**2021**

**Detroit Free Press, 1/8**

*Auto industry unlikely to return to normal anytime soon as COVID-19 lingers*

*By Jamie L. LaReau*

The auto industry won't soon forget 2020, but it can't embrace a 2021 recovery yet. Last year's turbulence casts a long shadow over this year, assuring us that it'll be a while before we shake the horror — and the heroics — of last year and return to any sense of normal. There is a "question mark" over the future of auto shows for many brands, said Marick Masters, a business professor at Wayne State University. "These auto shows are very expensive for the companies so you have to think what kind of return do you get?" Masters said. "It’s a good event, but does it really add value to the industry? That’s hard to say." The UAW had its share of problems last year amid a years-long corruption probe that so far has resulted in convictions for 15 people. The criminal investigation of the UAW is done, but Ford  and FCA remain under watch. While the union has some 400,000 members, the guilty parties included two presidents and vice presidents. The UAW’s settlement with the U.S. Attorney’s Office — which did not entail a government takeover of the union, but rather appoints an independent monitor for six years — puts the UAW in a position to reclaim internal stability. That is vital to its ability to represent its members responsibly and heal labor-management relations, Masters said. Nothing is more potentially destabilizing to labor-management relations than a union under continued prosecutorial siege, he said. "The union was in a weakened position because it was negotiating with the Detroit Three while the scandal was breaking on a weekly basis," Masters said. "Imagine the strength it would have had without that. Now it is in a stronger position and that helps stabilize labor and management relations and they will be in position of strength in an uncertain future." Members have a chance to determine how they want to elect their international officers while the independent monitor checks for the possibility of future corruption, Masters said.

<https://www.freep.com/story/money/cars/general-motors/2021/01/08/covid-19-auto-industry-2021/6553012002/>

**Detroit News, 2/18**

*Democrats try again on pro-union bill, now with majorities*

*By Riley Beggin*

President Joe Biden has vowed he will be "the strongest labor president you have ever had.” To fulfill that promise, he's thrown his support behind the Protecting the Right to Organize (PRO) Act. The bill cleared the Democratically controlled U.S. House last year but faltered in the Republican-led Senate. Now, Democrats have narrow majorities in both chambers and lawmakers are taking a second crack at passing the PRO Act — and this time, they may have a chance. "It is a very big deal. It's the most significant labor law reform legislative package on the table for decades, and I think the chances of it passing are more favorable than it has been for decades," said Marick Masters, a Wayne State University business professor who studies labor relations. There's been a dramatic decrease in union membership since the 1950s, Masters said, in part due to "defects embedded in the labor law, which is slanted in favor of employers... employers have felt increasingly emboldened over time to use the law to their advantage to make it more difficult to unionize." While Democrats, who are largely in favor of the legislation, control both chambers of Congress and the White House, it will be a challenge to make the bill into law. Proponents of the legislation would need 60 votes in the Senate to stop debate and move to a vote, which would require several Republicans to side with Democrats. They'll also be fighting for airtime amid a proposed COVID-relief package, climate policies and infrastructure priorities that are likely to take precedence. "It has a fighting chance. The odds are probably against it," Masters said. "I think it's going to be very very difficult. A lot depends on how much political capital the Biden administration and the Senate majority have to expend to get this through."

<https://www.detroitnews.com/story/business/autos/2021/02/18/democrats-try-again-pro-union-bill-now-majorities/6742505002/>

**Michigan Advance, 3/27**

*Rick Haglund: Can Biden help reignite the labor movement?*

*By Rick Haglund*

President Joe Biden has promised to be “the most pro-union president you’ve ever seen.” And Michigan AFL-CIO President Ron Bieber couldn’t be happier. Bieber said he was stunned by a remarkable White House YouTube video in which Biden, without naming the company, strongly warned giant online retailer Amazon not to interfere with a union organizing drive at a company fulfillment center in Alabama. Marick Masters is a Wayne State University business professor and former director of the university’s labor programs. He said Biden has so many big issues to deal with — COVID, economic recovery, voting rights, infrastructure, border security, deteriorating relations with China and North Korea — that his labor agenda could get short-changed. “There’s a lot of merit in [the PRO Act],” he said. “We need to revisit labor laws written 80 years ago,” he said. But union-averse employers also are likely to find ways to subvert organizing drives even if Biden manages to outlaw some of their current tactics, he said. “Most employers are nonunion and want to remain so,” Masters said. “Companies have more money than unions do to fight organizing drives and they are more than willing to spend it.”

<https://www.michiganadvance.com/2021/03/27/rick-haglund-can-biden-help-reignite-the-labor-movement/>

**The Wall Street Journal, 1/22**

*Labor groups push Biden administration on union-friendly Priorities*

*By Amara Omeokwe and Hannah Lang*

Years of downsizing at the Detroit car companies have dinged the UAW’s auto-making membership, which stood above 215,000 members last year, or about 28% of the auto-making workforce in the U.S.

Union membership overall declined in 2020 along with total U.S. employment, as a result of the economic effects of the coronavirus pandemic. The number of union members fell by 321,000 to 14.3 million in 2020 from 2019, bringing their share of the workforce to 10.8%, the Labor Department said Friday. That proportion was up from the prior year, but down from its recorded peak of 20.1% in 1983, when the department started reporting the data. Lower levels of membership reflect both the declining influence of unions and the obstacles that have made it difficult to build their ranks in recent years, said Marick Masters, a business professor at Wayne State University who studies organized labor. Masters said corporate resistance and a U.S. workforce shifting away from traditionally unionized sectors, like manufacturing, are factors. Even with a sympathetic administration and the potential for new pro-labor legislation, it might not be so easy to bolster union membership, Masters said—or at least not enough to turn the trend around. How do you think organized labor will fare under President Biden? There is no reason to believe that the dynamics have shifted to create a more favorable environment for unions,” he said, noting the Obama administration made promises similar to Biden’s yet still saw union membership hit record lows.

<https://www.wsj.com/articles/labor-groups-push-biden-administration-on-union-friendly-priorities-11611351746>

**Detroit News, 3/16**

*UAW blasts Ford for backing out of Ohio Assembly investment*

*By Daniel Howes and Kalea Hall*

A United Auto Workers vice president blasted Ford Motor Co. for reneging on a commitment to invest a full $900 million in its Ohio Assembly Plant in Avon Lake and for moving production of a new electric vehicle in Mexico. The move comes as the Dearborn automaker continues a reassessment of its operations under CEO Jim Farley since he ascended to the top job last October and after an announcement a month later saying Ford would be building a second, still-unnamed electric vehicle in its Cuautitlan, Mexico, facility that also assembles the new Mustang Mach-E EV. The sharp exchange also reflects comparatively high anxiety in northern Ohio surrounding the future of union-represented auto jobs in the northern tier of the state, Two years ago this month, rival General Motors Co. closed its sprawling Lordstown Assembly plant outside Youngstown, creating a new diaspora of union members to GM facilities across the Midwest. In the 2019 UAW and Ford contract highlights, the union boasted about a $900 million investment coming to Ohio Assembly that included a new product in 2023. Marick Masters, a labor and business professor at Wayne State University, said the union and Ford "will obviously need to sit down and clarify the situation and attempt to negotiate the future investment in this Ohio facility.  A critical variable in this discussion will be the extent to which the White House might intervene to protect U.S. jobs."

<https://www.detroitnews.com/story/business/autos/ford/2021/03/16/uaw-blasts-ford-backing-out-ohio-assembly-investment/4718047001/>

**Detroit Free Press, 3/25**

*GM just became only automaker with board of directors that's majority women*

*By Jamie L. LaReau*

General Motors is adding two high-profile executives to its board of directors and expanding its commitment to diversity in the process. Meg Whitman, the former CEO of Hewlett Packard Enterprise, and Mark Tatum, deputy commissioner and COO of the National Basketball Association, are joining GM's board effective Thursday, GM said. With the election of Whitman, 64, and Tatum, 51, GM now has 13 directors, seven of whom are women, making GM the only automaker with more than half its board comprised of women, according to website 50/50 Women on Boards, which tracks the gender composition of corporate boards in the Russell 3000 Index. “This is very much an effort at diversity," said Marick Masters, professor of business at Wayne State University. "Obviously, these people bring high qualifications to the table. But the more GM can move to have a diverse profile at the board level, the better off they are. It signals their commitment to that goal for the workforce.”

<https://www.freep.com/story/money/cars/general-motors/2021/03/25/gm-board-women-diversity-meg-whitman-mark-tatum/6969922002/>

**Detroit Free Press, 4/10**

*GM’s move to EVs will mean some jobs lost, some new jobs created*

*By Jamie L. LaReau*

At General Motors Arlington Assembly plant in Texas, many of the 5,000 hourly workers worry about their job security even as they work long hours pushing out thousands of vehicles a week to meet robust consumer demand. GM builds the Cadillac Escalade, GMC Yukon, Chevrolet Tahoe and Chevrolet Suburban full-size SUVs at Arlington. All of those trucks are propelled by gasoline, and they are all hot — for now. But in 15 years or sooner, these gasoline-fueled top-sellers will be obsolete. In fact, by 2030, GM said Cadillac will offer only electric vehicles, leaving many of Arlington’s hourly workers haunted by the vexing question: Which plant will get to build the electric Escalade as GM phases out the internal combustion model? About 35,000 hourly jobs could perish across the car industry as GM and other automakers move to Evs, said Marick Masters, a Wayne State University business professor who specializes in labor issues and has studied the potential impact of transitioning to Evs. GM has said all of its light-duty vehicles will be zero-emissions by 2035 and that GM will be a carbon neutral company by 2040. The typical internal combustion engine has about 2,000 parts in it, Masters said. Whereas Evs use far fewer parts, some parts might be bigger such as batteries, but fewer people are needed overall to make Evs. “There will be some job loss,” Masters said. “The question is how much of that can be mitigated?” If the move to Evs is accelerated by politicians pushing to control climate change and improve infrastructure with more charging stations, that will only hasten the “dislocation of jobs,” Masters said. “I think anybody has reason to be worried,” Masters said. “You also have to factor in how popular are electric vehicles going to be to foreign competitors, what is the cost to make them, how profitable will they be versus internal combustion ... all of that impacts the performance of the company and that will impact jobs, too.”

<https://www.freep.com/story/money/cars/general-motors/2021/04/10/gms-move-evs-mean-some-jobs-lost-some-new-jobs-created/6955900002/>

**Mlive, 4/28**

*‘They don’t care’: Blue Cross bashed for making union employees work in person, skirting COVID-19 rules*

*By Taylor DesOrmeau*

Blue Cross Blue Shield sent almost all of its nonunion employees home at the start of the pandemic and they’ve been working remotely ever since. But the company’s 1,500 unionized employees haven’t been so lucky – while they were home for a couple days last March, they’ve been forced to work from the office ever since, according to the UAW local that represents Blue Cross Blue Shield of Michigan employees. The situation raises red flags for Marick Masters, a business professor at Wayne State University and expert in unions and labor relations. “There’s no need for people to have to be sitting in a call center at a central location in order to perform the work,” Masters said. Custodial workers and facilities maintenance employees obviously can’t work from home, Masters said. But when two people are doing the same job – and one can work from home and the other can’t – that’s a problem, he said. Unions have had a lot of power during the pandemic, Masters said, as they interpret how COVID-19 rules fit into union contracts. If the union feels the contract is violated, it can file grievances and force the debate into arbitration. Having MIOSHA side with the employees instead of the company is a big step forward, Masters said. “This is going to create discord and disharmony in the workforce and that’s all bad for the environment that people work in,” Masters said. “It’s also bad for the reputation of the company – particularly a company involved in health care.”

<https://www.mlive.com/public-interest/2021/04/they-dont-care-blue-cross-bashed-for-making-union-employees-work-in-person-skirting-covid-19-rules.html>

**Detroit Free Press, 4/14**

*GM plant is about to lose a third of its workforce — and it's only the start*

*By Jamie L. LaReau*

About 770 hourly workers at General Motors Rochester Operations plant in New York are in a fight for their future. In some ways, they exemplify what other GM factories could face as the auto industry's landscape shifts towards a technologically new world that'll be home to electric vehicles. GM's present move to outsource work at that plant is, to some degree, a part of repositioning the company for the next generation of vehicles, said Marick Masters, a Wayne State University business professor who has studied the potential impact of transitioning to EVs. "GM is fulfilling its promise announced in 2018 to offshore this parts production, resulting in the loss of about one-third of the hourly workforce," Masters said. "The union's leverage lies basically in the extent to which it can convince lawmakers to 'jawbone' GM into shifting new product to the (Rochester) plant." Even Ford Motor Co.'s CEO Jim Farley has said technology changes in the industry will dramatically affect workers, and leaders must consider their well-being as those leaders shape global transportation policy. Senate Majority Leader Chuck Schumer, D-New York, has been a strong advocate of such action, Masters said. More lawmakers will have to address the issue of jobs lost as the auto industry embraces new technology that changes the game, Masters said. He cites research speculating that about 35,000 hourly jobs could perish across the car industry as GM and other automakers move to EVs, Masters said. The critical public policy question is how to address those displaced workers, or the "middle skills" worker, Masters said.

<https://www.freep.com/story/money/cars/general-motors/2021/04/14/gm-rochester-component-operations-plant-j-b-loss-electric-vehicles/7190639002/>

**Detroit Free Press, 5/7**

*Joe Biden's support of labor unions is historic. Here's what it means*

*By Todd Spangler*

At a UAW hall in Warren last September, then-nominee Joe Biden touted his profuse support for labor unions, calling their members "the best craftsmen and women" in the world and crediting them with creating the American middle class. He promised to create "good paying union jobs" across the U.S. For Detroit's automakers and their employees, it comes at a potentially perilous time: With California and other states saying they want zero-emission vehicles to be the only ones sold in the coming years, automakers are moving to bring dozens of electric or electric-hybrid vehicles to the market. But it takes fewer employees to make those vehicles — and the battery manufacturers, where much of the work is done, are more apt to be nonunion shops. On the other hand, climate change policies could result in more union jobs for industries like energy production and construction, said Marick Masters, a labor expert and professor at the Mike Ilitch School of Business at Wayne State University in Detroit. He sees Biden's pro-labor rhetoric as deliberate, saying, "They are concerned about sending a message that they want union jobs."

<https://www.freep.com/story/news/local/michigan/2021/05/07/joe-biden-labor-unions/4922992001/>

**Detroit Free Press, 5/13**

*UAW willing to fight GM to unionize 2 new battery plants*

*By Jamie L. LaReau*

The UAW is prepared to battle General Motors at two new battery cell factories if the automaker won't allow a simplified process to organize workers there. At issue in the new plants, which are under construction and are joint-ventures that aren’t automatically UAW represented, is a process that would allow workers to check a box on cards to allow them to organize, versus a drawn-out, traditional vote process. The outcome of organizing the plants will carry far-reaching consequences for future electric vehicle workers, a point fueling the UAW's sense of urgency for this upcoming battle. The union leadership knows organizing these two plants is "a critical event for the UAW and they know the importance of it," said Marick Masters, professor of business at Wayne State University. Industry experts say it is inevitable that there will be more future EV battery cell plants across the auto industry, so the unionization at these two GM plants could be precedent-setting for workers down the road. It is critical the union's local leaders prepare an organizing campaign as soon as possible, Masters said.

<https://www.freep.com/story/money/cars/general-motors/2021/05/13/uaw-gm-union-battery-plants-lordstown-spring-hill/5038103001/>

**Quebec News Tribune, 5/12**

*The shift to electric vehicles poses a threat to the work of U.S. unions*

*By Agnes Zang*

The U.S. automobile industry is the foundation of American manufacturing, employing nearly 390,000 employees among automakers and another 539,000 employees in the supply chain. However, electric vehicles increase the likelihood of job loss for assembly workers and the automotive supply chain. Electric vehicles generally require fewer components, which means they require fewer people to make parts and assemble vehicles. In addition, fewer jobs in electric vehicles may be union jobs, which tend to provide workers with better salaries and benefits. Rivian and Tesla have no unions, nor do many companies in the electric vehicle supply chain. “When you see the fact that you need fewer people, … and the supply chain involves more non-union employers, you may suffer a lot of unemployment.” Marick Masters, professor of business at Wayne State University said.

<https://quebecnewstribune.com/news/business/the-shift-to-electric-vehicles-poses-a-threat-to-the-work-of-u-s-unions-3995/>

**Detroit Free Press, 5/25**

*UAW Vice President Gerald Kariem, key liaison to Ford, announces retirement*

*By Phoebe Wall Howard*

UAW Vice President Gerald Kariem, the key liaison to Ford Motor Co. for the labor union, announced Tuesday that he will end his term early and retire next month. He plans to serve in his role through June 30. An appointment will be made to fulfill the balance of his term, which ends in June 2022. "Vice President Kariem has served with distinction and leaves the UAW at a point when it is emerging from difficult ethical challenges. His departure invites pivoting for the future leadership of the UAW," said Marick Masters, a business professor at Wayne State University. "In picking its next set of leaders, the UAW needs to not only be mindful of these challenges but also the tremendous difficulties and opportunities posed by the technological transformation to electrification," Masters told the Free Press. "As the industrial landscape transforms with profound implications for change in the nature and distribution of work in the supply chain, the UAW will need imaginative and bold leadership to accelerate its organizing program, which is critical to its future strength."

<https://www.freep.com/story/money/cars/ford/2021/05/25/uaw-vice-president-gerald-kariem-ford-retirement/7430760002/>

**Detroit Free Press, 5/25**

*GM now says it will support union at new battery factories*

*By Kalea Hall*

General Motors Co. and LG Energy Solution on Tuesday expressed support for unions and recognized the workers' rights to unionize the companies' joint venture Ultium Cells LLC battery plants. In the past, GM and LG, through Ultium Cells, remained neutral on the topic, saying it would be up to the workforce at the plants they're building in Ohio and Tennessee to decide if they want union representation. Marick Masters, a professor of business and the former director of labor studies at Wayne State University, said Tuesday the statement from the companies "reflects a commitment to support, at least philosophically, the representation of the new Ultium Cells workforce by the UAW." But it's still unclear "whether Ultium might agree to take other steps to facilitate organizing, such as recognizing the union if a majority of members of the prospective bargaining unit sign cards authorizing UAW representation," he said. "It will be important for the UAW to establish majority status, especially if it wants to avoid the prospect of a dissident group of workers that might wish to remain union-free," Masters said. "The landscape here is ripe for intense efforts both to support union organizing and to oppose it.  A variety of outside groups may choose to get involved to push their point of view."

<https://www.detroitnews.com/story/business/autos/general-motors/2021/05/25/gm-now-says-support-union-new-battery-factories/7437339002/>

**Bloomberg Law, 5/27**

*Automakers’ shift to electric vehicles puts union jobs on line*

*By Ian Kullgren*

The shift to electric vehicles is threatening labor unions’ ironclad grip on the U.S. auto industry, thanks in part to an obscure portion of federal labor law that gives car manufacturers authority to swap union workers for non-union workers. Typically, if an employer buys a company that’s already unionized, they’re legally required to recognize and bargain with that union. The obligation depends on whether the employer substantially retains the identity of the original business—the more it does, the more it’s required to recognize the union, the Supreme Court said in its 1972 decision NLRB v. Burns International Security Services. The National Labor Relations Board has addressed narrower questions surrounding successorship in the years since.

Successorship doesn’t apply in cases where the employer reorganizes as an entirely new entity—precisely what Ford Motor Co. and General Motors Co. are doing to make electric vehicle batteries through partnerships with other companies. So far, neither company has said they’ll recognize the UAW in the new battery plants, which will be operated through joint agreements with different Korean companies. “That’s why it’s really uncertain at this time—that it’s not a given that they’ll be automatically union jobs,” said Marick Masters, a business professor at Wayne State University who studies collective bargaining in the auto industry. “The union is going to have to fight for those jobs and make certain they can work out the best deal possible with the company, that at least the company will remain neutral during an organizing campaign.”

<https://news.bloomberglaw.com/daily-labor-report/automakers-shift-to-electric-vehicles-puts-union-jobs-on-line>

**WXYZ-TV, 6/23**

*Hiring for law enforcement jobs requires aggressive marketing and more pay, officials say*

By the numbers, the Wayne County Sheriff had no job applicants in April, eleven in May, and 26 this week because of new aggressive marketing. They have 150 positions to fill. “I think we do have to help ourselves with the salary," Wayne County Sheriff Raphael Washington said. "It is a tough job.” Low starting pay is a major factor detracting applicants from law enforcement and Sheriff Washington said being short staffed has forced many of his officers into overtime. Marick Masters is a Management Professor at Wayne State University’s Mike Ilitch School of Business. He says raising salary rates is not easily done for local governments. “There are serious budget constraints which constrain their ability to raise pay significantly. You can raise pay 10%, 15%, 20 % and that will make somewhat of a difference," he said.

<https://www.wxyz.com/news/hiring-for-law-enforcement-jobs-requires-aggressive-marketing-and-more-pay>

**Detroit News, 6/25**

*What Rory Gamble's departure could mean for the UAW*

*Breana Noble, Daniel Howes, Robert Snell and Jordyn Grzelewski*

The expected retirement of UAW President Rory Gamble, confirmed Friday, potentially positions the troubled union to regain leadership stability as it faces six years of federal monitoring and a fraught transition to electrification of the global auto industry. Gamble, 65, will retire on Wednesday. The first African American president of the union, Gamble will leave at a time when the union is better off than when he stepped into the top role amid a years-long federal investigation into corruption that has resulted in the convictions of 11 former union officials, including Gamble's two predecessors. "Even though it has put aside the possibility of a government takeover," said Marick Masters, a professor at Wayne State University’s Mike Ilitch School of Business, the union's "reputation has been damaged. And when it tries to organize any place across the country now, you can rest assured that its opponents are going to reach not too far back in the history books and pull out all the chapters of this scandal and publicize it to make it very difficult for them to have to overcome what has been a challenging public relations situation."

<https://www.detroitnews.com/story/business/autos/2021/06/25/what-rory-gambles-departure-could-mean-uaw/5349523001/>

**Detroit Free Press, 6/26**

*Maverick chief engineer was destined to work at Ford: My family bleeds Ford*

*By Phoebe Wall Howard*

Over the past 118 years, 21 Ford family members have worked at Ford Motor Co., including founder Henry Ford himself. Meanwhile, the lesser known Chris Mazur has had 10 family members work at Ford in every kind of job — from baker to administrative assistant to engineer. The historical role of Ford in Detroit cannot be overstated, said Marick Masters, a business professor at the Mike Ilitch School of Business at Wayne State University. "One way of getting into Ford was by having a relative in Ford and being able to vouch for that person," he said. "Then you build up bigger loyalty within the family and the broader community. It gives Ford a legacy of helping families. It speaks to the historical role that the company has played in the economic development of Detroit, the strong middle class and a healthy family structure."

<https://www.freep.com/story/money/cars/ford/2021/06/26/ford-maverick-chief-engineer-brings-history-reflects-detroit/7622764002/>

**Detroit News, 6/29**

*'Industry at a crossroads:' Tough job awaits incoming UAW President Ray Curry*

*By Jordyn Grzelewski, Riley Beggin and Daniel Howes*

Incoming United Auto Workers President Ray Curry, the union’s fourth leader in roughly three years, might be inheriting one of the toughest jobs in Detroit. Faced with six years of federal oversight of the union following a years-long corruption investigation, the new president elevated from its old guard will be tasked with navigating the disruption of electrification to autoworker jobs and rebuilding the union's credibility. Curry "brings a wealth of talent and experience to (the) position and will further the efforts made by Rory Gamble to restore trust in the union," said Marick Masters, a professor at Wayne State University's Mike Ilitch School of Business. Experts say it also will be important for the UAW, as it emerges from the corruption scandal and after high turnover among top officials in recent years, to establish a leadership team for the long run. "Having had several international presidents in recent years, the UAW needs to settle on a longer-term leader who will position it to deal with the massive challenges facing it and the industry in the years ahead," Masters said.

<https://www.detroitnews.com/story/business/autos/2021/06/29/industry-crossroads-tough-job-ahead-new-uaw-president/7784412002/>

**Detroit Free Press, 7/10**

*Workers reject 3rd tentative agreement at Virginia Volvo plant*

*By Eric D. Lawrence*

UAW-represented workers at a Volvo truck plant in southwestern Virginia on Friday rejected a third try at ratifying a collective bargaining agreement, a move signaling divisions not just between the company and its workers but also between union leaders who supported the deal and their members. The immediate impact of the vote means a strike that began in early June — the second strike during the negotiations — will continue at Volvo's largest truck manufacturing facility. Marick Masters, a Wayne State University business professor who specializes in labor issues, has said the failure to pass multiple tentative agreements is noteworthy because it signals a disconnect between the union leadership and the members. He also noted the residue of skepticism from the years-long corruption scandal that led to 15 convictions of former UAW officials, including two ex-presidents, and Fiat Chrysler Automobiles executives, including the company's one-time lead labor negotiator. Several plant workers have said the corruption scandal is regularly discussed among the rank and file.

<https://www.freep.com/story/money/cars/2021/07/10/volvo-uaw-workers-reject-third-tentative-agreement/7920875002/>

**The Wall Street Journal, 8/1**

*Companies pay new workers higher wages, and current employees ask, ‘What about us?’*

*By Lauren Weber and Omar Abdel-Baqui*

Companies across the U.S. economy are raising pay to recruit workers in a tight labor market, increases that are rippling through firms and prompting employers to rethink pay for existing staffers. So-called wage compression—when pay for new hires or entry-level staff approaches what longtime staff or senior colleagues make—poses a financial and management challenge for employers, and has gained new urgency as companies fight to attract and retain employees amid record-high rates of job-quitting. Union contracts can make it tougher for companies to adjust pay to match short-term shocks, said Marick Masters, a management professor at Wayne State University. Contracts typically lock in pay rates and raises for members. “You can’t give huge merit increases, you can’t give lots of promotions,” he said.

<https://www.wsj.com/articles/companies-pay-new-workers-higher-wages-and-current-employees-ask-what-about-us-11627810202>

**Detroit News, 8/10**

*Chip shortage could hurt autoworkers' profit sharing, pay raises*

*By Breana Noble, Kalea Hall and Jordyn Grzelewski*

Detroit's automakers recorded major profits for the first half of the year, but the benefits of those earnings won't land evenly among their employees and could delay wage raises and shrink profit-sharing bonuses for some autoworkers. The global semiconductor shortage has forced auto plants to idle around the world, in some cases for months at a time. Automakers are prioritizing their highest-margin vehicles and those that help them meet fuel efficiency and emissions standards. That leaves employees at plants that often already have felt the pains of layoffs feeling further left behind. "I would worry first about the impact on profitability," said Marick Masters, a professor at Wayne State University's Mike Ilitch School of Business, adding the companies could argue the events that caused the chip shortage and affected profits "are really beyond their control." A fire at a chip plant in Japan, the spread of COVID-19 in Malaysia and severe weather in Texas and Europe have led to parts constraints that are out of the automakers' control. Masters expects the chip shortage and other supply concerns will affect the next set of contract negotiations in 2023 between the UAW and Detroit's automakers. The UAW is likely to argue for hourly pay increases so members can depend less on variable pay like profit sharing. "Workers, you've been used to getting for several years anywhere from $6,000 to $12,000 profit sharing," Masters said. "You kind of depend on that. And I think that if that becomes more problematic going forward, they're going to be forced to take a harder look at hourly wage rates."

<https://www.detroitnews.com/story/business/autos/2021/08/10/chip-shortage-could-hurt-autoworkers-profit-sharing-pay-raises/5405294001/>

**Time, 8/11**

*The auto industry is going green. Will workers go along for the ride?*

*By Justin Worland*

The growth of electric-vehicle manufacturing in the U.S. could drive a renaissance for workers, creating new paths for unionization, training opportunities and better salaries. Or it could lead to lower wages, slashed benefits and a smaller workforce—and that’s just for the jobs that remain in the U.S. Making an electric vehicle is a less labor-intensive process than producing one of its gas-powered counterparts; many of the components under the hood of a car with an internal combustion engine simply aren’t needed in an electric vehicle. Automakers estimate that they will require 30% less labor to produce an electric vehicle than a gas-powered one. Many companies in the supply chain that make parts for cars will cease to exist entirely. That creates new problems for the workers who remain. With fewer auto jobs than job seekers, companies may try to pay industry workers less. That’s difficult to do under current union contracts, but many auto companies have already begun to outsource work to subsidiaries and partners that are not unionized. “A significant number of jobs are in jeopardy,” says Marick Masters, a professor of management at Wayne State University. “And some of the jobs that are going to replace them may be nonunion, paying considerably less than the going rate.”

<https://time.com/6084144/green-auto-industry-workers/>

**Detroit Free Press, 7/10**

*Workers reject 3rd tentative agreement at Virginia Volvo plant*

*By Eric D. Lawrence*

UAW-represented workers at a Volvo truck plant in southwestern Virginia on Friday rejected a third try at ratifying a collective bargaining agreement, a move signaling divisions not just between the company and its workers but also between union leaders who supported the deal and their members. The immediate impact of the vote means a strike that began in early June — the second strike during the negotiations — will continue at Volvo's largest truck manufacturing facility. Marick Masters, a Wayne State University business professor who specializes in labor issues, has said the failure to pass multiple tentative agreements is noteworthy because it signals a disconnect between the union leadership and the members. He also noted the residue of skepticism from the years-long corruption scandal that led to 15 convictions of former UAW officials, including two ex-presidents, and Fiat Chrysler Automobiles executives, including the company's one-time lead labor negotiator. Several plant workers have said the corruption scandal is regularly discussed among the rank and file.

<https://www.freep.com/story/money/cars/2021/07/10/volvo-uaw-workers-reject-third-tentative-agreement/7920875002/>

**Fox 2 Detroit, 10/14**

*Kellogg’s, John Deere strikes signal ‘volatile time’ for economy, supply chains: Expert*

Workers at Kellogg’s cereal plants in cities that include Battle Creek, and thousands of John Deere workers have walked away from their jobs to strike. "There’s no doubt that there’s a lot of pent-up frustration in the workforce," said Marick Masters. Masters, a professor of business at Wayne State University, believes contract disputes over items which include low wages, are driving this worker stoppage. "We could see a growing militancy on the part of some workers because they are tired of the cumulative effects of declining wages, they see inflation on the rise, and they see the devastating effects of the pandemic, in terms of lost businesses and jobs," he said.

<https://www.fox2detroit.com/news/kelloggs-john-deere-strikes-signal-volatile-time-for-economy-supply-chains-expert>

**Detroit Free Press, 11/10**
*Ford CEO Jim Farley gave us big clue automaker's stock was going to surge*

*By Phoebe Wall Howard*

Ford CEO Jim Farley took less than 58 weeks to do what his three predecessors at the helm of the iconic automaker could not: Tip the stock price past $20 a share - even while a global pandemic triggered supply chain challenges that continue to squeeze the industry. Most notable to industry analysts is that Farley foreshadowed his belief in the company's potential when everyone else was jumping ship. As factories shut down amid surging COVID-19 deaths and workers across the U.S. were furloughed, Farley doubled down on his faith in Ford and put his own skin into the game by purchasing about $1 million worth of stock at an average per-share price of $5.13 in May 2020, three months after he was promoted to chief operating officer and three months before Ford announced his promotion to CEO. Marick Masters, a professor at the Mike Ilitch School of Business at Wayne State University, said "Confidence, boldness, and determination are what make up the essence of leadership...Ford is fortunate to have Farley at the helm at this critical juncture."

<https://www.freep.com/story/money/cars/ford/2021/11/10/ford-ceo-jim-farley-stock-price/8578013002/>

**2022**

**Detroit News, 1/24**

*Autoworkers worry about GM’s use of lower-paid employees to build EVs*

*By Kalea Hall*

As General Motors prepares for its electric vehicle future with multibillion-dollar investments in Lansing, Orion Township, and elsewhere, autoworkers worry about the growing number of employees making less than traditional union-represented employees at the Detroit automaker. They see the push to add more jobs at subsidiary GM Subsystems Manufacturing LLC and GM’s joint venture battery cell manufacturer Ultium Cells LLC as unmistakable moves to retain a tiered wage system the United Auto Workers fought hard to eliminate. The Detroit Three have been competing heavily with non-union auto companies in the United States since the 1970s, forcing the UAW to make concessions for the automakers to stay competitive – including creating a tiered wage system and outsourcing jobs. Marick Masters, a professor at Wayne State University’s Mike Ilitch School of Business, says the UAW has been negotiating from a point of weakness for decades. Now, there’s even more pressure exerted by the pivot to electrification as GM and its local rivals compete with foreign automakers and new EV startups. “The two-tier wage system was meant to make the company more competitive and using the subsidiary to hire workers is intended to make the company more competitive,” Masters said. “And what they have in common is that they’re both doing so by paying lower wages.”

<https://www.detroitnews.com/story/business/autos/general-motors/2022/01/25/general-motors-lower-paid-employees-build-electric-vehicles/6557823001/>

**Crain's Detroit Business, 2/10**

*Billboard over Godfrey Hotel construction marks latest in union vs. nonunion battle*

*By Kirk Pinho*

A federal lawsuit alleging pervasive racial discrimination in a nonunion electrical shop based out of Lansing was file last month. Now, the union representing electrical contractors is taking their case to the public with a billboard targeting a large hotel under construction in Detroit's Corktown neighborhood, questioning why its developers and general contractor aren't using unionized trades labor. Overlooking the construction, the billboard says, "Union electricians power Detroit" followed by, in a horror movie red font, "Why not the Godfrey?" It marks a noted escalation, however mild, in what have been fairly quiet relations between union and nonunion construction labor the last decade or so, said Marick Masters, a management professor in the Wayne State University Mike Ilitch School of Business. "These trends (of de-unionization) started long before that," Masters said. "The growth in nonunion labor in construction really started in the 1970s and it's not surprising that you haven't seen a whole lot of tension points in the sense of public visibility, but the trend nonetheless has been present."

<https://www.crainsdetroit.com/construction/billboard-over-detroit-construction-project-marks-latest-unrest-union-vs-nonunion>

**Wall Street Journal, 2/9**

*Laid-off Peloton staffers take to social media in new job hunt*

*By Omar Abdel-Baqui*

Laid-off Peloton Interactive, Inc. employees are posting testimonials on social media about their experiences at the company and sharing career details in efforts to find new employment after the fitness company cut 2,800 jobs and replaced its chief executive. A publicly accessible spreadsheet was created for former employees to share their names, prior roles, locations, work preferences and contact information. Marick Masters, a management professor at Wayne State University’s Mike Ilitch School of Business, said an approach where hundreds if not thousands of laid-off employees at one company come together to try to find new jobs is uncommon. “What this does is publicize to a wider audience what’s going on,” Masters said. “This concerted effort gives them a leg up on the job search and shows that they’re very committed.”

<https://www.wsj.com/articles/laid-off-peloton-staffers-take-to-social-media-in-new-job-hunt-11644428026>

**Detroit Free Press, 3/17**

*UAW President Ray Curry’s $1,900 football tickets weren’t ethics violation, inquiry finds*

*By Phoebe Wall Howard*

UAW President Ray Curry has been cleared of wrongdoing after a months-long inquiry into his use of football tickets to attend the College Football Playoff National Championship game obtained as part of an advertising buy before he became president in 2021. Use of the tickets, a perk commonly included for media clients who purchase advertising packages, had been determined not to constitute a violation of UAW policies. Still, Curry reimbursed the union $1,900 in May 2021 – the face value of all four tickets to the game between the University of Alabama and Clemson University – after questions surfaced during a federal review of union practices at the conclusion of a long-term corruption investigation. Curry also issued an apology. Marick Masters, a professor at the Mike Ilitch School of Business at Wayne State University said the UAW is positioned well moving ahead. “The exoneration of UAW President Curry, after two independent investigations…shows the UAW operating at its highest ethical standard. There is no reason to doubt that this was a legitimate trip to Florida taken by Curry on UAW business and that the tickets were incidental,” Masters said. “In an abundance of caution to further transparency and remove any question of impropriety, Mr. Curry repaid the money and issued a public apology. This sends an important message of integrity to all the members, officers, and staff of the UAW.”

<https://www.freep.com/story/money/cars/2022/03/17/uaw-president-ray-curry-football-ticket-inquiry/7059094001/>

**Detroit Free Press, 3/22**

*Ford CEO says automaker needs ‘totally different talent’ to meet goals. Here’s why*

*By Phoebe Wall Howard*

Finding a balance at Ford Motor Co. right now is delicate. Wall Street has applauded recent restructuring changes while some workers cringe as the legacy automaker continues to make dramatic staff changes designed to help the company compete in an increasingly dynamic environment. Marick Masters, a professor at the Mike Ilitch School of Business at Wayne State University, said time is too precious to not make more strategic acquisitions to fulfill immediate needs at Ford. “It’s probably too time-consuming for (CEO Jim) Farley to groom and develop that talent in-house. The scope of tasks that he has to complete in order to deal with issues associated with supply chain in a highly turbulent environment are too complex to take on your own,” Masters said. “I think what he needs to do is acquire companies that have the capacity to do this, to a large extent, stand-alone operations that can feed into an existing operation.” As Ford faces continued pressure to eliminate costs and focus on electrification, Masters said anything and anyone who lacks the necessary new skills to meet that objective is “expendable.”

<https://www.freep.com/story/money/cars/ford/2022/03/22/ford-ceo-farley-talent-goals/9453474002/>

**WWJ, 5/16**

*Autoworkers reinstate mask policies*

General Motors, Ford, and Chrysler parent Stellantis have reinstated a requirement that employees wear masks in southeastern Michigan where there are high levels of COVID-19. Some of the car makers are saying this is a temporary measure, and that they know masks are uncomfortable for workers, especially as it gets hotter. Wayne State University business professor Marick Masters says this is the world we live in. “I think it’s going to be a recurring pattern until we’re through the pandemic,” he said. Masters said the protocols have kept workers healthy and have kept production going. “Nobody’s perfect. But I think they’ve gone the extra mile. They are very concerned about it. I would give them very high marks for how they have handled this,” Masters said.
<https://mms.tveyes.com/Transcript.asp?StationID=2785&DateTime=5%2F16%2F2022+2%3A06%3A05+PM&Term=wayne+state&PlayClip=TRUE>

<https://mms.tveyes.com/Transcript.asp?StationID=2785&DateTime=5%2F16%2F2022+6%3A06%3A55+PM&Term=wayne+state&PlayClip=TRUE>

**Detroit News, 4/1**

*UAW reports membership drop for 2021; expenses tied to corruption scandal continue*

*By Jordyn Grzelewski*

The United Auto Workers kicked off 2022 with a full agenda: a constitutional convention, campaigns to organize new members amid the auto industry's transition to electric vehicles, a growing unionization movement in higher education, and continued efforts to restore the union's reputation amid a years-long corruption probe. Also looming are direct elections of international officers following a historic referendum to change the way the union picks its top leaders, and a new round of national contract talks with the Detroit Three automakers. Still, even as the union works to put the corruption scandal behind it, related expenses continued to add up in last year, according to a new federal filing by the union, with new legal expenditures for some of the UAW's top leaders, additional payments to an outside law firm hired to oversee the union's response to the investigation, and payments tied to the federal monitor charged with overseeing the union. “It’s hard to say what the full costs of this are, but it’s more than just the dollar cost," said Marick Masters, a professor at Wayne State University's Mike Ilitch School of Business. “You have to ask yourself: how much of an improvement are we actually making in the operation of the union?”

<https://www.detroitnews.com/story/business/autos/2022/04/01/pivotal-events-looming-uaw-reports-dip-membership-2021/7235758001/>

**WDET, 4/6**

*Experts compare Amazon’s first union to 1937 Flint GM strike*

*By Jake Neher*

Last week, Amazon warehouse workers on Staten Island in New York came away with one of the biggest organized labor victories in the last century. Some experts are comparing their effort to the 1937 Flint General Motors strike that helped catapult America’s labor movement. More than 5,000 workers voted in the election to form the company’s first-ever union. The new Amazon Labor Union (ALU) won by about 500 votes. That’s despite a massive anti-union campaign by Amazon. Marick Mastersis chair of the Department of Finance and chair of the Department of Accounting at Wayne State University’s Mike Ilitch School of Business, as well as an expert on organized labor. He says the comparison to the Flint sit-down strike of 1937 is appropriate. “I think it reflects that there is a large, untapped desire for worker participation,” says Masters. “I think it’s a long way ahead before labor can capture the glory of the past, but this is certainly a significant step in that direction.”

<https://wdet.org/2022/04/06/experts-compare-amazons-first-union-to-1937-flint-gm-strike/>

**Crain’s Detroit Business, 5/10**

*First Starbucks in Michigan to reveal union vote as others set elections*

*By Kurt Nagl*

A Starbucks store in Grand Rapids is poised to be the first in Michigan to count votes for unionization, while more than half a dozen others in the state have set election dates. Staff at Workers United are confident the vote will be in favor of unionizing. On Monday, the National Labor Relations Board authorized four stores in Ann Arbor and one each in Grand Blanc, East Lansing and Flint to hold elections. Workers United was notified that a total of 10 stores in Michigan have been approved for election dates in early June. Seattle-based Starbucks has more than 15,000 locations throughout the U.S. Since the recent wave to unionize began in December in New York, more than 50 stores have voted to unionize, while hundreds more are poised to vote soon. Employees have demanded higher wages, better working conditions, and a platform to voice worker interests. On the other side, CEO Howard Schultz has taken a strong stance against unions and said the company could not have grown into a globally famous coffee behemoth with the restraints of organized labor. The Starbucks unionization effort has the potential to rekindle the labor movement in the U.S., and organizing in Michigan, once a union stronghold, has symbolic significance, said Marick Masters, former director of Wayne State University’s labor relations department and current interim chair of the department of finance and business. “If you combine it with some recent successes that unions have had at Amazon, I think that they have the potential to be transformative in the sense of really rekindling the labor movement, but we are a long way form that type of rejuvenation.” Unionization is only half the battle, Masters said. Winning better benefits for employees will be a tough go. “There are serious challenges that the union will face in trying to represent workers at Starbucks sites,” he said. “Their management team is going to become more aggressive and sophisticated in resisting in these campaigns. They’ll resort to a whole bag of tricks to discourage workers at other sites from unionizing.”

<https://www.crainsdetroit.com/restaurants/first-starbucks-michigan-reveal-vote-unionize-others-set-elections>

**The Detroit News, 5/31**

*UAW pushes to represent battery plant workers in Ohio*

*By Kalea Hall*

The United Auto Workers said it’s moving forward with attempts to unionize a joint-venture battery cell plant after pushback from Ultium Cells LLC, a company General Motors Co. and partner LG Energy Solution own. UAW-GM leadership attempted to establish a card-check agreement with Ultium Cells that would give the union access to the facility to collect cards as a way to organize the plant, UAW Vice President Terry Dittes told local leaders in a letter. Ultium Cells employees are not covered by the national GM/UAW contract. Rejecting the union’s ability to collect cards from employees to confirm union representation complicates the effort to unionize the plant. Another path would be a vote by employees to decide if they want union representation. The vote would be monitored by the National Labor Relations Board. “The bottom line is that if you go with the secret ballot election route, it’s more difficult for the union to win recognition,” said Marick Masters, a professor at Wayne State University’s Mike Ilitch School of Business.

<https://www.detroitnews.com/story/business/autos/general-motors/2022/05/31/uaw-says-it-received-pushback-from-gm-jv-to-unionize-battery-plants/7462407001/>

**Detroit News, WWJ, 6/5**

*Workers at 11 Starbucks stores in Michigan vote on unions*

*By Jordyn Grzelewski*

A Starbucks store in Grand Rapids last month became the first in the state to unionize amid a broader organizing effort at the country’s largest coffee chain. Now, workers at nearly a dozen other Starbucks stores in the state are poised to determine whether they’ll join a union that has racked up dozens of wins across the country in the past six months. Voting in union elections administered by the National Labor Relations Board is scheduled for Tuesday at five stores in Ann Arbor and Thursday at five others in Clinton Township, Flint, Grand Blanc, Lansing and East Lansing. A store in Ypsilanti will vote on June 17. “This is a significant movement for the labor movement as a whole and the retail industry in particular. It reflects a potential change in the climate that is more favorable toward unions, particularly among younger workers,” said Marick Masters, a professor of management at Wayne State University who is working on a book about organizing efforts at Starbucks and Amazon. “The unions have had a great deal of success so far in winning certification of elections at various sites in which they petitioned to organize.”

<https://www.detroitnews.com/story/business/2022/06/06/michigan-starbucks-unions-labor-vote-decision/7497471001/>

<https://mms.tveyes.com/Transcript.asp?StationID=2785&DateTime=6%2F6%2F2022+6%3A08%3A46+AM&Term=wayne+state&PlayClip=TRUE>

**Detroit News, 6/9**

*UAW flexes muscle with strike pay hike ahead of Detroit Three talks next year*

*By Breana Noble*

The United Auto Workers on Tuesday increased its weekly strike allowance for members to $400 per week from $275, a signal of strength ahead of the union next year approaching the bargaining table with the Detroit Three automakers, according to experts. The Detroit-based union has the funds for it, they say. In March, its strike balance sat at nearly $826 million, according to the union. For context, in 2019, the UAW paid nearly $81 million in benefits to striking members, which included stipends to the 46,000 General Motors Co. employees during a 40-day national strike, the longest again GM in nearly 50 years. "It could have a difficult round of negotiations, and the UAW wants to be as well-positioned as possible," said Marick Masters, a professor at Wayne State University's Mike Ilitch School of Business. "I don’t think they’re signaling they're more likely to go out on strike than they would otherwise, but they're reflecting their prudence as an organization and have prepared themselves as a membership for any eventuality that may come to pass."

<https://www.detroitnews.com/story/business/autos/2022/06/07/uaw-hikes-strike-pay-help-members-hold-their-employers-accountable/10002960002/>

**WXYZ, 7/6**

*Union interest grows in Michigan in response to COVID, wage concerns*

*By Jenn Schanz*

From Amazon to Google and Starbucks, workers at more and more major companies are seeking union representation, some more successfully than others. After workers at Buffalo Starbucks locations voted to unionize in December 2021, a wave of union interest spread in Michigan and around the country. According to the National Labor Relations Board, union petitions were up 57% in the first half of the fiscal year from Oct. 1 to March 31. Marick Masters, a professor at Wayne State University’s Mike Ilitch School of Business, has written extensively on labor issues and says that despite the measurable uptick, union membership in our state is still nowhere near what it used to be. “In 1960, 50% of workers in Michigan were unionized,” he said. It’s currently around 15%, when the private and public sector are combined. “So this is perhaps a tipping point, but it’s too early to tell whether or not this represents a sea-change in union success, either in Detroit, statewide, or nationally,” Masters said. He believes the COVID-19 pandemic was a huge catalyst for the recent wave of union interest. “There’s no doubt that the workers across the nation at Starbucks saw this as an opportunity and wanted to take advantage of it as quickly as possible. And I think that’s one of the reasons why they’ve had success,” he said.

<https://www.wxyz.com/news/union-interest-grows-in-michigan-in-response-to-covid-wage-concerns?_amp=true>

**WDET, 8/10**

*The rise, fall and potential resurgence of unions in America*

*By Dorothy Hernandez*

Marick Masters, a management professor at Wayne State University and labor expert, joins *Detroit Today* to discuss unions in America. He said corporations and labor both played a role in the decline of union membership, but the trade policies driving the U.S. economy are the primary culprit. While union membership has continued to decline in recent years, last month saw an increase in momentum for labor movements in Michigan. Both state congressional staffers and nursing home workers continued formal efforts toward unionization, continuing a spike in union worker petition filings nationally this year. “I would say the principal blame lies in the structure of the U.S. economy, which is dominated by the wealthy and those who have supported free trade policies, which has led to the exodus and off-shoring of jobs,” said Masters. “Treaties like NAFTA and our trade relations with China have cost lots of manufacturing jobs, which have resulted in the decline of unionized workers.” “I’d say that if we’re looking to place blame on the unions, it wouldn’t be so much that they did a poor job representing members. In fact, the opposite is probably the case,” he said. “They probably did too good a job in trying to raise wages and raise benefits to where the companies could not remain competitive with the onslaught of international competition with unfair trade rules.”

<https://wdet.org/2022/08/10/the-rise-fall-and-potential-resurgence-of-unions-in-america/>

**WWJ, 9/5**

*The UAW’s agenda on Labor Day*

The UAW has a full agenda, including the first direct election of officers, which will play out through November. Wayne State University business professor Marick Masters says the UAW was also starting a big organizing push at new battery plants and existing plants run by foreign carmakers. “I would view this is a real opportunity for them to exploit their opportunity to organize more actively within the changing nature of the industry…”

<https://mms.tveyes.com/Transcript.asp?StationID=2785&DateTime=9%2F5%2F2022+6%3A17%3A05+AM&Term=wayne+state&PlayClip=TRUE>

**Detroit News, 7/19**

*Federal UAW monitor says leaders obstructing watchdog rooting out corruption*

*By Robert Snell and Breana Noble*

United Auto Workers officials are interfering with a government watchdog tasked with rooting out corruption in one of the nation’s most influential and troubled unions, according to a report that portrayed a rocky start to the UAW’s rehabilitation. The report provided an intimate view of frustrated attempts by the federal watchdog to reform the UAW and asserts that union leaders have withheld information, failed to disclose that an active high-ranking official was being investigated for mishandling money and concealed a union-led investigation into wrongdoing, an act that appears to violate the union’s agreement with prosecutors. Marick Masters, a management professor at Wayne State University, called the report “damning” and said confirmation of 19 open investigations is a number that “raises an eyebrow.” “This places a burden on the union to demonstrate it is going to be more forthcoming, more transparent and more eager to correct the underlying problems than it has heretofore,” he said. “This is not a time to rely on business as usual practices. You’ve really got to be out front on this and taking the lead and do what you can to arrest doubts. That comes from the sincerity you have in meeting obligations.”

<https://www.detroitnews.com/story/business/autos/2022/07/19/federal-uaw-monitor-says-leaders-obstructing-effort-root-out-corruption/10100205002/>

**The New York Times, 9/5**

*(Opinion) Even with Biden as a pro-labor champion, unionizing is still a grind*

*By Farah Stockman*

For more than 150 days, baristas refused to return to their posts at the Great Lakes Coffee Roasting Company, a popular chain with a main spot in Midtown Detroit where the owners showed their respect for coffee farmers in Brazil and other countries by writing their names on a blackboard near their beans. During an outbreak of Covid in January, the baristas demanded protective gear and tests, and in February, they decided to form a union. Their strike was part of a flurry of new union activity across the country that Democrats hope will translate into more votes in November. Since President Biden took office, there has been an uptick in petitions to form unions, and today public approval of unions is at its highest since 1965. President Biden isn’t shy about promoting organized labor and has put labor-friendly members on the National Labor Relations Board. At a time when many employers are having a hard time keeping the doors open because of elusive workers and inflation, it’s unclear whether President Biden’s advocacy for unions will generate more support than opposition. “It’s a tough sell,” said Wayne State University professor Marick Masters.

<https://www.nytimes.com/2022/09/05/opinion/unions-labor-movement-biden.html>

**The Detroit News, 9/13**

*Ultium workers at Ohio plant vote to push for union representation*

*By Kalea Hall*

Workers at the Ultium Cells LLC plant in northeast Ohio have authorized a strike in a bid to get the company to recognize the United Auto Workers union as their bargaining agent. On Friday, 94% of voting workers at the General Motors Co. and LG Energy Solution joint venture plant approved the strike recognition measure. Experts say the UAW will lose the vote as leverage at the table in its effort to get the company to recognize the union. But Ultium said in a statement it is pushing for an election certified by the National Labor Relations Board, which experts say the UAW would like to avoid since it elongates the process. For the employer to voluntarily recognize the employees’ choice for a union, more than 50% would have to sign a card in support of union representation. Pushing for an election could give the company more time to run an anti-union campaign. “They want to make it harder for unions to organize,” said Marick Masters, a professor at Wayne State University’s Mike Ilitch School of Business. “You’re going to have to work for every penny you earn.”

<https://www.detroitnews.com/story/business/autos/general-motors/2022/09/13/ultium-workers-ohio-plant-vote-push-union-representation/10361808002/>

**Detroit Free Press, 10/20**

*GM's move to boost domestic partner, transgender benefits helps it compete*

*By Jamie L. LaReau*

General Motors is reinstating health care benefits to its U.S. salaried employees' same-sex domestic partners and their kids and, in a first for the automaker, is also going to allow employees to add opposite-sex, unmarried partners and their children to their health plans. GM's move, part of an effort toward its goal to be the most inclusive company in the world, will also expand the medical benefits it already offers to transgender salaried employees in the United States. The initiatives start January 1, 2023. GM's strategy, while significant for its goal, is not groundbreaking. This time a year ago, Stellantis reinstated its offering of domestic partner benefits for same-sex couples, adding it to the inclusion of employees with opposite-sex partners, which was not the case previously. The offering is still in effect. Stellantis has also offered similar medical benefits to transgender people. Similarly, Ford Motor Co. provides domestic partner benefits in the states that require it. Since 2021, Ford has covered various transgender-related medical procedures and it will add new services next year. GM's newest offerings are more "in the middle of the curve" than ahead of it, said Marick Masters, a business professor at Wayne State University who specializes in business, labor, human resource management, conflict resolution and employee relations. "They are essentially catching up," he said of GM. "Recruitment and retention are difficult in auto because of the waves of technological change, continual restructurings due to electrification, and portending demand for product challenges, domestically and globally, on the heels of supply (chain) difficulties."

<https://www.freep.com/story/money/cars/general-motors/2022/10/20/gms-move-to-boost-domestic-partner-transgender-benefits-helps-it-compete/69570788007/>

**Detroit Free Press, 11/1**

*GM’s pause on paid Twitter ads considered ‘strategic move’*

*By Jamie LaReau*

Just hours after billionaire Elon Musk completed the purchase of social media giant Twitter on Friday, General Motors applied brakes to its advertising presence on the site, despite potentially reaching hundreds of millions of active users on Twitter each month. GM’s spokesman said the company continues to hit pause on paid advertising on Twitter while it evaluates the social media platform’s new direction under Musk. Likewise, Ford Motor Co. is not currently advertising on Twitter and will continue to watch Twitter’s direction under new leadership. Marketing experts said GM’s move likely was calculated and strategic. Wayne State University business professor Marick Masters has studied social media platforms for a future book. He said he wouldn’t be surprised if a new social medium pops up to replace Twitter one day, started by someone else. “It’s a fluid situation and it’s uncertain,” Masters said of the social media landscape.

<https://www.freep.com/story/money/cars/general-motors/2022/11/01/elon-musk-twitter-general-motors-gm-barra/69607028007/>

**Detroit Free Press, 12/3**

*Latest Ford Super Duty orders set ‘insane’ pace*

*By Phoebe Wall Howard*

Ford shattered a sales record for the month of November after reaching a record-setting pace of 52,518 new orders for the 2023 Super Duty pickup in the last five days of October, when it averaged more than 10,000 trucks a day, according to monthly sales data. But the November sales report nearly triples that figure. The Super Duty pickup has a base price of $43,970 that often climbs past $90,000, depending on amenities selected by the buyer. Options include type of engine, wheels, tires, cloth or leather interior, display screen size and massaging seats. Ford now has orders for 151,870 Super Duty trucks since the order bank opened Oct. 27, the company revealed Friday. Marick Masters, a business professor at Wayne State University, said Ford has a high-stakes interest in maintaining the appeal of the Super Duty that goes beyond just happy customers who want a pickup with a traditional internal combustion engine that pulls enormous loads of weight. These are the products that fund the future at Ford in electrification and technology research, he said. "This bodes well for the company's future," Masters said. "The sheer volume of orders is particularly surprising. It's very important for the company to have high levels of sales in these profitable areas."

<https://www.freep.com/story/money/cars/ford/2022/12/03/latest-ford-super-duty-orders-set-insane-pace/69695780007/>

**Bloomberg, Financial Post, 12/2**

*UAW Presidential Race Heads Toward Runoff in a Rebuke of Leaders*

*By Gabrielle Coppola, Ian Kullgreen and David Welch*

United Auto Workers President Ray Curry failed to secure a new four-year term in the union’s first ever direct election, setting up a runoff to lead union members in contract talks with Detroit automakers next year. The vote underscores a deep divide at the union, which hasn’t seen a serious leadership challenge since Walter Reuther consolidated power in the late 1940s. The UAW is trying to regain the confidence of its members after a five-year U.S. investigation into embezzlement and illegal payoffs to union executives netted more than a dozen convictions, including two former presidents. “There’s dissatisfaction, and I’m not surprised,” said Marick Masters, a professor at Wayne State University who studies the UAW. “There certainly were ample grounds to be dissatisfied with leadership.”

<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2022-12-02/uaw-presidential-race-heads-toward-runoff-in-a-rebuke-of-leaders?leadSource=uverify%20wall>

<https://financialpost.com/pmn/business-pmn/uaw-presidential-race-heads-toward-runoff-in-a-rebuke-of-leaders>

**The Detroit News, 12/7**

*These UAW dissidents got elected to top leadership jobs. Here’s how they did it.*

*By Jordyn Grzelewski, Kalea Hall and Breana Noble*

For signs of change within the United Auto Workers, look no further than the results of the union's first-ever direct election of top officials.

Consider this: Not a single establishment candidate won outright in any of the contested races for positions on the Detroit-based union's International Executive Board. Instead, opposition candidates effectively broke the grip that the powerful Reuther Administrative Caucus has had on the UAW's top leadership ranks for more than 70 years, ushering in a new era for the union as it sits at a critical juncture. The looming leadership changeover comes as the UAW attempts to move past a landmark corruption scandal, broadens its membership in sectors like higher education, and grapples with the uncertain future of its core membership base — autoworkers — in the industry's transition to electric vehicles. The dissident candidates who are poised to take over key leadership positions promise to take more aggressive postures against the companies whose workers the union represents. The final shakeout from the election remains to be seen, as three races — including for the presidency — head to a runoff that starts in January. Unopposed establishment candidates hung on to five out of 14 IEB positions. Still, the results were historic. Marick Masters, a Wayne State University management professor focused on labor issues, said the strength of reform efforts only would increase if Fain, of UAW Members United, is victorious in the runoff against Curry. “You would potentially have a sea change in the UAW,” said Masters, noting there could be shifts in personnel practice, budgeting, allocation of resources and militancy in organizing and at the bargaining table.

<https://www.detroitnews.com/story/business/autos/2022/12/08/how-opposition-candidates-won-big-in-the-uaws-first-direct-elections/69705863007/>

**Wallet Hub, 11/30**

*2022’s best and worst states for jobs*

Marick Masters, professor at Wayne State University’s Mike Ilitch School of Business, shares insights about the types of jobs that may be most threatened by automation, fields expected to experience a high rate of job growth, and more. “The sectors in which the most growth is expected are healthcare, leisure and hospitality, advanced technology, data and information analysis, and alternative energy. Jobs that involve the provision of care and services for the elderly and infirm are like to grow considerably. Included among the specific jobs expecting growth are nurse practitioners, statisticians, health services managers, data analysts, and technicians working in alternative energy,” Masters said.

<https://wallethub.com/edu/best-states-for-jobs/35641#expert=Marick_F._Masters>

**Detroit Free Press, 12/9**

*Workers at new GM joint venture EV battery plant vote to join union*

*By Jamie L. LaReau*

The hourly workforce at Ultium Cells LLC, the joint venture owned by General Motors and battery maker LG Energy Solution, has voted to unionize its plant in northeast Ohio after the union and the company spent months at odds over the organizing process. About 1:30 Friday morning, the UAW released the results of a two-day vote that started Wednesday and ended at 11 p.m. Thursday. The workers at the plant, located near GM's former Lordstown Assembly plant in Ohio, voted in favor of joining the UAW by a vote of 710 to 16, the UAW said. Experts say the victory is significant for the UAW's future. It should enhance the UAW's bargaining power with the Detroit Three automakers later next year, for example, and it signals that Ultium's two other plants — one being built in Spring Hill, Tennessee, and the other in Lansing — will likely also vote yes for union representation. "If the UAW draws the important lessons from this win and uses the knowledge to replicate success in other comparable situations of joint ventures, then it will have performed its mission well," said Marick Masters, a professor of business at Wayne State University and an expert on unions. "The ultimate objective of unionizing is to improve the working conditions of people and build a stronger middle class. This victory is another signal that there is considerable support for unions that can result in bargaining representation if workers are given a fair chance to exercise their voice without undue employer interference."

<https://www.freep.com/story/money/cars/general-motors/2022/12/09/ultium-cells-general-motors-union/69714394007/>

**Detroit News, 12/10**

*UAW’s EV batter plant win signals success ahead in organizing push*

*By Kalea Hall*

The United Auto Workers' success this week in organizing its first joint-venture battery plant owned by a Detroit Three automaker will aid the union in its fight to organize other similar plants and bolster its position in the changing industry, experts say. Workers at the General Motors Co. and LG Energy Solution joint-venture Ultium Cells LLC plant in Warren, Ohio, this week overwhelmingly voted in favor of UAW representation, with 710 voting for the union and 16 voting against it. The plant is one of four U.S. facilities the companies are planning to open. Production launched first at the Warren facility this past summer. The Warren Ultium facility is the first of several battery plants the UAW will look to organize as the Detroit automakers progress with their EV plans. The organization efforts come less than a year before the UAW starts national contract talks with the automakers, which are likely to focus on preserving union jobs in the move to EVs. "The successful organizing of the new wave of electric battery manufacturing is essential to the UAW's future position," said Marick Masters, a professor at Wayne State University's Mike Ilitch School of Business, in a statement. The UAW's challenge now will be "to meld the representation of these workers into the overall fabric of the auto negotiations so as (to) protect jobs and wages," Masters said. "These workers should become ambassadors for the UAW's efforts to replicate this success in other facilities in the offing and in the facilities of the nonunion electrical vehicle manufacturers such as Rivian and Tesla."

<https://www.detroitnews.com/story/business/autos/general-motors/2022/12/09/uaw-organizes-its-first-ev-battery-plant/69708859007/>

**WGLT, 12/16**

*Why the UAW is so hungry for a unionization win at Rivian*

*By Ryan Denham*

Just this month, employees at a battery plant in Ohio voted to join the United Auto Workers (UAW) union – an apparent first for an electric vehicle or battery cell plant not owned entirely by the Big Three legacy automakers. The UAW would very much like Rivian to be next. The target is ripe. Rivian now has nearly 7,000 workers at its Normal plant in a blue state where voters just constitutionally endorsed the right to organize – and where early organizing already is happening. The plant used to be a UAW shop, back when Mitsubishi built vehicles here. That doesn’t mean it’ll be easy. Rivian faces enormous pressure from investors and customers to hit production targets and – someday – turn a profit. It has said unionizing would lead to “higher employee costs, operational restrictions and increased risk of disruption to operations,” according to its SEC filings. Labor experts say a UAW win at Rivian would be significant turning point in the electric-vehicle revolution that's expected to disrupt auto manufacturing – and auto jobs – on a grand scale. “That would be a non-trivial increase in its manufacturing base at the UAW, if they were organize (Rivian),” said Marick Masters, a business professor at Wayne State University in Detroit. “And you’d hope this would produce a tipping point in that they could take the success they’ve had there and broaden it to other parts of the auto industry in the U.S.” Masters said EVs present a challenge for the UAW on three fronts: from foreign-based competition, from U.S.-based legacy automakers that will be transitioning to more EVs, and from new entrants like Tesla and Rivian.

<https://www.wglt.org/local-news/2022-12-16/why-the-uaw-is-so-hungry-for-a-unionization-win-at-rivian>

**2023**

**The Conversation, 1/5**

*Worker strikes and union elections surged in 2022 – could it mark a turning point for organized labor?*

*By Marick Masters*

Marick Masters, professor of business and adjunct professor of political science at Wayne State University, wrote an article for The Conversation about ongoing shifts in labor issues. He writes: Workers organized and took to the picket line in increased numbers in 2022 to demand better pay and working conditions, leading to optimism among labor leaders and advocates that they’re witnessing a turnaround in labor’s sagging fortunes. Teachers, journalists, and baristas were among the tens of thousands of workers who went on strike – and it took an act of Congress to prevent 115,000 railroad employees from walking out as well. In total, there have been at least 20 major work stoppages involving at least 1,000 workers each in 2022, up from 16 in 2021, and hundreds more that were smaller. At the same time, workers at Starbucks, Amazon, Apple and dozens of other companies filed over 2,000 petitions to form unions during the year – the most since 2015. Workers won 76% of the 1,363 elections that were held. Historically, however, these figures are pretty tepid. The number of major work stoppages has been plunging for decades, from nearly 200 as recently as 1980, while union elections typically exceeded 5,000 a year before the 1980s. As of 2021, union membership was at about the lowest level on record, at 10.3%. In the 1950s, over 1 in 3 workers belonged to a union. As a labor scholar, I agree that the evidence shows a surge in union activism. The obvious question is: Do these developments manifest a tipping point?

<https://theconversation.com/worker-strikes-and-union-elections-surged-in-2022-could-it-mark-a-turning-point-for-organized-labor-195995>

**The Conversation, 1/10**

*Global economy 2023: What happens next with industrial action*

Marick Masters, professor of business and adjunct professor of political science at Wayne State University, is included as an author in a series about the state of the global economy published by The Conversation. “US workers organized and took to the picket line in increased numbers in 2022 to demand better pay and working conditions, leading to optimism among labor leaders and advocates that they’re witnessing a turnaround in labor’s sagging fortunes…” he writes. “In total, there have been at least 20 major work stoppages involving upwards of 1,000 workers each in 2022, up from 16 in 2021, plus hundreds more that were smaller… As of 2021, union membership was at about the lowest level on record, at 10.3%. In the 1950s, over one in three workers belonged to a union. The deck is still heavily stacked against unions, with unsupportive labor laws and very few employers showing real receptivity to having a unionized workforce. Unions are limited in how much they can change public policy. Reforming labor law through legislation has remained elusive, and the results of the 2022 midterms are not likely to make it easier. Nonetheless, public support for labor is at its highest since 1965, with 71% saying they approve of unions, according to a Gallup poll in August. And workers themselves are increasingly showing an interest in joining them.”

<https://theconversation.com/global-economy-2023-what-happens-next-with-industrial-action-197129>

**CBS Detroit, 1/8**

*What Michigan’s minimum wage increase means for small biz*

*By Luke Laster*

Michigan's minimum wage rises above $10 starting this year, but what does that mean for Michigan small businesses who may have small margins. The increase from $9.87 to $10.10 was set by the "Michigan Improved Workforce Opportunity Wage Act of 2018," and is part of multiple annual increases. Marick Masters, a professor of business at Wayne State university says this raise should be manageable when it comes to small businesses in the state. "Most recent year, you had about 170,000 person increase in the number of employees in small businesses in Michigan. So that's something you want to sustain, and you wouldn't want to set the minimum wage perhaps at a level that would detract from that," says Masters. He says small businesses have been leading the way in job growth, not only nationally but in Michigan as well. He added about 2 million people in the state work for small businesses, about 48%of the workforce.

<https://www.cbsnews.com/detroit/news/what-michigans-minimum-wage-increase-means-for-small-biz/>

 **Detroit Free Press, MSN, 1/20**

*Republican governor makes strong accusation against Ford – and it could help Michigan*

*By Dave Boucher and Phoebe Wall Howard*

Featured: Marick Masters, Mike Ilitch School of Business

<https://www.freep.com/story/money/cars/ford/2023/01/20/ford-and-china-snyder-others-on-what-virginia-move-means-for-michigan/69820729007/>

<https://www.msn.com/en-us/money/companies/republican-governor-makes-strong-accusation-against-ford-%E2%80%94-and-it-could-help-michigan/ar-AA16DIAJ?li=BBnb7Kz>