

Agenda

Retirement Training Workshop

By
Lynda M. Pittman, Retirement Outreach Director,
Municipal Employees Retirement System of Michigan

Pensions and the Economy: A Review and Discussion of Best Practices in Today's Challenging Times

This program will review both public and private retirement challenges and best practices found to provide employees with sustainability and security post work-life. Pensions are in the headlines daily, both for the public sector and the corporate member. Pension envy and misconceptions in public sector spark taxpayer outcries, while weary 401K account holders lose faith in an acceptable standard of living in their golden years.

Attend this session for an overview of differences in plan types, the effect of pensions and their investments on the economy, and a discussion of solutions and best practices revealed. Case studies and research based statistical information will be presented. (See registration form on page 7)

WHERE

Kellogg Hotel & Conference Center
Michigan State University
(Lower Level Room 62)

WHEN

Friday, February 4, 2011

AGENDA

8:30 ~ Registration and Continental Breakfast
9:00 ~ Introduction and program start
10:30 ~ Break
10:45 ~ Resume program
12:00 ~ Program end



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Fall • Winter 2010

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MLMA 2011 Conference Focus

By
Cynthia Corbin, Coordinator,
MLMA

Board members of Michigan Labor-Management Association (MLMA) have begun the planning for the 2011 “Partners in Progress” Annual Spring Conference; again will be held at the Kellogg Hotel and Conference center on the campus of Michigan State University on April 14-15. Last year, our keynote speakers shared their thoughts and visions addressing the topic “New Technology, Diversification and Ideas for Michigan’s Future.” The keynote panel including George Ericckek, economist, Greg Main, CEO, Michigan Economic Development Corporation, Stanley (Skip) Pruss, Director of the Michigan Department of Energy, Labor

and Economic Growth, and Tim Magee, International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees (I.A.T.S.E.) explored Michigan's future for employment and business through diversity and new technology. The 2011 conference will continue to explore the theme of Michigan’s economic future from the vantage point of what’s changing and what ideas should guide our planning. With a focus on restoring dialogue, MLMA’s spring conference program will examine the proposition that improved dialogue produces more beneficial outcomes for all of Michigan’s citizens and enhances the prospect of a strong economic recovery rather than continued crisis management and business as usual. With Michigan still facing serious economic challenges, it is

our view that we must find new ways to work together in order to solve difficult problems and stimulate innovation in order to move forward.

As in previous years, breakout workshop sessions will be specifically planned to enhance the knowledge and skills of the participants while also offering insights into the current economic situation of our State today.

We look forward to greeting you at the spring conference April 14-15, 2011. If you have any questions, comments, or suggestion regarding the MLMA Spring Conference, please contact us at e.turnquist@mlma.org.



Consolidation and/or Sharing of Services Good or Bad? You Decide

By
Jeffrey Keeton,
I.O.U.E. Local 547

The July 22, 2010, “Consolidation and/or Sharing Services, Good or Bad, You Decide” workshop was well-attended and well-received by labor relations representatives, municipal and school district personnel and administrators. The participants interacted with the panel members to receive information on successful, and not so successful, attempts to share services and/or consolidate.

When the participants left the workshop, they left with vital information as to what could or could not be accomplished, and the knowledge of what things to look for when evaluating their specific situation. This workshop provided vital information for participants to carry with them to their respective places of employment to be utilized in carrying out their day-to-day operation.



Ruthanne Okun, Moderator, Director, MERC (podium); Daniel Romzek, Director of Finance & Operations, Davison Community Schools (her far right), Jerry Ambrose, Chief Financial Officer, City of Lansing (her left); Steven Lett, Labor Attorney, Lansing (her second left); Tom Krug, Executive Director, Fraternal Order of police, Lodge 141, Lansing (her far left); Ed Klobucher, City Manager, Hazel Park (her right)



Shaping the Workplace of the Future

By
Edward F. Hartfield, President,
Metropolitan Detroit LERA

This year I have the privilege of serving as the President of the Detroit Area Chapter of the Labor and Employment Relations Association (LERA). When I arrived in Michigan in 1980 to begin work at the Detroit Regional Office of the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service, I was advised that joining the IRRRA was an excellent way of meeting people in the area and staying on top of key issues in our field.

Now the reason for joining and becoming involved in LERA is stronger than ever before. We are in the midst of the most serious economic challenges the nation has faced since the Depression. Michigan and the Midwest have lost a significant portion of our traditional manufacturing base. It is critical that all of LERAs constituents who are involved in some aspect of workplace decision-making find new ways to work together, solve problems, create innovative approaches, and do our part to help maintain and rebuild the economy.

That's why I have chosen **Restoring Dialogue** as the theme for this years LERA Programs. Our society has seemingly misplaced the ability and the will to engage in civil dialogue, to tolerate and acknowledge different

points of view, to find common ground on difficult issues. The chasm appears to be widening. It is therefore critical that LERA should lead the way in helping to model the ability to hold difficult conversations on our most challenging issues. Since our field succeeds or fails based upon good communication, my hope is that people will bring their skills along with a counterpart to LERA each month, engage in good listening and speaking practices, and then take that positive dialog experience back to their workplaces.

Traditionally, our monthly dinner meetings are on the first Thursday of every month and held at the Southfield Westin. A social hour begins at 5:30 followed by dinner at 6:30 and the program. We conclude no later than 8:30pm. This year, in the continuing attempt to arrange great programs and the best possible speakers, we will deviate from our first Thursday tradition to accommodate the speakers schedules.


We will open our program for this year on **October 28, 2010 with President James Hoffa of the International Brotherhood of Teamsters**. Mr. Hoffa will describe the challenges faced by the Teamsters and some of the innovative approaches that the Teamsters have taken to respond.

Our November program will be on

Thursday, November 18th and will feature Mr. Marty Mulloy, Vice President of Labor Affairs for Ford Motor Company, speaking on The future of Manufacturing in the United States .

In January, we will turn to three distinguished arbitrators — Mary Bedikian, Paul Glendon, and Mark Glazer — to kick off the new calendar year with a program on arbitration. Please take a moment to renew your membership or to join us if you are not currently a LERA member. This will allow you to attend the October program at the reduced rate of \$35.00. As the enrollment form on the back of the enclosed notice, indicates, we offer three options for membership. Please select the one that best suits your needs, and return the completed form to the LERA office, along with your dues payment.

If you ever have any questions, comments, or suggestions, you may contact me at ehartfield@ncdsusa.org. The goal of our LERA Board is to make our Chapter an organization that attracts the best and the brightest in our field by providing an excellent range of programs. I personally hope that LERA programs will rub off and help in restoring dialogue to the labor management and employment community this year.



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EDITOR OF THE AGENDA



*Have a Joyous
and Safe
Holiday Season!*



Viewpoint: New report suggests labor unions key to life satisfaction

By
Ed Haynor,
West Michigan Construction Alliance

Booth Newspapers including The Muskegon Chronicle is currently running a 10-part series on their perceptions of major problems facing Michigan and offering suggestions on how to fix Michigan's economy. Their September focus was "Is it time to consider becoming a right-to-work state?" The focus of many of the articles featured in The Chronicle and other Booth newspapers was a study conducted by Grand Valley State University economist Hari Singh. The supposition of his study was that if Michigan would have been a right to work state in 1965, Michigan could have had up to 60,000 more auto-related jobs, albeit the jobs wouldn't pay as well as they do today.

On Oct. 7 a new report titled, "Labor Unions and Life Satisfaction: Evidence from New Data," found that unions improve the general well-being for union and nonunion citizens in the industrialized world. The results of the study, which appear in the September issue of Social Indicators Research, a journal which focuses on quality of life measurements, conclude a link between union density and life satisfaction based on data from 14 developed nations including the U.S.

Three American academics from Notre Dame and Texas A&M universities used individual and aggregate data to measure what effect unions have on the overall satisfaction of the country and their citizens using a measurement known as "subjective well-being," a scientific concept that evaluates quality of life. They found that organized labor is a benefit to the well-being of those who live in the industrialized world.

Their findings strongly suggest that unions increase the life satisfaction of citizens, and this effect holds for nonunion workers as well, wrote Notre Dame University political science professor Benjamin Radcliff, Notre Dame Ph.D. candidate in political science Patrick Flavin and Texas A&M University political science associate professor Alex Pacek. They also found that labor organizations have the strongest impact on the subjective well-being of citizens with lower incomes.

The results were positive across all sectors from the society to the individual. Individuals who live in countries with high union densities had a higher level of life satisfaction. Union members reported being generally happier than nonunion workers. The less fortunate who were union members had the highest improvement in their quality of life. Nonunion workers benefited as well through interaction with union workers.

The study outlines several variables that contribute to improved worker well-being. Union membership provides a measure of job security when workers are threatened with sudden layoffs. Collective bargaining through labor-management cooperation allows a sense of empowerment through due process procedures. Unions also reduce a sense of alienation through their support network. The research underscores how labor organizations are contributing to the quality of life in industrialized nations. Life satisfaction indicators in the study show a direct relationship to unionization rates even as public and private sector unions have come under attack in recent years.

The American Rights at Work organization conclude that U.S. workers have

much organizing to do because America ranks on the bottom of the quality-of-life scale in the industrialized world as employers continue to prevent unions from forming in the workplace, leading to lower levels of general well-being. Unions have been criticized over the years for bargaining living wages and benefits, but the researchers note that it's important to consider organized labor as an agent for improving worker fulfillment. If union membership continues to decline, then according to this study, all U.S. workers and their families face many days of despair.

The findings of this study are a bright spot for U.S. labor groups at a time when union membership has declined and American public opinion for labor groups is mixed. It's unfortunate Booth Newspapers didn't study issues that contribute to the overall well-being of Michigan workers which would seem to benefit Michigan's economy rather than conduct a study that divides labor and Michigan citizens.

Ed Haynor is a consultant to the West Michigan Construction Alliance. The alliance is a nonprofit labor/management organization dedicated to fostering labor/management partnerships.

First appeared in the Muskegon Chronicle. Reprinted with permission.



MLMA Hosts Its Annual Golf Outing

By
Ed Turnquist, Executive Director,
MLMA

The MLMA once again hosted its annual golf outing on September 9, 2010, at The Woodlands of Van Buren Golf course. Everyone had an enjoyable day! During these hard times, we were very pleased that nearly one hundred golfers came together for a full day of golfing, fun and great food! The weather cooperated perfectly. Each foursome played 18 holes and enjoyed lunch at the turn. Golfers had an opportunity to participate in the Vegas Hole prize as well as purchase "The Ultimate Ticket" for a chance to win a 50" Plasma TV. After a full day of golf, we retreated to the golf course clubhouse for dinner, raffles and prizes! Ron Torakis, the event chairman from Health Alliance

Plan exceeded the proceedings handing out more than 50 raffle prizes.

The 50/50 winner netted \$250. Grand prizes included a Blue Ray DVD Player and a full set of Irons. Longest Drive winners were Terry Gillian and Nannette Benman, and the Closest to the Pin was Lauri Scalp and Kevin Hogan. Team winners were HAP and UAW Local 600.

The MLMA thanks The Woodlands of Van Buren Golf Course for helping organize an outstanding event. We want to especially thank our Gold Sponsors: Health Alliance Plan, The Michigan Regional Council of Carpenters, BC/BS Blue Care Network of Michigan, UAW Region 1C; and our Silver Sponsors: Operating Engineers Local 324, Healthplus of Michigan, Delta Dental, UAW Region 1, UAW Region 1A, and

UAW Ford National Program Center.

On behalf of the board, the director and the coordinator, we also want to thank Ron Torakis and his fabulous staff at HAP for their diligence in putting together this entire event. Without their efforts, our annual golf outing would not happen.

The funds raised from this event allows the MLMA's Annual spring conference to take place. And above all, we want to give our deepest appreciation to our Organizational Gold and Friends of Sponsors: Blue Cross/Blue Shield of Michigan, Health Alliance Plan, and T.E.A.M. Their continuing support allows the MLMA to support its mission of promoting cooperation between labor and management.



**Closest to the Pin Winner for men's was
Kevin Hogan**



**Longest Drive winners were Terry Gillian
and Nannette Benman (not pictured)**



**Closest to the Pin Winner for women's was
Lauri Scalp**



And ... wonderful prizes!



Now More Than Ever, Nation Needs Healthy Unions

By
Marick Masters,
Wayne State University

Unions are in decline. With just slightly more than 7 percent of the private sector unionized, the rate of membership is at record lows.

Even in the public sector, where unions represent more than a third of the workforce, the rate seems to have peaked. Only about 10 percent of the union workers in America toil in manufacturing, manifesting our eviscerated industrial base.

A less than silent chorus of approbation greets the dire straits of unions. Labor-bashing is in vogue. We blame unions for critical ailments and disruptive changes, from the shuttering of manufacturers to rising public debt.

Our solution to these problems: Invite more imports, close more plants, cut wages, reduce benefits and discard guaranteed pensions. Companies declare bankruptcy to breach contracts — a process euphemistically called restructuring — and leave workers and retirees to fend for themselves.

In short, we solve problems by lowering our standard of living for working people — hardly the American Dream. Where are our core values as a society when we nonchalantly tolerate the demise of manufacturing, exodus of

jobs, widening gulf between the rich and poor, and shrinking middle America?

We need unions today more than ever before precisely because they are declining. Labor is one of the few institutions that unashamedly stands up for American manufacturing, calls out unfair practices on the part of our trading “partners,” and advocates expanding and broadening the distribution of wealth. We need unions because they are powerful political and social assimilators and engines of economic progress.

They are also guarantors of capitalist democracies and national security. Let us not forget that it was Walter Reuther who raised the bar for America to be the arsenal of democracy before our entry into World War II when he proposed Labor’s Plan for auto workers to produce 500 planes a day. The privileged few do not make a great country, win wars or build strong communities. For that, we need a vibrant middle class.

Unions give workers a real voice in the workplace — one that is consequential and, with wise management, heard. They offer an alternative to exiting or quitting.

This voice is far different from the lone cry for help, the whistle-blowers who exposes criminality or the chronic

complainer. The union voice is the institutionally safeguarded mechanism for promoting better working conditions and managerial practices to raise productivity and improve the quality of customer service, be the customer a passenger or a patient.

Somehow we have reached the point of confusing managerial authority and discretion with wisdom or soundness of judgment. In working people lies the intellectual capacity to get things done efficiently and effectively. Unions channel that capacity through negotiations. Executives, who too often do not listen, do not have a monopoly on how best to get things done.

Labor’s objective is not to drive business out of business or to soak the rich, but rather to generate more wealth that can be broadly shared. It is to expand a middle class capable of caring for itself, buying a house, educating its children, and living its years of retirement in dignity, not poverty.

Labor is about fulfilling the American Dream, not abandoning it.

Marick Masters is the director of Labor@Wayne, a labor research center at Wayne State University, and a business professor at WSU.



Muskegon Area Labor-Management Committee Annual Conference

This year's annual conference will be held on May 12-13, 2011, at the Holiday Inn in Traverse City. The cost per MALMC member is \$125 per person. Programs include:

Dr. Keith Levick ~ "Adjusting to the "Survivors Syndrome": A Stress Management Approach"

Bob Ash ~ "A Piece of the Puzzle"

Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service ~ "Generational Conflicts: Communicating Though the Ages"

Sharon DeFrieze ~ "Of Course You're Angry"

Michelle Kaminski ~ "Workplace Bullying"

For reservations or additional information, please contact Shelly Fox at (231) 724-3178



"Pensions and the Economy" Workshop Registration Form

COST

Organization: _____

Contact Name: _____

Address: _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone: _____

Fax: _____

E-mail: _____

- \$109 per person per paid registration.
- \$99 per person group of 4 or more
- \$89 per person MLMA members
- \$119 per person late registration

Mail or fax registration
by February 11, 2011
to:
MLMA
36500 Ford Road, #264
Westland, MI 48185

Fax:
Westland Office: (734) 354-8775
or
Lansing Office: (517) 347-2468

ATTENDEES

- 1) _____
- 2) _____
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SUSTAINING ADVOCATE

\$5,000

Sponsorship (Organization)

- 3 Newsletters per year (on-line PDF)
- Member Discount for Conference/ Training
- Receive Annual Outing Flyers
- Organizational Logo displayed on our Website
- Access to the Website and MLMA Board Members
- 5 FREE Spring Conference Registrations
- 1 Spring Conference Booth
- Display your Organization Banner at Conference
- Sponsor of all Events
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- 4 FREE Golf Outing Registrations
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- Name Promoted in the "Agenda" (newsletter)
- Access to all ALMC's in Michigan
- Opportunity to Present your Profile at Board Meetings
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- Major Sponsor of all Events

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- Member Discount for Conference/ Training
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- Organizational Logo displayed on our Website
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- Access to all ALMC's in Michigan
- Opportunity to Present your Profile at Board Meetings

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\$500

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- 3 Newsletters per year (on-line PDF)
- Member Discount for Conference/ Training
- Receive Annual Outing Flyers
- Organizational Logo displayed on our Website
- Access to the Website and MLMA Board Members

CHAMPION

\$50

Membership (Individual)


- 3 Newsletters per year (on-line PDF)
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- Receive Annual Outing Flyers


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Sponsors

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Health Alliance Plan
Healthplus of Michigan

Fall • Winter 2010

Future Dates • Activities • Contacts

Michigan Labor-Management Association

- Bimonthly Board Meetings — November 15, 2010
- 2011 “Partners in Progress” Annual Spring Conference — April 14-15, 2011, Kellogg Hotel and Conference, Michigan State University
- Contact: Edgell Turnquist at (734) 354-8736 or webmaster@mlma.org
- For the Agenda, contact: Mike Nowakowski at (248) 250-9834 or mnowakowski@fmcs.gov

Southeast Michigan Labor-Management Association

- Contact: Edgell Turnquist at (734) 354-8736 or webmaster@mlma.org

Kalamazoo Area Labor-Management Committee

- Kalamazoo Area Labor-Management Monthly Meeting are held the 3rd Wednesday of each month (except July and August)
- Contact: Doreen Brinson at (269) 344-6708 or dabrinson@gmail.com

Muskegon Area Labor-Management Committee

- 2011 Muskegon Annual Conference — May 12-13, 2011, Holiday Inn, Traverse City
- Student Awareness Program — Wednesday, May 4, 2011, Muskegon Community College
- Contact: Shelly Fox at (231) 724-3178 or sfox@muskegon.org

Upper Peninsula Labor-Management Council

- Contact: Doreen Bower at (906) 466-0155

Mid-Michigan Labor and Employment Relations Association (Formerly IRRA)

- Contact: Karen Hagan at (517) 432-9896 or hagenk@michigan.gov

LERA Detroit Area Chapter

- Contact: Ed Hartfield at (586) 419-7417

Association for Conflict Resolution

- Contact: Bonnie Hanes at (248) 338-4280 or Mike Nowakowski at (248) 250-9834

Institute of Continuing Legal Education

- Contact: www.icle.org or 877-229-4350

