



June 22, 2018

Dear UA and MCAA Members,

There is an adage that goes, “we are greater than the sum of our parts”. This is true of many organizations but, perhaps, most important to unions and contractors that represent the hard-working men and women in skilled trades. If we operate in silos we won’t succeed. However, when we work together toward common goals and means, we are a strong and powerful force. The MCAA provides jobs for UA members and the UA provides highly-skilled tradesmen and tradeswomen to get the job done on time and on budget for our contractor partners. Our individual success relies on our collaborative effort to organize the unorganized and grow our rank and file by increasing our membership.

This concept applies to much of what we do at both the local and national levels, and is a key factor to remember as we grow the ranks of the UA and MCAA. And so together as a united front, we want to emphasize our joint message of the importance of growing our ranks and bringing in apprentices to learn our trades as we work in tandem to secure a sustainable future.

For the continued success of our organization, it is recommended that each local have apprentices at a 1 to 4 ratio to meet our national goal of 25%. Some of you are already at 20%, 25% and even a few at 30%. We commend those local unions and the efforts they’ve made to increase their own apprenticeship numbers and we encourage them to share their best practices with sister locals and signatory contractors. But we’re not out of the woods yet, and we can’t rely solely on these local unions to provide the growth for the whole of the UA. With approximately 17% of apprentice members we are moving in the right direction but with an annual growth of apprentices at about 6% we certainly have plenty of room for improvement.

In boom times we certainly don’t think about our need to grow – but this is the time we become the most vulnerable to lose market share. The reality is we are no longer in a position where we can simply coast along and operate under past “status quos”. We ask that you develop and put into effect a plan of action to grow your apprentice numbers to reach our goal of 25%. The UA can certainly speak to the benefits of union membership to increase our ranks, and as contractors we have an advantage when it comes to organizing open shop contractors. Organizing from both sides is in all of our best interests.

Raising the number of apprentices in the UA is something that must be accomplished jointly as members and contractors. Work with your organizers to find ways to reach potential apprentices and members - whether they are just entering the workforce or looking to step up from an open shop to become a UA member or affiliated contractor. Either path will allow us to accomplish this mission and keep the UA and MCAA strong for years to come.



As the UA and MCAA continue to grow, we must be able to meet the manpower needs of projects of all sizes – if we can't man the job – we lose the job. To meet this demand, we must ensure that we have certified and highly-skilled members. This means making sure we have apprentices coming in, being trained on the job and in the classroom ready to take the reins as our members retire. The benefits here are two-fold. We can take on and man the jobs we want and keep the financial health of the organization strong to meet the pension needs of the future. In fact, if you take a look at your CBAs you may find that you've already agreed and committed to language that requires a 1 to 1, 1 to 3 or even a 1 to 4 ratio of apprentices to journeymen.

The UA and MCAA have been working hard to spread the word about the opportunities we offer apprentices and members alike. We have also developed materials that can be customized for local use such as videos and brochures on apprenticeship and our trades. Our local training centers have access to this material at no cost and more information can be found in the e-Resource Training Guide section of [uaolr.org](http://uaolr.org). The UA and MCAA will continue to partner with you on this effort and are here to help with organizing, marketing and recruitment as we grow our ranks and train the workforce of the future.

Sincerely,

Mark McManus  
UA General President

Mike Brandt  
President, MCAA