



2017 USW Constitutional Convention RESOLUTION

Resolution No. 26

Training and Career Development

WHEREAS, continuing education and training provide our members with tools crucial for adapting to the changing economy and the changing environment of work; and

WHEREAS, the USW has negotiated with major steel companies, most major tire manufacturers, a glass manufacturer, a paper products manufacturer, and a utilities systems manufacturer to offer employer-funded training through the Institute for Career Development (ICD); and

WHEREAS, this negotiated benefit has proven so popular with our members that in 2015 alone, there were more than 14,000 USW enrollments in more than 1,500 ICD-sponsored classes hosted by local learning centers; and

WHEREAS, the ICD has 65 career development sites in the U.S. to enrich the lives of USW members by providing training that not only helps members on the job, but also improves long-term employability through a series of basic skills-teaching packages; and

WHEREAS, new technologies and work reorganization have increased the education, literacy and skill requirements needed for our members to advance in their workplaces; and

WHEREAS, since its inception, the ICD has been awarded three United States Department of Labor grants to develop and deliver training to help workers transition to new employment opportunities and to supplement the training efforts of incumbent workers in the workplace; and

WHEREAS, basic skills like reading, writing, oral communications, numeracy and computer skills; the ability to understand, retain and utilize written and oral information; critical thinking, problem solving, conflict resolution; social and economic analysis are critical components of educational and training programs; and

WHEREAS, there is a shortage of skilled workers to fill job openings and employers are not investing in apprenticeship training as much as they should be; and

WHEREAS, ICD is committed to developing a highly-trained workforce by continually providing upskilling of our members through its programs; and

WHEREAS, the USW provides oversight to assure that dislocated members receive effective job training and placement services through consolidated government programs; and

WHEREAS, the USW in Canada has a long history of working with employers, provincial and federal governments, and in some instances with other unions, to create sector-based councils that develop, promote and deliver training and labor adjustment programs that are tailored to meet the needs of workers; and

WHEREAS, The Canadian Skills Training and Employment Coalition (CSTEC), has operated for over twenty five years and offers skill development programs for Canadian steelworkers and other workers in the manufacturing sector, provides leadership in the development of training programs that benefits workers, and continues to demonstrate the enormous potential of sector-based approaches to apprenticeship and training for both workers and employers; and

WHEREAS, some members of the U.S. Congress seek to privatize employment placement and labor exchange services and drastically reduce funding for all such programs; and

WHEREAS, the Canadian Federal Government has reduced resources to labor and community based adjustment programs, and has terminated the Sector Council Program that funded joint sector-based training councils for many years; and

WHEREAS Canadian Federal and Provincial Governments are devoting insufficient resources for training and adjustment programs, which are becoming even more important in light of our changing economy which is increasingly under pressure from the effects of trade, automation and the need to address climate change.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that:

- (1)** Our Union should continue to expand its pioneering efforts to establish Career Development and other training programs in the United States, funded by collectively bargained employer contributions, that realize the desires of our members for lifelong learning and give them the opportunity to improve their literacy and basic skills, develop portable skills, and enhance their personal and family relationships by expanding their education opportunities, training and counseling inside and outside of their workplaces.

- (2)** In Canada, our union should continue to build on its track record of creating effective councils that bring unions, employers, provincial and federal governments, and community colleges together to develop and deliver training and labor adjustment programs that are designed to meet the needs of workers.
- (3)** We will increase the pressure on our employers to provide more apprenticeship training and career advancement opportunities.
- (4)** We will ensure that the enforcement of training and occupational standards in skilled trade jobs is maintained, and work to strengthen the portability of skill trade credentials and the mobility of skilled trades people.
- (5)** The USW will call on all of our governments to support effective training and retraining programs, including those that train workers involved in new technologies that may offer significant employment opportunities building on the skills and talents of our members.
- (6)** Although we support a rationalization of the myriad job training programs, we demand that any restructuring provide adequate funding, including targeted and expanded funding for trade adjustment assistance, dislocated workers' training and trade readjustment assistance, and enable our union, the public and our governments to retain the ability to track job losses attributable to unacceptable trade legislation.
- (7)** We support strong accountability measures in any expenditure of public moneys, but such measures should not be used to privatize adjustment services and destroy labor and community based programs that served workers successfully for many years.
- (8)** We believe any restructuring of job training programs must include a strong federal role in defining standards, must remain accountable through public administration and oversight, and must include balanced representation of organized labor, employers, educators and community organizations in the planning and administration of these programs.