



The United Automobile Workers celebrate their 75th anniversary in 2010. Since 1935, the union has been a powerful force within the American automotive industry and American society at large. Over the years, the members of the UAW have raised their standard of living, secured improved work environments, and helped shape modern America as they fought for social justice and economic equality for all.

To commemorate this anniversary, the Reuther Library opened a retrospective exhibit on June 13, 2010: "75 Years of Solidarity: A History of the United Automobile Workers." The exhibit features photographs, images, and artifacts from the Library's UAW collections and was on display through October 2010.

The exhibit tells the story of the founding of the UAW through its recent history, including the nature of the automotive industry before the advent of the UAW. In the early years of the automotive industry, cars and parts were hand-made and hand-assembled, and workers labored in small shops in dangerous and dirty conditions. African Americans, if they could find work in an auto factory, were usually given the toughest jobs, and women were employed in just a few occupations such as sewing seat covers or clerical support.

During the Great Depression, autoworkers faced tough times. Hundreds of thousands of automotive employees lost their jobs while the speed of the assembly line was increased to maintain production with fewer workers. In the face of these difficulties, concerned autoworkers gathered together in Detroit and founded the United Automobile Workers of America on August 26, 1935. The UAW was affiliated with the American Federation of Labor (AFL) until May 1936 when it joined the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO).

The 1930s was the era of the Great Depression, labor strikes, and mass union demonstrations. Beginning in the fall of 1936, the UAW employed the strategy of the sit-down strike. UAW members would stop working, sit down on the job, and refuse to leave their workplace. Early successful sit-down strikes at Bendix Corp. in South Bend, Indiana and at Kelsey-Hayes Wheel Co. in Detroit prepared the UAW for the Great Flint Sit-Down against

The UAW at 75

General Motors which began on December 30, 1936. Forty-four days later, GM recognized the UAW and signed a contract. By the end of the year, Chrysler Corporation also recognized the UAW, and membership soared to 375,000.

In the 1940s, the UAW had two major successes: organizing Ford Motor Company and providing war material for the Allies in World War II. After a strike was held at Ford's River Rouge

Plant in 1941, the company finally agreed to recognize the UAW. When Pearl Harbor was attacked on December 7, 1941 and the United States entered World War II, automotive production shifted to making war material. The UAW adopted a no-strike pledge for the duration of the war. Soon, UAW members were manufacturing tanks, jeeps, planes, guns, and bombers. As men were drafted into the armed services, women entered the factories in large numbers to fill the positions and perform the same jobs as men.

The postwar era was a period of progress for UAW members. During the 1950s, the UAW increased its membership to over one million, and negotiated significant gains in wages and benefits such as company-funded pensions, health insurance, paid vacations, and unemployment compensation. UAW members saw dramatic improvements in their

lives, both on and off the job. It is often said that the UAW made the middle class in the United States. Certainly, the union set the world standard for industrial workers.

Since its inception, the UAW has fought against racial and sexual discrimination. In the 1960s, the UAW became a national force in the fight for social justice, providing financial, political, and physical support for the civil rights and women's rights movements. Union members elected women and African Americans to both local union offices and to prominent leadership positions on the UAW International Executive Board.

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Strikers, led by a band, march out of Dodge Main Plant in Detroit at the end of their 1937 Sit-Down Strike with Chrysler.

**The Reuther
turns 50!**
See page 7 for
details.

Collections Now Open for Research

AFSCME Office of the Secretary-Treasurer: Gordon Chapman/Joseph Ames Records

1944-1973, bulk 1962-1972 [11 linear feet]



Left to right: President Jerry Wurf, Secretary-Treasurer Joseph Ames, and Coretta Scott King at the 1968 AFSCME convention.

This collection covers the end of Gordon Chapman's tenure as Secretary-Treasurer, and all of Joseph Ames's tenure. These years saw turbulence in International Union politics as founding president Arnold Zander was defeated by Jerry Wurf in 1964.

In 1966, Chapman retired due to poor health. He was replaced by Joseph Ames who was Secretary-Treasurer until 1972 when he became Judicial Panel Chairman. This collection documents union politics, finances, and organizing campaigns, such as the 1968 Memphis Local 1733 strike at which Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. was assassinated.

Michigan Coalition for Human Rights Records

1975-2005, bulk 1981-1995 [4.5 linear feet]

The Michigan Coalition for Human Rights (MCHR) was formed in Detroit in December 1980 by a group of Detroit-area religious leaders. Initially organized to provide a liberal alternative to conservative Christian organizations, the group's primary issues included racism, militarism, gay rights, unemployment, poverty, and other socio-economic and local political topics. The MCHR Records document its operations and activities, 1981-2003, with some supplemental articles and materials on human rights issues, 1975-1980.

Ernest L. Horne Papers

1975-2000, bulk 1987-1995 [4 linear feet]

Ernest L. Horne, a retired General Motors Research Laboratory librarian and archivist, has been a known activist in the Detroit gay civil rights movement since 1979, holding membership and leadership positions in several area GBLT organizations. His papers document the activities of the gay and lesbian liberation movement in Detroit, primarily through the records of three organizations: The Association of Suburban People (ASP), South East Michigan Gay and Lesbian Association (SEMGLA), and Detroit Area Gay and Lesbian Council (DAGLC).

Monsignor Clement Kern Papers

1945-1969, bulk 1945-1950 [0.5 linear feet]

Monsignor Clement Kern was a Roman Catholic priest at Most Holy Trinity Church in Detroit for 34 years. Under his leadership, Holy Trinity became a major center for Latino American residents from southwest Detroit. Kern became active in the

migratory labor arena and helped with the Michigan Committee to Aid Farm Workers. Monsignor Kern's records document the struggle of Detroit area migrant workers and their fight for compensation for their work. The collection also explores his involvement in organizations to further the equality of minorities.

UAW Office of the President: Owen Bieber Records, Part II

1970-1995, bulk 1984-1994 [227.25 linear feet]

Owen Bieber began his career with the United Auto Workers (UAW) in Michigan and went on to hold numerous regional and national positions before he was elected the UAW's sixth president in 1983, serving four terms. During his presidency, Canadian auto workers pulled out of the union, American auto companies downsized, and competition from foreign auto companies increased. He is credited with diversifying the UAW by inviting new members from areas outside industrial sectors. Part II provides documentation of his work on various committees, as well as his role as the second UAW president to serve on the Chrysler Board of Directors.



Owen Bieber speaks with Archbishop Desmond Tutu at a 1986 anti-apartheid demonstration in Washington, D.C.

Ernest Goodman Papers, Part II

1929-1997, bulk 1940-1975 [52.5 linear feet]

A founding member of the Detroit Chapter of the National Lawyers Guild, Ernest Goodman served as NLG President, and formed the nation's first (known) interracial law firm: Goodman, Crockett, Eden and Rob. He was deeply involved with the labor movement and some of its most bitter union organizing struggles and represented clients ranging from Communists to Black Panthers, prison inmates, and African Americans during the civil rights movement. Part II reflects his activities as counsel in controversial cases, particularly first amendment and civil rights cases, courts martial, deportation and denaturalization cases, and the 1971 Attica Prison uprising.

Wayne State University Women's Resource Center Records

1972-2003, bulk 1976-1998 [27 linear feet]

The Women's Resource Center (WRC) at Wayne State University, originally founded as the Women's Center in 1976, was created in response to a report from the President's Commission on the Status of Women. The Center existed largely for women on campus to find support, information, and advice, and it routinely arranged seminars, workshops, and support groups for this purpose. Kay Hartley served as the Center's

Director until it closed in 2001. The records of the Women's Resource Center document its origins and subsequent administration and services to the University and the Detroit Metro area. The records of Kay Hartley are included.

Coleman A. Young Papers

1964-1993, bulk 1993 [56.5 linear feet; 1 oversized box; 42 scrapbooks]



Coleman Young became Michigan State Senator in 1964, representing an east-side Detroit district. In 1968, Michigan Democrats elected him to become the first black member ever to serve on the Democratic National Committee. In

1973, Young ran for mayor of Detroit. He defeated the City's former police chief, John Nichols, in a bitter election in January 1974 and was re-elected in 1977, 1981, 1985, and 1989. He was one of the first African Americans to be elected mayor of a major U.S. city and served a total of twenty years. During Young's tenure, Detroit faced numerous economic, political, and social challenges. The papers in Part I reflect the years of Young's state senatorial service. The materials in Part II represent a portion of Young's correspondence and other documents from his tenure as mayor of Detroit, 1973-1993.

United Farm Workers Boston Boycott Office, Part II

1969-1980 [12 linear feet]

The United Farm Workers Boston Boycott Office opened in 1967, one of several regional branch offices of the UFW formed to organize communities to participate in a consumer boycott of lettuce, grapes, wines, and other agricultural products. The primary activity of the office involved outreach efforts aimed at prominent members of the greater Boston area, urging them to refrain from buying non-union products. The office was also responsible for the distribution of flyers, pamphlets, and posters. The collection also contains materials from other boycott offices in the United States and Canada.

Damon J. Keith Papers, Part II

1938-2007, bulk 1957-2006 [21.75 linear feet, 1 oversized box]

Judge Damon J. Keith served on the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Michigan and on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Sixth Circuit. Judge Keith delivered several landmark rulings in civil rights and civil liberties cases. He played an active role in various civic, cultural, and educational associations, including the Detroit YMCA, the United Negro College Fund, and the Detroit Branch of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). Judge Keith's papers document important milestones in his career, his precedent-setting judicial decisions, his role in ensuring equal justice

for all Americans, and the many honors and awards bestowed upon him for his dedication to civil rights and to the City of Detroit.

Don Binkowski Papers

circa 1820s-2008, bulk 1940-1980 [51.5 linear feet]

Don Binkowski served the people of Michigan as a Warren councilman, delegate of the Michigan Constitutional Convention, and judge in the 37th District Court. Privately, Binkowski, a passionate historian, researched and wrote extensively on Polish and Polish-American history and interests, and on North Detroit. This collection is primarily comprised of Binkowski's research collected in the pursuit of publication, specifically his three books: *Col. P.W. Norris – Yellowstone's Greatest*, *Poles Together: Leo Krzycki and Polish Americans in the American Labor Movement*, and *Leo Krzycki and the Detroit Left*. Papers that document Binkowski's career in public service are also included.

Minoru Yamasaki Papers

1935-1986, bulk 1956-1981 [18 linear feet]

Minoru Yamasaki (1912-1986) moved to Detroit from Seattle in 1945. He is best known as the architect of the World Trade Center. His work in Michigan includes Temple Beth El, Michigan Consolidated Gas Company, and four buildings on the Wayne State University campus. Tall narrow windows, gothic-inspired arches, and open ground level areas contribute to his signature style. His papers include correspondence regarding projects, travel, communications with peers and associates, magazine exposure, invitations to speak, and professional organizations. Early architectural drawings, speeches and writings, photographs, awards and doctoral degrees, scrapbooks detailing the progress of his career, and various publications are also included.



The College of Education (left) and the interior of the McGregor Conference Center, both on Wayne State University's campus, show Yamasaki's style.

Robert Sedler Papers

1985-1990 [0.75 linear feet]

Robert A. Sedler is a Professor of Law at Wayne State University where he teaches courses in constitutional law and conflict of laws. Mr. Sedler has litigated a large number of civil rights and civil liberties cases, published extensively on constitutional law, and received several awards for his work in these areas. The materials in these papers consist of documents related to the Detroit Branch, NAACP, et al. v. City of Dearborn, a case brought by the NAACP and the ACLU to overturn a City of Dearborn ordinance that restricted the use of its parks to Dearborn residents. Mr. Sedler acted as counsel for the ACLU in the case.

Uncovering Hidden Collections

Reuther Library Backlog Project

In March 2010, the Reuther Library embarked on a special project to accelerate access to its manuscript and records collections. The first phase of the project has resulted in 30 opened collections, constituting over 570 processed linear feet of manuscripts and records, with additional audio-visual and library materials. One quarter of these collections consists of additions to existing collections, however the majority were previously unknown to researchers.

The project focused on collections that might provide useful historical context to the recent national focus on the economy, including affected industries, like the automotive industry, and their impact on jobs and cities like Detroit. Subjects such as poverty, housing, civil rights, immigrant workers, political movements, automotive industry, labor relations, and others relevant to today's prevailing discourse are contained within most of these collections.

All collections have been inventoried and minimally described in an effort to expedite their availability. Abstracts can be accessed online at www.reuther.wayne.edu, complete with full PDF guides which are full-text searchable. The Reuther plans to continue efforts to expose all of its collections. Visitors to the Reuther's Web site can stay up to date with our progress by checking the *Manuscript and Records Collections—Recently Opened* list on the home page. Collections opened to date include the following (separated by main subject focus):

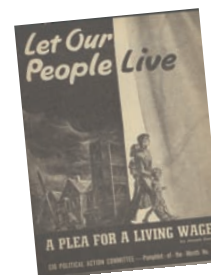
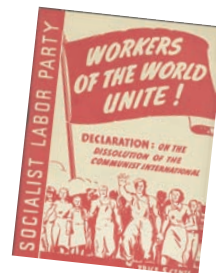
American Labor Movement

- AFT Southern Regional Office Records
- Bakery & Confectionery Workers International Polish Local 77 Records
- Alex Barbour Papers
- Al Bilik Papers
- Irving Bluestone Papers
- CIO Education & Research Department Records, Part III
- Irwin DeShetler Papers, Part II
- Katherine Ellickson Papers, Part I [addition]
- Farm Labor Organizing Committee (FLOC) Records
- Dan Forchione Papers

- Merle & Wilma Henrikson Papers, Part II
- Alex Kovacs Papers
- Henry Kraus Papers, Part II
- Dorothy Kraus Papers, Part II
- James Lindahl Papers
- Sam Sweet Papers, Part II
- Philip Vera Cruz Papers
- UAW Research Library: Congressional Testimonies
- UAW Vice President's Office: Don Ephlin Records
- UFW Information and Research Department Records, Part III

Metropolitan Detroit Urban Affairs

- Father Charles Coughlin FBI Files
- Hugh M. Davis, Jr. Papers
- Detroit Renaissance Records
- George Edwards, Sr. Papers, Part II
- George C. Edwards, Jr. Papers, Part IV
- Kathy Groehn Cosseboom El-Messidi Papers
- Charles Kellogg Papers
- A.G. & Marie Mezerik Papers
- Merrill-Palmer Institute: Pauline Knapp Records
- Merrill-Palmer Institute: Dr. J. William Rioux Records
- NOW Downriver Chapter Records
- Mel Ravitz Papers, Part II



At top is a pamphlet cover from the James Lindahl Papers; at middle is a pamphlet cover from the CIO Education & Research Department Records; left is a photograph from the Henry Kraus Papers.

Anniversaries and Archives

SWE Collection Plays Central Role in 60th Celebration

The Society of Women Engineers (SWE), which houses its national records at the Reuther Library, has heavily used its collection to celebrate its 60th anniversary and to encourage its members to become actively involved in documenting the history of women engineers and SWE.

SWE began preparing for its diamond anniversary in 2007, when it started an oral history project through a partnership with StoryCorps. The project resulted in 14 interviews between women engineers recorded at SWE conferences. Those

interviews have been archived both at the Reuther and at the American Folklife Center at the Library of Congress.

In 2009, SWE Archivist Troy Eller developed the SWE Grassroots Oral History Project to continue gathering stories from women engineers around the country. Eller leads workshops at SWE's annual conferences to encourage historical documentation, and SWE gives a History Award to sections that have made outstanding efforts to preserve their histories. Eller created anniversary galleries for past

conferences, which featured highlights from the archival collections.

Using its archives, SWE has also increased scholarship about women engineers. In 2010, Eller wrote historical articles for SWE's monthly newsletters, and a team of authors wrote a 21-page series of archives-based articles for the SWE magazine. Most importantly, in 2011 SWE will publish a peer-reviewed volume that will feature articles written by interdisciplinary researchers from around the country who have used the SWE collections. ■

UAW Celebrates 75 Years

continued from page 1

The 1970s were a time of change for the UAW. The decade began with the death of legendary leader Walter Reuther in May 1970 in a tragic plane crash.

The UAW reached a peak membership of 1.5 million in 1978. However, the union also faced major challenges, including the oil crisis in 1974 that created a greater demand for smaller vehicles. The increase in foreign competition contributed to declining sales of U.S. vehicles and layoffs for UAW autoworkers.



UAW members during the strike against Kelsey-Hayes Wheel Company in Detroit, December 1936.

The Chrysler Crisis dominated the early 1980s for the UAW. Chrysler Corporation was nearly bankrupt, and UAW President Doug Fraser asked union members at Chrysler for three rounds of concessions. Negotiations with U.S. President Jimmy Carter and Congress led to loan guarantees that saved the automaker.

The 1990s was a decade of triumph and challenge. For years, the UAW had campaigned for the end of apartheid in South Africa and the release of Nelson Mandela from prison. Upon Mandela's 1990 release, he traveled to the United States



Casino workers in Connecticut voted to join the UAW in 2008.

where one of his first stops was UAW Local 600 in Dearborn, Michigan. Mandela personally thanked UAW members for their support. However, the UAW faced serious issues in the 1990s. Foreign competition, computers, and robotics changed the nature of manufacturing in America, and the UAW began to suffer a decline in membership. To cope with this, the UAW redoubled its efforts to diversify its membership in occupations beyond automotive factories.

The UAW and the American automobile industry faced the worst crisis in their history during the first decade of the twenty-first century. American car companies began to lose market share in the 1990s, but after the turn of the century, the situation became dire. In 2007, the UAW negotiated new, innovative contracts that included Voluntary Employee Beneficiary Associations (VEBAs) with the Big Three. However, thousands of UAW members lost jobs during the financial crisis of 2008. GM and Chrysler went into bankruptcy and needed federal loans to continue operations. UAW President Ron Gettelfinger negotiated with the car companies, the U.S. Congress, and the administration of U.S. President Barack Obama in order to save GM and Chrysler, and maintain the UAW's influence in the American automobile industry.

After 75 years of solidarity, the UAW is still fighting for its members. Today, UAW members build cars, parts, planes, trucks, washing machines, and hockey sticks. They work in casinos, drive EMS ambulances, teach college students, and work as librarians. Although smaller, its strength is undiminished, and the UAW still fights everyday for social justice, equal

rights, and better lives for its members and all Americans.

On June 13th, the Reuther Library held an opening reception for "75 Years of Solidarity: A History of the United Automobile Workers." The reception at the Reuther was co-sponsored by UAW Local 2200, which represents librarians at the Detroit Public Library.

The well attended and lively affair preceded the opening of the 35th UAW Constitutional Convention in Detroit on June 14th. Wayne State University (WSU) Interim Provost Phyllis Vroom was in attendance, as well as other Wayne State officials. The Reuther was particularly honored that retiring UAW President Ron Gettelfinger and incoming President Bob King attended the event, along with UAW International Executive Board members and Regional Directors. ■



Visitors enjoy the exhibit.



Left to right: Former Wayne State University Interim Provost Phyllis Vroom; Former UAW President Ron Gettelfinger; Former WSU Provost Nancy Barrett; Exhibit Designer Kathryn Dowgiewicz; UAW President Bob King

From the Reference Desk

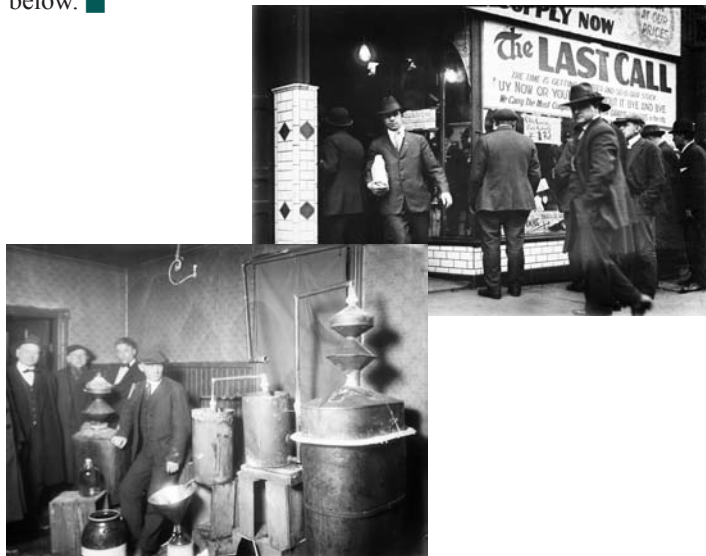
How Our Collections Are Used

The Reuther Library's audiovisual collections are often used to produce exhibits and documentaries for patrons around the country. In the last year, Audiovisual Archivists Elizabeth Clemens, Tom Featherstone, and Mary Wallace provided material for a wide range of exciting projects.

The well-received WNET/PBS documentary *Blueprint America: Beyond the Motor City* features dozens of images from the Reuther's collections. A permanent exhibit at the San Francisco International Airport highlights the Reuther's United Farm Workers Collection with images of Dolores Huerta. The Michigan Diversity Roundtable used images from several collections for its exhibit "Race in Housing and Metropolitan Detroit, 1900-1968." The Chicago History Museum opened an exhibition entitled "Facing Freedom," which drew heavily from the Reuther's audiovisual collections for its section on workers' rights and union formation.

Of special note, filmmaker Ken Burns became a Reuther Library patron. His production company, Florentine Films, used images from the collections for a recent documentary on U.S.

national parks. In addition, eight images will appear in his upcoming documentary on prohibition, two of which are shown below. ■



Reuther Staff Accomplishments

Above and Beyond

William LeFevre, the Reuther Library Reference Archivist, was elected to the Board of Directors of ARMA International in July 2010. ARMA is the leading professional organization in the field of records and information management. William has served in many capacities for ARMA, including Vice-Chairman of the ARMA International Education Foundation (AIEF), Chair of the Higher Education Task Force, and as a member of the Educational Development Committee.



William LeFevre

Louis Jones, the Reuther archivist for the Service Employees International Union (SEIU), earned his PhD in American history from Wayne State University in May 2010. His dissertation is titled, "The Rise of Public Sector Unionism in Detroit, 1947-1967." It focuses on the implementation and effect of a 1947

state law that restricted the public sector, the successful efforts to significantly amend the law in 1965, and that amendment's immediate impact. Plans are underway to prepare portions of the dissertation for publication. Louis was also recently elected to the board of the Academy of Certified Archivists for a two-year term as Regent for Outreach.



Louis Jones
photo by: Richard Bielaczyc

In July, Louis and William both attended the Archives Leadership Institute, a program funded by the National Historical Publications and Records Commission (NHPRC) and designed to provide mid-level archivists with leadership training. The week-long program brought archivists together in Madison, Wisconsin to discuss issues in the field. Louis and William were among the twenty-five professionals selected to attend the program. ■

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Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs turns 50!

The Reuther at 35

The Walter P. Reuther Library of Labor and Urban Affairs is celebrating two anniversaries in 2010. It is the 50th anniversary of its major collection, the Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs, and the 35th anniversary of the Library itself.

Dr. Philip P. Mason founded the Wayne State University (WSU) Archives in 1958 and established the Archives of Labor and Urban Affairs (ALUA) in 1960. As the first director of the archives, Dr. Mason was given one desk, one chair, and one file cabinet for collections. In 1962, the members of the United Automobile Workers (UAW) designated the ALUA as the official repository for its historical records. Soon after, other major unions, urban organizations, and prominent labor and civic leaders placed their papers with the ALUA. The collection quickly grew and required more space.

At its 1966 Constitutional Convention, the members of the UAW, led by the legendary Walter Reuther, voted to fund a



physical structure to hold their papers and those of the ALUA and WSU Archives. The Reuther Library opened in 1975, and in 1991, the Woodcock Wing opened, also funded by the members of the UAW.

Today, the Reuther Library holds 75,000 boxes of documents, 2 million photographic images, thousands of moving images, sound recordings, oral histories, books, journals, and the collections of thirteen national labor unions.

Looking forward to the next fifty years, the Reuther Library is doing its best to become a leading digital archives, as evidenced by its website: www.reuther.wayne.edu. The Reuther is also striving to retain its position as the largest labor archives in North America and one of the nation's leading repositories for urban collections. The Reuther is grateful to the UAW for funding the construction of the Library, and to the many donors who have graciously given to the Reuther's collections and programs. ■

AFSCME Convention:

AFSCME History on Display as AFSCME History was Made

The American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) held its biennial convention June 26-July 2, 2010 in Boston. This convention was unique because it saw the first contested election for AFSCME leadership in nearly thirty years. William Lucy, AFSCME Secretary-Treasurer from 1972 until 2010, retired just before the convention. Danny Donahue, president of New York's Civil Service Employees Association (CSEA – AFSCME Local 1000), squared off against Lee Saunders, one of President McEntee's closest advisors, for the position. Supporters were fairly evenly split, and Donahue earned Lucy's endorsement while Saunders picked up McEntee's. After several heated days of debate, demonstration, and campaigning, Lee Saunders won the election by a close margin.

The election atmosphere made for an exciting convention with an engaged group of over 3,000 attendees. The Reuther Library benefited from this large and interested delegation. Reuther Director Mike Smith and AFSCME Archivist Johanna Russ attended the convention and staffed a booth where they

displayed a nine-panel exhibit on AFSCME history. The exhibit detailed the founding of AFSCME in 1936, its growth over the years, its role in the 1968 sanitation workers' strike in Memphis where Martin Luther King, Jr. was assassinated, its work in the 1980s for pay equity, and many other aspects of its almost 75-year history. Many AFSCME members and staff visited the booth and praised the exhibit. ■



Walter P. Reuther Library

For access to photos, audio, collections, and more, log on to our Web site at
www.reuther.wayne.edu

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