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uniforum



Unifor Local 88 members gather to ratify their new contract at GM/CAMI on September 15.

CAMI deal secures jobs

Hundreds of temporary workers were made permanent under a new collective agreement at the General Motors assembly plant in Ingersoll, Ontario.

"This was not an easy round of negotiations, but the committee managed to carve out some important victories, including breaking

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Shipbuilding at risk

Comments by Nova Scotia Liberal Leader Stephen McNeil jeopardize years of work to rebuild the Nova Scotia shipbuilding industry, Unifor is warning on the eve of a provincial election in the province. McNeil recently criticized a loan to Irving Shipbuilding, which helped secure 30 years of work

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Welcome to Uniforum

Welcome to the second edition of Uniforum, the new biweekly newsletter of Unifor.

Our first edition, on Sept. 5, was a special convention issue with coverage of the founding convention of Unifor on Labour Day weekend. With this edition, we launch into what will be the regular look of Uniforum, with our regular features.

For those who come to Unifor from the CAW, Uniforum will replace the old Contact newsletter sent out weekly. For those from CEP, Uniforum will be something new. There is also an email version of this newsletter, which you can sign up for at www.unifor.org.

And all of these newsletters will be available in both French and English.

Uniforum, published by the Unifor Communications department, is a great way to keep on top of what your

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#unifor

Here's a selection of tweets about @UniforTheUnion

@ryan_a_kelly

Congrats @UniforTheUnion! Further proof col. bargaining works! Tentative deals reached between U of W & Unifor locals

@Tony_Tracy
 Canada's new

@UniforTheUnion acting as bright spark of hope across the country

In brief

Raise the minimum wage

It is time to raise the minimum wage in Ontario to \$14 as the first step toward establishing a “living wage”, Unifor said in a recent submission to a panel studying minimum wages in the province. The submission by Unifor economists Jim Stanford and Jordan Brennan said a higher minimum wage would help lower-income families, boost consumer spending and create jobs. **U**

Solidarity across Unifor locals

On behalf of the members of Unifor Local 2002, Chuck Doyle drove to Trois-Rivières, Quebec to deliver a \$1,000 cheque and a new Unifor flag to Jean Simioneau, president of Local 184. Unifor Local 184 workers at Silicium Bécancour have been locked out of their workplace since May. **U**

Postmedia layoffs

Unifor is exploring all options to protect the interests of workers at Postmedia following a major restructuring and layoffs. The company abruptly announced plans to contract out printing and distribution at its papers in Calgary and Vancouver. **U**

Train crash investigation



Unifor expresses its deep sadness for the victims of the accident involving a Via Rail train and OC Transpo bus that took place Sept. 18 in Ottawa, and pledges to help with the investigation.

“I want to express our deepest sympathy to the family and friends of passengers who were killed in this morning’s awful crash,” Unifor National President Jerry Dias said at the time.

Unifor represents Via Rail’s onboard service, station customer service and maintenance staff. “Our thoughts are also with those who were injured in this terrible accident.”

Dias said that he is proud of the efforts of the onboard staff at Via Rail who played a critical role in helping passengers in a time of crisis. Passengers were safely removed from the train, with the assistance of Via Rail staff and emergency personnel.

Dias committed the union to working with the Transportation Safety Board in its investigation of the accident. “We will do whatever we can to assist in the investigation. It’s our goal to have a safe, well-functioning and accessible network of railways across the country.”

Dias also urged that a move away from the use of level crossings, such as the

one in the Ottawa accident, be considered.

“Level crossings, particularly in busy areas, take a needless toll – including injury and the loss of life. We strongly recommend changes to the use of level crossings, combined with other necessary safety improvements.”

The federal government has commissioned the University of Waterloo to look at level crossings in a \$120,000 study.

No Unifor members were hurt or injured in the crash. Unifor represents 2,100 workers at Via Rail and a total of 9,000 members working in the railway sector. **U**

>> continued from Shipbuilding at a risk page1

for the Halifax shipyard and an estimated 11,000 jobs.

“Stephen McNeil is carelessly jeopardizing future investments for our province and with it thousands of jobs,” said Atlantic Region Director Les Holloway. “We’ve spent the last few years under the NDP government trying to rebuild and raise confidence and it could now be decimated once again by a lack of government support.”

Holloway said that McNeil’s suggestion during a leadership debate that the government investment in the shipyard has provided nothing more than “...a parking lot at the end of the



Shipbuilding is an important part of the Atlantic economy.

road” is reprehensible and irresponsible for anyone aspiring to lead this province.

Holloway called McNeil’s criticism both unfair and thoughtless.

“We’ve spent the last few

years under the NDP government creating a place where workers can raise their families. Now, McNeil and his reckless say anything attitude is putting all that hard work at risk.” **U**

UNIFOR COMMUNICATIONS: SHANNON DEVINE, MICHELLE WALSH, ANGELO DICARO AND KATIE ARNUP

>> continued from "Welcome to Uniforum" on page 1

union is doing, both nationally and at locals across the country.

Through news stories and special features, we'll keep you informed.


Special features will include Featured Activists, profiling rank and file

members active in their locals across the country, and Featured Campaigns, turning the spotlight on some of the issues Unifor is championing. We'll have photo spotlights of events across Canada and tell you about some of our newest members.

So, if you know about an activist, a campaign, an event or a new bargaining

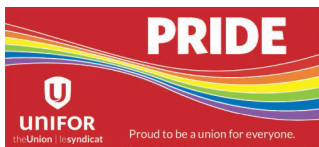
unit that you think the rest of the country should know about, let Uniforum know by emailing communications@unifor.org.

To sign up for Uniforum, go to <http://www.unifor.org/en/whats-new/subscribe> and fill out the online form.

To continue receiving Uniforum by mail, you need to email us at: communications@unifor.org 



Protecting LGBT rights



Unifor National President Jerry Dias has urged Russian President Vladimir Putin to "stand on the right side of history" and repeal recent laws severely infringing on the rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual and trans (LGBT) people.

"We both know that

governments have the power to restrict or expand the freedoms, dignity and rights of their citizens," Dias wrote in a letter to Putin.

"I am appealing to you to stand on the right side of history."


Dias announced his intention to contact Putin during his keynote speech at the Unifor Founding Convention on Labour Day weekend, saying Unifor will

work to build a better society for all in Canadians and around the world.

"I am so proud that unions such as ours in Canada have used our collective strength to push for changes in the workplace and in legislation, such that our country has become a global leader on LGBT rights," wrote Dias.

With international attention on Russia as it prepares to host the Winter Olympic Games, Dias

emphasized that Unifor fully expects Russia to support the Charter of the games, including a clear anti-discrimination policy.

Dias made it clear that this issue is far greater than just the high-profile Games and that the Russian government must respect fundamental worker and citizenship rights every day – in every workplace and every neighbourhood. 

>> continued from "CAMI deal creates jobs" on page 1

the company's reliance on temporary work," Unifor National President Jerry Dias said.

The 2,700 members of Unifor Local 88 at the CAMI plant ratified the four-year deal Sept. 15. The contract eliminates the Supplemental Workforce Employment program, which allowed for the company to hire temporary workers.

Dias called the new agreement a beachhead in Unifor's campaign to win good, permanent jobs in Canada's increasingly precarious jobs market.

New hires will enter into a defined contribution pension plan, a demand the company aggressively pursued. The union significantly increased the total value of the plan beyond initial company demands. The union continues to advocate for defined benefit plans.

"We're going to redouble our efforts to improve pensions for all workers, and will continue to push aggressively for a defined benefit plan in future rounds of talks," plant chairperson Mike Van Boekel said. There is also a \$3,000 signing bonus and annual lump sum payments of \$2,000 in 2014, 2015

and 2016. The deal protects current pension benefits for active workers and retirees and makes inroads in workplace health and

safety, job security and skilled trades, including the creation of eight new apprenticeship opportunities at the plant. 



The Unifor bargaining team at CAMI.

Photo spotlight: Toyota Campaign



SUBMIT YOUR PHOTOS TO COMMUNICATIONS@UNIFOR.ORG



Unifor the Union for Toyota Facebook page

Unifor members met Toyota workers at the gates of their plant with information on why they should join the union.



Unifor the Union for Toyota Facebook page

Some of the material handed out to Toyota workers to explain their rights and the advantages of joining Unifor.

Improve armoured car safety

Unifor National President Jerry Dias has offered to bring a delegation of local union leaders from the armoured car industry to meet with the federal public safety minister and make the case for comprehensive safety regulations in the industry.

“Canada has a patchwork of out-of-date and ineffective regulations governing the armoured car and secure logistics

industry,” Dias wrote in a letter to Public Safety Minister Steven Blaney.

Dias called for a federal task force to look into the industry, consult with stakeholders and develop new regulations, and included a copy of the Unifor discussion paper on the industry, *Armed and Safe*, in his letter to Blaney.

The paper calls for minimum standards in employee training, vehicle

specifications, crew compliments and safety equipment.

Unifor represents 2,000 workers in the armoured car industry, mostly at Brinks and G4S, and has been actively lobbying for improved safety regulations in the industry. In his letter, Dias said increased competition in the industry has put both the public and workers in the industry at risk.

“Facing danger has always been the backdrop for this industry, but standards are weakening as new entrants to the industry and established firms are engaging in heightened price competition on the basis of lowered security standards,” Dias wrote in his letter.

Other countries have adopted stricter regulations. 

Featured campaigns


As safe as our cargo

Since 2000, there have been more than 70 attacks on armoured cars in Canada, including three fatalities and two serious injuries.

Comprehensive safety regulations are lacking, just as new entrants and established firms fight a price war based on lowered security standards. That puts the public and

armoured car drivers and guards at greater risk of gun crime through armed robbery and organized crime.

Unifor is calling for minimum standards in employee training, vehicle specifications, crew compliments and safety equipment requirements.

For more information go to www.unifor.org/safecargo 



2013 Unifor Brinks master bargaining committee.

TO PROMOTE A CAMPAIGN IN YOUR LOCAL OR REGION, CONTACT COMMUNICATIONS@UNIFOR.ORG

Short-term thinking on pensions

The Alberta government's recent announcement that it plans to bring in legislation to restrict the pensions of provincial employees is an overly aggressive, and unneeded, approach, says Unifor's Western Region Director

"Pensions are built through years of negotiations. Alberta employees have given up other gains in the past to build their pensions to where they are today," Scott Doherty said. "To unilaterally cut pensions today flies in the face of that tradition."

The provincial government last week said it plans to limit contribution levels, cap pension

improvements and cut cost of living increases in government pensions as a way to curtail its own costs.


By Finance Minister Doug Horner's own admission, "there is no crisis today" in Alberta's government pensions.

That means there is time

for the government to sit down with its unions, including Unifor, to ensure the long-term strength of the pensions, Doherty said.

"Today's pensions are the consumer dollars of tomorrow," Doherty said.

"Not only should all workers be able to retire

with dignity, it's just good economics to make sure that when they do retire they'll have enough of an income to keep spending and contributing to the economy." Doherty said Unifor is ready to sit down any time to discuss pensions. 

Going green

Uniforum is going green. If you would like to continue receiving Uniforum by mail, you must let us know.

Email the Unifor Communications department at communications@unifor.org. You can also call us at 1-800-268-5763 Ext 3771

To sign up for the email version of Uniforum, go to <http://www.unifor.org/en/whats-new/subscribe> and fill out the online form.

Did you know?

Fairness Works sessions are now under way.

A series of one-day seminars are being held across Canada in the coming weeks to help locals boost member engagement.

Engaging our members in the work of our locals is key to the success of Unifor in winning better contracts and building a better society.

The one-day Fairness Works seminars and discussions are part of a Canada-wide Canadian Labour Congress program to boost union member involvement in their unions.

Aimed at union local leaders and staff, participants will learn about the steps, activities and resources needed to successfully launch a Fairness Works program within their union and locals. There is no charge, and lunch is provided.

For more information or to sign up, go to the Events section of Unifor.org and find the Fairness Works seminar near you. Space is limited.

Featured activist

Name: XXXX

Age: XXXX

Local: XXXX


Workplace: XXXX

Hometown: XXXX

Unifor is a rank and file union relying on thousands of activists to meet members' needs. In every local, there are people who others know they can count on to help out when needed. If you know such a person, we want to know them, too!

Send us a note at communications@unifor.org telling us about your Featured Activist, and we'll get their story out. Include



their name, age, local, workplace, hometown, and about 60 words on the work they do for Unifor members. 

TO PROMOTE AN ACTIVIST IN YOUR LOCAL OR REGION, CONTACT COMMUNICATIONS@UNIFOR.ORG

Unifor receives award

Unifor received an Award of Appreciation from the Council of Agencies Serving South Asians, or CASSA, for helping sponsor an event in Toronto to celebrate the culture and contributions of the South Asian community in Canada.

Much of the focus of Toronto Mela 2013 was the recently announced cuts to ethnic

programming by Rogers Media at its OMNI television stations.

In accepting the award, Unifor Human Rights Director Vinay Sharma said the cuts will hurt new comers.

"We believe in local and community-based programming in our various languages. We believe in building a stronger OMNI," Sharma

said. OMNI is Canada's first free multilingual/multicultural television system, in Ontario, British Columbia and Alberta.

Unifor represents OMNI staff in Locals 830M and 723M.

Unifor hosted a booth at Mela 2013, where visitors could sign a petition supporting OMNI programming. "Multicultural and

multilingual television is not only necessary for multicultural communities to preserve their heritage but is what makes Canada unique," said Grade 12 student Matthew Satar, who volunteered at the Unifor booth.

Satar said the booth had many visitors including several politicians, with most people signing the Unifor petition. 

A community chapters how-to

Unifor locals have an important role to play in reaching out to new groups of workers through our new union's unique idea of community chapters.

The Unifor Founding Convention adopted a plan to create a new category of membership for non-traditional workers called community chapters. This means that groups of workers who have different workplaces, precarious working conditions or who

are unemployed can work together through Unifor to improve their situation.

The first step in setting up a community chapter in your local is to identify groups of people who represent a natural extension of your own membership.


It could be workers in a connected workplace who are not organized, support staff who work on contract or in part-time positions, temporary workers or

workers in the broader community.

Your local would assist the group in doing further outreach to members, getting the support they need to continue with the project and drafting a plan of action. To adopt a chapter, your local will need to amend its bylaws and decide if the chapter will have a seat on the executive. Once the community chapter is formed, your role will be to

involve those members in the activities of your local, assist them with overseeing their finances and finding ways to support their goals.

For more information visit: <http://unifor.org/en/about-unifor/community-chapters>.

To discuss how you might start forming a community chapter email: chapters@unifor.org. 

Ford jobs secured

A \$700-million investment in the Ford Oakville Assembly Plant is a giant boost for the provincial and national economy, Unifor National President Jerry Dias says.

"The benefits of this investment are enormous for the province and for the country," Dias said as the investment was announced Sept. 19, citing studies showing that every job in the facility supports 10 jobs in total in some part of the value chain.

"This kind of investment

is exactly what we need to see more of – one that creates jobs and hope for young workers that they can find good job opportunities."

Dias said government's many roles - quality education and training, infrastructure, transportation and universal, public health care – help secure such investments.

Dias also attributed the investment to the work of Unifor members and a clear indication that Canadian



Unifor National President Jerry Dias speaks to Ford workers.

plants are competitive.

"Our members at Ford have worked hard to ensure that this facility is a profitable location to invest and build automobiles well

into the future."

Unifor Local 707 represents production and skilled trades workers at Ford in Oakville. 

Keep GM shares

The federal and Ontario governments should keep their holdings in General Motors, rather than sell them off, Unifor National President Jerry Dias says.

In letters to federal Finance Minister Jim Flaherty and Ontario Finance Minister Charles Sousa, Dias said GM's share values will keep rising as the North American auto industry's sales and profits grow.

"Selling the public's equity stake in this company now will deny Canadians an opportunity to share directly in that continuing progress," he wrote.

More importantly, Dias said, a stake in the company would help to

ensure that GM's future manufacturing operations in Canada fairly reflect the contribution of Canadians to the company's turnaround.


"It is essential that we use every tool in the policy toolbox to ensure that GM and the other automakers in Canada retain and grow their operations here," he wrote. "It is simply not enough for a jurisdiction like Canada to make itself competitive on cost grounds, and then wait for global firms to beat a path to our door."

Many countries have minority stakes in automakers and other strategic firms, including France (with 15% of Renault) and the German

state of Lower Saxony (20% of Volkswagen).


"It is no coincidence," Dias wrote, "that Volkswagen has not closed a single assembly plant in Germany since the end of World War II."

Despite Canadian labour costs being competitive with those in the U.S., governments must play a pro-active role in cementing future investments. Keeping their equity stake would help them do this. Unifor represents close to 40,000 workers in Canada's auto assembly and parts industries.

Dias's letter is available at <http://www.unifor.org/sites/default/files/attachments/lettertoflahertyandsousa.pdf> 


Ratifications

University locals ratify

Two Unifor locals at the University of Windsor ratified new contracts that improve wages 1.5 per cent per year for three years and improve job security, narrowly averting a strike. The contracts were for Local 2458, representing 361 clerical staff, operating engineers, and mechanics and Local 195, representing 27 campus police. 


New deal for IMP workers

Workers at IMP Aerospace in Nova Scotia, members of Unifor Local 2215, have reached a new three year contract with the employer following a tough round of bargaining.

The agreement includes wage increases each year of the agreement (2 per cent, 2.25 per cent, and 2.5 per cent respectively) as well as increases to the wage scales and a fifth week of vacation time. 

Apprentice pay boosted

A deal between Unifor Local 1.01-0 and Prescott Machine and Welding boosts apprentice pay to 90 per cent of a journeyman rate, up from 80 per cent, to attract young people to replace an aging workforce.

The contract also includes 2 per cent per year wage increases, and an increase in the boot allowance from \$25 to \$175. 

Ontario conservatives attack unions

All working people have the right to earn a fair wage, work in a safe environment and maintain a decent standard of living, core values that the Ontario Conservative Party made clear this past weekend it does not share, Unifor National President Jerry Dias says.

Ontario Progressive Conservative Leader Tim Hudak told the policy convention that he supports party policies that would weaken unions and diminish the voice of workers in their workplaces.

This includes a proposal to outlaw the Rand Formula (a model of automatic union dues check-off for all workers covered by the

benefits of a collective agreement).

"The PC White Paper on labour law amounts to an aggressive attack against unions, and will undermine workers' ability to negotiate decent collective agreements - on equal footing - with their employers," said Dias.

"More dangerously, it will spark a whole new chapter of labour-management confrontation, which is the last thing Ontario needs today."

Hudak recently dropped Member of Provincial Parliament Randy Hillier, a key author of the June 2012 White Paper which first proposed outlawing the Rand Formula, from his

shadow cabinet.

"Mr. Hudak has recognized that Mr. Hillier is a liability to his party's pre-election preparations. Now he should acknowledge that Mr. Hillier's divisive policies are an even greater liability," Dias said.

"No union exists without the majority support of the members in that bargaining unit. The Rand Formula reflects the fundamental principle of majority-rules, pure and simple," said Unifor Ontario Regional Director Katha Fortier.

Fortier said recent investments at Ford and General Motors show that free collective bargaining is compatible with modern, competitive industrial facilities. 

New appointments

Strategic Planning

Fred Wilson (former CEP Assistant to the President) - Director of Strategic Planning, a new function which will focus on planning and coordination of key union initiatives and priorities.

Organizing

Duncan Brown (former CEP National Director, Graphical and Humanity Fund) - Organizing Department as Strategic Organizing Campaigns Director.

Josh Coles (former CEP National Construction Strategy Co-ordinator) - Organizing Department as the Organizing Resource Coordinator.

Roxanne Dubois (former CEP National Representative in

Communications) - National Representative in the Organizing Department, focusing on Community Chapters.

Laura Davis (former CEP Ontario Director of Special Projects) and **Zoran Grgar** (former CEP National Representative) - National Representatives in the Organizing Department.

Membership Mobilization and Campaigns

Patty Barrera (former CEP Director of Special Projects) and **Mike Shields** (former CAW National Representative) - National Representatives in the Membership Mobilization and Campaigns Department.

Research

Angelo DiCaro (former CAW National Representative in Communications) and **Karen Cobb** (former CAW National Representative in Education) - National Representatives in the Research Department.

Education

Dawn Van Nostrand (former CEP National Representative) - National Representative in the Education Department.

Women's Department

Barb Dolan (former CEP Ontario Administrative Vice-President) - National Representative in the Women's Department.


Area Directors

Rino Ouellet (former CEP Atlantic Region Administrative Vice-President) - Maritime Area Director.

Ken Stuart (former CAW National Representative) - Manitoba/Saskatchewan Area Director.

Don Boucher (former CEP Western Regional Administrative Vice-President) - Alberta Area Director.

Industry Director

Whitey MacDonald (former CAW National Representative) - Auto Director, coordinating Unifor's bargaining, representation, and related issues in the major auto sector. 

Reporter wins labour award

The Hamilton Spectator's senior business reporter Steve Arnold has won the 2013 Unifor local 87-M annual Labour Journalism Award for his compelling and comprehensive stories on how foreign domination has hurt Hamilton's steel

industry and its workers. "He writes with clarity and purpose, telling the workers' stories while giving voice to the company as well," said Paul Morse, president of Unifor Local 87-M Southern Ontario Newsmedia Guild, which sponsors the annual

award.

Arnold's stories looked at how global forces have affected multinational steel giants Arcelor Mittal Dofasco and U.S. Steel, and the impact that has had on steelworkers worried about their pensions, job security

and meaningful employment.

"His steel series speaks to the realities of globalization on our national economy," said Randy Kitt, the Media Sector representative on Unifor's National Executive Board.

Job summit needed

The latest jobs figures released by Statistics Canada show a worrying surge in part-time work and underline why a National Good Jobs Summit is needed, Unifor National President Jerry Dias says.

"Little by little, our economy is being built on a series of part-time, temporary, seasonal and precarious jobs -

particularly for young workers now entering the workforce," said Dias.

Canada's economy pumped out 59,000 jobs in the month of August, 70 per cent of which were part-time and mostly concentrated among older workers (aged 55 and older).

Despite it being the summer jobs season for

young people, Canada's youth unemployment rate rose, topping the 14 per cent mark.

"It's a mistake to believe the current direction of our economy is static and unchangeable," said Dias.

"Staying the course has only led our job market to a standstill, instead of innovation and growth," he said.

Dias restated his demand for a National Good Jobs Summit and said that if government will not heed the call, Unifor, the newly created Canadian union, will host this summit over this coming year.

"We need to look at what kind of jobs we want to be creating and what direction we want the economy to take," Dias said. 