

# United Electrical, Radio and Machine Workers of America (UE)

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## UE Statement on Crisis at Antioch College March 15, 2008

UE stands in solidarity with the officers and members of UE Local 767 at Antioch College, and with the alumni, faculty, students, Yellow Springs community, and other friends of Antioch who are fighting to keep the College open. Our national union is very proud of Local 767 and the contributions it has made to our union, and to the college. Local 767 was organized by workers at Antioch in 1967. Although our union's roots are in manufacturing, we believe UE's strong tradition as a progressive union, committed to social justice, equality, and peace – make UE the perfect union for Antioch. But that initial union organizing campaign and the first contract negotiations encountered stubborn resistance from college administrators. So when our members fought for decent pay, benefits and justice on the job, they were also trying to *teach Antioch to practice what it preached*, and that justice begins at home – in how you treat your own employees.

UE Local 767 has not only fought for economic security and workplace fairness for its members. It has also fought *for* Antioch. Many of the union's struggles over the years have been directed against mismanagement that was harming the college. At critical moments for Antioch, our members chose to make painful sacrifices in order to keep the college open.

Antioch is the first educational institution where UE became the bargaining agent for workers. In the decades since then, and to a large extent *because* of things our members at Antioch have taught us, UE has come to represent employees at many colleges and schools across the country. Local 767 has also contributed leaders to our national union. Joyce Clayborne, an Antioch food service worker and an African-American woman, served for many years as President of UE District 7 and a National Vice President of UE.

UE is proud to be part of the Antioch community. We are proud of Antioch's progressive traditions, proud of its students and alumni, and proud of the contributions that our members have made to the education of so many fine citizens. But like the rest of you, we are also angry. We are angry about the deliberate, systematic neglect and disinvestment in Antioch College over

many years, by people in power who were more interested in building a business empire that they call Antioch University. We are angry that Antioch University Board of Trustees has, for several years, pursued a policy of destroying this college – and is now prepared to toss aside the students, the faculty, the campus workers and the Yellow Springs community – as if you were all last week's trash. We're angry that the Board of Trustees and the administration have dealt in total *bad faith* with the dedicated people who have worked so hard, and sacrificed so much over the past year, in the effort to save Antioch.

The corporate mindset of the Antioch University Board is something all too familiar to our union. What has happened here is not very different from a company that, after it becomes big and very profitable, decides to close its original factory and discard the workers and the community that made it successful.

The greedy and deceptive corporate attitude of the Antioch University Board has proven to be very hazardous to Antioch College and to the principles that Antioch originally stood for. UE supports Antioch College declaring its independence from the Antioch University Board of Trustees, and we support keeping Antioch College open – a Non-Stop Antioch.

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