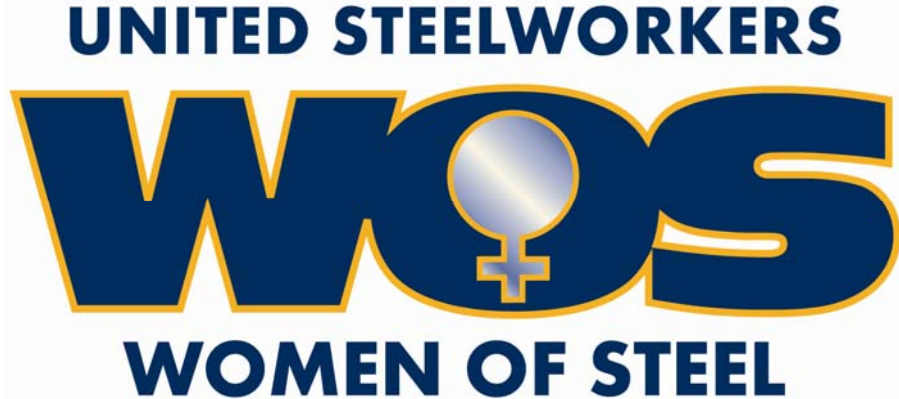


*Notes or Special Dates*

**STEP-BY-STEP  
TO ELECTED OFFICE**



**A STEELWORKERS  
AFFIRMATIVE ACTION GUIDE  
TO  
LOCAL UNION ELECTIONS**



***Produced By:***

Women of Steel  
United Steelworkers  
5 Gateway Center, Pittsburgh, PA 15222

***Contact Info:***

Telephone: 412-562-1177  
Fax: 412-562-2489  
E-mail: [aflener@usw.org](mailto:aflener@usw.org)

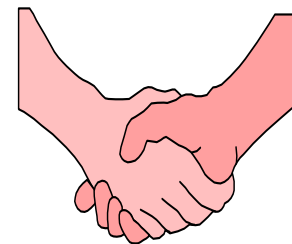
<http://www.uswa.org/wos/default.htm>

affordable and environmentally friendly ways to produce and distribute materials. For example, collect old campaign buttons from people, and use paint to cover the old slogan. You can then use a magic marker to write your name or message on the button. It doesn't take many people wearing a button with a catchy phrase or slogan for people to "get" the message.

In addition to the written word and word-of-mouth, the most effective campaign technique is the personal canvass by the candidate. Running for election takes time and effort. While a campaign team's help and support is essential, you are still the most effective campaigner. Be visible, be active! Try to speak personally with as many of the members as possible. Visit the lunchrooms, union hall, and places in the community where members may meet. If it is not possible to physically reach the members because of the shifts you work or because of a disability, use the phone or mail information directly to members' homes.

**Elections are not won in a month.**

**Stay active and involved to  
build your support for the  
next election!**



**DESIGNING YOUR CAMPAIGN**

**W**hat is necessary to run a good campaign? What you will need to do in a campaign period may well be determined by how big your Local is, both in terms of the number of members and the number of units in the case of an Amalgamated Local, and how well known you are to the membership.

Part of making the decision to run includes canvassing your friends for support and help. Once you have made the decision, invite some of your friends to be part of your “campaign team.” Brainstorm the kinds of things you think should be done to increase your chances of success on election day. Even if you only have one or two people on your team, the ideas and suggestions will help you in shaping your campaign.

**Note:** *No monies or anything of value (such as the use of facilities, equipment or supplies) of any Local Union and of any employer shall be contributed or applied to promote the candidacy of any person.*

A campaign team to help you prepare leaflets, raise money if necessary and organize events is valuable. These people are also your key “canvassers.” Develop a plan to ensure your team reaches other members to talk about the election and your candidacy. Keep track of the names of people who say they will support you. Remind these people to vote on election day!

One of the effective ways to “get your message out” is to prepare a one-page flyer, card or a leaflet to distribute at the entrance to the workplace, plant gate, parking lot or union hall. A flyer or leaflet should include some background information and a brief explanation about why you are running and what you have to contribute to the Local Union. If you are running as part of a team or “slate,” you may want to issue one leaflet together.



Be creative in designing your campaign materials. Think about what attracts your attention in a campaign. Is it the message, the advertisements or the campaign buttons? Look at

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## RESOURCES AVAILABLE

There are a number of resources available to all members seeking election. As well as this guide, members should not hesitate to contact their staff representative. Members of Local and District Women's and Human/Civil Rights Committees may also be quite helpful in offering suggestions and advice.

Specific terms and conditions for nominations and elections are detailed in the Constitution of the United Steelworkers of America and the Local Union Elections Manual. Used together with this guide, these resources should help you through the election process. For copies of the Constitution, By-laws and Election Guide, contact your Recording Secretary, Staff Representative or Steelworker District Office.

**Note:** *This publication is only a guide. Where there is any question about the rules governing local union elections or activities, refer to the Constitution, Local Union Elections Manual or By-Laws for Local Unions.*

## WHY RUN FOR ELECTED OFFICE?

Why do people run for elected office? Why do we vote for one person over another? Your decision to run will be based on your own personal reasons and may be influenced by a number of different people and factors. Before announcing your decision to run, make some notes about why you are running. Are there some things you think the Local Union should be doing differently or are there some key issues you think need more attention? What can you offer in terms of experience, commitment, enthusiasm or a new perspective? What position do you want to run for? If this is your first time running, what position will give you the experience you may benefit from in future elections?

## DO YOU HAVE THE SUPPORT OF YOUR FRIENDS AND FAMILY?

A big factor in making the decision to run for elected office is whether you have the support of your family. If you have to spend time to campaign and subsequently carry out your elected duties, what will this mean to your family responsibilities? As an elected or active member of the local you may have the opportunity to attend schools and conferences that may require staying away for a few days or

## STEPS TO ELECTED OFFICE

1. Decide what position you want to run for and why.
2. Talk to your family and friends about why you want to run and what kind of support you will need.
3. Put together your campaign team. Decide on a campaign plan. How much money will you need? Budget? Ask a member of your team to help in fundraising and keeping track of expenses.
4. Attend the nomination meeting with your nominator. If you cannot attend, make sure you submit a written note accepting the nomination. Try to ensure a lot of your supporters come to the Nomination Meeting. Don't wait for others to be nominated, make sure your nominator is the first to speak. Demonstrate your strength and enthusiasm!
5. Design and produce a short leaflet for distribution to let people know who you are and your reasons for running. Arrange for translation if necessary. Are there places to post a letter or one-page flyer? Can you submit an article or letter in a community newsletter?
6. Develop a campaign calendar. Include for example, times for distribution of leaflets, attendance at union events and deadlines for articles or advertisements. Be visible, be active!
7. Establish a network of supporters to talk about your candidacy in their work area. Keep track of identified supporters so you can remind them to vote on election day.
8. Organize your time carefully to ensure that you spend as much time as possible meeting with members to gain their support and their vote on election day.
9. Win or lose, say thank you to your team and supporters!



Develop a plan to ensure your team reaches other members to talk about the election and your candidacy. Keep track of the names of people who say they will support you. Remind these people to vote on election day!

One of the effective ways to “get your message out” is to prepare a one-page flyer, card or a leaflet to distribute at the entrance to the workplace, plant gate, parking lot or union hall. A flyer or leaflet should include some background information and a brief explanation about why you are running and what you have to contribute to the Local Union. If you are running as part of a team or “slate,” you may want to issue one leaflet together.

Be creative in designing your campaign materials. Think about what attracts your attention in a campaign. Is it the message, the advertisements or the campaign buttons? Look at affordable and environmentally friendly ways to produce and distribute materials. For example, collect old campaign buttons from people, and use paint to cover the old slogan. You can then use a magic marker to write your name or message on the button. It doesn't take many people wearing a button with a catchy phrase or slogan for people to “get” the message.

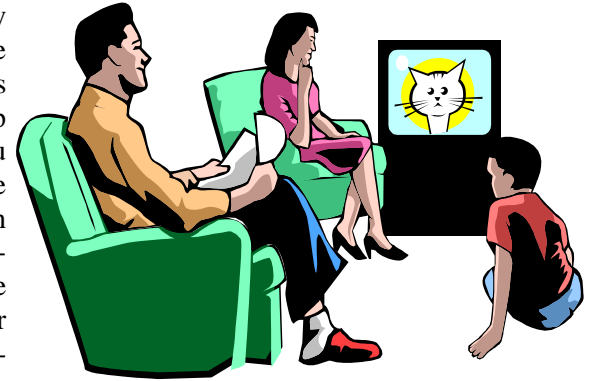
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Where there is a community newspaper, you may want to submit an article for publication. Find out if you can post information about the election and your candidacy on bulletin boards. Are their events, schools or conferences coming up that might provide you with an opportunity to speak or meet with the membership?

There are many different ways to run a positive, effective and fun campaign! Negative campaigns do not build membership unity or public trust of your Union.

Finally, win or lose, remember to thank your supporters, campaign team and family! And continue to work in solidarity with those elected to build your union.

weeks at a time. Whether you have children, elderly relatives at home to care for, or family and friends away from home to keep in touch with, what do you need to help you balance these responsibilities with your activities in the union? Do you have the support of friends or other relatives to help out if necessary?



If you have a disability, you may want to consider what measures may be required to help ensure your access to the membership during and after the election.

For example, a person who is hearing impaired may require the assistance of an interpreter. If you require a wheelchair, are there special arrangements you will need to reach members in their specific units if you are running in an amalgamated local? While the barriers faced by people with disabilities may appear difficult to overcome, there are people and resources available to help accommodate special needs. As the participation of people with disabilities increases within the union, more workers and employers will learn about accommodating special needs to ensure that opportunities in the workplace and in the union are accessible to everybody.



Do you have the support of your co-workers? Before making the decision to run, you may want to speak with some of your co-workers about supporting your candidacy. Present your reasons for wanting to run and listen to their comments. They may help you in identifying other good reasons for running. And, they may indicate their willingness to help you get elected. Ask them if they will help you in distributing leaflets or speaking with other members in their work area.

- What kinds of activities do they think you should be involved in to help you get elected?
- Who will nominate you?
- Are there others running for different positions that you support?
- Does it make sense to run a team or “slate” of candidates?

Your campaign team, however small, will be valuable in helping you to plan an effective campaign.

- Who will you be running against?

Knowing your opposition is important when putting together your election platform and strategy.

- Why should someone vote for you as opposed to someone else?

It takes a lot of commitment and courage to run for office. Respect those qualities in your opponent and identify issues where your approach may differ. Avoid personal attacks and don’t make promises you can’t keep!

### WHAT IF YOUR CHANCES AREN’T GREAT?

Should you run even if your chances aren’t great? Absolutely. While we all like to “win,” building a profile in your Local Union may take time. You may be unsuccessful the first time you run, but staying involved and active will help you in future elections. Get involved in one of the Executive’s committees, attend the union’s education programs or seek appointment or election as a steward. The greater the participation in Local Union events, committees and day-to-day activities, the stronger the Union. And, the more experience you gain in working with other members of the Local, the more confidence others will have in you to represent the Local.



### AMALGAMATED LOCALS

In an Amalgamated Local, each unit usually will elect a Unit President. Depending on the Local’s by-laws, the Unit President may sit on the Local Union Executive Board in addition to the officers noted above. Individual units may also elect a unit grievor(s) and a unit secretary depending on the local union’s by-laws.

Each unit of an Amalgamated Local Union will have their own collective bargaining contract with their employer. And they negotiate that agreement with representatives from their unit. However, someone from the Amalgamated Local Union may also be assigned by the International to help bargain an agreement. Although negotiations and contract enforcement remain the responsibility of the unit representatives, the administration of the Local Union and its finances are handled by the Local Union Officers for all units. Members from all units can run for Local Union Offices, but unit positions can only be filled or elected by members from their unit.

**Note:** *Because there are numerous differences in the structural and geographic construction of Amalgamated Local Unions, it is important that you refer to your specific Local Union’s by-laws for guidance.*

### DESIGNING YOUR CAMPAIGN

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A campaign team to help you prepare leaflets, raise money if necessary and organize events is valuable. These people are also your key “canvassers.”



counts and investments of the Local.

### ***Guide***

At meetings of the Local Union, the Guide ensures that people sign the attendance book. It is the responsibility of the Guide to make sure that those in attendance are members in good standing and thereby entitled to participate.

### ***Guards (2)***

Guards guard the doors! Only those entitled to attend Local Union meetings (or invited guests) may be permitted attendance. If necessary, guards ensure that no one enters who is not entitled to do so and that order is maintained during the meeting.

### ***Trustees (3)***

Trustees help to maintain the local property, meeting hall or office, of the Local Union as directed by the members. Every three months, the trustees audit the financial books as well as the Recording Secretary's books and those perhaps held by other committees of the Local. The Trustees will then prepare a report for the next membership meeting noting recommendations and comments on the state of the records and books.

### ***Grievance Committee Members***

Depending on the size of the Local Union and negotiated provisions for handling grievances in the Collective Agreement, the Local Union will elect a number of people to the Grievance Committee at the same time as they are electing Local Union Officers.

A person running for a position as a Local Union Officer may also run for a position on the Grievance Committee or any other Local Union Committee that is filled by election. In locals that have stewards some are elected but most positions are filled by appointment. Stewards work with grievors and the membership to file grievances with the Company enforcing the Collective Bargaining Agreement.

Once a grievance is filed, it becomes the property of the Union and the responsibility of the Grievance Committee who represents workers in grievances and in some cases arbitration cases. Grievance Committee members must be trained in preparing cases, pulling together all the evidence and interviewing those involved so they can present the Union's position in various steps of the grievance procedure.

## **UNITED STEELWORKERS STRUCTURE**

The membership of the United Steelworkers works in almost every sector of the economy including retirement homes & hospitals, restaurants, taxis, banks & credit unions, hotels, mines, manufacturing, offices, universities and steel mills. The union represents workers in a wide variety of workplaces. Every member of the United Steelworkers has a direct vote in electing the people who run the business of the union: on the Local level, District, and at the International level.

### **Local Officers to be Elected**

President  
Vice President  
Recording Secretary  
Financial Secretary  
Treasurer  
Guide (2)  
Guard (s) (3)  
Trustee (s)

### **In Amalgamated Locals:**

(In addition to the above officers, each unit shall elect a person from his/her unit for)

- (1) Unit President
- (1) Unit Secretary
- (1) Unit Griever

### **Local Committees**

#### ***Grievance Committee***

(Other committees for example, Health and Safety, Human/Civil Rights or Organizing may be elected at the same time as the Officers and the Grievance Committee).

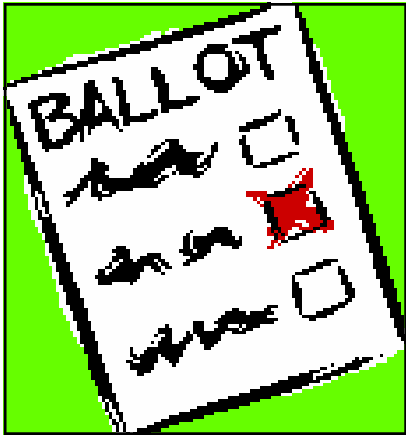
### **International Officers to be Elected**

- International President
- International Secretary-Treasurer
- National Director for Canada
- International Vice President (Administration)
- International Vice President (Human Affairs)
- District Directors (for each District & Executive Vice-President of RPIC)

## LOCAL UNIONS

Workers eligible for membership in the International Union make up a Local Union upon receipt of a “charter” from the International Secretary-Treasurer. In the interests of sharing resources and meeting the needs of our members more effectively, units in the same or different workplaces may join together in an “amalgamated local.”

All Local Union Officers and Grievance Committee Members are elected every 3 years at the last scheduled general membership meeting in April or at a time in April designated by the membership.



Nomination meetings for those interested in seeking election are generally held at the membership meeting in March, one month before the election. A campaign period of one month, while not very long, is long enough to give all the members notice of the election as well as an opportunity for candidates to meet with members and rally support.

The Nomination Meeting, like a campaign kick-off, is a great opportunity to show your strength. Ask as many of

your supporters as possible to come to the meeting. Although you may nominate yourself, you may want to have someone nominate you to show you have support. Choose your nominator carefully and be sure that your nominator is the first to speak. Once all the nominations have been made, each candidate will be asked if she or he accepts the nomination. While you may be nominated for more than one position, you may only accept the nomination for one “officer” position. However, you may run for election to as many committees as you want. Be careful not to over extend yourself. Committee work takes time and commitment too.

If no one is nominated for a particular position, it may stay vacant until the new officers meet to determine how to fill the vacancy in accordance with the Local Union Elections Manual and By-laws.

At the Nomination Meeting, Tellers will be appointed or elected to run the actual election. Following the Local Unions Elections Manual, Tellers are responsible for notifying the membership of where and when voting will occur. All members in good standing, including those who may be on lay-

## *President*

The President of the Local Union chairs the meetings, appoints members of committees not otherwise provided for and performs other duties as assigned by the Local Union. These “other duties,” in addition to acting on behalf of the Local when dealing with management on issues of personnel or production, may include representing the Local Union at community events, meeting with other Local Unions and attending conferences or workshops that may be of interest to the members.

## *Vice President*

Working with the President, the Vice President may help to co-ordinate and plan the work of the Local Union. The Vice President may also sit on committees and fill in for the President in his or her absence. If the President cannot complete the term, the Vice President shall act as President until the next election.

## *Recording Secretary*

The “minutes” or proceedings of meetings held are noted in a book by the Recording Secretary. The Recording Secretary is also responsible for the attendance book and the Local Union’s seal. The “seal” must appear on minutes of meetings, credentials for conferences or other union business to be official. Correspondence is usually handled by the Recording Secretary to be dealt with at each meeting as well as perhaps posted on the bulletin board or communicated through a newsletter. In turn, the Recording Secretary may reply to correspondence or communicate on behalf of the Local to people inside and outside of the Union.

## *Financial Secretary*

The Financial Secretary receives monies due to the Local and maintains up-to-date books and membership reports as required by the Constitution. Monies received are passed on to the Treasurer. Both the Financial Secretary and the Treasurer will give a written and a verbal report at the membership meetings.

## *Treasurer*

Receiving money due to the Local from the Financial Secretary, the Treasurer will deposit all monies accurate and up-to-date re- the Local Union must be ship meeting and checks are Financial Secretary and with the Constitution and addition to the Financial Treasurer will report to membership meetings on the state of various ac-



in the bank and maintain cords. All expenses of approved at a member- signed by the President, Treasurer, in accordance Local Union by-laws. In Secretary’s Report, the





**POSITIONS TO BE ELECTED**  
***LOCAL UNION OFFICERS***

President	Vice-President
Recording Secretary	Financial Secretary
Treasurer	Guide
Guard	Trustee

Committees: Grievance Committee (other committees i.e. Health and Safety, Human /Civil Rights or Organizing may be elected or appointed at the same time or at a different time.)

The following are brief “job descriptions” for each of the positions of the Local Union Officers. Some of the duties are set out in the Union’s Constitution while others may vary due to additions made in your specific Local Union by-laws once approved by the International Union and adopted by the Local Union.

As noted, you may be nominated for more than one position. While you may only accept the nomination for one “officer” position, you may run for election to as many committees as you want.

**Note:** *A Local Union with fewer than 100 members may adopt a by-law allowing for the positions of Guide, Guard and Trustee to be combined or allocated among the other offices.*

off or on sick or disability leave, are eligible to vote and must be notified of the election date. Tellers will also determine who is eligible to run in the election following guidelines set out in the constitution and outlined below.

**WHO IS ELIGIBLE TO RUN?**

In order to run for election as a Local Union Officer or Grievance Committee Member, a member shall have been in continuous good standing for 24 months (or since the Local was established), be employed in a workplace within the jurisdiction of the Local Union and have attended at least 1/3 of the regular meetings held by the membership in the 24 months prior to the election month.

There may be circumstances where it is not possible to attend membership meetings. If a member provides notice (see Local Union Elections Manual on acceptable forms of proof) to the Local Union Executive Board that she or he is unable to attend a meeting due to Union activities, working hours, service in the armed forces, sickness which confines, death in the immediate family or jury duty, these meetings shall not be counted as meetings held in determining eligibility for that member.

Be sure to retain a copy of any forms submitted for your personal records, this is especially important if you submit the form throughout the year(s) as you miss a scheduled meeting. For example, your Local Union held 24 meetings in the last 24 months. If you missed 5 of the meetings for one of the reasons outlined above and can provide proof, then your eligibility will be calculated based on the remaining 19 meetings you could have attended: seven meetings (one-third of 19, rounded to the next highest number). You must therefore have attended one-third of the meetings held in the 24 months prior to the election month that you could have attended.

The election tellers, with the assistance of those officers who have the necessary records, will determine the eligibility of each candidate for election. For more examples and details on determining eligibility, please see the Local Union Elections Manual.

Remember: Nominations in March  
Elections in April

**Note:** *If no person nominated for a specific office has been a member in good standing for 24 months or has attended 1/3 of the meetings in the 24 months preceding the election, these criteria are waived and the elections will continue. In other words, once you are nominated, the Tellers will check to make sure you are eligible to run. If you are not sure you meet the criteria, you should still seek the nomination because it may be that no one who wants to run for that position meets the criteria. But, if one person does meet the criteria and the others do not, he or she will be acclaimed in that position.*

### WHAT IS THE ROLE OF THE LOCAL UNION LEADERSHIP?

**T**he Local Union Officers usually meet between meetings of the membership to organize the work of the union in the workplace and in the community.

Some Local Unions have by-laws that establish an Executive Board made up of all or a portion of the elected officers. This Board then acts to perform the duties outlined below.

Most Local Unions will hold monthly general membership meetings. In accordance with the Constitution and policies of the International Union, Local Unions may adopt their own by-laws and rules to guide the work of the Local Union Officers and the members. While workers may have daily access to Local Union Officers in the workplace, general meetings are opportunities to discuss issues that may concern all workers. In an amalgamated local, membership meetings bring together workers from different units, providing an opportunity to discuss issues that are of interest in a variety of workplaces.

Often depending on the size of the Local Union, the Officers will establish committees or designate positions to improve the services and education offered to the members. While some committees are required by the Constitution: Safety and Health, Workers' Compensation, Human/Civil Rights and Organizing, others may be specific to the Local Un-



ion like Women's Committees, Education Committees, or Pension and Insurance Committees.

Some Local Union by-laws have provisions for appointing or electing stewards. Grievance Committee and Stewards are often the link between the membership and the Local Union Officers, and the membership and the employer. Assisting members in filing grievances and handling complaints, stewards are trained to advise and guide members. Providing advice and advocacy support, stewards and grievors are key in helping to implement provisions in the collective agreement. For people just getting active in the local, pursuing the job of steward may be a good step in getting to know, and respond to, the various needs of the membership.

As the needs of the membership change with adjustments in the workplace, the tasks performed by local executive members may also change. Keeping in touch with the membership is therefore essential to ensure the union's work is as far-reaching and effective as possible. Through newsletters, notices posted on bulletin boards, meetings and word-of-mouth, the local union communicates with the membership, building union strength and solidarity.

### WHAT KIND OF EDUCATION AND TRAINING IS AVAILABLE?

**T**he United Steelworkers has built one of the finest union education programs in North America. Courses offered at the local level, through your Area Council and at the District or National levels, include training for union officers and stewards, and union activists in such areas as health and safety, collective bargaining, international solidarity, leadership development and communications. As the needs of the membership change, new courses have been developed like "Women of Steel" and "Empowering Workers."

In general, members find out about upcoming courses at regular membership meetings. While some courses offered locally may be open to everyone, others may be limited because of the time and travel involved. In these cases, the membership may decide which courses would be of value to the local union and in turn, who should attend the course.

Conferences and conventions, inside and outside of the union, are also learning opportunities. Again, while some conferences may be open to everyone, others may be open only to local union "delegates." Delegates may be appointed or elected at a membership meeting.