



# Union - Affiliated Contractors



## Constructive Collective Bargaining Seminar:

*A Contractor Education Series for Effective & Mutually Beneficial Union CBA Negotiations*

Presented by UAC (Union Affiliated Contractors) of the PHCC Association

*In cooperation with the PCA of Greater Chicago and MARBA*



*Presenters:*



*Richard L. Samson  
Shareholder  
Ogletree-Deakins*



*Christina K. Wernick  
Partner  
Laner-Muchin, LTD.*



*Wesley H. Covert  
Partner  
Laner-Muchin, LTD.*

*Wednesday  
March 19, 2025  
7:15 a.m.- 2:30 p.m.  
900 Jorie Blvd.  
Oak Brook, IL 60523*

Planned and hosted by PCA of Greater Chicago at the  
association's lower level classroom.

# PROGRAM SCHEDULE

7:15 – 8:00 a.m.

## **Registration & Continental Breakfast**

7:55 a.m.

## **UAC Welcome, Introductions and Acknowledgements**

8:00 to 9:00 a.m.

## **Basics of Bargaining: An Introduction for Beginners & Refresher for Previous Association Negotiators**

*Presented by Richard Samson, Shareholder, Ogletree Deakins*

This introductory session is designed to provide a general and fundamental overview of the collective bargaining process from start to finish for the first-time “novice,” but will also serve as a useful review for previous bargaining team members. Included in this optional but recommended pre-seminar class focusing on construction and skilled trades union contract negotiations: step-by-step explanations of standard bargaining practices; common sequences of events (from the “intent to bargain” letter through ratification); relevant terms and “lingo;” the responsibilities expected of the bargaining teams; and more.

9:15 to 10:15 a.m.

## **Doing Your Homework: Planning and Preparation by the Association for Bargaining**

*Presented by Christina Wernick, Partner, Laner-Muchin*

Day one of contract negotiations is by no means “step one” in the process. Coming prepared to the first (and last) bargaining session is essential for the Association’s team to help improve the outcome for all. Be assured: the union has already done that – as both sides should. Among the topics explored as to how the Association’s committee can and should get ready for negotiations in advance: surveying the contractor members on desired (but realistic) changes to the CBA; evaluating the current state of the economy; economic forecast; benefit funding levels; number of union members “on the bench;” the political and legislative climate; results of recent negotiations by other skilled trades unions and subsequent wage increase expectations; market share considerations (i.e. non-union competition); the union leadership team (who’s in? who’s retiring? is a union election coming up?); status of the union-association relationship; are hours trending up or down?; projects in your area “on the horizon;” and more.

10:30 – 11:30 a.m.

## **Beyond Bargaining Basics: A “Nuts & Bolts” Overview of Negotiations in a Multi-Employer Setting**

*Presenter: Richard Samson, Shareholder, Ogletree-Deakins*

This session will cover a range of more complex areas of union contract negotiations in a multi-employer setting. Among the subject examined: what is multi-employer bargaining; delegations of bargaining rights, contract types (8f vs. 9a); the bargaining process at an advanced level; what is a mandatory vs. a permissive subject of bargaining; deadlocked negotiations (impasse) and possible remedies; ratification procedures; minute taking at meetings; the make-up (who is serving) of Association committee; traits of an effective chief spokesperson; and more. Audience questions, comments and feedback will be welcome.

11:45 a.m. to 12:45 p.m.

## **Understanding the Union’s Goals and Priorities in Contract Negotiations**

*Presented by Christina Wernick, Partner, Laner-Muchin*

Our union colleagues, as you’d expect, typically come to the table well-prepared. After all, a principal duty of a labor union is to secure as favorable an economic package for its members as it can. That’s their job. Remember also that contractors in negotiations are away from their jobs while at the meetings, while the union representatives are at the jobs at the same meetings. As in any endeavor involving two equal counterparts, each side strives hard to “win.” Negotiations are no exception. Learn what labor unions traditionally do to prepare for negotiations, and how such strategies evolved to the present. Delve into the tactics, resources and research unions apply as they aim to achieve a satisfactory deal. A clearer grasp by the Association’s bargaining team of what the union is seeking (and why) while simultaneously balancing our own interests, challenges and limitations as employers can lead to mutually beneficial outcomes.

# PROGRAM SCHEDULE

12:45 – 1:15 p.m. **LUNCHEON**

1:15 – 2:15 p.m.

## **Optional Bonus Session**

### **Reciprocity: Discussion and Q&A**

*Led by attorneys Richard Samson; Wesley Covert; and Christina Wernick.*

A common yet occasionally complicated (and at times risky) situation facing signatory contractors who perform work in multiple local union geographical jurisdictions within the same skilled trade is reciprocity. Ensuring that the respective pension/retirement, health & welfare, and apprenticeship trust funds receive their required contributions on behalf of individual union members when work takes place “out of territory” can potentially yet unintentionally lead to a broad range of costly missteps. Moreover, expensive non-deliberate blunders may not even surface until a periodic fund audit of a contractor is underway and long after the completion of an out-of-town project. As many employers have unfortunately learned (usually too late), a frequent and problematic obstacle is how (either or both) CBA language and/or trust fund policies can vary widely because consistency is not mandatory from local union to local union – despite being affiliated with the same national or international labor organization. This session will function as a discussion and Q&A forum, with the aim for attendees going forward to pay focused attention on an array of potential pitfalls they may not have previously considered.

### **Registration Information**

- Fees: \$25 per person reservation fee, strictly to cover seminar expenses.
- The presenters (with our sincere appreciation) are donating their time and expertise on behalf of the UAC and all signatory employers of the contractors’ association members who will attend.
- Make checks payable to: PCA or submit payment via Square. Register using this link or complete and return this form to [adriana@pcaofchicago.com](mailto:adriana@pcaofchicago.com) or mail to: PCA, 900 Jorie Blvd., Suite 195, Oak Brook IL 60523. You may also use the QR code for information and to register.
- Please forward this seminar notice to others who may be interested in attending.

### **Acknowledgements:**

This seminar is being presented by the UAC (Union Affiliated Contractors), one of three enhanced service groups of the PHCC (Plumbing-Heating-Cooling Contractors – National Association), and is being planned and hosted by the Plumbing Contractors of Greater Chicago – the local PHCC chapter covering Northern Illinois. Our thanks also to MARBA (MidAmerica Regional Bargaining Association) for partnering and assisting the UAC and PCA in scheduling and promoting this seminar on behalf of its members and the signatory construction contractor community throughout our region.





## UAC Constructive Collective Bargaining Seminar

*A Contractor Education Series for Effective & Mutually Beneficial  
Union CBA Negotiations*

### About the UAC: Union Affiliated Contractors of the PHCC National Association

The UAC of the Plumbing-Heating-Cooling Contractors (PHCC) represents a unified voice for the signatory contractors and association executives within PHCC to ensure that their distinct needs, interests, goals and concerns are presented with an emphasis on interacting with UA officials to address issues faced only by union employing contractors.

*UAC Mission Statement: To establish, maintain and nurture a working relationship between the United Association employing segment of PHCC-National Association and the United Association (UA). This relationship is to be built on trust and cooperative efforts on issues which both organizations agree, on a national or regional basis. It is recognized and understood that there will always be issues on which both parties will disagree; this group is to provide a forum for constructive dialogue on such issues.*

Click [here](#) for a thorough overview of the UAC. For information about the PHCC and UAC, please contact: Tanya M. Coogan, Senior Director, Membership and Chapter Relations: Office: 703-752-9859 | E-mail: [coogan@naphcc.org](mailto:coogan@naphcc.org) | Web: [phccweb.org](http://phccweb.org) OR: UAC Advisor, S.J. Peters, Executive Director: PCA of Greater Chicago, Office: 630.280-9307 | E-mail: [sj@pcaofchicago.com](mailto:sj@pcaofchicago.com) | Web: [phccweb.org/uac](http://phccweb.org/uac).



Presenters/Attorneys Christina Wernick (left) and Richard Samson (right)



Attendees from the PCA at this UAC seminar presentation in 2023



Wes Covert, Presenter/Attorney



Education and preparation: key for productive negotiations

### REGISTRATION INFORMATION

*Please use a separate form for each attendee.*

Name : \_\_\_\_\_ Badge Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Company: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Cell Phone #(\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail address: \_\_\_\_\_

Dietary Restriction: \_\_\_\_\_

Reservation Fee: \$25.00

TOTAL AMOUNT ENCLOSED \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Check Enclosed (please make payable to **PCA** and mail to **PCA- 900 Jorie Blvd., Suite 195., Oak Brook, IL 60523**)

*You can scan the QR code to register online or click [here](#). Then fill out the online reservation form. You will receive an email confirmation when the form and payment is submitted.*



We are pleased to inform you that there is ample free parking available for attendees. For those who are traveling from out of town, click [here](#) for a list of local hotels to accommodate your stay. The seminar will take place on the lower level of the building, and there is an elevator available to access this level. If you have any difficulty locating the venue, please don't hesitate to reach out to S.J. Peters at 630-280-9307 or Adriana at 708-435-1501 for assistance.

## ***SEMINAR SPEAKER BIOGRAPHIES***

### **Christina K. Wernick, Partner (Attorney) – Laner Muchin**

Christina joined Laner Muchin in 2021 and represents unionized employers in collective bargaining, grievance proceedings, arbitration and benefit contribution litigation.

Christina is an experienced negotiator and regularly assists clients with the resolution of grievance actions, collective bargaining agreements, project labor agreements, prevailing wage issues, jurisdictional disputes, and key man agreements. She has extensive experience advancing and defending claims in Federal and State Court, before Joint Grievance Boards, and before the National Labor Relations Board.

Christina also counsels clients on a range of subjects including day-to-day labor-management issues and employee benefit contribution compliance and conducts training for clients on a variety of labor topics.

Prior to joining Laner Muchin, Christina spent her career representing a prominent Chicagoland construction union and its multi-employer fringe benefit funds. In her role as in-house counsel, she advised on a range of matters specific to the construction industry.

### **Richard L. Samson, Shareholder (Attorney) - Ogletree-Deakins**

Rick has represented management in all aspects of labor and employment law for over 30 years with a particular emphasis on traditional labor law. He has also litigated cases before federal and state courts as well as state and local agencies in employment discrimination and wrongful discharge actions. He routinely advises clients on a host of employment-related issues including employer investigations, claims of harassment, employment policies and social media.

In the traditional labor arena, his experience covers the gamut of issues arising under the National Labor Relations Act including matters affecting both unionized and non-union employers in litigation, trial work and day to day counseling. He is currently outside labor counsel to one of the nation's largest steel producers with over 12,000 represented employees, and also represents multi-employer bargaining associations in their negotiations with several construction craft unions for labor agreements covering several thousand employees. He has experience in a variety of industries including construction, ready mix supply, material supply (aggregate mining), steel, light and heavy manufacturing, retail, food distribution, theatrical production, casinos, meatpacking and assisted living. He regularly appears on behalf of employers before the National Labor Relations Board in the defense of unfair labor practice charges and in representation cases. Over the course of his career he has handled such matters throughout the country in the Labor Board's various regional offices including Chicago, Milwaukee, Peoria, Minneapolis, Indianapolis, Detroit, Kansas City, Cincinnati, Cleveland, St. Louis, Oakland, New Orleans and Philadelphia.

Rick has been an adjunct professor of law at IIT Chicago-Kent College of Law where he taught a course on the law of employment relationships and established a seminar class on employee privacy rights.

### **Wes Covert, Partner (Attorney) - Laner-Muchin**

Wesley (Wes) joined Laner Muchin in 2008 as an associate and has been a partner at the Firm since 2014. Wes focuses his practice on all aspects of employee benefits law, including health and welfare benefit plans, defined contribution plans, defined benefit plans, and multiemployer plans. Wes' practice also includes counseling clients as to compliance with various federal laws, including the Affordable Care Act, HIPAA, ERISA, the Internal Revenue Code, and the correction of qualified retirement plans through the correction programs available through the IRS and DOL.

Wes also counsels clients as to fiduciary best practices and qualified retirement plan compliance. He is a frequent speaker to benefit and human resource professionals and author on various benefit topics and provides training to HR Departments on a number of benefit-related matters. Wes is the editor and frequent author of the Firm's e-newsletter, The Fast Laner. Wes is originally from West Union, Ohio, and resides in Chicago, Illinois with his wife and two daughters.