



2017 USW Constitutional Convention RESOLUTION

Resolution No. 6

Women of Steel

WHEREAS, all USW sisters are Women of Steel regardless of industry or sector in which they are employed; and

WHEREAS, USW Women of Steel show their solidarity and sisterhood by standing together to advance women's equality and equity and to counter assaults on worker rights by volunteering for political and organizing activities, and by engaging in bargaining and corporate campaign struggles; and

WHEREAS, six of the fourteen USW 2016 Jefferson Awards went to Women of Steel activists or Local Union Women's Committees. Their volunteerism builds the Union's image by reaching beyond the union hall into communities. Our sisters have a long and proud tradition of assisting those in need, visiting veterans homes and homeless shelters, supporting various charitable causes, and continually striving to show that union members are a positive, proactive, viable and necessary part of every community. One union sister was the honored recipient of the National Jefferson Award for her work in assisting women living in domestic abuse shelters to improve their economic situation by qualifying and securing good-paying family-sustaining jobs; and

WHEREAS, in 2016, union sisters converged on the city of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, for the Seventh USW International Women's Conference in the continued tradition of being the highest-energy USW conference, and largest gathering of union women in North America. The Conference provides a venue for union sisters to learn from each other, build solidarity to increase support for their local unions, districts, and other women and workers around the world; and

WHEREAS, the USW encourages participation and leadership of all sisters through the ever-expanding District women's programs, the Women of Steel Leadership Course conducted at least annually in each District, and Women of Steel council, chapter or District meetings, and by ensuring that Women of Steel is on the agenda at all major District functions; and

WHEREAS, Women of Steel has offered “Putting Breast Cancer Out of Work” training to over 1500 union sisters and brothers further demonstrating the USW’s commitment to the health and safety of our members and that Women of Steel is not just for women; and

WHEREAS, Women of Steel activists have engaged Union brothers in the struggle to end violence against women, resulting in USW being one of the most successful unions in Canada in bargaining paid and other leaves of absence for members experiencing domestic violence; and

WHEREAS, USW strives to be an inclusive union and to that end has offered the following workshops: “Bargaining Equality Issues” to support the development of strategies and tactics to help negotiate equality provisions into collective agreements; “LGBTQ Inclusive” equality of rights in a union for all; and “Taking Practical Action to End Violence Against Women;” and

WHEREAS, the USW Constitution demonstrates our Union’s commitment to the development and education of union sisters by establishing long ago that Local Union Women’s Committees be created in every local union where sisters work; and

WHEREAS, Women of Steel has participated in global women’s programs in conjunction with the IndustriALL Global Union Women’s Conference, the UN Commission on the Status of Women, The White House Summit for Women and Families, and The White House Summit for Working Women; and

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that:

- (1)** The USW will continue to identify, support and mentor Women of Steel activists in our workplaces, our Union, and our communities.
- (2)** Our Union will support, promote, assist in, and provide resources to promote a deeper understanding of the need for, and to develop, local union Women’s Committees, equal in importance and responsibility to all other mandated committees and are included as a fundamental and inherent part of the local union to increase solidarity and activism, and to assist with the work of the local.
- (3)** Women of Steel will continue its efforts to reach across borders to build solidarity on an international basis, to promote economic and social equality of women and to assist in the struggles against exploitation of all workers around the world.
- (4)** We will continue our work with Unite the Union, as part of our Workers Uniting efforts, to develop Women Workers Uniting that will continue to build upon the union sister exchange and communication programs that already exist, and to identify additional international equalities issues and initiatives to

strengthen the voice of women in government and international agencies to end poverty and violence against women.

- (5)** Each USW District Women of Steel Coordinator will, along with their District Director, continue to develop and implement a District Women of Steel Plan.
- (6)** Our Union will continue its women's programs at the International and District levels while striving to enhance and update them, and will encourage each local union to support Women of Steel meetings and activities at all levels.