

MUSACAW: and the STRONGER TOGETHER

CAW TCA
CANADA
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MUSACAW: and the MAKING THE RIGHT CHOICE

Dear MUSA Member;

Your union has arrived at an exciting and historic decision.

MUSA is an excellent, effective organization. Your elected leaders are experienced and capable. MUSA has done a fine job improving the working conditions and enhancing the rights of its members, organizing new bargaining units, and building an influential presence at McMaster.

However, MUSA can't do it all alone – especially not these days, as universities experience more pressure from corporate funders, and administrations become more uncompromising in trying to squeeze their own workers. Your leaders have recommended it is time for MUSA to band together with a larger union: one with more resources, more services, more access to the media and politicians. In short, a larger union with a greater ability to make a difference.

MUSA struck a sub-committee that spent several years examining the different unions that MUSA could potentially merge with. MUSA Executive Committee members, Representative Council members, and other activists have attended many union conventions, educational programs and other events, looking for the best fit for MUSA's members and MUSA's aspirations.

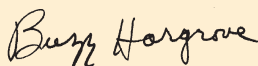
Your elected leaders have come to one, clear conclusion: The CAW is the best union for MUSA. MUSA's Executive Committee has endorsed the CAW. So has your Rep Council – unanimously. So did the members attending your recent Annual General Meeting.

We are tremendously honoured that MUSA's leadership has selected the CAW as the best union for MUSA. Now it's up to the membership to ratify that choice in your special ballot, November 24-25. We hope you will agree that the CAW and MUSA can do great things together: bargaining excellent collective agreements, protecting MUSA members in the workplace, providing unparalleled access to union training and education.

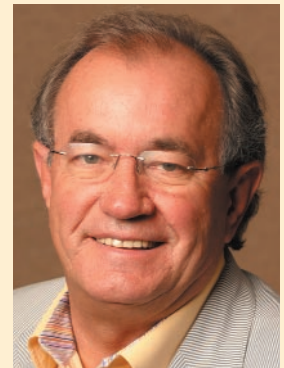
The CAW represents support staff at seven different Canadian universities. We are a democratic, Canadian union, with an unmatched record in improving the lives of our members. MUSA's merger with the CAW will open up exciting new opportunities for growth in the expanding post-secondary sector.

Please vote for the CAW on November 24-25. I am confident that it will make both of our organizations stronger.

In solidarity,



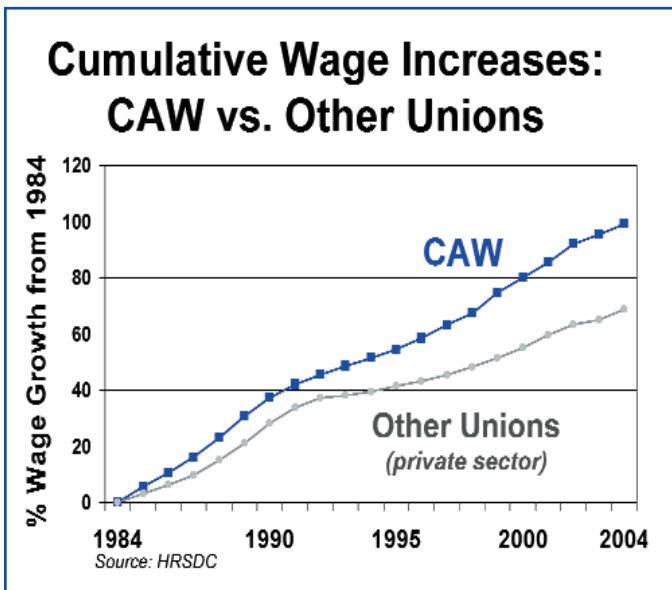
Buzz Hargrove,
CAW National President



About the CAW

The CAW is Canada's most prominent and effective trade union. We represent 265,000 members in at least 16 different sectors of the economy, in every province and territory in the country.

We were founded as an independent Canadian union in 1985, when our members decided to leave a U.S. union which was increasingly distant and non-democratic. Since then the CAW has grown by leaps and bounds – while our former U.S. parent has continued to decline.



One-third of our members work in the auto assembly and auto parts industries. This provides our union with a strong financial base, and plenty of economic and political influence. However, the majority of our members now work in a diverse array of different occupations, in varied sectors of the economy.

This diversity is an incredible asset for our union: it means we can withstand the economic ups and downs of any particular sector, and can learn from each other about new ways to organize and be effective. It also allows us to wield real power when we need to, by calling on the solidarity of members in different regions and different industries.

Our membership is growing thanks both to mergers (such as the proposed merger with MUSA) and to new organizing (in the last several years, the CAW has organized more new union members in Ontario than any other union).

The CAW enjoys unmatched public profile and political influence. Our leaders are regularly featured in the print and electronic media, meet regularly with senior ministers in both the federal and provincial governments, and have shown their ability to influence policy on matters such as economic affairs, government budgets, and social policy. Our independent approach to politics ensures our continuing influence, whatever party is in power.

Recently, a growing proportion of our membership has been employed in the broader public sector – including health care, public transportation, and community services. We already represent support staff workers at several Canadian universities (in Ontario including Windsor, Lakehead, U of T and Sudbury). If MUSA members accept their elected leaders' recommendation to affiliate with the CAW, this will enhance our joint presence in this growing sector – a presence which will grow further in coming years through new organizing.

The CAW represents thousands of specialized high-skill workers in a range of office and technical professions (including air traffic controllers, health care specialists, computer programmers, and engineering & laboratory workers). We have great experience in bargaining specialized and innovative contract provisions to meet the needs of our skilled and specialized members, including training support, access to specialized equipment and tools, specialized health & safety protections, and leaves for continuing education.



CAW dues breakdown

In other words, it's not just factory workers who benefit from membership in the CAW. Whatever your sector, whatever your occupation, every worker benefits from a strong, effective, and democratic union – like the CAW.





Message from Peggy Nash

Women Are Full Partners in the CAW

Dear MUSA Members;

I am the Assistant to the President of the CAW, responsible for numerous aspects of our union's work, including leading the bargaining at Ford Motor Co. I am also responsible for the many activities of our CAW Women's Department.

About 80 percent of MUSA members are women. I want to assure you that if you vote to join the CAW (as your elected leaders have recommended), you will be joining an organization which fully values the contributions of our women members and leaders, and which ensures that all our activities and programs are inclusive and welcoming for women.

I first became an active trade unionist when I was working as a check-in agent for an airline. Most of my colleagues were women; our work was undervalued by management (and by some trade unions) because it was deemed to be 'women's work.' I learned early on that fighting for women's full equality – in the workplace, and in society – is as important as anything else a union can do.

Today, women make up more than one-third of the CAW's membership. And we have an unmatched program of women's activities – including a dynamic annual women's

conference, women's courses designed by women, for women, at our education centre, and ambitious policies to steadily increase women's representation among our local and national leadership and staff. Our CAW Women's Department ensures that women activists in the CAW get all the support and help they need.

We practice what we preach, by bargaining innovative and effective provisions in our collective agreements that empower women and maximize their potential – everything from subsidized child care, to pay equity, to anti-harassment and anti-violence training.

I have met many of the dynamic and dedicated women of MUSA. I am thrilled that your elected leadership have recommended CAW as the best union for MUSA. I am looking forward to the chance to work with you more closely as full members in our fine union.

Yours in sisterhood,

Peggy Nash
Assistant to the National President

MUSA Timeline:

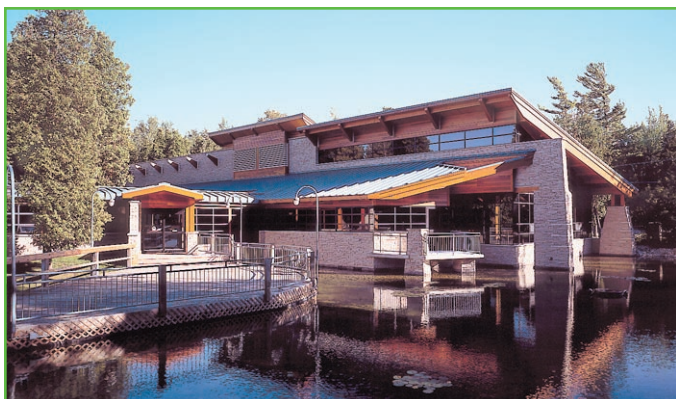
- 1973:** MUSA begins as a voluntary staff association.
- 1992:** First agreement formally (but voluntarily) bargained with McMaster.
- 2000:** MUSA officially certified as a bargaining agent by the Ontario Labour Relations Board.
- 2001:** 5-week strike for a first contract.
- 2003:** MUSA joins the Canadian Labour Congress as a direct local on an interim basis.
- 2003:** Affiliation Investigation Committee begins studying larger unions.
- 2004:** MUSA members at Parking & Transit Services bargain and ratify first contract.
- 2005:** MUSA members at RMA bargain and ratify first contract.
- 2005:** MUSA members vote to select a larger union; MUSA leadership recommends CAW.
- 2006:** MUSA will bargain its first contract (for the main bargaining unit) under umbrella of a larger union.

Education: The Union's Greatest Asset

A union is only as strong as its members. Nothing empowers union members more than knowledge. That is why the CAW puts such an incredible emphasis on union education – for our local leaders, and our rank-and-file members.

The CAW's education programs cannot be matched by any other union. We spend more than \$60 million per year on education programs at all levels: national, regional, local, and right in the workplace.

We have our own education campus: the CAW Family Education Centre in Port Elgin, Ontario (about 2.5 hours north of Hamilton – see photo). CAW members visit there for multi-week residential courses on union history, bargaining, health & safety, and other topics. Believe it or not, the program is paid for by employers – through a special 'paid education leave' premium which we negotiate in our collective agreements.



CAW Family Education Centre, Port Elgin

We negotiate and organize a wide range of other union education programs, including regional weekend schools, night courses in local unions, and (in some workplaces) special on-site union courses run during work time. The CAW has even developed a pioneering certificate program for union members right here at McMaster (the CAW-McMaster Labour Studies Certificate), using a combination of classroom, video, and web-based instruction tools.

We also bargain other supports for the continuing education and training of all our members – including employer-paid tuition assistance, targets for apprenticeships and other workplace training, education leaves and sabbaticals.

When we invest in education opportunities for our members and local leaders, we are investing in the future of our union. This is an investment that pays huge dividends.

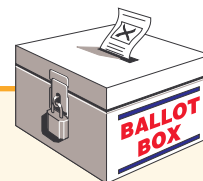


A Canadian Union for Canadian Universities

We learned the hard way in the 1980s that Canadian workers need to have independent, home-grown unions in order to be as effective and democratic as possible. The CAW split from our former U.S. parent in 1985, when we could no longer accept their refusal to acknowledge Canadian realities, and their willingness to accept contract concessions and other union-destroying practices.

In contrast, our Canadian independence has allowed the CAW to double our membership since our birth in 1985. And where U.S. unions seem locked in a long-run declining trend, the CAW has grown – in membership, influence, and innovation.

We believe fully in internationalism: the campaign for workers' rights knows no boundaries. Our Social Justice Fund and other initiatives actively strengthen our international labour ties. But when it comes to bargaining, politics, and internal democracy, we know all too well: Canadians must steer our own course.



How to Vote:

At McMaster: Look for ballot boxes on campus, on Thursday, November 24 and Friday, November 25.

Other Locations: Look for your mail-in ballot in your mail (using a double-blind return envelope system).

**Either way, your ballot is secret.
Please exercise your right to vote!**

Democracy in Action

Review the reports of MUSA's Affiliation Investigation Committee, or the latest MUSA newsletter, and you will see that there is one reason above all why your elected leaders have recommended that the CAW is *'the best union for MUSA'* – our unmatched commitment to democracy, transparency and accountability.

For a union, democracy must be more than a slogan. It is essential to keeping the union alive as a vital, effective force. Indeed, the CAW's commitment to internal democracy explains concretely why the CAW is such an *effective* union.

A democratic union is accountable to its members. A democratic union puts emphasis on the issues and concerns that its members care about most passionately. A democratic union ensures that its members have the final say – and hence keeps its staff and leaders on their toes.

The CAW's commitment to democracy is much more than jargon. It is embedded in the very structures we created when we broke away from our former U.S. parent in 1985 to form an independent Canadian union. These unique structures include:

- We have two conventions every three years (one for collective bargaining & political action, and one for constitutional matters and elections). These conventions are the top decision-making bodies in the union.
- In addition to these conventions, we hold a CAW Council meeting two or three times per year. These meetings are almost like conventions in their own right: over 1000 local delegates from across the country, receiving reports on the CAW's activities and voting on policy papers and bargaining priorities. It's expensive to bring 1000 delegates together every four months – but the payoff, in terms of membership empowerment, is worth every penny.
- The CAW's Public Review Board is a unique institution in the labour movement. It is composed of prominent, independent individuals (chaired by Alan Borovoy of the Canadian Civil Liberties Association) who grant hearings to any member who feels they have not been fairly served by the union's internal processes.

- Rigorous auditing and review processes have ensured the CAW is free of corruption.
- Local unions control their own collective bargaining. Local members elect their bargaining committees and determine their own priorities. Most crucially, members must ratify any agreement – and this keeps our bargaining directly reflective of the members' will.
- The CAW has never placed a local under trusteeship in its 20-year history. Local autonomy is a supreme principle of our system of active, member-driven unionism.
- Our constitution is right on our web page, for everyone to see:

www.caw.ca/whoweare/CAWconstitution/CAWconstitution_index.asp

Check it out to see more details on our democratic structure.



Learn More About the CAW

Please visit the CAW's web site for more information about our structure and activities:

www.caw.ca

Colette Hooson, a national staff representative in our Organizing department, has been working closely with MUSA members during the merger process. If you have any questions or comments regarding the CAW and our record, please contact her directly – by e-mail at chooson@caw.ca, or by phone at 1-800-465-0974 (ext. 229).

Once you've compared the record and structure of all the unions, we hope you will agree with the recommendation of your elected MUSA leadership: The CAW is the best union for MUSA!

The CAW in Action: 2005 Major Auto Bargaining

Only about one third of the CAW's 265,000 members work in the auto industry. But that base in Canada's most important export sector gives our union valuable financial resources and political influence. Our bargaining with the major auto companies, which happens every three years, provides a high-profile example of the CAW in action.

Despite difficult times in the auto industry, the CAW's bargaining strategy met with excellent success in 2005:

- All three contracts (Ford, DaimlerChrysler, and GM) were settled in record time, with no work stoppage.
- The contracts provided for wage increases of \$1.05 per hour over the three years (in addition to quarterly cost-of-living adjustments which ensure our members keep up with inflation), improvements in pensions, and no concessions.
- The contract introduced an innovative new CAW auto insurance program, offering auto insurance discounts of 25% or more to participating members. We plan to expand this program to eventually cover all CAW members.

What Happens Next?

After several years of careful study, MUSA's elected leaders have recommended that MUSA affiliate with the CAW. On November 24-25, by secret ballot vote, MUSA members will vote on whether to accept that recommendation.

If MUSA members endorse their leadership's recommendation of CAW as *"the best union for MUSA,"* then MUSA's leaders will negotiate a formal merger agreement with the CAW.

MUSA will retain all its financial assets, and full autonomy over how it spends its portion (43%) of dues money. MUSA will continue to have complete control over its collective bargaining, staffing, and campaigns. MUSA even retains the right to leave the CAW at some future point, if the members decide to do so in a democratic vote.

MUSA will immediately benefit from all CAW resources – including support from specialist departments (legal, research, health & safety, communications), full access to the CAW's top-notch educational programs, the support of a national servicing representative, and the backstop of the CAW's defense fund (which provides strike pay and covers the continuation of health benefits during any legal work stoppage).

MUSA and the CAW: Stronger Together

Thank you for allowing the CAW to participate in this extremely important process, that will now determine MUSA's future direction. MUSA's members and elected leaders have been incredibly thoughtful, careful, and professional in investigating the options before your union, and organizing a decision-making process that is both transparent and fair. MUSA's members have been well served indeed, by elected leaders who have approached this historic decision with such care and caution.

The CAW is honoured that MUSA's Executive Committee, your Representative Council, the Affiliation Investigation Committee, and – most important of all – your members, at the recent Annual General Meeting, have all endorsed the conclusion that the CAW is the *"best union for MUSA."*

**Please exercise your democratic right to vote November 24-25,
and have your say in this historic decision.**

