OPEIU mourns loss of two members at World Trade Center

OPEIU is mourning the loss of two members as a result of the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Center in New York on September 11, 2001. There were 87 OPEIU Local 153 members employed in the World Trade Center. William Valcarcel, employed by New York State, and Michael Boyle, employed by the Uniformed Firefighters Association are missing and presumed dead. Also, the son of Local 174 (Burbank, California) Executive Board member Carole Weems was a passenger on the second plane that crashed into the south tower. OPEIU extends its sincere sympathy to their families.

The other 85 Local 153 members were able to escape unharmed. They were working for Local 153 employers: Millennium Hotel, Marriott WTC, Empire Blue Cross, New York Stock Exchange and New York Board of Trades. The economic impact of this attack is causing widespread unemployment, leaving many of our members without health insurance.

In response, the International Union Executive Board has approved a program to receive monies to assist OPEIU members, with the recommendation that each OPEIU member contribute $10 to the OPEIU Relief Fund. The monies raised will be distributed to those most in need.

At the recent Canadian National Committee meeting, Vice President Nick Kapell from Local 397, Regina, Saskatchewan, presented a check to the OPEIU Relief Fund in the amount of $15,000. He stated that Local 397 would also match individual $10 contributions of its members. If all OPEIU Local Unions do what Local 397 is doing, OPEIU will be able to raise millions of dollars for this worthy cause. Contributions should be sent to OPEIU, OPEIU Relief Fund, Attention Secretary-Treasurer Gilles Beauregard, 1660 L Street, NW, Suite 801, Washington, D.C. 20036.

Convention coverage begins on page 2

In this section, you will find a review of all the speakers who addressed the convention, resolutions passed by the delegates, as well as a gallery of photos.
The delegates to the 22nd Triennial Convention on Monday, June 25, 2001 unanimously reelected Michael Goodwin to his third full-term as International President of the Office and Professional Employees International Union. Gilles Beauregard was also elected to serve as Secretary-Treasurer, a position he has held since 1986. Both will serve three-year terms.

The Convention hall erupted in cheers and applause after both International President Goodwin and Secretary-Treasurer Beauregard were nominated and seconded, and the delegation voted in favor of the nominations, thereby electing Goodwin and Beauregard by acclamation.

“I appreciate your support,” Goodwin said. “I’m going to work my heart out over the next three years so that when we come back here to our next convention in 2004, we will be a larger, stronger, more effective OPEIU. We’re going to continue the course of leading OPEIU in new directions, with new strength for the future,” Goodwin said.

“I reassure the convention of my continuing support and dedication to this organization,” said Secretary-Treasurer Beauregard. “We have a great organization—the future is ours!”

Elections were held to decide who would fill the thirteen Regional Vice President positions on the OPEIU Executive Board. Delegates from respective regions around the United States voted to elect:

**Region II**
- Mary Mahoney, Local 6
- Dan Dyer, Local 2
- Richard Lazigan, Local 153
- Dr. John Mattiacci, Local 45
- Patricia Priloh, Local 457

**Region III**
- Phillip Pope, Local 268

**Region IV**
- J.B. Moss, Local 277

**Region V**
- Nancy Wohlforth, Local 3
- Judy Solkovits, Local 140

**Region VI**
- Gary D. Kirkland, Local 11

**Region VII**
- Julie Weir, Local 502
- Theresa Horner, Local 42
- Anita Roy, Local 12

Canadian Director Michel Lajeunesse and five Vice Presidents from Canada – Region I, Maurice Laplante and Claude Grenier; Region VIII, Jerri New; Region IX, Nick Kapell; and Region X, Carol Dupuis – were elected separately at the Canadian Convention in accordance with the restructuring plan adopted at the 1998 convention.

Elections were also held to decide who would fill the three U.S. Vice President-At-Large positions on the OPEIU Executive Board. Delegates from Local Unions located anywhere in the United States voted to elect Millie Hall (Local 494), Maureen Bo (Local 8), and Kathleen Kinnick (Local 30): Bo received 811 11/12 votes, Kinnick received 806 11/12, and Hall received 838 11/12. A fourth candidate, Elizabeth Alonso (Local 29), received 77 votes.

The Vice President-At-Large positions were established in order to provide diversity on the Executive Board.
Speakers stress need to move in new directions in solidarity

In addition to the business of the convention, the gathering was an excellent opportunity to hear from national and international leaders from both the political and labor arenas. Among those who traveled to Florida to be with OPEIU were Representative Neil Abercrombie (D-HI), Maryland House of Delegates member and United States Congressional candidate Mark Shriver, AFL-CIO Secretary-Treasurer Richard Trumka, Former U.S. Attorney General Janet Reno, Union Privilege Representative Doreen Price, Coalition of Labor Union Women President Gloria Johnson, Free The Children Founder and Chairperson Craig Kielburger, Canadian Labour Congress Executive Vice President Hassan Yussuff and United Farm Workers President Arturo Rodriguez.

Florida warmly welcomes OPEIU

Canadian Director Michel Lajeunesse stresses need for solidarity

Richard Ellis, President of Local 100, Miami, Florida and Augustus Chester, President of Local 101, Miramar, Florida, welcomed delegates to the 22nd Triennial Convention. Both men served as co-hosts of the convention and acted as Chairpersons Pro Tempore until the gavel was turned over to International President Michael Goodwin.

Cynthia Hall, President of the South Florida Central Labor Council, AFL-CIO and Marilyn Lenard, President of the Florida State AFL-CIO, also welcomed delegates to the convention. Both women talked of the great progress that has been made in the state of Florida over the past several years.

“We have made great strides in a right-to-work state,” Hall remarked.

“Union membership has increased over the past few years,” Lenard said.

Both women expanded on the Florida the election debacle.

“Despite the outcome, the American labor movement pulled off one of the greatest election mobilization efforts ever,” Lenard said.

Hall and Lenard also both praised the work of Richard Ellis as President of Local 100.

Representative Abercrombie urges delegates to take back this country

Representative Neil Abercrombie (D-HI), a senior member of the Armed Services Committee in the House of Representatives, fervently called on OPEIU, and the labor movement in general, to take power from those who are fighting against working families.

In an inspirational and enthusiastic speech, Abercrombie affirmed that every vote counts, as evidenced by Senator Jim Jeffords’ switch out of the Republican Party in the United States Senate.

Abercrombie praised International President Michael Goodwin and the rest of OPEIU, calling the union, “a true example of international unionism.”

Abercrombie also spoke on the topic of diversity. He commended the OPEIU for the number of women serving in leadership positions, and related a message from his home state, “We let diversity define us in Hawaii, not divide us. Labor must heed that message.”
M • White Collar

A t the beginning of the convention, Doug Potter, President of Local 90, the Southern California Professional Engineering Association (SCPEA) and John Conley, President of the newly affiliated Industrial, Technical and Professional Employees Union (ITPEU), both warmly praised International President Michael Goodwin and the rest of OPEIU for its integrity and its hospitality.

Potter spoke of the great support he has received from the International Union and praised International Vice President Gary Kirkland for negotiating the best contract in years. The contract is in the process of being ratified.

Conley praised former Director of Organization Jay Porcaro for his efforts in bringing OPEIU and ITPEU together. He handed President Goodwin a letter stating that the affiliation agreement was in the process of being overwhelmingly approved by the ITPEU membership.

Congressional candidate Shriver: One can make a difference

Mark Shriver

Maryland House of Delegates member and United States Congressional candidate Mark Shriver addressed convention delegates, where he said that one person can make a difference, as evidenced by Senator Jeffords’ historic move that gave the Democrats control of the Senate. Shriver further stated that he wants to make a difference as well, by defeating the Republican member of Congress from Maryland House of Delegates member and United States Congressional candidate Mark Shriver addressed convention delegates, where he said that one person can make a difference, as evidenced by Senator Jeffords’ historic move that gave the Democrats control of the Senate. Shriver further stated that he wants to make a difference as well, by defeating the Republican member of Congress from Montgomery County, Maryland.

Shriver said he is running for Congress because he believes working Americans want a Congress that prioritizes their needs and finds a fair balance between big business and working people. “This Republican Congress, led by Hastert, Armey, DeLay and company, has not measured up,” Shriver said.

Shriver provided delegates with a laundry list of examples of how the Republican-controlled Congress has catered to big business and special interests. “Whether it’s rolling back ergonomics standards that would prevent debilitating workplace injuries; or promising to delay consideration of a patients’ bill of rights; or raiding the Medicare Trust Fund; or passing a millionaire tax cut at the expense of working people’s priorities, the Republican Congress has put working families under attack,” Shriver said.

Gun safety legislation, environmental protections, and children’s education are just a few of the issues Shriver has fought for in Annapolis, the capital of Maryland. Shriver thanked organized labor for its support over the seven years he has served in Annapolis. “It has been a privilege and an honor to work on behalf of working women and men in Maryland.” Shriver said.

Richard Trumka praises OPEIU for its organizing prowess

Richard L. Trumka, Secretary-Treasurer of the AFL-CIO, congratulated OPEIU for achieving “a historic milestone” by reaching 100,000 members in the United States.

“You can tell from the spirit in this room, about the benefits of union affiliation.”

Abercrombie closed his comments with an adaptation of a Vince Lombardi quote, the famous former coach of the Green Bay Packers football team. “Leave no regrets on the union field; let’s bring this country back to the working people!” he concluded.
Continued from page 4

Trumka continued, "If every union in our federation measured up to the job this union is doing in organizing, there’s no doubt we could reach our goal of bringing 1 million new members into our movement every year—so keep on leading the way and show- ing us all how to gain new strength through new directions. “You got your success the old fashioned way, you earned it," Trumka said.

“And we shouldn’t be talking about raising the retirement age; we should be talking about lowering it," Trumka said to a standing ovation. Trumka spoke about how although labor turned out its members in record numbers on Election Day, it still was not enough because all three branches of the national government ended up under partisan right- wing control.

He explained that we lost because we are mobilizing the same number of union mem- bers as we did in 1956—13 million. “The bottom line is that we are doing a great job at politics, but we aren’t winning and we aren’t in control because there aren’t enough of us," Trumka said.

“What we need most desperately is more members, millions more, and that’s my main message to all of you today—we have to organize our way up and out of the morass we are in," he continued.

Trumka acknowledged, once again, that OPEIU is doing a terrible job of organizing and setting standards for other unions to follow.

Trumka concluded his remarks by ask- ing every OPEIU member to raise the bar even higher. “I know that you will accept the challenge and help us build the new strength we need to move our country in a new direction."

Craig Kielburger fights against child labor

Craig Kielburger, 17 years old, Founder and Chairperson of (Kids Can) Free The Children, spoke to delegates about the importance of the opposition to child labor and poverty all around the world. Kielburger also preached the benefits of unionism and how the labor movement is one of the greatest supporters of the fight against child labor.

“We have the ability to eliminate poverty,” Kielburger said. According to Kielburger, if the United States spent $45 billion, every fami- ly in the country could be brought above the poverty line. Forty billion dollars alone is spent by Americans each year playing golf, Kielburger said.

Kielburger urged delegates to stand togeth- er on this important issue. “We’re here to raise our voices for the people who have no voice. “Every single change has come about because of solidarity,” he continued.

Kielburger told delegates about how Free The Children is growing every day, and a big reason is because of organized labor’s help. “We now have Free The Children chapters in 35 nations and over 100,000 members,” Kielburger said.

Kielburger asked delegates to teach their children to fight for what they believe in. “Teach them not to be bystanders, but to be activists. Challenge them, get them involved in social justice causes,” Kielburger said.

International President Michael Goodwin then presented Kielburger with a donation to Free The Children from OPEIU.

CLUW President Gloria Johnson expounds on issues important to labor movement

Gloria Johnson, President of the Coalition of Labor Union Women (CLUW), passionately urged dele- gates to fight against policies that discriminate against working families.

“We must fight sexism, racism, homo- phobia, ageism or any other –ism, because they are truly wrong,” Johnson said. “The labor movement is the only organization that will address these issues, so it is in our hands to continue to fight,” she continued.

Johnson thanked International President Michael Goodwin and OPEIU for its steady- fast support of CLUW and acknowledged several OPEIU members that are also CLUW members.

Several of the issues Johnson expounded on were the minimum wage, prescription drugs for seniors, Social Security, an ergonomics standard, the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA), judicial appointments and globalization.

Johnson also addressed racial profiling and hate crimes.

While Johnson recognized that the recent switch in the Senate and several key may- oral races won by Democrats are good signs, she said that these signs are a call to action. “We must show the significance of the right to vote and the right to join a union," Johnson said.

Hassan Yussuff urges delegates to combat racism

Hassan Yussuff, Executive Vice President of the Canadian Labour Congress (CLC), told dele- gates that effort, energy and commitment is required to eradicate racism.

“Racism plays a very divisive role for working people," Yussuff said. “We must end this horrible, horrible ideology."

Yussuff announced to delegates that he would be attending the Children’s march in Washington, D.C. "I am going to show the world that organized labor is standing up to racism," he said.

Continued on page 6
Continued from page 5

Dying the Third World Conference on Racism in Durban, South Africa, along with Pierre Gingras, OPEIU Canadian Legal Counsel.

Yussuff further expanded his thoughts on racism. “The person sitting beside you may look different, but you both stand for the same thing: solidarity.”

“We have more in common with each other than the bosses who try to destroy our collective gains every day,” he continued. Yussuff acknowledged that while unions still have problems regarding racism, the labor movement “is the greatest movement on the face of this planet.”

Yussuff also spoke about globalization, saying, “The Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA) will only strengthen the hands of transnational corporations.”

“We will stand together to ensure that the trading system of the Americas will benefit working people,” Yussuff continued. “Our union, your union, makes this world a better place to live,” Yussuff said. “It is hard to continue to fight, but the labor movement is the most perfect vehicle to bring about change,” he said.

Yussuff then reminded delegates that in order to bring about change, a union must be strong. “It is your responsibility to see that particular provision overridden to give us equality,” Yussuff said.

He also spoke of how the APMA is seeking to change the system, becoming the first health care group to join the OPEIU, thus “providing a great mechanism to make an impact for our members and workers.”

Sowell praised the work of Dr. John Mattiacci, President of Local 45, a “real activist” and the driving force between affiliation of podiatric groups with OPEIU, and spoke of the great benefits to both organizations of such an affiliation.

“We feel that this is a very important relationship,” Sowell said. “There is much to gain. Through unity there is strength, and we will further this development and have a great relationship in the future.”

Doug Sowell praises APMA, OPEIU relationship

R
obert D. “Doug” Sowell, the President of the American Podiatric Medical Association (APMA) told OPEIU delegates of the burgeoning relationship between the APMA and OPEIU. APMA was the first group of medical professionals to join the OPEIU.

Sowell spoke of the dilemma facing the podiatric health care community. “In between a system of governmental regulation and private health care systems (HMOs), the APMA seeks to equalize a system of care...and to provide quality care for all,” Sowell said.

Sowell said that HMOs are “tying the hands of providers,” and that ERISA provisions are continuing to allow discrimination of health care, restricting access for many workers. “We are determined to see that particular provision overridden to give us equality,” Sowell said.

He also spoke of how the APMA is seeking to change the system, becoming the first health care group to join the OPEIU, thus “providing a great mechanism to make an impact for our members and workers.”

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“We feel that this is a very important relationship,” Sowell said. “There is much to gain. Through unity there is strength, and we will further this development and have a great relationship in the future.”

David Christopherson urges political involvement

D
avid Christopherson, a Canadian Member of Parliament from Ontario, warned delegates of the growing right-wing movement in both Canada and the United States.

“Right-wingers think clean water, decent health care and a good education are not as important as the almighty tax-cut,” Christopherson said.

Christopherson, who happens to be a union member, got involved in politics because the political arena is where compensation laws and standards are set.

“My job didn’t end at the bargaining table, I had to enter the political arena,” Christopherson said.

According to Christopherson, the Ontario government is forfeiting safe drinking water

Dr. Annie B. Martin: Victory comes with unity

D
r. Annie B. Martin, a member of OPEIU, Local 155 and a member of the Executive Board of the New York City Central Labor Council and the President of the New York Chapter of the NAACP urged delegates to work together to achieve success.

“We cannot expect to reach our goals until we have diversity with women and people of color,” Martin said.

Martin relayed her experience in an event titled “Seven Days In June.” She accompanied labor leaders across New York City, protesting against companies that utilize unfair labor practices.

Martin concluded by saying, “Our combined strength can build a better union and a better society.”

Dr. John Mattiacci speaks against managed care

D
r. John Mattiacci, President of OPEIU’s National Guild of Medical Professionals, Vice President on the OPEIU Executive Board from Region II and President of Local 45, notified delegates that managed care companies have dismantled the traditional health care system.

“The working people of America should not be subjected to the pitfalls of managed care,” Mattiacci said. Mattiacci spoke of the many dangers of managed care, including eroding the doctor-patient relationship.

“One danger could mean the end of the line for many of our patients,” he continued.

Mattiacci informed delegates of the past, present and potential future of unionizing medical professionals.

“We could organize 1.5 million medical professionals; we just have to show that there is a real tangible benefit,” Mattiacci said. “We have the right tools, the right location, the right time in history; all we need is the fuel to run,” he continued.

Mattiacci praised and thanked the OPEIU for its work in helping the medical professionals organize.

“I can think of no other union that medical professionals should join,” Mattiacci said.
Janet Reno touts education as the heart of all we do

Former Attorney General of the United States and potential Florida gubernatorial candidate Janet Reno addressed convention delegates on June 28. After a five-minute standing ovation and cheers of, “Run, Janet, Run,” Reno appealed to delegates to focus on childhood education.

“We must ensure that every child in America has a quality education,” Reno said.

Reno told delegates that there should be no failing schools, yet unfortunately, teachers are not paid a fair wage.

“We ask people to teach, but we don’t pay them a wage. We have to ensure that teachers can teach,” Reno said.

Reno added that the government must reduce class size and increase compensation for teachers. She gave several examples of how schools and education can help not only students, but adults as well.

“Let us make schools day and night learning opportunities for everybody. Let us make sure that every child who graduates high school has a skill, so that they can earn a living wage,” Reno said.

Reno also discussed crime and violence and added that crime has been down for eight years in a row.

“If people work together, we can make a difference and eliminate the culture of violence in this country,” Reno said.

Reno concluded her remarks by encouraging OPEIU members to work with her to better the country.

“It can be done” says UFW President Rodriguez

United Farm Workers of America (UFW) President Arturo Rodriguez led OPEIU delegates in an old UFW chant titled, “Si se puede,” which means “It can be done,” in Spanish.

Rodriguez told delegates of the progress the UFW has made in the past three years.

“Six different states now honor Cesar Chavez with a state holiday,” Rodriguez said.

According to Rodriguez, Cesar Chavez Day, celebrated on March 31 in California, honors Chavez in a unique way. In the morning, students learn about Chavez’s life and teachings and in the afternoon, students complete service projects.

Rodriguez said that the UFW has won twenty-two elections in a row and boycotts have now ended against Gallo wine and California grapes.

Rodriguez also told delegates of the success of the Watsonville march, which gave the UFW the ability to sign an agreement with the largest independent strawberry producer in the nation.

Organizing continues to be a UFW focus, according to Rodriguez.

“We just organized a furniture company, which is the first company we have organized outside the agricultural industry,” Rodriguez said.

Rodriguez thanked the OPEIU for the tremendous support it has given the UFW for the UFW over the years. At the end of Rodriguez’s remarks, International President Michael Goodwin presented Rodriguez with a generous check from OPEIU in support of UFW organizing campaigns.

A Golden Award was presented to Paul K. Rainsberger, Director of Labor Studies at the University of Missouri for his support of the OPEIU’s Romeo Corbeil Scholarship Funds.

Through Rainsberger’s assistance and endorsement, the camp is now permanently held at the Missouri University Forest School of Natural Resources on Lake Wappapelo.

Also given special recognition was Vanessa Cortinas, the daughter of a Local 174 member, for her involvement in the summer camp. Vanessa was one of the first students to attend the camp in 1997, and is now a student at Tulane University, where she is extremely active. She spends her summers as a counselor at the summer camp.

Since its inception, 74 children of OPEIU members have enjoyed the Romeo Corbeil Summer Camp. This summer, 25 more students will be attending.
Delegates consider resolutions, policy statements and constitutional amendments

Delegates to the convention carefully considered many important resolutions, policy statements and constitutional amendments that will help to guide OPEIU over the next three years. Following is a synopsis of their actions:

RESOLUTIONS

Timely Resolution No. 1, VOTE (Voice of the Electorate) resolves “that OPEIU emphasize to all of its members the importance of contributing to the OPEIU-VOTE ("Voice of the Electorate"); and Be It Further Resolved, that all delegates to this 2001 OPEIU 22nd Triennial Convention, commit themselves to the OPEIU efforts to educate and recruit members to sign up for VOTE—our strength at the ballot box; and Be It Finally Resolved that the delegates to this 2001 OPEIU International Convention go on record fully supporting this Resolution. This is America. Count every vote!”

Timely Resolution No. 2, Pay Equity, resolves “that we commend the courageous women who are breaking the glass ceiling, impacting the political arena, smashing barriers, shattering Olympic records, heroes challenging cyberspace, the silver screen and the male-dominated boardrooms; and Be It Further Resolved that we recognize the skills, talent and significant contributions made by American women, regardless of race, class, age and ethnic background as women seek equal pay, equal protection, equal power; and Be It Finally Resolved that the delegates to this 2001 OPEIU International Convention go on record fully supporting this Resolution.”

Timely Resolution No. 11, Coalition of Labor Union Women, resolves “that the OPEIU fully supports the National Coalition of Labor Union Women in its mission to improve the working conditions of women; and Therefore Be Further Resolved that the OPEIU commits to support the National Coalition of Labor Union Women, resolves “that the OPEIU fully supports the National Coalition of Labor Union Women wherever and whenever it can.”

Timely Resolution No. 12, Ergonomics Standard, refers to the repeal of ergonomics standards and resolves “that the OPEIU calls on the United States Congress to reverse this misguided policy and undo this unnecessary assault on worker safety;” and “that the U.S. Congress reinstate the OSHA ergonomics standard immediately.”

Timely Resolution No. 14, Resolution on Energy Deregulation, resolves “that the OPEIU oppose the deregulation of the energy industry” and “that the OPEIU oppose the introduction of private, for-profit energy delivery systems, which result in a reduction of service and reliability with increased costs to the general public.” This resolution was brought by Local 378 in Vancouver, BC as part of its “It’s Our Dam Power” campaign.

Timely Resolution No. 15, Resolution re FTAA, resolves “that the OPEIU oppose any trade agreements that do not include the goals and objectives of labor as defined by the Canadian Labour Congress (CLC) and the AFL-CIO;” and “that “the OPEIU Locals be encouraged to lobby their political representatives to include labor’s input in future trade agreements.”

Timely Resolution No. 24, Saving Social Security, resolves “that this Convention go on record in support of this Resolution and let our Representatives across the country know that we do not support privatization of the Social Security system. Let us not allow Congress to kill the best run program of the United States.”

Also passed were Timely Resolution No. 5, Restore the Control of the Deminimus Level to Congress; No. 6, Requiring Union Member Appraiser for Union Sponsored Real Property Valuation; and No. 7, Real Property Valuations. The actions called for in these Resolutions will work to ensure that licensed, experienced appraisers will conduct all real estate appraisals.

Timely Resolutions were also adopted by the delegates, including Resolution No. 8, Equal Pay; No. 10, Immigrant Workers Right to Organize; No. 13, American Income Life Insurance Company and National Income Life Insurance Company and No. 26, Edith Withington.

Resolution No. 25, OPEIU Internship Program, was referred back to the Executive Board for consideration. Resolutions Nos. 20 and 23 both titled Jobs, Justice and Equality, were combined and adopted. Unintimely Resolution No. 29, Helicopter Pilots, and No. 31, Changing Puerto Rico Region II, were adopted.

Resolution No. 3, Midwest Conference of Illinois Locals; Resolution No. 4, Region 7, Vice President; Resolution No. 18, Full-Time Paid Organizers; and Resolution No. 28, OPEIU Puerto Rico Labor Council, were not adopted by the delegates.

Unintimely Resolution No. 30, Joint Organizing and Co-operative Organizing Committees, was adopted.

As part of a special memorial tribute, the delegation adopted Executive Board Resolution No. 1, Gwen Wells, in memory of OPEIU’s former Director of Research and Education who passed away in 1999. The delegates resolved, “that we re dedicate ourselves to carry on her work with the same fervor and commitment to organizing, affirmative action, political action and union participation, with a special emphasis on education which she considered a vital part of every activity she pursued on behalf of all of us.”

Also adopted was Executive Board Resolution No. 3, Organizing, which resolves that “the OPEIU supports the overall goal of the AFL-CIO to organize one million members in 2001,” and that “OPEIU sets the goal of organizing an additional 15,000 members within the next twelve months using the 30% of its resources that OPEIU has dedicated to organizing” and that “the President of OPEIU will work with the Director of Organization and Field Services, the officers, staff and members to develop an overall plan on how this growth can best be accomplished.”

Executive Board Resolution No. 10, A Salute to Jay Porcaro, recognizes the many efforts of the retired Director of Organization and resolves “in recognition of his contributions to OPEIU and the labor movement in general, we hereby salute Jay Porcaro for his great inspiration and work,” and “that this convention shall rise in a standing ovation in appreciation for his great work. Thank you Jay for a job well done.”

The delegates adopted Executive Board Resolution No. 2, In Honor of Janice Best; No. 4, Medicare Prescription Drug Benefit; No. 5, Alliance for Retired Americans; No. 6, Campaign Finance Reform; No. 7, Patients’ Bill of Rights; No. 8, California’s Electricity Deregulation Crisis, with a floor amendment; No. 9, Voice of the Electorate; No. 11, Support of OPEIU Guilds; No. 13, Globalization; and No. 14, Protection of Labour Rights in a Global Environment, were incorporated into Revised Policy 10, Globalization, Free Trade and Union Solidarity, and approved No. 12, Organizing in Partnership, with an amendment, was also approved.

POLICY STATEMENTS

Adopted were new Policy Statement No. 2, Right to Organize; No. 3, The National Labor College; No. 4, Local Union Affiliation with AFL-CIO State Federations of Labor along with Revised Policy Statements No. 1, Affirmative Action; No. 2, AIDS; No. 3, Americans with Disabilities Act, No. 6, Electronic Monitoring; No. 9, Food Assistance Programs; No. 13, Needs of Working Families and No. 18, U.S. Social Security and Medicare.


CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENTS

Delegates to the convention unanimously voted to approve Constitutional Amendments in the area of finance. Among these amendments is a provision that calls for an increase in per capita tax on all members of $.35 per member per month effective October 1, 2001, and $.25 per member per month effective October 1, 2003. These per capita increases will be allocated to the General Fund, ROC Fund, or the Strike Benefit and Defense Fund as determined by the Executive Board.

In recognition of the positive results of area educational conferences, it was also amended that all Local Union contributions to the U.S. Educational Conference Fund be increased from $25 to $30 per month. This will ensure that all Local Unions shall be entitled to $600 per Local Union participating in area educational conferences. Article XIV was also amended to ensure that contributions to the Canadian Convention Fund be increased from $25 to $30 per Local Union per month. This will assist Local Unions in Canada to meet the continuous increases in cost to attend conventions.

Also amended was Article XVI to increase contributions to the International Union Convention Fund from $30 to $50 per month for all Local Unions with more than twenty members. This change will provide for a 67 percent increase in allowances paid out to Local Unions to attend conventions.

Also amended was Article XIX, Section 8 permitting Local Unions to increase initiation fees up to $100. The current constitution provides a $50 maximum. This was in response to requests from many Local Unions calling for such an increase.

Constitutional amendments were also made to Articles IV, V, VI, IX, XIII, XIV, XXI and XXIV. These sections refer to Membership, Conventions, Officers, Executive Board, Canada, Withdrawal Cards and Rules.
Awards were given at the convention for special achievement in the areas of organizing and political activism. Florida Regional Director Ed Darcy Sr., and International Representatives Ed Darcy Jr. and Vincent Menditto and Local 100, Miami, Florida, were presented the Henderson B. Douglas Award for outstanding efforts in organizing supervisors and professionals in Florida.

The triennial awards for organizing were also presented. The Gold award was given to Jacques Latendre and Local 57, Montreal, Quebec. The Silver award was presented to Organizer Cindy Schu and Local 8, Seattle, Washington. The Bronze award was presented earlier in the week to Lupe Salazar and Local 174, Los Angeles, California.

The Regional Organizing Cooperative (ROC) Award was presented to International Representative Paul Bohelski for his work in organizing helicopter pilots in the Gulf Coast, and Virginia Levesque, for her work organizing at St. Vincent’s Hospital in Little Rock, Arkansas. Captain Steve Ragin was recognized for his volunteer efforts in organizing helicopter pilots at Air Log. Gordon Brehm was also recognized for his volunteer efforts in the organizing campaign at St. Vincent’s Hospital.

International Vice President Gary Kirkland and Local 11, Portland, Oregon, were recognized for their outstanding work in raising the largest amount of voluntary funds per capita for OPEIU’s Voice of the Electorate (VOTE) program.

Awards given for organizing, VOTE participation

Organizer Cindy Schu (third from right) and Local 8, Seattle, Washington, receive the Silver award for organizing.

Secretary-Treasurer Gilles Beauregard, Canadian Director Michel Lajeunesse, International Vice President Maurice Laplante, Jacques Latendre, and International President Michael Goodwin, Latendre and Local 57, Montreal, Quebec, are awarded the Gold award for organizing.

Secretary-Treasurer Beauregard, Director of Organization and Field Services Kevin Kistler, Secretary-Treasurer Gilles Beauregard, Florida Regional Director Ed Darcy Sr., International Representative Ed Darcy Jr., Local 100 President Richard Ellis, International Representative Vincent Menditto, and International President Michael Goodwin. Local 100 is the recipient of the Henderson B. Douglas award for organizing.

OPEIU Director of Organization and Field Services Kevin Kistler, Secretary-Treasurer Gilles Beauregard, Florida Regional Director Ed Darcy Sr., International Representative Ed Darcy Jr., Local 100 President Richard Ellis, International Representative Vincent Menditto, and International President Michael Goodwin. Local 100 is the recipient of the Henderson B. Douglas award for organizing.

International Vice President Gary Kirkland and Local 11, Portland, Oregon, are recognized for outstanding voluntary fundraising for OPEIU’s Voice of the Electorate (VOTE) program.
Each delegate received a seniority pin in their delegate kit, indicating the number of years they have been a member of the OPEIU. The Convention recognized those five members with the most years of service; combined, these members have 240 years of service. These members are: Kathryn L. Lee, Local 339, Akron, Ohio; Vivian Grubbs, Local 1794, Cleveland, Ohio; J.B. Moss, Local 277, Fort Worth, Texas; Louis Philippe Lamoureux, Local 663, Quebec, Canada; and Charlie Ponti Sr., Local 153, New York, New York. Ponti has the most years of service, having joined the OPEIU in 1937. Secretary-Treasurer Gilles Beauregard also paid special tribute to Lamoureux, who has been a friend and mentor to Beauregard since he first ran for Local Union President in 1960.

Secretary-Treasurer Beauregard gave special recognition to two loyal members of the OPEIU Secretary-Treasurer’s office who are retiring this year. Sandra Rose has worked at the OPEIU for 35 years, and Mary Foki for 32 years. Also recognized was staff member, Barbara Devine, who is also retiring but was not at the convention.

The Bronze Award for Organizing was then given to Lupe Salazar, Local 174, Los Angeles, California, for her work organizing two units at Warner Brothers.

An Executive Board Resolution was also passed recognizing the contributions of retired Director of Organization, Jay Porcaro.
Convention Scenes

International President Goodwin pictured with ITPEU Director of Organization Dennis Harrington, President John Conley and Secretary-Treasurer John Brenton III.

Karen Rockwell, Local 397, Regina, Saskatchewan, Canada.

Verleen Wilder, Local 8, Seattle, Washington.

Carol Baker, Local 343, Toronto, Ontario, Canada.

Cynthia Oleson, Local 35, Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

International Vice President Jerri New, Canadian Director Lajeunesse, Hassan Yusuff, President of the Canadian Labor Congress, and International President Goodwin.

Canadian Director Lajeunesse, Secretary-Treasurer Beauregard, International Vice President Carol Dupuis, retiring Vice President Janice Best and International President Goodwin.

Secretary-Treasurer Beauregard, International Vice President John Mattiacci, Doug Sowell, President of the American Podiatric Medical Association, and International President Goodwin.
Vice President Emerita Carolyn Combs swears in the newly elected OPEIU Executive Board.

International Secretary-Treasurer Beauregard.

International Vice President Jerri New seconds Michael Goodwin’s nomination.

International Vice President Kathleen Kinnick.

International Vice President Richard Lanigan nominates Michael Goodwin for International President.

Delegates relax and confer before the morning session begins.

Secretary-Treasurer Beauregard and Director of Organization and Field Services Kevin Kistler.
International Vice President Maurice Laplante.

International Vice President Carol Dupuis.

International Vice President Millie Hall.

International Vice President Patricia Priloh.

Canadian Director Lajeunesse congratulates Janice Best as she is conferred Vice President Emerita status upon her retirement from the Union.

International President Goodwin thanks Free The Children founder Craig Kielburger for joining the convention.

Delegates vote for the OPEIU Executive Board.

Kathryn L. Lee, Local 339, Akron, Ohio is recognized for her many years of service in OPEIU.
Delegate Steve Tully, Local 32, Newark, N.J., and others stand to support Janet Reno’s run for Governor of Florida.

Secretary-Treasurer Beauregard, Louis Philippe Lamoureux and International President Goodwin.
Convention Scenes

Patricia Hoffman, Business Representative with Local 153, New York, N.Y., talks with friends.

It's all smiles at the convention.

A happy group of delegates, guests and spouses.

Secretary-Treasurer Beauregard, International Vice President Mattiacci, International President Goodwin and Director of Organization and Field Services Kistler.

Vivian Grubbs, Local 1794, Cleveland, Ohio addresses the convention. Grubbs was recognized for her years of service to OPEIU.

Federation of Catholic Teachers President Michele MacDonald with Free The Childrens’ Craig Kielburger.

A convention delegate enjoys the daily newsletter, Delegate.

International Vice President Gary Kirkland and convention delegates.

Jim Sullivan, the Chair of the Sergeant-at-Arms Committee, and President of Local 11.
Convention Scenes

Delegates in session.

Christine Page, a member of the Sergeant-at-Arms Committee, and Local 174, Burbank, California.

Delegates at work.

A “Canadian Mounty” gives a salute to all Canadian delegates.

(Right Photo): Conny Ford, Local 3, San Francisco, California, and Karen Rockwell, Local 397, Regina, Saskatchewan, Canada. Rockwell served as the chair of the Election Committee; Ford was co-chair.

Francine Doyon of the Canadian Director’s office, Secretary-Treasurer Beauregard and Richard Ellis, Local 100, observe the singing of the National Anthem by Ben Parrish, United Memorial Bible Services, Inc.

Edwina Dunne, Local 153, New York, N.Y. (Federation of Catholic Teachers) wins the VOTE Raffle.

International Vice President Kirkland accepts an award on behalf of Local 11, Portland, Oregon, for its exemplary support of OPEIU’s Voice of the Electorate (VOTE) Program.
Convention Scenes


Richard Ellis, Local 100, Miami, Florida; Ben Parrish, United Memorial Bible Services, Inc.; and Judy Boehmer, Local 397, Regina, Saskatchewan, Canada.

Dr. Michael Wodka, Local 45, OPEIU’s National Guild of Medical Professionals.


International Vice President Maureen Bo.

Former Attorney General Janet Reno and her convention escort committee.

A convention participant reads Delegate.

International Vice President Julie Weir and International Vice President Jerri New deliver a report.

International Vice President Phil Pope.

Billie Adams, OPEIU Vice President Emeritus serves as Chairman Pro Tempore during nominations for International President.
Convention Scenes

International Vice President Claude Grenier.

International Vice President Anita Roy.

International Vice President Dan Dyer.

Lula Stewart, Local 204, Pascagula, Mississippi.

International Vice Presidents Millie Hall and Carol Dupuis deliver a report to the convention.

International Vice President Judy Solkovits.

International Vice President J.B. Moss.

Juan Alvarez, Local 153, New York, N.Y.


Mary Foki, a retiring member of the Secretary-Treasurer’s office, and OPEIU Purchasing Agent Geoffrey Palmer.

General Counsel Melvin Schwarzwald with Convention Parliamentarian Carl Jimmy Stickler.

Rich Sabo and Gary Locke work behind the scenes.

Local 2 delegates and guests, with OPEIU International Vice President Dan Dyer (far right).
Local 35 successfully fights lock out at Alfa/Laval

Kenosha, Wisconsin, bravely fought back management and won a new contract. Almost all of the Local 35 members employed at Alfa/Laval are women. While the company easily reached a contract agreement with the machinists union, a bargaining unit that is mostly male, it turned around and demanded a string of serious givebacks from Local 35.

Wages were not really an issue in the dispute. But management demanded enough givebacks in other areas to make its proposal nothing less than a gutting of the contract. The Union resisted the demands. Seeing that Local 35 and its members were not about to give in to its hardball tactics, the company responded by locking out the employees. But the Local 35 membership fought back. The Union began picketing and it reached out to the media. OPEIU and other local unions in the Kenosha area gave support. Then a rally was held that really got the company and the media to take notice. Because the company had signed a fair agreement with its other bargaining unit that is mostly men, Local 35 decided to stage a major demonstration called “Cross Dress for Success.” And, yes, the women in Local 35 dressed as men for the demonstration.

The message was obvious and the tactic worked. The demonstration received wide coverage in the media and a contract was reached with the company the very next day. The two-year deal was overwhelmingly ratified by Local 35 members.

Under the terms of the agreement all locked out members of Local 35 returned to their jobs. Although wages were never an issue in the dispute, the agreement calls for 2 percent wage hikes in each year. The contract also contains improvements in the employees’ long-term disability, life insurance and pension benefits. The major issue between the employees and management dealt with seniority rights. All seniority rights are preserved in the new agreement, along with other contract language that was considered vital by the Union and its members. Retired members’ health insurance will be fully paid by the company.

The President of Local 35, Judy Burnick, expressed appreciation to members of other labor unions and the public. “We are extremely grateful for the outstanding support from the community and from other labor unions, especially the machinists,” she said. “This contract proves that solidarity is alive and well in Wisconsin.”

Local 35 members speaking with the press at the demonstration where some “cross-dressed for success.” Among those present are (center) Local 35 President Judy Burnick, Chief Steward Cassie Cokes, Kathy Hauptman, Kim Rodriguez, Karen Ellis, Gail Plaistad, Kathy Nickel and Nancy Byers.
Local 378, Vancouver, British Columbia

Transit workers legislated back to work

The four-month transit strike in Vancouver concluded with a legislat-ed return to work imposed by the Provincial Government. Throughout the strike, ratemembers of the public, business owners and disabled groups joined striking OPEIU Local 378 members and Canadian Auto Workers with TransLink and Coast Mountain Bus in a series of rallies, demonstr-a tions and delegations.

OPEIU believes the strike was prolonged because TransLink was saving so much money in wages and fuel each day the strike continued.

“Even if we had won, the strike puts an end to any short-term optimism. We hope that after Premier Campbell’s appointment as new government ministers in the various portfolios, OPEIU has requested face-to-face meet-ings. “We’ll try to ensure that the new ministers are current with issues affect-ing our members. That way we can work together to address common problems,” New said.

“We’ll be working hard in the coming weeks to prepare briefs that will give new government officials an understanding of who we are, our labor relations experiences at the various companies, the challenges we face each employer and the ram-ifications for our members,” New con- cluded.

Local 463, Montréal, Québec

Local 463 at Gaz negotiates agreement on how to utilize $22.2 million pension plan surplus

At meetings held June 11-12, mem-bers of Local 463 voted over-whelmingly in favor of an agreement to utilize the $22.2 million surplus generat-ed by their pension plan. The pension plan covers all unionized employees at Gaz Métropolitant, and the agreement was negoti-ated jointly by all three bargaining units. Local 463 represents two of the bargaining units — the office workers and the sales rep-representatives — while another union (the CSN) represents the blue-collar workers. This historic agreement sets out a num-ber of important improvements to the pen-sion plan by dividing up the $22.2 million in surpluses generated by the plan as follows:

Early retirement packages:
• $7.7 million toward financing an entic-ing early retirement package that will allow some 180 employees to retire with greatly enhanced benefits (maximum bridging supplement, more advantageous age/years of service factor);

Improvements for active members:
• $1.1 million to finance a change to 85

Local 378, Vancouver, British Columbia

Cutbacks, layoffs at ICBC discussed

The provincial election results are in and the implications for Local 378 members — not to mention B.C. motorists — are immense. Newly elected Premier Gordon Campbell has promised to open up basic auto insurance to private sector competition. This means that ICBC will be forced to focus on core services and reduce its non-insurance activities, reduce customer service and reduce staff.

Local 378 members who work at ICBC certainly know the negative affect private insurers will have on rural B.C. residents, young drivers, parents with teenagers who drive, and those with business insurance. The scope of cutbacks planned within ICBC, how- ever, is still unknown.

Local 378 President Jerri New remains optimistic. “We hope that after Premier Campbell has examined ICBC books, he will not open up basic auto insurance to private competition. ICBC provides public service at a low price while returning profits to the provincial treasury,” New said.

Local 378 President outlines post election plan 

Union sending briefs to new government

The predicted Liberal landslide has arrived in British Columbia. In the run up to the election, Premier Gordon Campbell promised massive changes and now Local 378 members, particularly those working in crown corporations, are wonder-ing what happens next.

“The people of B.C. have spoken through a democratic process,” said Local 378 President Jerri New. “We recognize Local 378 has a duty to work with our new gov-ernment leaders to represent our union mem-bership,” New said.

Now that Premier Campbell has announced his appointments for govern-ment ministers in the various portfolios, OPEIU has requested face-to-face meet-ings. “We’ll try to ensure that the new ministers are current with issues affect-ing our members. That way we can work together to address common problems,” New said.

“We’ll be working hard in the coming weeks to prepare briefs that will give new government officials an understanding of who we are, our labor relations experiences at the various companies, the challenges we face each employer and the ram-ifications for our members,” New con- cluded.

Local 378, Vancouver, British Columbia

Members of the Canadian delegation, including International Vice Presidents Nick Kapell (third from left), Carol Dupuis (fourth from right), and Jerri New (second from right), greet speaker David Christopherson, a Canadian Member of Parliament.

Local 463 at Gaz negotiates agreement on how to utilize $22.2 million pension plan surplus

A t meetings held June 11-12, mem-bers of Local 463 voted over-whelmingly in favor of an agreement to utilize the $22.2 million surplus generat-ed by their pension plan. The pension plan covers all unionized employees at Gaz Métropolitain, and the agreement was negoti-ated jointly by all three bargaining units. Local 463 represents two of the bargaining units — the office workers and the sales rep-representatives — while another union (the CSN) represents the blue-collar workers. This historic agreement sets out a num-ber of important improvements to the pen-sion plan by dividing up the $22.2 million in surpluses generated by the plan as follows:

Early retirement packages:
• $7.7 million toward financing an entic-ing early retirement package that will allow some 180 employees to retire with greatly enhanced benefits (maximum bridging supplement, more advantageous age/years of service factor);

Improvements for active members:
• $1.1 million to finance a change to 85
Free The Children protects children throughout world

OPEIU was proud to host Craig Kielburger, the 17-year-old founder and chairperson of (Kids Can) Free The Children, at the 22nd Triennial Convention and to support the work of this worthwhile organization.

Free The Children is an international network of children helping children through representation, leadership and action. The organization has two main purposes: To free children from poverty, exploitation and abuse; and to give children a voice, leadership training, and opportunities to take action on issues that affect them from a local to an international level. Free The Children is dedicated to eliminating the exploitation of children around the world by encouraging youth to volunteer in, as well as to create programs and activities that relieve the plight of underprivileged children. It believes that all children have the right to full intellectual, physical, emotional and social development. Included in these basic human rights, says the group, are the right and the responsibility to participate in finding solutions to problems affecting them and other children around the world.

Free The Children is a registered non-profit charitable children’s organization existing in more than 35 countries around the world and growing every day. Only children under the age of 18 within the organization vote on decisions regarding policy and projects or act as spokespersons for children and children in other countries. Free The Children takes place on a local level among children who have formed groups in their schools, neighborhoods, religious centers, communities or among their friends. Children make decisions regarding projects they undertake and organize the actions themselves. A children’s Board of Directors makes decisions regarding the policy and direction of the movement.

Free The Children shares many of the goals of the labor movement, and of OPEIU in particular. One of Free The Children’s major campaigns is to put an end to child labor for the 250 million working children in the world today. Free The Children has launched a major campaign in the United States to put an end to child labor. If you would like to support Free The Children, please visit Free The Children’s website at www.freethechildren.com to make a donation by mail to Free The Children, please write to Free The Children International, P.O. Box 32099, Hartford, Connecticut 06150-2099.

OPEIU wins election at CareFlite

OPEIU International Representative Paul Bohelski said job security is one of the biggest issues for these pilots.

“Collective bargaining will allow the pilots to address seniority rights and successor language, in the event the company decides to sell,” Bohelski said.

In Louisiana, OPEIU organized 300 helicopter pilots at Offshore Logistics in 1998 and 600 pilots at Petroleum Helicopters last year.

“Now the pilots are awakening,” Bohelski said, adding that the pilots’ goals are to have a voice in the company and “representation in front of the Federal Aviation Administration. They utilize that the only way they can do this is to come together as a group,” Bohelski said.

Bohelski said that after organizing collective bargaining units, pilots at Petroleum Helicopters and Offshore Logistics have negotiated contracts that provide seniority rights, grievance procedures and improved benefits.

A typical schedule for CareFlite pilots is seven 12-hour days every other week. They primarily transport patients and accident victims to and from hospitals and provide medical assistance at accident scenes.

CareFlite is funded by a nonprofit consortium made up of Texas Health Resources, Baylor University Medical Center and Methodist Hospitals of Dallas.

Goodwin reelected President of American Labor Museum/ Botto House National Landmark

OPEIU International President Michael Goodwin was reelected as President of the American Labor Museum, which is housed at the Botto House National Landmark in Haledon, New Jersey. All of the museum’s officers were also reelected: First Vice President Patricia Niven, Communication Workers of America (CWA); Second Vice President Frank Cocuzza, New Jersey Education Association (NJEA); Secretary Phyllis Salvato, private consultant; and Treasurer Thomas Maselli, Valley National Bank.

Goodwin said, “I’m very pleased that all the officers were reelected and look forward to continuing the great work of the museum, as well as to raising necessary funds to make all of its programs a great success,” Goodwin said.

A rich history

Proving its commitment to honoring the labor struggles of the past century, OPEIU has been a strong supporter of the museum since its incorporation in 1981. This museum is a reflection of the spirit, goals and dedication of America’s workers and their unions,” Goodwin said. “It is a vital reminder of our determination to put the American Dream within reach of working families and to create a stronger, more prosperous society,” he concluded.

The Botto House is a natural fit for the museum. The House has a glorious history and represents both triumphs of the labor movement and of the American Dream. The house was built in 1909 by Pietro and Maria Botto, immigrants from Italy who had settled in West Hoboken, N.J. They dreamed of leaving the crowded city and moving to a place where they could raise their four daughters in open space and peace. They worked for 15 years in the silk mills, saving their money and thinking of the day they could move. Finally, they were able to save enough money to buy the land in Haleden and build their dream house. Little did they know that in five years’ time, their home would play a major role in history.

The mill where the Botto worked was typical of the mills in the area. The conditions were deplorable. Air ventilation was horrid, lighting was poor and the noise from the machinery was deafening. Dye workers also had to contend with the vats of boiling chemicals. Dye houses had toxic vapors in the air and steam that caused the floors to be constantly wet. Workers were burned almost every day from the mixtures, and even were expected to taste the dye to determine if it was mixed correctly. Hours were long and the pay was minimal. Protesting and job actions were a common occurrence in the region, but in 1913 the disputes had come to a head. The largest mill in the area, the Doherty Mill, tried to implement a speed-up system. Weavers, who formerly had two looms to work, now had to operate four. Half of the workers would lose their jobs and those remaining would be grossly underpaid for their higher production.

That was the last straw and the workers of the area turned to Local 152 of the Industrial Workers of the World for help.

In the winter of 1913 the workers, more than 24,000 men, women and children, marched out of the mills and went on strike. They wanted improved conditions in the mills, an end to child labor, an eight-hour workday and improved wages. From January to July the workers were harassed, arrested and threatened by hostile city authorities as they walked the lines and tried to find places to meet. It was in this hostile atmosphere that Pietro Botto offered his house to the strikers as a meeting place.

Famous labor leaders Elizabeth Gurley Flynn, Carlo Tresca, Big Bill Haywood, along with the novelist Upton Sinclair and others spoke from the Botto House balcony to the assembled strikers.

Gurley Flynn called the Botto home “the little oasis in the Old World Gardens.

Flynn called the Botto home “the little oasis in the Old World Gardens.
Fear Stifles Pain Relief

By Phillip L. Polakoff, M.D.

More than 50 million Americans live with chronic pain caused by various diseases or disorders. Each year nearly 25 million people suffer with acute pain as a result of injury or surgery. How can this deplorable situation exist in a time when medical knowledge and technology are available to relieve or greatly ease most pain?

Fear...Many doctors, and patients as well, fear using strong painkillers (a class of drugs called opioids) because they believe — wrongfully—that they are addictive.

The fact is, when prescribed by a doctor and taken correctly, they are safe, effective, and rarely lead to addiction.

Here’s what Dr. James Campbell, professor of neurosurgery at Johns Hopkins Medical Center, past president of the American Pain Society and chairman of the American Pain Foundation, has to say on the subject:

“Taking legal, FDA-approved opioid medications as prescribed, under the direction of a physician for pain relief, is safe and effective, and only in rare cases, leads to addiction.

“When properly used, these medications rarely give a ‘high’ — they give relief. And, most importantly, they allow many people to resume their normal lives."

Fortunately, the management of pain is finally starting to achieve the status it deserves. Healthcare professionals, policy makers, the public and the media are becoming more aware of the undertreatment of pain and are beginning to take steps to address the problem.

For example, on January 1, 2001, new standards adopted by the nation’s largest healthcare accrediting organization went into effect. The standards are set by the Joint Commission on Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations (JCAHO). They now require all of the organization’s 19,000 hospitals, nursing homes and other healthcare facilities to assess and treat pain. Furthermore, they are required to inform patients about their right to effective pain care. If they don’t comply, they can lose their accreditation.

In spite of these advances, more than 50 million Americans still live with malignant or non-malignant chronic pain. And though most pain can be treated, it often goes untreated, improperly treated or undertreated.

For example, studies show that while cancer pain can almost always be relieved, more than 40 percent of cancer patients are undertreated for pain.

A more enlightened and humane approach to pain management, however, carries with it a burden of responsibility. Doctors and pharmacists need to be diligent in taking security measures to keep opioid medications out of illegal and improper hands.

Regulators and law enforcement officers must be tough in combating the illegal diversion of opioids to street trafficking. But they should do it in a balanced way that doesn’t discourage the safe and legal use of such medications.

As the American Pain Foundation says: We must be careful not to turn the “War on Drugs” into a “War on Patients.”

Jeff Bleustein is the exception to the U.S. business rule. There should be more like him.

The ironic point about that is that AFL-CIO President John J. Sweeney has been saying much the same thing for the last five years, but U.S. business has been deaf.

Bleustein is chairman and CEO of Milwaukee-based Harley-Davidson, Inc., the leading U.S. motorcycle manufacturer. He’s been with Harley for 26 years.

Harley’s unions, for a long time, have been the Machinists, the Paper, Allied-Industrial, Chemical and Energy Workers (PACE), and PACE’s predecessors.

Harley was threatened by cheap subsidized Japanese motorcycles in the 1980s. Since then, Harley — with union cooperation — has ginned its motors to the top of the motorcycle market. It has 8,000 workers nationwide and is adding more.

Why? Because Harley forged a wide-ranging cooperative relationship with IAM and PACE, ceding large amounts of traditional managerial control of the workplace in return for increased loyalty, good wages and benefits, high productivity and worker commitment.

Bleustein described how Harley and the unions have done at the Labor Department’s Summit on the 21st Century Workplace. “We have a significantly different approach to labor-management relations that we can offer to others,” he said.

“In the mid-90s, the presidents of Harley (himself), IAM and PACE got together to look for a way to change our (often adversarial) relations. The outcome was a formal partnering agreement. It’s made Harley-Davidson a better place to work and made our business more successful than ever before,” he said, as Sweeney and the others listened.

The pact’s key principles are:

• Open recognition of unions as “a valued institution” in the workplace.
• “They’re not to be run out of factories and we’re not to run away from them,” Bleustein said.
• Shared leadership and joint decision-making. The manager of Harley’s newest factory, in Kansas City, Mo., shares his office with the local IAM and PACE presidents. “No secrets, no barriers, no walls,” Bleustein added.
• Empowerment of workers on virtually everything. Why not use workers’ brains, since they’re closest to the job? he asked.

The unions and Harley jointly chose the Kansas City site for the new plant in 1995 “and we took the unions there with us” rather than go non-union and build in a right-to-work state. Workers choose new machines for Harley plants, after consulting engineers, and are “tighter with the pocketbook” than managers.

And workers interview potential colleagues to ensure they have the needed skills and can work as team players, he said.

• Company-wide sharing of productivity benefits. “When I get a good payday, so do all the workers,” Bleustein said.

The results? Workers flock to work at Harley, the firm earns record profits, it had to build the Kansas City plant to meet a two-year backlog of orders, and workers want their children and grandchildren to work for the company, he says.

Sweeney has argued for years that if corporate managers take that progressive attitude towards their workers, they’d get the same results. So why doesn’t corporate America listen?

Bleustein said that while some firms ultimately realize unions are there to stay, taking the next step — sharing power — is “a difficult one for a lot of companies.

“People have to turf to protect. People who grew up managing information and power have to get used to the idea of sharing it. It takes time and we’re getting there. We have our setbacks,” even at Harley, he admits.

“But I have the idea that every worker is a CEO in his or her own house. So why, when they come through the plant door, should we turn off all those talents — planning, buying, decision-making — and just use their brains?”

“ar lot of managers look at the costs of unions,” in higher wages and benefits, without looking at the positive advantages, Bleustein adds. They should be “saying those jobs are special. Why not use the whole person? When you use 90 percent of a person’s potential, not 10 percent, you get a lot more. If you stop saying, ‘Who’s going to win, you or me?’ and switch to ‘How can we both win?’ then it’s a lot better.”
Lobbyist Corner

September 11 attacks change Congressional agenda

Patients' Bill of Rights passes in Senate; House passes alternate bill

Submitted by OPEIU Lobbyist Robert McGlotten of McGlotten & Jarvis

The acts of September 11 have had a major affect on what Congress will be focusing on in the near future. While we still will be pushing hard for a patients' bill of rights and an increase to the minimum wage, OPEIU is strongly committed to helping Congress pass bills aiding laid-off workers and industries that have been hit especially hard by the attacks.

Patients' Bill of Rights

The Senate passed a Patients' Bill of Rights on June 29 by a vote of 59-36, despite a veto threat from President Bush. This bill makes it easier for patients to secure a wide variety of services, including coverage for visits to the nearest emergency room, direct access to medical specialists, medically necessary prescription drugs and clinical trials for experimental treatments, according to The Washington Post. The House of Representatives passed a "faux" patients' bill of rights, which is supported by the Bush administration. This bill passed 226-206, and gives patients a more limited right to sue than the Senate bill. Both bills will now go into conference, as House and Senate negotiators will try to hammer out the differences between the bills. OPEIU will work to ensure that as many facets from the Senate bill get included in the final version.

Minimum Wage bill

The Fair Minimum Wage Act of 2001 (S. 277), sponsored by Senator Edward M. Kennedy (D-Mass.), now has 36 co-sponsors; previously it had 35. Senate Majority Leader Tom Daschle (D-S.D.) has promised that he will take up S. 277 as one of his first actions following Labor Day. The House version (H.R. 665), sponsored by Representative David Bonior (D-Mich.), now has 149 co-sponsors; previously it had 145. President Bush remains opposed to a minimum wage increase. Please call your representatives and ask them to support S. 277 and H.R. 665.

Getting involved

Grassroots involvement significantly amplifies our Union’s lobbying efforts. Phone calls and personal letters encouraging your congressional representatives to back labor-friendly measures are invaluable. Elected officials need direct feedback from our members, urging them to sponsor and support OPEIU-endorsed legislation. Every letter counts. Every phone call can make a difference. If you prefer to make written contact, OPEIU strongly advises you to mail all correspondence, as opposed to sending an e-mail. With your support, we can press for more immediate action on key bills awaiting hearings in both the House and Senate, such as the Minimum Wage Act.

If you know who your House representative is, the Clerk of the House maintains addresses and phone numbers of all Members and Committees: Clerk of the House, U.S. Capitol, Room H154, Washington, DC 20515; phone (202) 225-7000; hours 9 a.m. to 6 p.m., Monday through Friday.

If you are not sure who your representative is, the following web sites contain links to congressional directories: http://www.house.gov/writerep and http://www.senate.gov/learn-faq.html. You can also access this information at your local library.
OPEIU Announces
2001 Scholarship Winners

OPEIU is proud to announce the full-time and part-time winners of the 2001 Howard Coughlin Memorial Scholarship Fund, the John Kelly Labor Studies Scholarship Fund, and the Tennessee Valley Authority Employees Scholarship Program. Congratulations to all who won this year, and we encourage all eligible students to apply for the 2002 scholarship. Information about how to obtain an application form for these scholarships can be found in this issue.

Howard Coughlin Memorial Scholarship Fund

★★★ Full-Time Winners ★★★

James Corcoran
Wisconsin Rapids, Wisconsin
Attending: University of Chicago

Adam Pulver
Plainview, New York
Attending: Tufts University

Joshua Dachman-Soled
Mahway, New Jersey
Attending: Yeshiva University

Brent Quigley
Biloxi, Mississippi
Attending: Mississippi State University

Scott Grant
Bloomfield Hills, Michigan
Attending: Princeton University

Kyle Riddiough
Bonney Lake, Washington
Attending: University of Washington

Da-Qian Li
San Diego, California
Attending: University of California San Diego

Margaret Segall
Ann Arbor, Michigan
Attending: Harvard University

Nicole Martingano
Staten Island, New York
Attending: New York University

Brian Upman
Daytona Beach, Florida
Attending: Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University

Joseph Misener
Maplewood, Minnesota
Attending: Washington University

Bethany Withers
Schenectady, New York
Attending: Boston College

★★★ Part-Time Winners ★★★

Roderick Bonner II
Detroit, Michigan
Attending: Henry Ford Community College

Renee Cortez
Chicago, Illinois
Attending: Illinois Institute of Art
[No photo available]

Tracy Palmer
Muskegon, Michigan
Attending: Muskegon Community College

Johnny Davis
Dewitt, New York
Attending: Syracuse University
[No photo available]

James McAlister
Clarkston, Michigan
Attending: University of Michigan-Flint
[No photo available]

Erica Sansbury
Lanham, Maryland
Attending: University of Maryland University College
[No photo available]

Continued on page 27
Announcing the 2002 John Kelly Labor Studies Scholarship
Deadline: March 31, 2002

In memory of the late John Kelly, OPEIU President, (1979-1994), the International Union Executive Board established a new scholarship fund in his name. John Kelly was totally committed to education and training for working people, most particularly our own union members. It was during his presidency that the union began the Howard Coughlin Memorial Scholarship and, thereafter, expanded union training programs for its members, officers and staff. The Howard Coughlin Memorial Scholarship Fund is open to members, associate members and their eligible dependents for any course of study at any university or college. However, the John Kelly Labor Studies Scholarship Fund is dedicated strictly to OPEIU members or associate members who desire to pursue studies and a career in labor relations.

We owe so much to John Kelly and are very pleased to memorialize him with a scholarship in his name. The rules for that scholarship are as follows:

**RULES:**
Ten (10) scholarships per year will be awarded on the basis of at least one (1) per region and not to exceed one (1) per family. Applications are open to members or associate members in good standing for at least two (2) years. All applicants must meet the eligibility requirements and comply with the Rules and Procedures as established by the OPEIU Executive Board. Each scholarship has a total maximum value of $2,000.00.

**SEND FOR OPEIU JOHN KELLY LABOR STUDIES SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION**
Application and Requirements deadline – March 31, 2002

Please send me the application for the 2002 John Kelly Labor Studies Scholarship.

Name ______________________________________________________________

Address ____________________________________________________________

City _______________________ State _________________ Zip Code ____________

OPEIU Local Union ________________________________

Send to: OPEIU
         John Kelly Labor Studies Scholarship Fund
         1660 L Street, NW, Suite 801
         Washington, DC 20036

Call for Canadian address at (514) 522-6511. The Canadian deadline is March 1, 2002.

**ELIGIBILITY:**
The applicant must be:
— a member or associate member of OPEIU in good standing; and
— The applicant must be either an undergraduate or graduate in one of the following areas of study: — Labor Studies — Industrial Relations — Social Science or a related field — Non-degree programs sponsored by the National Labor College at the George Meany Center or similar institutions.

**PROCEDURES:**
Each applicant must file an official John Kelly Labor Studies Scholarship Fund application. Application forms must be endorsed by the Local Union President or Secretary-Treasurer attesting that the MEMBER OR ASSOCIATE MEMBER is in good standing. Such endorsement must be obtained before the application is submitted.

**FORMS:**
Application forms may be obtained at your Local Union Office or at the Secretary-Treasurer’s office of the International Union.

**REQUIREMENTS:**
Application: All applicants are required to submit a completed application, which is endorsed by the Local Union President or Secretary-Treasurer.
High School Transcript: All applicants are required to submit their High School transcript.
Rank in Class: High School transcript must show rank in class or rank in class must be provided. In the event the High School does not rank students, approximate rank or percentile and class size must be provided.
College Transcript: If presently enrolled in a College, University or a recognized Technical or Vocational Post-Secondary School, applicant is required to submit College transcript, along with their High School transcript.
Essay: All applicants shall be required to submit an essay on their occupational goals (300 to 500 words). This essay should be double-spaced and typed on 8 ½” x 11” paper.
Statement of Intent: All applicants shall be required to execute the Statement of Intent to remain within the OPEIU for a period of at least two (2) years.

**APPLICATIONS AND REQUIREMENTS:**
All applications, High School transcripts, Rank in Class or approximate rank or percentile and class size must be provided, College Transcripts (if applicable) and Essays must be received at the Secretary-Treasurer’s office of the International Union, 1660 L Street, NW, Suite 801, Washington, DC 20036, no later than March 31st of each year.

**SELECTION OF SCHOLARSHIP:**
The selections shall be based on recommendations of an academic scholarship committee. Announcements of the winners will be made during the month of June of each year.

Address all inquiries to:
John Kelly Labor Studies Scholarship Fund
Office and Professional Employees International Union
1660 L Street, NW, Suite 801, Washington, DC 20036
Phone: (202) 393-4464, Fax: (202) 347-0649
Announcing the 2002 Howard Coughlin Memorial Scholarship Fund

Deadline: March 31, 2002

FULL-TIME SCHOLARSHIPS

Twelve (12) full-time scholarships will be awarded on the basis of at least one (1) per region and not to exceed one (1) per family for a lifetime. Applications are open to members in good standing, associate members, or to their children, all of whom must meet the eligibility requirements and comply with the Rules and Regulations as established by the OPEIU Executive Board. Each scholarship has a total maximum value of $5,000.00.

ELIGIBILITY:

An applicant must be either: a member or an associate member of OPEIU in good standing on the date of award, unless a member loses employment to study on a full-time basis, retires, becomes disabled, or terminated from employer layoffs and plant closing, the son, daughter, stepchild or legally adopted child of an OPEIU member in good standing or an associate member; and

An applicant must be either: High School senior or High School graduate entering a College, University or a recognized Technical or Vocational Post-Secondary School as a full-time student, presently in a College, University, or a recognized technical or Vocational Post-Secondary school as a full-time student.

PART-TIME SCHOLARSHIPS

Six (6) part-time scholarships will be awarded on the basis of at least one (1) per region in order to reach a greater number of members, as full-time scholarships are generally awarded to children of members, and not to exceed one (1) per family for a lifetime. Applications are open to members in good standing, associate members, or to their children, all of whom must meet the eligibility requirements and comply with the Rules and Procedures as established by the OPEIU Executive Board. Each part-time scholarship is $500.00 per year for a total maximum value of $2,000.00.

Part-time scholarships are defined as a minimum of three (3) credits and no more than two (2) courses.

If a part-time student does not attend a college/university each semester, they have two (2) years maximum to use the part-time scholarship.

If the student becomes a full-time student, while receiving a part-time student status scholarship, the scholarship will be revoked, and they will be able to apply for a full-time scholarship.

Part-time scholarship awards shall be subject to all other eligibility rules under this Scholarship Fund.

PROCEDURES:

Each applicant must file an official OPEIU scholarship program application. Application forms must be endorsed by the Local Union President or Secretary-Treasurer attesting that a member, a parent of an applicant, or an associate member is in good standing on the date of award. The application form must also be endorsed if a member loses employment to study on a full-time basis, retires, is disabled, or is terminated from employer layoffs and plant closings. Such endorsement must be obtained before the application is submitted.

FORMS:

Application forms may be obtained at your Local Union office or at the Secretary-Treasurer’s office of the International Union.

APPLICATIONS AND REQUIREMENTS:

All applications and requirements must be received at the Secretary-Treasurer’s office of the International Union, 1660 L Street, NW, Suite 801, Washington, DC 20036, no later than March 31st of each year.

Please send me the application for the 2002 Howard Coughlin Memorial Scholarship.

Name __________________________
City __________________________ State ________ Zip Code __________

Send to: OPEIU
Howard Coughlin Memorial Scholarship Fund
1660 L Street, NW, Suite 801
Washington, DC 20036

Call for Canadian address at (514) 522-6511. The Canadian deadline is March 1, 2002.

Please send me the application for the 2002 Howard Coughlin Memorial Scholarship.

Name __________________________
City __________________________ State ________ Zip Code __________

Send to: OPEIU
Howard Coughlin Memorial Scholarship Fund
1660 L Street, NW, Suite 801
Washington, DC 20036

Call for Canadian address at (514) 522-6511. The Canadian deadline is March 1, 2002.

SELECTION OF SCHOLARSHIP:

The selections shall be based on recommendations of an academic scholarship committee. Announcement of the winners will be made during the month of June each year.

Address all inquiries to: Howard Coughlin Memorial Scholarship Fund Office and Professional Employees International Union 1660 L Street, NW, Suite 801 Washington, DC 20036 Phone: (202) 393-4464, Fax: (202) 347-0649
Announcing the 2002 Office and Professional Employees International Union Romeo Corbeil Memorial Scholarship Fund “Summer Camp”

Six (6) scholarships will be awarded on the basis of at least one (1) per region and not to exceed one (1) per family for a lifetime. Applications are open to children (between ages 13 and 16 ONLY) of OPEIU members in good standing or associate members, all of whom must meet the eligibility requirements and comply with the Rules and Procedures as established by the OPEIU Executive Board. Each scholarship has a total maximum value of $2,000.00.

ELIGIBILITY:
An applicant must be, the son, daughter, stepchild or legally adopted child (between ages 13 and 16 ONLY) of an OPEIU member in good standing or an associate member.

PROCEDURES:
Each applicant must file an official OPEIU scholarship program application. Application forms must be endorsed by the Local Union President or Secretary-Treasurer attesting that a parent of an applicant, is a member or an associate member in good standing on the date of award. Such endorsement must be obtained before the application is submitted.

FORMS:
Application forms may be obtained at your Local Union office or at the Secretary-Treasurer’s office of the International Union.

APPLICATIONS:
All applications must be received at the Secretary-Treasurer’s office of the International Union, 1660 L Street, NW, Suite 801, Washington, DC 20036, no later than March 31st of each year.

TIME AND PLACE:
This year’s Summer Camp will be held in August 2002 at University Forest Environmental Education Center, University of Missouri, 153 University Forest Drive, Wappapello, MO 63967, (573) 222-8373, fax (573) 222-8829.

SELECTION OF SCHOLARSHIPS:
Announcement of the winners will be made during the month of June of each year.

Address all inquiries to:
Office and Professional Employees International Union
Romeo Corbeil Memorial Scholarship Fund “Summer Camp”
1660 L Street, NW, Suite 801
Washington, DC 20036
PHONE: (202) 393-4464
FAX: (202) 347-0649

Announcing the 2002 Office and Professional Employees International Union Romeo Corbeil Memorial Scholarship Fund “Summer Camp”

Tennessee Valley Authority Employees Scholarship Program

★★★ Full-Time Winners ★★★

Jessica Beck
Winnsboro, South Carolina
Attending: Columbia College

Monica Bolden
Austell, Georgia
Attending: DeVry Institute of Technology

Nicholas Riggs
Norris, Tennessee
Attending: Eastern Kentucky University

William Black
Athens, Alabama
Attending: Calhoun Community College

Amanda Loven
Chattanooga, Tennessee
Attending: The University of Tennessee at Chattanooga

Timothy Santos
Louisville, Tennessee
Attending: Pellissippi State Technical Community College

Amanda Elliott
Clinton, Tennessee
Attending: Pellissippi State Technical Community College

Scott Richardson
Florence, Alabama
Attending: The University of Alabama

Will Willis
Killen, Alabama
Attending: University of Alabama-Huntsville

For more information about the OPEIU, visit our website at http://www.opeiu.org
New Directions, New Strength

By Michael Goodwin, International President

Following is an excerpt from International President Michael Goodwin’s keynote address to the 22nd Triennial Convention in Bel Harbour, Florida on June 25, 2001.

We’ve had so much success and so many people have been organized in various industries. I am so pleased to be here with you this morning at this 22nd Triennial Convention. This meeting will serve as yet another turning point for our Union and the broader labor movement.

Working families in the United States and Canada are being threatened like never before and we need to act now to reverse this dangerous course. The decisions that we will make this week, the resolutions that we adopt and the policies we set will decide the question of how effectively we will be in the future in organizing, collective bargaining and political influence.

We are here this week to celebrate our victories and analyze our defeats and make the tough decisions that will move our Union forward in the 21st century—making it stronger and guiding it in new directions with new strength.

I want to thank the members of the Executive Board, all of whom have gone beyond their tough jobs as leaders of their own Local Unions and dedicated thousands of hours to supporting the plans, programs, and broader needs of OPEIU. We have been putting them through committee work, sending them around the country on assignment and kept them busy thinking.

Our success includes helicopter pilots...catholic school teachers...chiropractors...registered nurses...real estate appraisers...professional engineers...public employees...management and confidential employees...clinical social workers...podiatrists...and thousands of industrial...technical...professional...and clerical employees everywhere.

Yes, sisters and brothers we have come a long way in the last few years—some of it planned and some of it unexpected, but we must level only briefly in our victories.

Yes, membership is growing, but too many working families were left behind in the greatest economic boom in history. We must work hard to make sure that all working families share in the economic wealth of our respective countries.

There are also many lessons for us to learn from the sharp changes in the political landscape that took place this past year—lessons that must be heeded if we are to survive in the coming decade.

We can’t wait for our politicians to switch parties to advance the agenda of working families. Looking ahead to the 2002 elections, it is up to us at the grassroots level to ensure that the right candidates are elected in the first place.

What’s going on in the United States has also been going on in the national government in Canada and in the provinces. Premier Jean Chretien has recently been elected for a third time and the New Democratic Party lost seats in last year’s elections. The same tax cut philosophy of benefiting the rich was put in place, drying up money for social programs, no money for health care, childhood education or rebuilding the infrastructure. While the election of Chretien is not good for working families, it could have been worse if Stockwell Day and the Alliance Party were successful. Their philosophy is quite extreme and far to the right of the Republican Party in the United States. The right-wing philosophy is spreading all across Canada.

In Ontario, the government has passed a rule that allows for the negotiation of 60 hours of work in a week before overtime can be paid. It is also now required that instructions be posted in the province on how to decently the union.

The 2001 Summit of the Americas in Quebec City was yet another struggle for all working families to worry about as greedy global employers met and conspired against workers’ interests. That’s why workers were there to protest and demonstrate to make sure that our voices were heard. Most importantly, all of this should indicate to us that grassroots participation works.

We can be encouraged to know that organized labor was out in full force during the 2000 presidential election cycle, and that Get-Out-The-Vote campaigns ensured that voter turnout among working families was at its highest point in years.

We can make a difference. By mobilizing our members now, we will make a difference in 2002.

Our relationship with our sisters and brothers in Canada remains very strong. When it comes to trade unions, there are no borders.

One of the wonderful benefits of working for the Union is that wherever you go and whenever you meet a union member, you are meeting a friend. Canadian and American trade unions are not only sisters and brothers, but are truly friends. We thank all of them for their friendship, their support and their care.

For some years now, the International Union has provided reimbursement to Local Unions for expenses incurred on organizing campaigns under the organizing incentive program. We are now in the process of revising this program and establishing a new relationship with Local Unions, which will be named—"partnership, power and politics" (PFP). This partnership between the International Union and the Local Unions will enhance the potential for growth initiated at the Local Union level. The International Union and our Local Union partners will develop a strategy and a plan for fund- ing and staff needs. I am confident that this new program will work well with our ROG program and lead to even greater success.

I am pleased to report that the state of the Union is strong. Financially, we achieved a balanced budget of $3.4 million in the General Fund and $5.9 million in the Strike Benefit and Defense Fund as of February 28, 2001. This compares with $2.8 million and $6.7 million, respectively, three years ago. We have made sure that your per capita tax is spent wisely. I am proud to report that we have maintained a balanced budget for the fifth consecutive year.

Our plan for diversity in our top leadership positions has been more successful than could have ever been imagined just a few short years ago. Expanding on Resolution No. 8 passed at the 1995 Convention, and our vision for the future, we adopted a strategy and a plan to increase the representation of women on the Executive Board.

My friends, I am pleased to tell you that as a result of this plan, twelve of the twenty-one vice presidents on the Executive Board are women. This was accomplished in three ways. First, we added three diversity vice president positions to be elected from Local Unions anywhere in the United States. Second, we expanded the number of vice presidents to twenty-one. And, third, we opened the door of opportunity by providing for the Regional election of vice presidents. We knew that our program would change the map forever and our Union now serves as a model for other unions to follow.

We have established a technological initiative program entailing Local Unions to a sub-sidy for the purchase of a computer, a printer, or to upgrade an existing system. Since inception many Local Unions have taken advantage of this program. I am pleased to announce that these subsidies will be increased to $1,200 for a computer, $300 for a printer and $500 for upgrades.

The educational scholarship program for officers and staff will be expanded and incorporated into the John Kelly Labor Studies Scholarship Program, which has a current balance of over $17,000. This will enable more of our Local Union representatives to receive additional training in labor studies. The Romeo Corbeil Summer Camp Program is among the best of its kind, providing a good time for kids and an education on collective bargaining and trade unions.

A need to provide economic security during strikes is critical to our success. Therefore, we will increase strike benefit payments over the next three years to $240 per week, one of the highest amounts paid by any union.

To enable Local Unions to participate in area educational conferences, we will increase the subsidy to $500 to help offset the cost to participating Local Unions.

The cost of attending Conventions is difficult for some Local Unions. Therefore, we are recommending an increase in contributions to the Convention Fund from $30 to $50 per month, which will provide a 67 percent increase in allowances paid out to Local Unions. This will enable more Local Unions to attend and ease the cost in a Convention year. We also have adopted a similar savings plan for the International Union permitting me to tell you that the cost of this Convention has been fully funded and prepaid.

All of our accomplishments are just the beginning, there is much more to be done. We can get there together if we care enough, if we work hard enough and if we are fully committed to achieving justice for all workers throughout North America.

With your help we can make it happen.