we can all succeed in getting what we want and need this year. To become one, we need to act as one.

# Zero Tolerance Policy applies to all

By Jim Fisher

**W**e have had several discussions with the company about the treatment of our members. Upper management has no issue disciplining our members or sending them to medical to be drug tested if our members question what they are doing. They have even gone as far as disciplining one of our Union Reps who was standing up for the membership.

However, they go out of their way to protect the out of control supervisors that are harassing our members.

We have provided information on supervisors being intoxicated at work, holding unjust hearings, telling members they will be disciplined for following contractual language such as "The Quality Stop Button Procedure", and buying off units to dealerships that haven't been repaired yet.

Ford says they have a Zero Tolerance Policy, but KCAP management thinks that only applies to UAW workers. If you are getting harassed by a member of management, we strongly recommend you contact the Ford Harassment Hotline at 888-735-6650.

If you are not satisfied with those results, you can come to the union hall so we can get you in contact with outside legal representation.

The Bargaining Committee and Health and Safety Reps are continuing to pursue a number of safety complaints

at the plant. We have filed health and safety grievances on the condition of the roads leading to Truck Paint and Truck Body due to the 66 potholes we counted that have been causing damage to members vehicles. We have also filed grievances on other areas of the plant roadways that are in bad condition and require immediate repair.

The International Union has announced an immediate strike pay increase from \$200 per week to \$250 per week. They have also stated that in January of 2020 the strike pay would increase to \$275 per week.

There has been a question as to what happens to the temporary workers in the event of a work stoppage. They are UAW dues paying members. They would be included in any work stoppage.

The Transit System will remain on a 5x10 pattern with Saturday production beginning in April and at this time it looks like the Saturdays will run all the way into August. The Truck System



UAW Local 249 Bargaining Chairperson Jim Fisher attended the recent Special Bargaining Convention at the Cobo Center held in Detroit on March 11. Photo by Don Lehman.

will remain on a 3-Crew pattern with no Super Production Days scheduled at this time.

The vacation schedule has been announced for this year. Transit System will be down for the first week in July. The Truck System will be on vacation for the first two weeks in July.

We are continuing to have an issue reaching members who have been terminated. It is very important that

you keep the most current contact information updated at the union hall and with Labor Relations.

The open enrollment period for the Hourly Life Insurance Program will run for six weeks between April 22nd – May 31st.

In addition, this year a onetime only Open Enrollment for Optional Long Term Disability will run concurrently with the Optional Life.

## 2019 UAW Region 5 Special V-CAP Drive

### Two Grand Prize 7-Day All Expense Paid Cruise for Two

Or Win a Laptop Computer or 5-Day All Expense Paid Elk Hunt

**Winning Wednesdays**  
Buy a V-CAP Ticket for a  
Chance to Win \$25 Gift Card or  
Movie Tickets and Restaurant  
Gift Card  
Drawings Every Wednesday

Join the Platinum Club  
Members Who Donate \$50 a Month  
Get a Chance to Win A Cast UAW Wheel  
Wall Decoration

Raise Your Monthly Donation to the  
Next Level to Win a \$150 Gift Card

**Monthly Drawing**  
Buy a Book of Tickets  
For a Chance to Win a 90-Minute Massage  
• Michael Koors Purse • Drone • Blue Tooth  
Speaker • 10" Tablet  
**June Drawing**  
American Made Smoker Set  
**September Drawing**  
\$500 Costco Card



1 Ticket \$3 • 2 Tickets \$5 • 12 Tickets \$30

# The future of auto work

By Jason Starr

**L**ocal 249 delegates Jim Fisher, Dean Freed, Steve Chorbak, Dana Davidson, Sade Ott, Scott Pyle, Tony Renfro, Ed Scaggs and I represented our local union at the UAW Special Bargaining Convention in Detroit March 11-13.

The UAW Bargaining Convention is held every four years, usually after the union's Constitutional Convention. At the convention, elected delegates from 570 active locals and regions across the U.S., Canada and Puerto Rico debate and decide what will be the union's bargaining strategy in 2,000 contracts at more than 1,000 employers over the next four years.

Naturally, Local 249 members are most interested in what will happen at Ford, but the Bargaining Convention covers much more than the Detroit Three automakers. The resolutions and discussion are broad in nature and designed to give bargaining committees in each sector represented by the union guidance when entering contract negotiations.

The theme of this year's convention was "We Are One," a reminder that wherever UAW workers are from, where they work, whatever race, region, gender, age, sexual orientation they happen to be, solidarity is the key to reaching bargaining goals.

These resolutions take a big picture view of issues facing our members across all industries and occupations. We use a building block approach that builds on past successes. For many

years, the UAW has employed a strategy we call pattern bargaining which prevents companies from competing on the basis of who can pay the lowest wages and forces them to compete instead on the basis of the quality of their products.

The primary goal of the resolutions adopted by the delegates for this round of contract negotiations is to, "protect the rights and dignity of workers and provide safe workplaces, fair pay, better job opportunities and a voice in shaping our work environment."

On wages, benefits and job security, delegates voted to:

- Continue to work to eliminate tiers where they exist and to reduce the time it takes for new workers to progress to top wage rates.
- Do more to limit the use of temporary workers, especially where they are used instead of permanent employees.
- Insource new and outsourced work
- Bargain to keep fresh products and the best technology in our work-sites as the key for job security.

I spoke on the floor of the convention on the changing nature of



Local 249 President Jason Starr spoke on the floor of the UAW Special Bargaining Convention in Detroit March 13 about new technology and the future of auto work. Photo by Don Lehman.

the auto industry, new technology and how they affect the future of auto work. Although these issues don't get as much attention on the plant floor as the bread and butter issues of pay and benefits, I believe they are critical job security issues. I also believe we will confront these issues sooner than many of us think.

A number of factors are coming together right now that will fundamentally change the nature of the auto industry. The resolution we adopted says, "we find ourselves in what is being called the 4th Industrial Revolution."

By 2022 we can expect to lose 75 million jobs due to technology, but there will be a gain of 133 million new jobs due to the introduction of new technologies. "Another way to look at this," as the resolution notes, "is that 65 percent of the children currently in grade school will work in jobs that don't exist at this time."

The auto industry is at the epicenter of many of these changes. Young people are no longer buying cars in the numbers that previous generations did.

Many now use ride hailing apps like Lyft or Uber, based on new technology, when they need to get somewhere by car.

Ford is already road testing autonomous vehicles in partnership with the city of Miami and plans to launch its own ride sharing operation in 2021. General Motors is also investing heavily in ride sharing technologies and is not far from going into competition with

Uber and Lyft.

Automakers are already preparing to phase out cars powered solely by internal combustion engines according to the financial services firm J.P. Morgan. They project that electric vehicles and hybrids will account for 30 percent of all vehicle sales by 2025.

We are also on the verge of a boom in autonomous vehicles sales. It is estimated that by 2025, some 8.5 million vehicles will be sold that have the capability to safely monitor the environment on their own, rather than depending on the driver to do so. Audi is already manufacturing a vehicle that is capable of doing this,

The revolution that is already shaking the foundations of the industry where we work and earn our living is still in the beginning stages, but it will have a direct impact on the future of our members who are not yet near retirement.

Many of those who have come to work in the auto industry since the 2008 recession will feel its impact.

That's why our negotiators will have to look ahead to the future of auto work when they sit across the table from the bosses at the Detroit Three in this round of negotiations.

We need fairness now in our wage and benefits agreements, but we also need jobs in the future. No one should be surprised to see union negotiators fighting for future products and training in new technology as a key part of our demands is this round of bargaining.



## UAW-Ford Fitness Center

Open Monday through Friday 9:00 a.m. to 7:00 a.m. (22 hrs.)  
Saturday 10:30 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. Sunday 2:00 p.m. to 5:30 p.m.

Located in the Education Bldg.

Call 459-1945 for more information.

# Silent auction for UAW quilt

By: Natalie Wood

**T**he Retirees are holding a silent auction for a beautiful quilt adorned with the UAW logo. The starting bid is \$225.00. There will be a choice of two quilts to the winner of the auction, and the auction is open to all UAW members. Get your bids in now for a chance at this lovely quilt. The quilts will be on display at UAW Local 249 union hall until the May 15th retiree meeting. The quilt that does not get chosen will be donated to UAW Region 5 Summer School in memory of Louise Sayer. Louise Sayer was on the CAP committee from UAW Local 2250 and their Retiree Board for many years. She will be missed. All proceeds benefit the retirees.

There were 60 members in attendance at the March meeting who listened to Chairperson Mel Thompson as he reported the details on Summer School which will be held in Norman Oklahoma on June 9-14, 2019.

He also spoke about how to find out if we need to cancel our retiree meetings due to inclement weather. We should check on our local TV stations to see if they have been cancelled.

Larry Rupp reported that the defibrillator has not arrived yet but when it does the union will have training on how to use it. A defibrillator is a medical device used to counter the onset of ventricular fibrillation, a common cause of cardiac arrest, and pulse less ventricular.

Shirley Mata reported a need for our members to exercise our right to vote. She spoke about issues with minimum wage, right to work and to pay attention to changes in Medicare.

She told members that they need

to call their representatives weekly because there are so many bills taking away our rights especially Clean Missouri. We voted to stop gerrymandering and create a new system that protected communities of color and prioritized fairness. But right now, a few politicians are blatantly ignoring us and using their unchecked power to reject the will of the people.

Lori Marin our Family Auxiliary Vice-Chair led us in song for the birthdays and anniversaries for the month of March. We had two anniversaries announced, Donald Hodge has been married 45 years and Carmen and Ray Wohler have been married 50 years. Congratulations to the happy couples. There were also eight birthdays announced this month. We had three members retire in February, Bill Amos, George Gibson and Steven Stordahl. Congratulation to all of you and we hope you enjoy retirement.

There were six deaths reported in



UAW Local 249 retirees are holding a silent auction for the winners choice of two beautiful quilts donated by Local 249. You have until May 15th to place your bid. Proceeds benefit the retirees. Photo by Don Lehman.

January and February. Timothy Bogart, Antonio Cervantes, Robert Collins, James L. Johnson, John W. Ropcke and Eddie Savage. Please pray for these families.

Bingo starts at 11:00 am on the third Friday of every month. April has been moved to the 12th this time. Please bring a white elephant gift and

snacks.

Please note that our June and July meetings will be combined. Our next meeting will be on April 17, 2019 starting at 10:00 am. Won't you join us for our next meeting? There is always room for more. Please bring a covered dish or dessert and come for fellowship with your union brothers and sisters.



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## NEED HELP?

Are you worried about money? Do you have problems on the job? Is someone in your family ill? Has a loved one passed away? Have you been physically or mentally abused? Are there drug or alcohol problems in your family? Having thoughts of suicide?

The UAW Chaplaincy Committee is here to listen or to offer spiritual advice. Call the Union Hall at 816-454-6333 and the Local will put you in touch with one of our caring Chaplaincy Committee members.



UAW Local 249 members Nicole Zable, left to right, Terri Hall, Shirley Mata, Karen Combe, Erica Eckart, Denise Claypole, LaFranse Jones, Camalee C. Hefty, Kim Hicks, and Angela Wheeler attended the annual International Women's Day at the Missouri Capitol in Jefferson City on March 8th.

# There is no limit to what women can accomplish

By Chrissy Kline

**Every year on March 8th, women around the globe gather to celebrate International Women's Day. This year was no exception, as women met in Missouri's capitol, to lobby for women's rights and empower our female legislators. A quote by Michelle Obama, sums up the fierceness displayed by those women as they shared the podium before descending on the halls of the House and Senate. She stated, "There is no limit to what we as women can accomplish." Many of the women gathered there that day have proven that time and again against great odds and were happy to share their stories.**

One of these empowered women working in the Capitol is Liz Henderson, legislative assistant to Senator Lauren Arthur. She loves her job and encourages women to pursue a career in politics if it is your passion. When asked what it is like working in the office of a senator, she said she feels that she connects well with Arthur and can relate better due to being closer in age and sharing similar ideals and experiences.

When the question was posed to her as a younger woman working in politics, what advice do you have for those looking to make their way to where you are, she advised against using gender as a crutch for favors or sympathies. "Don't make yourself less than, or others will treat you as such. You are great as you are. Own it." Being confident in who you are and the decisions you make will help you go the distance. She presented as passionate

but modest, and eager to help accommodate anything our group needed as we awaited the senator.

Senator Lauren Arthur met with the group and smiles and hugs were shared as she updated the women gathered on certain legislative measures pertaining to women. She showed that same fierce spirit that helped to propel her to the Senate as she educated those in attendance and then bestowed a great honor by introducing the working women of the labor movement to the Senate floor.

Senator Arthur was not the only legislator to show her appreciation for working women and Local 249 that day. House Representative Mark Ellebracht and his legislative assistant opened the doors of his office to us as though we were family before Ellebracht announced the group to the House floor and the women were

received by the legislators with applause and personal introductions. One woman in attendance said the experience was surreal, that she felt so honored to be able to go onto the floors and have the one on one time with these legislators. Another said she truly felt heard and seen and did not expect that in the halls of politics.

After returning to Ellebracht's office and being greeted with a smile that felt like home from his legislative assistant Ronda Griggs, I had to know her story. She was reluctant to share at first as she said she generally preferred to operate in the background as it isn't about her, it's about the people she serves.

We felt like kindred spirits in that sense and shared our stories with one another. She has worked as a legislative assistant for 45 years. When asked about her position and what it entailed she said that she does anything and everything that Mark needs, from fielding calls and e-mails to researching issues that his constituents find important. Ultimately she said that her job is to do everything she can to help him do his job to the best of his ability and to always make him look good.

However, she does not only serve Mark, she serves the community and the people in his district even more so. She takes every single call, letter

and email completely seriously. She said, "Everyone is a priority. Everyone receives the same quality of service. And that is the best I can give anyone." She shared that you have to have a serving heart for her job and that you never stop learning, every single day she learns something new.

Ronda Griggs showed me that not all strength comes in the form of a fierce fighting nature with impassioned speeches or having the loudest voice in a room. Sometimes being a strong empowered woman is having a heart that wishes to serve, a quiet voice that takes no credit, and a smile that feels like home.

I encourage anyone that has never made the trip to Jefferson City to get to know the legislators in their district to do so. And when visiting, get to know the people behind the scenes. They may be tentative or nervous to do so at first, but many truly wish to help and serve to improve the lives of those represented by their office. Make your voices heard and your presence known. Speak for what you believe in. Help to stand up for the working men and women around you. Help to support and uplift the women in your life. If we as women empower one another, there is no limit to what we can accomplish.