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UNITED AUTOMOBILE, AEROSPACE & AGRICULTURAL IMPLEMENT WORKERS OF AMERICA

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8/17/26

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

Negotiations start next week. This week, we are finishing up our preparations as we get ready to bring back a fair and equitable contract for our members.

Over the next two weeks, it may be difficult to share much information. Things can change quickly during negotiations, and we don't want to provide information that may change as discussions continue.

We will do our best to be as transparent as possible throughout the process and keep you informed as negotiations progress.

On Friday, August 21st, our Region 9 Director, Brother Jimmy Lakeman, and Assistant Director, Brother Pat Ashton, will be coming to the plant in support of our upcoming negotiations.

Brother Lakeman and his team were elected in a special election on January 15th, 2026. This election came after Brother Lakeman fought back against talks of merging our region with another region. This was a big win for our Local. Adding more Locals to a region would stretch regional leadership thin and make it more difficult to provide Locals with the timely services and support they need.

In the eight months that Brother Lakeman has been in office, he has shown great support for our Local and its members. He has been to our facility and our hall more times than any Regional Director during my nearly 20 years as an employee. He continues to go to Washington, D.C., to fight for more work at our facility, often doing so without us even having to ask for his help.

With our negotiations starting earlier than expected and on short notice, Brother Lakeman was able to get a team from the International Union ready and on call to provide any questions, guidance, and support we may need throughout the process.

You should start receiving ballots for the upcoming elections around August 24th. Please fill them out and send them in as soon as possible to ensure your vote is heard. We ask that you support Brother Jimmy Lakeman and Brother Pat Ashton so they can continue providing the level of support to our members that has been missing from our Regional Directors for a long time.

In the last election, voter turnout at our facility was one of the lowest in the region, despite being one of the largest Locals. We need to do a better job of showing our support by participating in our elections and making sure our members' voices are heard.

In Solidarity,

Jim Rugh

President, UAW Local 1069