

Union Leader and Member Testimonials



UCWCP

Union Construction Workers' Compensation Program
Administered by Wilson-McShane Corporation
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"Several months ago I became a labor trustee on the Board of the UCWCP. I wasn't sure that the program benefited my members as much as it did our signatory contractors. However, after learning of the program's unique services and seeing first-hand how it helped my members get through the workers' compensation system with a successful return to the trade, I know it benefits the entire organized construction industry—both labor and contractors. As trustees we make sure that excellent medical care is provided and that benefit disputes are resolved quickly and fairly. Without a doubt, the UCWCP delivers on its mission."

Barry Davies, Business Manager-Financial Secretary/Treasurer, Ironworkers Local Union #512; Labor Trustee, UCWCP

"The UCWCP has selected physicians who are both knowledgeable about workers' compensation and are considered 'best in class' in their specialty. Knowing that our injured members are being referred to only these physicians is reassuring. Everyone 'wins' when the best medical outcome is achieved that allows for a return to work in the trade whenever possible."

Matt Fairbanks, Business Manager/President, Sheet Metal Workers Local #10; Labor Trustee, UCWCP

"As a trustee on the Audit Committee, I am closely involved every year in determining how much revenue is required (from Subscription Fees paid by participating contractors) to support the operational needs of the Union Construction Workers' Compensation Program (UCWCP). All of the trustees want to see the program add more contractors in order to bring the services to more union members. This also helps to reduce the assessment formula as operational costs are spread over a larger payroll base. I am pleased that the UCWCP has NEVER increased the assessment formula. Last year we were able to reduce the formula, and hold it steady this year, while increasing staffing and services that our union members and signatory contractors rely on."

Russell J. Scherber, Business Manager, Pipefitters Local 539 Labor Trustee; Audit Committee Member

"It is reassuring to know that there is reliable and trustworthy UCWCP staff working to see that our injured members are taken care of properly. By meeting the needs of our members promptly they return to work at a faster rate with their pre-injury wages and benefits intact."

Michael J. Cook, Former President/Secretary-Treasurer, Bricklayers & Allied Craftworkers Local Union 1 MN/ND

"The Minnesota Construction Conference of Teamsters was one of the four founding unions of this innovative program when it began in 1997. As a trustee I have seen the changes made over the years to constantly improve the process and the value for its members. I was involved in the debates about creating a mandatory health care network (Exclusive Provider Organization) and its implementation in 2004. After seeing the results of this part of the program since then, I know my members are being referred to health care providers who understand the physical demands of the construction industry and the importance of effective treatment that provides good outcomes without delay."

Dave Schrunk, Business Agent, Teamsters Local #120; Labor Trustee, UCWCP

"The Union Construction Workers' Compensation Program produces a timely resolution for each claim. This allows my members to know where they stand during a very trying time in their lives."

Jamie McNamara, Business Manager/Financial Secretary, I.B.E.W. Local Union #110

"This program is really a win-win for employers and union members. If a claim absolutely has to be litigated, this system gets the job done in a few months rather than a few years."

Glen Johnson, Former Business Manager-Financial Secretary, International Union of Operating Engineers, Local Union #49

"The Union Construction Workers' Compensation Program began serving our injured members and signatory contractors in 1997. The program has consistently kept its promise of providing a fair, fast, cost-effective and commonsense administrative system for delivering workers' compensation benefits. It has truly been a labor-management success story."

John Raines, Executive Secretary/Treasurer, North Central States Regional Council of Carpenters



"When I became a labor trustee on the Board of the UCWCP, I was skeptical that the program benefited my members as much as it did our signatory contractors. However, after serving for several months and learning how the program worked and the impact it was having on helping my members get through the workers' compensation system with a successful return to the trade, I became convinced that it was a benefit to the entire organized construction industry – both labor and contractors. Trustees make sure that excellent medical care is provided and that benefit disputes are resolved quickly and fairly. The UCWCP delivers on its mission."

Charlie Roberts, Former Business Manager-Financial Secretary/Treasurer, Ironworkers Local Union #512

"Every time one of our members can get the proper benefits paid without having to hire an attorney and go to court, they win – no legal fees to pay and no delay in payment of benefits."

Jim Brady, Former Business Manager-President, Laborers District Council of MN and ND

"Being a labor trustee on the Board of the UCWCP never puts me in the position of having to decide the validity of a workers' compensation claim. The UCWCP doesn't have an Appeals Committee, but instead provides an ADR system made up of independent mediators and arbitrators who are responsible for making those decisions. The UCWCP's Board of Trustees monitors the quality of the ADR system by reviewing the adherence to timelines and the satisfaction surveys of those who use the system to resolve disputes. As a trustee I look for ways to improve the service provided to our participants, but I never have to decide whether a claim is compensable or not."

Greg Massey, Former Business Manager, Cement Masons Local #633

"As a labor trustee for the Union Construction Workers' Compensation Program (UCWCP) as well as the Labor Representative to the Minnesota Department of Labor and Industry's Rehabilitation Review Panel (RRP), I have been in a unique position to compare the differences and the outcomes between these two administrative systems.

In many ways, my responsibilities in both organizations have been the same: ensure that Minnesota injured workers who qualify for statutory vocational rehabilitation benefits receive those benefits timely, and that the best possible outcome is achieved cost effectively.

What I have observed about the UCWCP alternative system is the higher rate of return to work to the original job, with significantly reduced rehabilitation benefit costs to the employer and insurer. This outcome also reduces the negative financial impact on the injured union tradesperson, as they return to union jobs with fringe benefits included.

These outcomes have been accomplished by the UCWCP's process of selecting a small number of rehabilitation consultants (QRC's) that are knowledgeable about the construction industry and are focused on returning our injured union members to their previous job as soon as safely possible."

Michael Hawthorne, Former Executive Vice-President, Bricklayers & Allied Craftworkers Local Union No. 1

"I am pleased that our members and contractors will now have the services of the Union Construction Workers' Compensation Program. Knowing that our injured members will receive prompt answers and solutions should a problem occur will benefit both them and the contractor they were working for when they were injured."

John Grahek, Former Business Manager, Plumbers and Pipefitters Local Union #589

"I don't think work comp is a fair system, because we don't get our fringe benefits while laid-up. But this program my union negotiated for me made things go a lot better than when I had an injury several years ago. I hired an attorney, but the program's facilitator took a lot of extra time to explain things to me. Even though I didn't get everything I wanted, in the end I thought I got a fair deal."

Anonymous Injured Union Worker



"The (program's neutral) doctor who examined me did a complete exam and treated me with respect. The letter he got from the program explained my problem clearly and the doctor listened to my answers when he asked me questions during the exam. When the report came out I was able to get the treatment I needed in short order. Thanks for the help!"

Anonymous Injured Union Worker

"The facilitator helped put us at ease throughout the process. We weren't sure what to expect and he made the whole process less stressful for me and my wife."

Anonymous Plumber

"The facilitator was absolutely helpful in solving my problem and then getting me the proper benefits."

Anonymous Carpenter

"The neutral physician who examined me treated me with respect and listened carefully to the information I gave him."

Anonymous Carpenter

"Just a note to let you know that the adjuster sent me my checks today and they are the amounts we were able to agree on. I'd like to THANK YOU for all your support, knowledge, and help that you gave me through this process. Thanks again."

Anonymous Carpenter

"I appreciate the help the facilitator has given me over the past few months. With the pain and lots of medication, sometimes things get confusing and he is always available to answer my questions and explain things to me. His kind and caring attitude is obvious."

Anonymous Carpenter

"My wife and I came to a facilitation meeting with my employer and their insurer to talk about what should happen next in my case. We didn't know what to expect, but we had a good relationship with the company and their adjuster, and the facilitator made sure we understood how the process worked as we went through it. Getting through that meeting wasn't easy, but we were able to reach a settlement that we could understand and agree to."

Anonymous Injured Union Worker

"Since my injury, the facilitator has gone that extra distance to assure that I receive all of the help I need and deserve."

Anonymous Ironworker

"The program set up the facilitation quickly and the facilitator took all points into consideration. We all came to a fair compromise and I thought he did an excellent job."

Anonymous Injured Union Worker