



**Labor-Management
Partnerships for
Working Families**

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

LABOR-MANAGEMENT PARTNERSHIPS FOR WORKING FAMILIES

INTRODUCTION	1
The Labor-Management Partnership Model.....	1
The Next Generation of Unions: Champions for Working Families?.....	3
 MEETING THE FAMILY CARE NEEDS OF THE HEALTH CARE WORKFORCE: REFLECTIONS ON THE 1199 CHILD CARE FUND	
<i>Carol Joyner</i>	
A Brief History of the 1199 in New York.....	5
1199 and Work-Family.....	5
The Labor-Management Board of Trustees.....	6
Local Labor-Management Committees.....	6
Whom to Serve.....	7
Programs and Accomplishments.....	8
Child Care Fund Spin Offs.....	10
Future Projects and Directions.....	12
How Other Unions Can Follow the 1199/Employer Child Care Fund Example.....	12
 BRIDGING THE GAP BETWEEN WORKPLACE DEMANDS AND FAMILY OBLIGATIONS: LESSONS FROM THE UNITED AUTO WORKERS/FORD PARTNERSHIP	
<i>Bill Corey and Richard D. Freeman</i>	
The Development of the Family Service and Learning Center.....	15
Programs and Activities Offered at the Family Service and Learning Center Program	16
Running the Family Service and Learning Center Program.....	18
Current Status of the Program.....	19
Challenges.....	20
Advantages.....	20
Lessons Learned and How Other Unions Can Benefit.....	21
 CONNECTING WORK AND FAMILY IN THE HIGHER EDUCATION WORKPLACE: PAST SUCCESSES, FUTURE DIRECTIONS	
<i>Kris Rondeau</i>	
Work-Family as a Driving Force.....	23
Benefits Negotiated by HCTUW.....	23
HUCTW and Harvard's Union-Management Relationship.....	26
The Harvard Local's Path for the Future: Work Redesign.....	27

LABOR-MANAGEMENT PARTNERSHIPS FOR WORKING FAMILIES

INTRODUCTION

One of the basic premises of the MIT Workplace Center is that society will be able to address and solve work-family issues only when the full spectrum of stakeholders with responsibility for these issues *work together*. This premise leads us to explore one promising approach to engaging multiple stakeholders: labor-management partnerships. We asked representatives of three leading examples of such partnerships to discuss their approaches in the Center's Fall 2002 Seminar Series.

Carol Joyner presented the case of the Local 1199 Employer Child Care Fund, Bill Corey and Richard Freeman described the history and activities of the United Auto Workers-Ford Family Service and Learning Centers, and Kris Rondeau chronicled the Harvard Union of Clerical and Technical Workers initiatives at Harvard University and University of Massachusetts Medical Center. Susan C. Cass summarizes them here.

Each case pushes the envelope of labor-management relations to address the needs of today's working families. The cases reflect the best features of unions and collective bargaining in America today—and offer a vision for the future. We present these cases to encourage other companies and unions to develop similar programs and to highlight how addressing work-family issues might help revitalize America's labor movement.

The Labor-Management Partnership Model

Labor-management partnerships that are established through collective bargaining have several attractive features for addressing work-family issues.

- ***Expanding the Benefits Frontier.*** Collective bargaining has historically been one of the major vehicles for achieving breakthroughs in workplace benefits and improved conditions and for ensuring that benefits cover large numbers of workers and their families. Benefits Americans now take for granted—such as vacation and sick pay, pensions, and health insurance—were all introduced by and spread through collective bargaining. Work-family benefits and programs represent the next frontier issue for collective bargaining. But it will take committed leaders and mobilization of membership support to achieve these breakthroughs in collective bargaining. Kris Rondeau tells about union leadership moving ahead without a great deal of membership support on work-family benefits, but when members see how valuable the newly created programs are, they demand program expansion. Carol Joyner says several things are needed to create this kind of change: a strong voice inside the union, women on the executive board, and showing management during negotiations that members want and expect these kinds of programs.
- ***Joint Response to Crises.*** Bill Corey and Richard Freeman describe building new innovative programs in a time of economic crisis for the auto industry, “even though times were bad, it allowed us to open the door on some

different issues.” This is a lesson of special relevance today: Labor-management partnerships could be a model for how to respond to the economic and social crises and tensions working families and communities are feeling from the three pronged pinchers of war, recession, and cuts in critical governmental, social, and family services. If employers want a stable workforce, with low turnover and high company loyalty, they need to show workers that the company will be there for them through good times and bad times.

- ***Providing a Stable Funding Base.*** Labor-management partnerships are a good way to overcome a common pitfall of either government- or company-initiated and managed work-family programs, which is the lack of a consistent or steady funding mechanism. Most labor-management partnerships, like the ones presented in the following pages, are jointly funded through allocations negotiated in collective bargaining. The most common funding mechanism involves a specific hourly contribution that goes into the fund, as is the case in the UAW-Ford and the 1199 cases. There are two advantages of this funding mechanism. First, it is contributory, requiring both employers and workers to choose investing in these issues over other pressing wage and benefit priorities. Second, it provides a continuous stable funding mechanism. These funding mechanisms address a fundamental problem that plagues new programs—how to ensure sustainability. Unlike many corporate- or government-funded programs that often get cut when budgets get tight, the joint programs that are funded through contractually-based formulas provide a continuous flow of funds to the program, even as business conditions change.

- ***Joint Administration and Ownership.*** Programs that are jointly administered by employer and worker representatives build a shared commitment to the efforts and allow use of the funds to meet the different needs of particular workers and their families. Employees have a direct input into how the funds are allocated and can provide input into new initiatives as needs change.

- ***Expanding the Partnership to Serve Community Needs.*** As the UAW/Ford agreement says, their goal is “stronger families and better communities.” Thus, this partnership brings in another key work-family stakeholder: the communities in which the company is located and the employees live. Joyner indicates that 1199 partners with many different community agencies and programs. She says 1199 members were concerned that while they were working, their children were in environments that did not nurture, protect, or value them—this became a concern of the union and employers. She also emphasizes that parents who work at night want to keep their children at home (in the community) and not take them to centers at work. Bill Corey and Richard Freeman use community agencies and programs to provide school age care, and they work with school districts. They bring community representatives onto the Family Councils that govern the Family Service and Learning Centers (FSLC), emphasizing the importance of local control in each community where there is a center. In both of these cases, employers are helping to build the capacity of

existing community-based organizations and to strengthen the infrastructure that links family support services.

- ***Taking an Industry-Wide Approach to Establishing Work-Family Benefits.*** 1199 has generated childcare programs by bringing together many employers in health care. Some would not have been able to do anything if they had not been part of an employer consortium. Bill Corey and Richard Freeman talk about expanding the UAW/Ford partnership around the FSLCs to include other unions and their represented employees. Some companies can afford the cost of building infrastructure, others cannot, but all employees have work-family needs and can benefit from access to FSLCs. These models show that small- and medium-size firms can provide work-family benefits without hurting their bottom line.
- ***Engaging Managers and Peers in the Design of Work Systems.*** Kris Rondeau describes how she and her colleagues put to work the concept our colleague Lotte Bailyn has called the “dual agenda.”¹ They work with management to redesign jobs so that the work gets done well and that workers have the flexibility to meet family and personal needs.

Given the benefits that accrue to working families through these new labor-management partnerships, we hope that more companies and unions will examine the experiences reported here and consider starting a similar initiative, suitably adapted to circumstances facing their industry and their workforce.

The Next Generation of Unions: Champions for Working Families?

Historians have long noted that a healthy and innovative labor movement is critical to a healthy democracy. America is testing this argument today as union membership and influence in society are at their lowest levels since the Great Depression. Work-family benefits and services could well serve as an important catalyst for a resurgence of interest in and support for unions. Bargaining for the needs of working families could expand worker voice on issues that call for a labor movement perspective. Moreover, these cases illustrate how making work-family issues a top union priority might also change, in very positive ways, the process of union organizing and the culture of unions, as well as union-management relationships. The following are some of the key elements of a new model for organizing and representing workers that emerges out of these cases:

- ***Organizing through community building at work, without relying on distrust of management.*** Harvard Union of Clerical and Technical Workers’ organizing slogan is “You don’t have to be anti-Harvard to be pro-union.” This is a powerful message that future organizers would do well to consider. If unions reject “legal adversarialism,” as Rondeau suggests, they may find that greater

¹ *Beyond Work-Family Balance: Advancing Gender Equity and Workplace Performance* with Rhona Rapoport, Joyce K. Fletcher, Bettye H. Pruitt (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 2002).

numbers of workers—including various kinds of professionals—will identify with the union cause.

- ***Representing workers before a collective bargaining relationship is achieved.*** Kris Rondeau notes that much can be done to represent workers and build organizational support even before majority status is achieved through an NLRB election. This is a protected right under American labor law, yet it is seldom practiced by unions during an organizing phase. Organizing in this way takes time, resources, and perseverance. But, if Rondeau’s 100 percent success rate is an indication, it ultimately pays off, both for the workers and the union.
- ***Viewing the relationship with members as “lifelong” and adopting bargaining and representational strategies to meet members’ (and union staffers’) needs as they change over their family life course.*** Carol Joyner says that 1199 programs started as pre-school childcare then expanded to after-school and are now running programs for youth on preparing for college. The union is now thinking about education and workforce development issues. Having surveyed members on elder care, the Fund is considering this issue for the future. Kris Rondeau reports on her union’s “cradle-to-grave philosophy” and “looking at a worker in the context of her whole life.” Their benefits go from childcare for infants to “sage days” for people nearing retirement. Indeed, all three cases take this full life-course approach. Bill Corey and Richard Freeman talk about the way FSLCs have programs for pre-school, school-age, adults, and retirees, and their interest in seeing people “develop over a lifetime.” They also highlight the value of “intergenerational experiences,” like their program in which teens teach seniors about computers.

While work-family issues are of great importance to both men and women, it should not be surprising that these organizing and representational models and programs have strong appeal to women. While addressing work-family issues takes patience, perseverance, and on-going attention, doing so builds community, organizational capacity, and the power to get things done, often in non-adversarial ways. Since women now account for three out of four new union members, these lessons should be of great interest to labor leaders—enhancing their ability to serve current members and bringing new workers into the labor movement.

We hope that you find these cases as stimulating and informative as we did.

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MEETING THE FAMILY CARE NEEDS OF THE HEALTH CARE WORKFORCE: REFLECTIONS ON THE 1199 CHILD CARE FUND

Carol Joyner, Executive Director, 1199/Employer Child Care Fund

A Brief History of the 1199 in New York

Representing approximately 250,000 members and growing every day, the 1199 SEIU is New York's Health and Human Service Employees Union. The union extends from Montauk, Long Island to Buffalo, New York and is expanding westward in New York State. The union started in the early 1930s when a small group of pharmacists wanted to organize. In the 1960s, 1199 began organizing health care workers, primarily in hospitals, and in the 1970s moved on to home care workers, giving them a stronger voice and higher wages as well. 1199 also includes an entity that is not health care related—the legal aid workers in New York City—organized approximately 20 years ago.

1199 and Work-Family—the 1199/Employer Child Care Fund

1199's membership is huge and diverse, ranging from maintenance workers and clerical workers in hospitals to physician's assistants. The salary range and lifestyle differences are enormous between these groups, but one thing the members all have in common, as all of us do, is they all are part of a family and have loved ones and therefore have to balance work and family.

Beginning in 1989, work-family issues became a topic of discussion and great interest at delegates' and organizing meetings alongside more traditional workplace issues. 1199 members were concerned that while they worked, their children were in

environments that did not nurture, protect, and value them. At that time, with hospitals downsizing and forced overtime in the hospitals, workplace issues coupled with fewer or no supports in the community (for instance, after-school programs were being cut) led the members to bring their concerns to the union. One would think that a church or religious institution would be the organization people would turn to with such problems, but that was not the case. The workers brought these problems to the union, and the union began to pay attention.

By the end of 1989, the union had completed a contract survey as it does every year before negotiations. A question on the survey asked, "Would you fight for a childcare benefit in this union?" The response? Eighty percent of those who responded to the survey said they thought the union should fight for a childcare benefit. At that time, about 40 percent of the membership were parents. Union officials believed that some union members would complain about childcare benefits because it would be a benefit just for a specific population within the union. Benefits are generally for the entire membership—everyone gets the same thing. A registered nurse, for example, may receive additional benefits due to the budget process, but for the most part the standard contract language is the same for the entire membership. The survey convinced the union to fight for childcare benefits.

In the beginning, 16 forward-thinking healthcare institutions signed on

to this pioneering initiative—leading to the establishment of the first comprehensive Taft-Hartley Childcare Fund in the nation. Each employer agreed to pay three-tenths of a percent of their gross yearly payroll into a childcare fund—amounting to approximately two million dollars each year. Currently, there is approximately \$16 million a year in the Fund. In the past, employers contributed between three and five percent and there was no regularity to the bargaining. Since April 1, 2003, all employers contribute five percent.

In 1991, 1199 successfully negotiated a contract with a block of institutions called the League of Voluntary Hospitals resulting in the addition of 50 new institutions into the Child Care Fund. In 1992 contract negotiations, approximately 60 additional employers agreed to contribute to the Child Care Fund, effective 1994. Currently more than 380 employers contribute to the Fund, which provides benefits for approximately 8,000 children each year.

The Labor-Management Board of Trustees

Originally, there were seven representatives on the union side and seven on the management side of the board set up to govern the Fund. Now there are 13 on each side. In 1994, when the League of Voluntary Hospitals came into the Fund, we went through an active process of determining how we are going to operate and the Trustees made a formal decision to operate more collaboratively. There are no caucuses on this board. There is a sincere attempt at conversations that are not driven by the union or management agenda. Board members thought that the childcare

interests of working people would be better served with this type of collaboration. And so far, most Trustees would agree that this approach benefits the Fund as well as the families.

Local Labor-Management Committees

Much of the success of the Child Care Fund can be attributed to the work of the labor-management committee members. When the Fund began, it needed an identity, and we felt strongly that local committees of rank and file members were the key to real parent participation.

The parents of the children in these programs needed to have a say in the types of programs that

would be offered and how the collective bargaining money would be spent. In the beginning, there was a big struggle. This was new territory—usually with benefit plans, trustees determine the complete schedule of benefits and recipients simply participate. But oftentimes with childcare and education services, parents do have a voice and the Child Care Fund was structured so the members—the parents—would participate in the same way.

At each contributing institution, therefore, a local committee helps administer the Fund to participants. The Board of Trustees adopted a plan of benefits from which local committees select. To give the members a voice, we designed the local committees to have budget control over what their employer contributes. The committee could decide if they wanted money to go to camps, holiday programs, voucher reimbursements, after-school programs, or to developing a childcare center. People began to dream, and it was a very exciting time. There were some

Much of the success of the Child Care Fund can be attributed to the work of the labor-management committee members.

committees where management was interested, too, and worked with 1199 members to develop these programs and to budget for their childcare benefits.

From the start, committee members have been involved in resource development. They keep their ears to the ground in their communities to find the area's best camps and programs. Members also provide counseling to other 1199ers, taking them through the complicated process of registering for childcare benefits. They also assist one another during crises and give tips for managing work and family.

We currently have about 600 committee members, and this year we are changing the structure of the committees. Last year when the union negotiated a contract, they decided to

challenge of maintaining the committee participation absent financial control.

Whom to Serve

Originally we tried to figure out how to offer the broadest array of services and benefits to 1199 members. After some struggle, the Trustees agreed that we should serve children from birth to 17 years of age. This was not an easy decision and tension arose because several Trustees thought the cutoff should be 13 years of age, as it is generally for tax purposes. There was also disagreement regarding the needs of teenagers and whether or not the Fund should provide benefits to "young adults." Other Trustees argued that all children require care while parents are working and the type of care should be

Finances

Years ago when new institutions began contributing, it took time for them to figure out the full process. Some union members could not believe the Fund existed! We used to wonder why some particular hospital had such low turn-out during registration. In focus groups people said they thought their money would be taken out of their paychecks. They could not conceive that the employers would contribute for childcare benefits. This lag in start-up resulted in a Fund balance that over the years accumulated in several local accounts. Even though we sent out literature, and the registration material was very clear, these members could not believe that this was a benefit that they would actually receive without payroll deduction. The commingled structure will allow the surplus to be spent where it's needed most.

commingle all of the funds. In the past, we were able to have strong committees because we had 380 separate budgets, which were based on the institution that provided the funds. It was not a very equitable system, but one that had a lot of buy-in on a local level. People felt that it was their money and they should control it. That worked when there were a small number of institutions, but the Fund's growth has forced a new operating process. We will experiment with commingling this year and have the

age appropriate. But the union felt strongly about focusing on teenagers since a lot of our members have teenage children. Originally, most people thought we would set up a childcare center in every hospital and they imagined people wearing nursing uniforms, walking around and rocking babies all day. But our survey results suggested that members needed a comprehensive range of care.

Non-Traditional Hours and Childcare

Ten years ago we conducted a survey and asked people who worked non-traditional hours what kind of childcare they wanted. Responses were minimal on this question. In fact, results from both the survey and follow-up focus groups indicated that parents do not want to take their children out at night, they want them home. Vouchers meet some of that need. A babysitter can come to the home of a late shift worker or single parent and stay while the children are sleeping. While we have the capacity to provide 24-hour care at our new learning center, it now operates from 6:45 a.m. – 6:00 p.m., spanning several shifts. In Texas, the number of 24-hour centers is growing and the UAW has a 24-hour center in Flint, Michigan. It would be interesting to study these centers in the coming years. (See article on page 15.)

Programs and Accomplishments

- **Voucher System**

One of the Fund's first programs was a voucher system. Parents get reimbursed for childcare tuition up to \$75 per week based on a sliding fee scale that considers their salary and the number of children in their care. This is structured very much like a typical social service voucher or reimbursement system.

- **Childcare Centers**

Nine years ago, we started our first childcare center, the 1199 Future of America Learning Center. We recently expanded that center and have developed another center in the Bronx. The new center has 10,000 square feet of space and is a collaboration between the Child Care Fund, the 1199 Training Fund, and the City University of New York. Over the years, the Fund has also sought the development of a center in Brooklyn, which has the largest concentration of 1199 children.

- **Subsidized Slots in Centers**

Some hospitals have existing childcare centers, but the tuition is at the market rate and cost prohibitive for 1199 parents. The average 1199er or parent cannot afford \$12,000 yearly tuition. Doctors and nurses are the primary users of the on-site centers. When we can, we purchase slots from those centers and subsidize them for 1199 members, reducing tuition by 50 percent or more.

The subsidized tuition is still a lot compared to people's salaries, but the subsidies make it more feasible than paying the full tuition.

- **Summer Day Camp Programs**

Parents with school age children have several gaps in childcare throughout the year. The summer and school breaks, for example, present a challenge to parents who must work and can not take the time off to be with their children. The Fund's first program was the summer day camp program.

We contract primarily with 135 camps located in the five boroughs of New York City, Long Island, and Westchester. 1199 parents select the camp that they want and then pay the Fund a small co-payment. We added a summer day camp voucher program that reimburses summer camp costs for people who do not live in the five boroughs of New York City. These people can use the voucher and select whatever camp they want in accordance with a reimbursement schedule. In addition, we have gone into surrounding communities and developed contracts with other community-based programs. Some of these camps are 90 percent 1199 children. It is good for the camp because they have guaranteed funding. It is very good for us because those are the communities where the members live. The camps are often in the churches or the synagogues that the members attend, and it makes sense to keep those

programs funded and the community relationships consistent.

- **Cultural Arts Program**

We started a cultural arts program about six years ago and initially contracted with six or seven cultural arts institutions around New York. Members wanted support to help them pay for arts activities. In response, we developed a cultural arts stipend program, similar to the voucher program.

Getting the cultural arts program approved was a big struggle. Some Trustees did not consider it childcare. They felt the program would not enable employees to work more. They saw it as time for employees' children to dance and sing. We argued that children are no longer dancing and singing in school because of the drastic cuts in schools' arts budgets. What helped us was a provision of the 1199 contract requiring people to work every other weekend. We said, while the union members are working every other weekend what are their children doing? They are home, watching TV or dancing and singing alone. These children need to be engaged.

We thought we would develop relationships with several arts programs and museums, but it proved to be very, very difficult. The groups that we were able to develop relationships with—seven organizations—had to redesign Saturday programs to accommodate a group of children from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. We tacked on the cultural arts stipend program because we thought it might be easier for people to get reimbursement for a dance or music class the child is engaged in on the weekend. It is a very interesting project, and parents do appreciate it. We have about 450 children using the cultural arts program at any given time.

- **Workforce 2000**

When the Fund decided to start a youth program we were clear that it had to be sustainable year round and be able to reach young people in a variety of ways. We were not sure however, what young people wanted out of such a program. One summer we polled a group of 300 teenagers about what they wanted and needed and where they planned to be in four years. We asked what was interesting to them about school and what careers interested them. We found huge gaps between what kids thought they were going to be or wanted to be and what they were interested in at the moment. For example, kids were saying, "I definitely want to go to medical school" yet they were failing math or failing science. There was a total mismatch between where kids wanted to be and where they currently were.

In response to the survey mentioned above, we developed Workforce 2000 in cooperation with New York University (NYU). The children go to NYU on Saturdays and they work with counselors and college students to begin honing their skills and thinking more deeply about what it is they want to do. With the counselors, the students look at their transcripts, their pattern of study, their interest level and develop a plan for their future. Students also work on developing their skills. If one wants to be a doctor, then they work on math skills.

Workforce 2000 is a response to the new standards that states have imposed on children. Across the country, new education standards have affected kids. Our hope for this program is to develop a safety net so teenagers not only learn how to assess their own skills, but they also get support to meet the standards that the New York City Department of Education and many

other county systems are requiring of them. Setting higher standards is acceptable to most people, but the school systems have failed to create the needed academic support to help students meet the standards.

The counselors at NYU develop a relationship with each of these students' high school guidance counselors to help ensure continuity in the classroom and that the guidance counselors talk to the children. The average guidance counselor in a New York City public school has about 300 cases, so their time with students is extremely limited. The counselors at NYU are asking the guidance counselors in the high schools to pay particular attention to this group of children. This does not solve all of New York City's public education problems, but it does address some of the issues these 300 or so individuals face. Over the last four years, all of the students in the senior class of the Workforce 2000 program have graduated high school and entered college (with the occasional exception of someone entering the military). We keep track of the students, and they also do well in college.

Child Care Fund Spin Offs

About four years ago, the Child Care Fund became the sole member of the Child Care Corporation, whose purpose is to oversee childcare centers and childcare center development. Under the Corporation, we have established two childcare centers, a Public Education Project and new grant-funded program to extend childcare benefits to low income parents.

In addition, we have been trying to address a concern that members have

about sick care and what happens when their child is sick and they must return to work. The union contract has a sick leave provision, but it only allows members to use two sick days for a family member who is sick. We are in the process of working with Montefiore Hospital in the Bronx to develop an on-site sick care program with space in the hospital's pediatrics department. 1199 members would be able to use that space for up to four days if their child is sick.

Another interesting project is the Union Child Care Coalition, which is not under the auspices of the Fund or Corporation. It is a coalition of the New York State AFL-CIO, and the Fund participates. The coalition of 20 labor unions in and around New York City, which started about six or seven years ago, frames the union position on work and family issues. The Union Child Care Coalition works on behalf of all children in the State of New York. The Coalition primarily started out doing what unions do best—lobbying—and we realized that when the unions went up to Albany to lobby for more childcare dollars in the state budget, the legislators definitely paid attention. As a result, the budget for childcare increased significantly for over three years. Union children receive free summer camp programs, the facilitated enrollment program assists middle income workers with their childcare expense, and the Coalition has joined the New York State Paid Family Leave Committee. Since September 11 and the budget crises effecting most states, the Union Child Care Coalition has been instrumental in working with the statewide coalition of childcare advocates to move that agenda along.

Culture Change as a Result of the Child Care Fund

There is a small nursing home up the block from our first childcare center. The 1199 members at that nursing home brought me over to the space they had found and said, “let’s build a center together.” The Child Care Fund had a huge impact on that nursing home. The management person is one of the board members and is very committed to the local committee structure. He was one of the lead opponents of the commingled financial structure that might weaken the local committee, and spoke more strongly about the committees than anyone on the board. The parents in the nursing home were very committed to the center whether they had children in the center or not. They met with other parents regarding center-based issues, raised money for it by having fish fries at lunchtime, and purchased holiday gifts for all of the children.

While I don’t know what impact the childcare center had on the work of these parents on a day-to-day basis, I do know that the childcare discussion made the other problems a little bit easier to deal with, because they found a common ground and used that common ground as a successful starting point for other conversations.

We hear from the local committee members that parents greatly appreciate the Fund, and they see it as an integral part of their work. They need these benefits to work. Members can not get the benefit every year because there is not enough money for all of the children that need to be served. Benefits are distributed by seniority and benefit history, so there is type of rotation system. At times, members have even coordinated with one another, to help make sure families with the greatest needs are served. They have said things such as, “I know you need it more than me—I’ll decide not to register this year and give others a chance to be considered.”

Throughout the union membership, I have never witnessed the competitiveness in terms of receiving the benefits that one hears about in corporations. Parents could take the position of, “I know how to register and it benefits me to have fewer people in this hospital register because of how the benefits get distributed. So, I’m not going to help others to register.” But they do not take that position at all. They want as many people as possible to register for this benefit because it is such a great thing and they know others need it. It has created a community mindedness amongst our members.

Future Projects and Directions

■ Paid Family Medical Leave

The Union Child Care Coalition and a group of other workers in New York State have drafted a bill that will be heard on the floor of the legislature in the near future.

■ Shortage of Childcare Providers

The shortage of childcare providers is a huge problem—not just for our childcare centers, but also for summer camps, retreats, Workforce 2000, and all our seasonal staffing. We are considering developing some sort of youth education system so that people can get informal training aside from the early childhood specialized training that the state requires. This training would be geared toward developing a cadre of trained staff.

To fill positions in our centers, we are competing with the department of education for teachers. Last year the United Federation of Teachers (UFT) negotiated a generous contract for its teachers, and we were afraid we would lose all of our licensed staff at the center to the public school system. Surprisingly, we did not lose any of our teachers this year, though I am waiting for the axe to drop. We increased vacations because the Department of Education gives 10 weeks. We are generous with allowing our staff to attend just about any conference they want to attend. We do whatever we can to increase professional development and keep them engaged because we know it is very hard to find good teachers, especially those with the State license.

Our tuition costs before subsidy at the learning center are \$12,500 and 75 percent goes toward salaries. If you do not pay the salary, you are not going to keep the teachers. The problem that

every center in this nation is experiencing is that most parents can not afford to finance the full expense of running a center and centers that care about quality can not afford to balance the expenses on the backs of its workers. The piece that is missing is money from the government. The United States is the only industrialized nation that does not have a comprehensive or universal childcare system that provides for the early education of its citizenry. At the Fund, we have money from the employer through collective bargaining and payment from the parent, but there is nothing from the government. The only way to combat the shortage of childcare workers is to pay them more and treat them like professionals.

There has been little done in terms of lobbying for childcare funding, although a few years ago, the Union Coalition was instrumental in securing a subsidy for childcare workers across New York State. It amounted to \$700 per worker. It is a step in the right direction in terms of getting the government to recognize that childcare workers need additional compensation if we are ever going to address the high turnover rates and retention and recruitment problems that have a negative impact on the childcare delivery system in America.

How Other Unions Can Follow the 1199/Employer Child Care Example

Local 2 of H.E.R.E in the San Francisco Bay area negotiated childcare language for members into their contract. It is modeled after the Child Care Fund and has grown steadily in the last five years. They have also been able to provide some benefits that the Fund is now

Mission of the 1199 Employer Child Care Corporation (CCC)

The CCC is a non-profit corporation committed to providing a high standard of early education and quality childcare to the children of working parents both from 1199 Employers and from the broader community. Our caring program is built around safe, nurturing, and responsive environments. At the Corporation, we value people and work hard to bring out the best in our dedicated staff, the parents we serve, and the children under our care.

considering, so we really do benefit from each other's existence. The UAW has been very active in work-family matters over the years, particularly in Michigan and they have done something that we have not been able to do. (See article that follows). They have not only provided a variety of services for workers, they have also been able to develop sensitization training for managers on the needs of working parents.

Negotiating a childcare fund or other work and family benefits is not out of the realm of possibility for other unions, but there has to be a very strong voice inside of the union for it to happen. The Labor Project for Working Families has amazing resources that chronicle all of the collective bargaining childcare language negotiated nationwide. Unions need the information and strong leadership that can put family benefits high on the agenda. It needs to be an expectation during bargaining. Despite the fact that most union leadership remains male dominated, having women on the executive boards or in leadership seems to help. On boards that have women or men who actually get the point of addressing work-family issues, we have seen the outcomes and they are always positive: good for working families and good for organizing.

Carol Joyner is executive director of the 1199/Employer Child Care Fund. She guided the Fund through its ten years of growth, from serving 250 children to serving 8,000 children a year. Prior to her work at the Child Care Fund, Carol was assistant director of the 1199 Training and Upgrading Fund where she planned and implemented a number of programs for adult learners and children. Joyner has a master's degree in psychology from City College of New York and taught elementary school in the public school system for six years.

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BRIDGING THE GAP BETWEEN WORKPLACE DEMANDS AND FAMILY OBLIGATIONS: LESSONS FROM THE UNITED AUTO WORKERS/FORD PARTNERSHIP

Bill Corey, Assistant Director UAW, FSLC and Richard D. Freeman, Ford Director, FSLC, Employee Support Services Programs and Total Health

The Development of the Family Service and Learning Center

Bill Corey

The Family Service Learning Center is a cooperative venture between the United Auto Workers (UAW) and Ford Motor Company for the betterment of our members and the communities where we live and work. During the early 80s, the whole auto industry was hit hard by recession. Market shares in domestic automakers dropped rapidly and Ford experienced its deepest financial crisis, losing almost half of the Union membership. In 1979, the UAW and Ford had about 203,000 people in their hourly workforce. By 1982, that number declined to approximately 100,000. The UAW was asked to give concessions in 1982, which we did. In return, we received the UAW-Ford National Joint Programs Center and other new programs, such as "profit sharing"—programs we wanted but could never get during good times at UAW-Ford. So even though times were bad, doors were opened to us on some different issues.

The joint programs were incorporated into a non-profit corporation housed at the National Joint Programs Center in Detroit, Michigan, to administer many programs, including Health and Safety, Quality, Mutual Growth Forums, Employee Involvement, Employee Support Service Programs, Technical Skills, Training, Education Development Training Programs, and

many others. The Family Service and Learning Center, which was created through negotiations in 1999, is the newest of these programs and the most comprehensive union management program ever. The letter of understanding drafted in 1999 is only two pages, but it represents a very complex partnership and arrangement. In essence, we negotiated a program to meet the diverse needs of our working families.



Richard Freeman

Ford Motor Company has always been a good corporate citizen with a long history of community service. Three hundred thousand UAW members—hourly, salaried, and retired, from the production line to the corporate offices at Ford, Visteon, and ZF Batavia—represent a diverse cross-section of American workers. They face significant challenges in reaching their career goals while providing for their families and meeting the needs of their communities.

The Family Service and Learning Center Program was the brainchild of the Union and management leadership during 1999 negotiations, former

President of the United Auto Workers, Stephen P. Yokich; CEO of Ford Motor Company, Bill Ford, Jr.; and Chairman and CEO of the Visteon Corporation, Peter Pestillo.

With one-third of the Ford workforce poised to retire within the next ten years, Bill Ford, Jr. knew his company needed to become the employer of choice to backfill the attrition with the best, the brightest, and the most diverse workforce possible. Along with Yokich and Pestillo, Ford championed the program knowing that not only did the current UAW membership need to keep up with the complexities of an advancing society, but so did their spouses and their children. The Family and Learning Center Program is therefore built on the principle that individuals and families are strengthened by intergenerational life experiences and development opportunities.

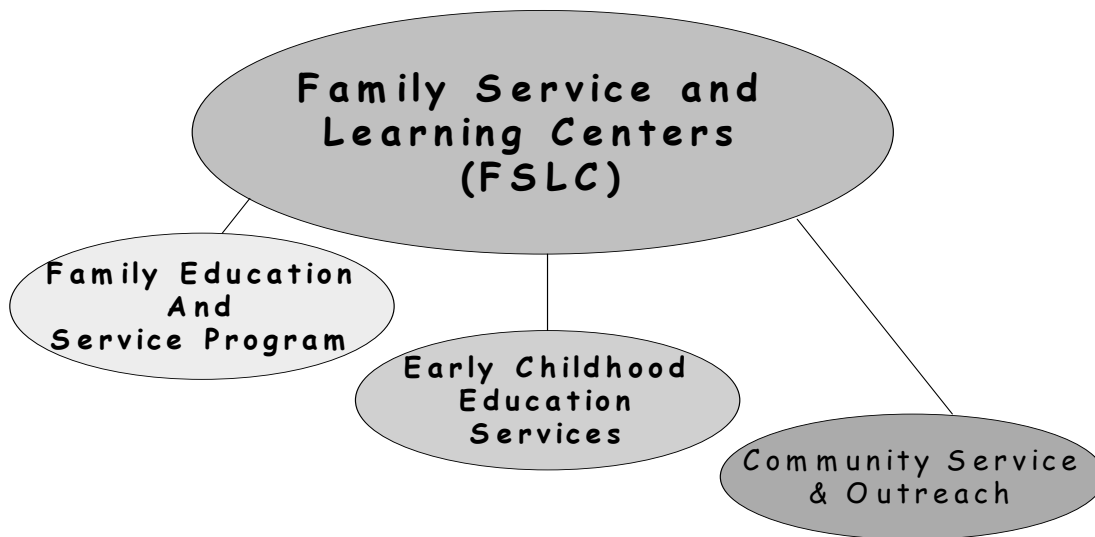
Programs and Activities Offered at the Family Service and Learning Center Program

Bill Corey

Family Center staff work with local and area-wide family councils to determine

which programs and services best serve the needs and interests of employees, retirees, and their families. The Family Center Program is more than a childcare center. Programs offered at centers across the U.S. generally fall into three categories: Family Education and Service; Early Childhood Education Services; Community Service and Outreach.

The **Family Education and Service Program** includes programs such as retiree walking clubs, travel clubs, support clubs, chess classes, family technology, literacy, cooking classes, art classes, parenting classes, conflict-resolution classes, teen community services plus pre-teen programs such as summer camps and tutoring. It also includes intergenerational programs such as teens teaching seniors to use computers, weight loss classes, and health screenings. Only demands, imagination, and available funding limit the types of programs.



Early Childhood Education

Services is another very important area. Providing quality childcare in a safe and enriching environment is a primary focus of the Family Center concept. As all parents know, sometimes the unexpected occurs, sending parents into a tailspin looking for childcare options. Family Centers and community childcare networks will offer backup care and get-well programs for mildly ill children ages six weeks to twelve years, allowing parents to go to work with peace of mind, knowing that their children are being cared for.

We have dedicated childcare centers for infants through kindergarteners, in close proximity to the workplace, with flexible hours. Local community networks of high-quality childcare providers provide emergency backup childcare. The childcare part of this program is unlike other programs we negotiated because it is not free to the membership. Nevertheless, now that it is in place, the subsidy enables centers to offer flexibility in the hours they operate—up to 24 hours per day—and offers unmatched quality childcare. There is a low ratio of child to caregivers, and the facilities are world-class, including a commercial kitchen to provide nutritious meals for the children. In addition, there is a large outdoor play area, complete with garden and water play area. The subsidy has also allowed us to recruit the best-qualified caregivers in the industry, who are also UAW members.

In the metro Detroit area, if a member cannot take his or her child to the childcare center because the child is sick, backup care exists. Parents can call a provider and someone will come to the home to stay with the sick child.

Working parents want their children to be in a safe and enriching environment, no matter what their age.

The cost is split—the company pays 80 percent of the cost and the employee pays 20 percent.

In addition to on site childcare, we support approximately 679 independent childcare facilities by supplementing the resources their centers provide and in some cases giving direct financial aid. We are involved with day care center chains, independent households that provide day care for children, and small facilities. We go into those types of places and evaluate what they need in order to give the child

a better learning experience. The support we give ranges from buying the facility a computer, to building

a sliding board, or putting a swing set in. We have had walls painted and removed lead-based paint to make places safer. We will also help facilities with the accreditation process. What I have described is what these independent facilities get from us. What we get from them is a guarantee that our members' children will have some priority for childcare in their particular business and the care will be safe and top-grade. These facilities also adapt to our members' needs. For instance, most childcare places don't open early enough or stay open late enough to match the needs of Ford's workforce. So when we provide them financial assistance to improve their services, they in turn agree to open earlier and stay open later.

The Family Centers work with local school districts to enhance before- and after-school programs benefiting employees and the community. Local Family Councils have selected schools that we support through a program called Grants for Schools. We make available \$10,000 grants to schools that apply to us with a plan for using the grant.

Because we have only eight childcare centers open now, we are not handling all of our plants. In 2001, there were approximately 23 grants and those particular schools that received them are located where we have concentrations of our workforce.

Elementary and middle-school-age children also enjoy educational summer and school vacation programs. Middle school and younger high school students will find tutoring assistance, babysitting training including CPR and first aid, teen help, and computer classes. Activities for teens include drama, nature exploration clubs, art studio, teen cafés, and movie nights. Programs for older teens include driver's education classes, tutoring, resume preparation, interview skills workshops, and vocational assessment. The Family Centers offer intergenerational programs in educational and leisure activities such as learning to surf the Web or gardening.

The last element encompasses the **Community Service and Outreach** portion of the program. It supports both individual and family activities. It encourages community volunteerism, identifies volunteer opportunities, and offers training to volunteers to help them get involved in their communities. An example of encouraging volunteerism are the four national volunteer projects we have each year: Martin Luther King's birthday, National Volunteer Week, UAW-Ford Contract signing anniversary, and National Make a Difference Day. We have also arranged for high school students to get credit for volunteering at the Center and teaching computers to the senior citizens. In addition to getting high school credit for volunteerism, the seniors give these kids the benefit of their life experiences.

“Can we help?” is a referral service that is part of the Family Service and Learning Centers Program. Eligible Family Center members can get information, from dining and nightlife to home repair and pet services. “Can we help?” referrals make life easier and more fun.

Running the Family Service and Learning Center Program

Bill Corey

Because of the magnitude of the Family Center Program, a separate, non-profit corporation was established. A board comprised of an equal number of UAW and Ford representatives governs this corporation, the UAW-Ford Family Services and Learning Centers.

A national staff is managed by Richard Freeman and Bill Corey, but there are Local Family Councils at each location made up of co-chairs: the local UAW President or local UAW Chairperson and the Human Resources Manager. Other members of the Council include UAW and Ford representatives and members at large. Resources for Council members include representatives from the local community and educational organizations, the Family Center Director, and where applicable, the Child Development Center Director. The Council selects its members, but the national staff give recommendations. Some positions are appointed, like in the support services program, the educational program, and employee resource program. We also have retirees, a teen, and community folks who sit on the councils. In developing the programs, we learned from the teenagers

THE FAMILY SERVICE AND LEARNING CENTER MISSION STATEMENT

The Family Service and Learning Center Board is committed to providing educational and social programs and activities that contribute toward stronger families and better communities. Our negotiated mandate is to offer UAW-represented and Ford and Visteon salaried employees, retirees, and their families community service opportunities, family educational programs and services, and quality childcare.

Through the Family Service and Learning Center Board, we acknowledge the importance of social as well as economic concerns of working families. Together, we stand committed to assist families beyond the workplace. We further acknowledge that our workplaces are part of our communities, and our needs and concerns as employees are intertwined with those of our communities.

not to develop anything for them unless they are part of development process.

Each local Family Council is allocated an amount of money based on their population. They have their own money and they decide how to spend that money within established guidelines. They submit a proposal to us saying how they want to spend it. While we have a general sense of needs, the local communities and the local Family Councils are much more in tune with what is the best for their particular area and what is going to touch their population.

Current Status of the Program

Richard Freeman

We currently have eight full-size Family Service and Learning Centers with dedicated childcare serving 819 children of UAW-Ford employees. We have negotiations in 2003 and will potentially be discussing building additional family centers to meet our future needs. Each of the childcare centers attached to Family Centers has a capacity for 220 children. Two of these centers opened in 2001. The other six opened in 2002 and are discussing offering other businesses an opportunity to utilize selected centers.

Our centers in Louisville have already received a Governor's Award for Excellence in Childcare.

Bright Horizons manages most of our childcare centers. One childcare center is freestanding and is operated independently by a group called Access. We have one freestanding Family Service and Learning Center without dedicated childcare and we are considering adding additional ones.

In addition to our centers, as mentioned earlier, we sponsor a national network of family childcare providers to enhance the quality and accessibility of childcare in the community. They provide services to approximately 2,000 of our employees to meet their children's childcare needs.

But, as we stressed, our family centers are much more than childcare centers. There are potentially 600,000 people that can be involved in or participate in one service or another, but there are different ways to add the numbers. Roughly 50,000 people have gone through the different centers. Tracking is complicated because there may be a very active retiree family that may come in multiple times and that distorts the number, since you have a

unique number and a total number. We have about 50,000 total-number usage, but we have not weeded out the unique numbers yet.

Challenges

We still have challenges. The first challenge is funding. This is a very expensive program, and it is only for companies that have the resources to be able to participate. UAW-Ford is a leader in this endeavor, despite the economy and how poorly its stock is doing. We hope to be able to continue. Each one of these Family Service and Learning Centers is state-of-the-art, which added to the cost of the infrastructure. In addition, wages and benefits of the employees add significantly to the cost. The employees in the childcare centers and on the family center staff are UAW represented and are among the highest-paid in the country.

The funding challenge entails not just money, but how that money is divided. Because you have both salaried and UAW members to whom these benefits are available, there has to be some way of splitting who provides what.

With the salaried people who are not represented by unions, the company has “company fringe” that they pay on a proportional basis. Roughly 71 percent of Ford Motor Company domestically is UAW-represented. So 71 percent of the funding to support this comes out of that joint fund. Twenty three percent of the Ford Motor Company fringe pays for their salaried employees. Six percent are Visteon salaried employees. As the bills come in, they are split into 71 percent - 23 percent - 6 percent.

We also have to reconcile people who want direct wage increases versus people who want more services, although this is not as big a challenge as we thought it might be. We expected a disconnect between the older workforce who are finished with child rearing and those who have young children. Only about 5 percent or less of the workforce need to use the childcare centers at any one time. Despite this, we have not seen a rise in demand for direct wage increases, instead of these services. This may be because a lot of our members understand what collective bargaining is all about—negotiating things for the future. It means opening doors for future generations.

Advantages

Besides the obvious quality of life enhancements these programs provide, the program could end up paying for itself in terms of lower absenteeism and retention, but this is difficult to track. Among the people who participate, the only group that we have been able to measure is the group with young dependents. The absenteeism among that group has dropped. It does not give us what we want across the board because we do not have everyone participating in it. But among that particular grouping of people, there is very little absenteeism because of the program.

A great advantage for the company in regard to salaried employees would be an improvement in our ability to recruit and retain talent. Many feel the glass ceiling has been shattered at the Ford Motor Company and these programs really help to attract women and minorities. The programs give career individuals a way to take care of

The programs give career individuals a way to take care of their families.

their families. It helps that these centers are very close to the workplace.

Lessons Learned and How Other Unions Can Benefit

We have learned a great deal over the last three years, and we are learning every day as this program moves from infancy toward maturity. One core lesson is: Unions and companies cannot introduce change into a complex organization without extensive communication and careful planning. Local empowerment to apply funds should be based on local needs and not nationally mandated. Local control of basic funds increases participation and has in itself a built-in evaluation system. Any national program should leave room for the local community to tailor the programs to fit their local culture, which differs in each community. As a program, we suffered from growing too fast without taking time to evaluate our progress. Childcare facility capacity was determined across the board without due consideration to different family childcare alternatives in different areas of the country and those are very important.

The Family Service and Learning Centers are a work-in-progress, and we continue to examine ways to expand their use to benefit the whole community. We are hopeful that other UAW-represented companies, both auto and suppliers, consider a similar program. The option to extend elements of the partnership to multi-companies may be a next step to encourage expansion. By opening our programs to other unions and their represented employees, we save those other

companies from the infrastructure cost, but yet they can share in it at the same price with the company subsidizing their employees.

For more information, visit www.familycentersonline.org

Bill Corey started at Ford as an apprentice at the Dearborn powerhouse and has been a member of the UAW, Local 600 for more than 35 years. He has held many positions in the Union, including four terms as Council Delegate and three terms as a National Negotiator on Subcouncil Three. In 1986, he was appointed to the National Ford Department as UAW International Representative in the Employee Assistance Program area. In 2000, Corey was promoted to Assistant Director and he manages the Family Service and Learning Center for the UAW.

Richard D. Freeman's career at Ford has spanned two decades. He has held a variety of positions in the Customer Service Division, Powertrain Operations, Union Relations, and Employee Relations Staff where he worked in a number of areas, including Education and Training, Equal Employment Planning, Plant Human Resources Manager, and now in North American Labor Affairs. He is currently Director of the Ford side of the Family Service and Learning Centers, Employee Support Services Programs and Total Health.

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CONNECTING WORK AND FAMILY IN THE HIGHER EDUCATION WORKPLACE: PAST SUCCESSES, FUTURE DIRECTIONS

Kris Rondeau, Organizer, Harvard Union of Clerical and Technical Workers

Work-Family as a Driving Force

Because I am a woman and because I organize workplaces with large numbers of women, I am very driven by work-family concerns. Unfortunately, I am in the minority. Work-family issues do not drive employers or unions enough, nor is enough being done to help families. I use the analogy of a toolbox—we are patching work-family solutions together like we would patch together a home improvement project. We are just fixing problems at work in a piecemeal fashion using whatever tools we have. No one is looking at the master plan. There is no architect. The fact is that there is something fundamentally wrong with the way work is organized.

The fact is that there is something fundamentally wrong with the way work is organized.

Until work is reorganized, we have to continue to use the toolbox.

Even those who could be significantly helped by family-friendly benefits are not driven to push for them. The buy-in for work-family benefits follows a very curious progression in the consciousness of workers. When we introduce a new work-related idea (as opposed to a family-oriented idea) to a particular union, we usually talk to 500, then 1,000 members, and by the time we've spoken to 2,000 members, the whole community knows about and understands the idea and the support for it grows. It is not like that in the work-family arena. When we approach people to discuss work-family benefits, many people say, "I raised my kids." "I stayed home." Or even, "Who needs work-

family benefits?" Despite this negative reception, we went forward as union leaders and fought for these benefits at Harvard and at other workplaces because we believed that people needed them and that these benefits would become meaningful to the rest of the community.

What we learned is that the general acceptance of work-family benefits flips completely in the community. At first people say, "No, we don't need a childcare subsidy. People should raise their own children." But when a childcare subsidy is instituted they say, "Great, let's get more." This complete turnaround happened at Harvard and at the University of Massachusetts

Medical School in Worcester, a public sector institution. First the employees and the employer said they did not want the benefits and that people should raise their own children. At the last minute during contract negotiations, we said, "What about a little money for childcare?" And the employers agreed and then it seemed like everyone was behind the childcare benefit.

Benefits Negotiated by Harvard Union of Clerical and Technical Workers (HUCTW)

When we formed the Harvard Union of Clerical and Technical Workers (HUCTW) in 1988, the turnover rate was approximately 40 percent a year. One thing that contributed to the high rate was that Harvard did not have much

in the way of work-family benefits. When an employee began building a family, often that person had to leave the workplace permanently. Paying for childcare was just not feasible for clerical and technical workers. Harvard had five or six childcare centers that were partially subsidized, but *tuition* for those centers was not subsidized. The employer simply paid the rent and overhead for the centers. Tuition at that time was \$10,000 a year, and it is now between \$13,000 and \$14,000 a year. These high-priced childcare centers were all Harvard had in terms of work-family benefits at that time.

In negotiations since 1988, we have added or expanded benefits programs in the following areas:

- Health care—those who earn less than \$60,000 (our membership), pay the least amount for health care and domestic partners are covered.
- Pensions
- Disability coverage—including short-term disability coverage.
- Vacation and other time off—a minimum of four weeks vacation. The university is closed for a week for winter recess between Christmas and New Year's. Those with less than five years of service receive three weeks vacation plus winter recess and those with over five years of service get four weeks and winter recess.
- Paid parental leave—13-week paid maternity leave plus new mothers can use sick and vacation time to extend their leave, paid—paternity leave, and adoptive leave.

- Financial assistance—for childcare, education, and adoption.

Harvard now subsidizes childcare, more than just paying the rent and overhead for the centers as they did when HUCTW was organized. When we negotiated the first childcare subsidy, the biggest tension was about what to call it. At the suggestion of the university negotiator, we called it a “fellowship.” The childcare fellowship is a direct subsidy for any kind of licensed childcare, such as family day care, after-school, camp, or summer programs. It is very similar to the 1199 program described in the article “Meeting the Family Care Needs of the Health Care Workforce: Reflections on the 1199 Child Care Fund” by Carol Joyner (see page 5). HUCTW's program is not as institutionalized as the 1199's nor do we run our own programs.

Harvard's part-time staff has complete access to the same benefits as full-time staff. When benefits for part-time workers are prorated, the benefits are just too expensive for most working women to afford. We have had some fights around this issue at Harvard (see case example below), at UMass Medical School and at UMass Memorial Health Care, but now each of these employers does pay full-time benefits for part-time workers.

Our hope is that the rest of the labor movement will start to push this issue forward. A young person in her 20s who is entering the workplace will work until she is 65, 70, or even 75 years old. At some point, she will go to part-time work, possibly more than once. As a two-parent family grows, the total hours that the parents work outside of the home diminishes, and it is usually the mother who goes part-time to handle the

Case Example: Prorating Benefits

Harvard prorated benefits for their managerial part-time workers. In the Harvard local, we have about 650 part-time workers and when Harvard came to HUCTW and asked us to agree to prorate benefits, we said no. We fought prorating benefits for two years. We had an informational picket line in front of Mass Hall for two and a half months and in the end we won. We got full-time benefits for part-time workers reinstated for all the constituencies on campus.

care-related issues. With this in mind, we look at the worker in the context of her whole life and know that she is going to be part-time at some point.

Our union has a cradle-to-grave view of work and the workplace. We stay connected to our retirees and negotiate cost-of-living increases for them. Workers at Harvard can ease into retirement by taking “sage days”—time off to prepare for their new roles, perhaps as community builders.

In the Harvard local, we have about 1,000 problem-solving cases a year. Most cases are worked out at informal levels and about one case a year goes to mediation for a final decision. About 500 of these cases are about flexibility in scheduling. For years we have had advice from people who urge us to change the culture. But since we cannot get the culture to change, we solve each individual problem with our “toolbox.” We negotiate each case and the bottom line at Harvard is if you want a flexible schedule, we can negotiate it without too much trouble.

Telecommuting is allowed per our negotiations, but in our opinion it is too isolating for low-wage workers. It means isolation from the social fabric of the workplace, and it causes a person to be vulnerable to job loss.

Job shares are allowed, too. It takes a lot of work to put together job shares, but they are amazingly effective ways of getting the work done. We have

about 25 to 30 job shares now, each one lovingly assembled by the people who do the work and their coworkers. Whether job shares provide higher productivity or higher quality would be a very interesting thing to study. Often hiring supervisors think they cannot deal with two benefits packages or with paying health insurance for two people. But, in fact, the advantage to the employer is measurable, and it should be studied. Job shares work for workers, but they also work for employers.

In contrast to childcare, the responsibility of elder care is very difficult—childcare is a great problem to have. If you are going to have no time and no money, what better reason than a child? It is a nice thing. Elder care is the great conundrum and flexibility in scheduling to allow for elder care is a great challenge. HUCTW has many programs for people who are trying to deal with this issue, but they are not enough. What is very important for employers and unions to know is that caring for an elderly relative can last for a long time. What these employees need are employers who really understand that and who can create a safe place for a worker to come into work and yet not have to follow rigid schedules. Flexibility is crucial for dealing with elder care.

The current array of benefits addresses nearly every area of human concern that HUCTW and Harvard negotiators have been able to negotiate.² The turnover rate at Harvard is now 18 percent, which is still high, but it is a big improvement over the 1988 pre-union 40 percent turnover rate.

HUCTW and Harvard’s Union-Management Relationship

HUCTW believes that we have a model of organizing that works and that can be used anywhere. When I talk about our organizing model around the country, workers respond with enthusiasm. The HUCTW model of organizing is different than a traditionally adversarial union model. At Harvard, we organized clerical and technical workers by meeting and getting to know every person in the bargaining unit and by creating a community of workers. This takes a long time and a lot of effort but by knowing our members we have a large network of people who are personally connected to the union community in a positive way. At HUCTW, we also believe that it is possible to assert the workers’ rights under the law *and* build communities and union membership without a collective bargaining agreement. You do not need a majority to have a union. You do however have to have a majority to force the employer to bargain, but you can do a lot of other things without that majority.

The HUCTW model of organizing is so different than the traditionally adversarial union model in which you have to hate the employer to join a union.

Our cases involve self-representation and they are all addressed at a fairly complex level, but they are all negotiations, and they are all friendly. We resolve conflict and build community at the same time. I think legal adversarialism is wrong for the workplace. In 14 years, the Harvard local has had about 14 mediations. This means that out of 1,000 problem-solving cases or grievances we handle each year, an average of one per year is settled using a mediator. By using our negotiating and cooperation skills when working with both union members and with management, we save money. By helping our members negotiate the solutions to their problems, our members gain valuable skills.

A wonderful model for work has yet to be created. An unorganized worker is at a disadvantage in the world. Redesigning work in health care

poses different issues, (see next page “Case Example: Negotiating Lay-Offs without Using Seniority”). I do not think Harvard would be brave enough to do something like what is described in the case example, but health care is different than academia. In health care, the work *has* to get done. Problems have to be solved. At University of Massachusetts Medical Center we have strong, healthy relationships with some of the top leaders and middle management because the management is absolutely committed to getting the work done and that makes them non-ideological. It makes them open and interested in problem-solving and less afraid of the union and the workers. Although it is in financial crisis, I have greater hope for health care

² “Open Letter to the Harvard Community: Steady Progress, A New Agenda, Continued Commitment,” written by the leaders and staff of HUCTW, November 2002.

Case Example: Negotiating Layoffs without Using Seniority

We tried an experiment that warrants study. Our contracts do not have any kind of strict seniority in them, even though we respect seniority and often do use seniority as an important guiding principle. About two years ago at University of Massachusetts Medical Center in Worcester, 450 people had to be laid off and 90 of them were in our unit. There were two other groups that had layoffs—nurses and cafeteria and service employees of the United Food and Commercial Workers. Both groups had regular strict seniority and bumping. We made an agreement with management that we would go into departments where there were layoffs scheduled and enlist volunteers based on friendships, need, sense of community, who could handle a layoff, and who could not. In the beginning, we were skeptical about it working and management was squeamish, but we arranged 90 cases in our unit that way and it worked. It was a grueling, yet incredible experience. For one thing, we had 90 layoffs in which we did not have people angry at the end. People who could not afford to be laid off were protected by their coworkers.

than for Harvard, which has plenty of financial resources. Harvard has enough money to work around problems instead of changing the system. In the Harvard schema, solutions are patched together for every single problem that comes along, despite all its money. We are still using the toolbox here. Harvard is not a model, but is a place where people have worked hard to try to build something promising.

The Harvard Local's Path for the Future: Work Redesign

While all the benefits we fight for and institute are very important, there is something inherently wrong in the workplace. Something is broken and it is very, very hard to provide a complete solution for people who have others to care for outside of work. Work design is a core family issue and without redesigning work we are not going to be able to take care of our families. Work is structured badly—it is not flexible enough, interesting enough,

nor meaningful enough. Power relationships are unhealthy, and the work design consultants who say we should redesign work in America to improve quality and productivity are off base. While I care about quality and productivity and am interested in those issues, work-family is just as important. The family is in trouble and people are suffering and it is because work is broken.

HUCTW has a three-pronged approach to work redesign. One is participation at work—meaning work design. All the benefits and flexibility negotiated by the local fall in this category, which continues to expand.

HUCTW has never given up on a vision of union-management partnership and community engagement.

Part of work redesign could entail moving to a team model with flattened hierarchies. It would include lots of learning and cross-training. (See next page, “Case Example: Teams and Designing Leave”).

Case Example: Teams and Designing Leave

In our small union-organizing group we work as a team. Four teams make up one big team and each of us has our individual responsibilities. We have been able to do things in that tiny culture that I did not think were possible. For example, we are parents to 29 children now and when someone is going to have a child by birth or adoption we ask them to design their own parental leave. They can take as much time off as they want and can design the leave they want. For the first 15 children, we were not really sure if we would be able to handle this flexibility, but we went ahead anyway. Ours is a small group and it works. This flexibility can work in health care and in higher education environments, too.

The second prong is learning—creating opportunities for continuous learning for all of our members. This includes a parents’ education program we are creating and a school-to-work program we now sponsor. A bigger part of continuous learning is supporting the culture change that is necessary in work redesign. In the Harvard local, we place special emphasis on men, primarily fathers, and help and support them being caregivers. We believe that the more we do that, the more accepted work-family benefits will become. This focus and learning helps our women members as well.

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The third prong is community-building. Community-building at Harvard is a complex idea, but we would like our members to view themselves as community builders in relation to others in and outside our community. We created a 501c3 to accept foundation money so that we can do community building. The “Open Letter to the Harvard Community of 2002” says, “HUCTW has never given up on a vision of union-management partnership and community engagement.”

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