

UNITE HERE, Plumbers and Fitters Union, endorse Obama for president

The Plumbers and Pipe Fitters Union (UA) and UNITE HERE have endorsed Sen. Barack Obama (D-Ill.) in the 2008 presidential primary race.

The UA is the first national union from the AFL-CIO to back Obama, who won the Iowa caucuses earlier this month and came in a close second in last week's New Hampshire primary. The UA represents 340,000 members.

UNITE HERE is the first national union from the Change to Win labor federation to endorse Obama. The union represents 450,000 hotel, restaurant, laundry, culinary and apparel workers.

"Our organization and our members will do everything in our power to see that Barack Obama reaches the White House this fall, because we know he will bring working Ameri-

cans with him," said UNITE HERE General President Bruce Raynor.

UA President William Hite said Obama "has always fought for working people throughout his career and will do the best job of bringing badly needed change to Washington."

Sen. Hillary Rodham Clinton (D-N.Y.), who narrowly won the New Hampshire primary, has been endorsed by 12 AFL-CIO unions, including AFSCME, the American Federation of Teachers, the Amalgamated Transit Union, the Bricklayers, the Letter Carriers, the Machinists, the Office and Professional Employees, the Painters and Allied Trades, the Sheet Metal Workers, the Theatrical Stage Employees, and the United Transportation Union.

IAM's endorsement of Clinton in the Democratic primaries was accom-

panied by an endorsement of former Arkansas Gov. Mike Huckabee in the Republican primaries. Huckabee won the Iowa caucuses.

Three national AFL-CIO unions are supporting former Sen. John Edwards (D-N.C.) in the Democratic primaries. They are the Mine Workers, Transport Workers and United Steelworkers. The Carpenters Union, an affiliate of Change to Win, also has endorsed Edwards.

Neither the AFL-CIO or Change to Win federation has made an endorsement for the primaries.

LERC 30th anniversary party slated

The Labor Education and Research Center of the University of Oregon is planning a 30th anniversary celebration Friday, March 30, at the Oregon Convention Center in Portland.

Gov. Ted Kulongoski has been invited to speak, along with UO President Dave Frohnmayer and Ruth Milkman, director of the UCLA Institute for Research on Labor and Employment.

A reception and dinner are scheduled for 6 to 9 p.m. Preceding the dinner, from 2 to 5 p.m., will be a symposium entitled, "Creating Labor-Community Alliances That Work."

At the evening celebration LERC also will launch its new Strategic Training and Action Research (STAR) Fund. Net proceeds from the event will benefit the fund, which was started through an estate gift from Robert and Cloydene Uhrbrand. The fund will be used in part to provide more training programs and to bring visiting union leaders to Oregon.

LERC's hopes to raise \$30,000 at the anniversary dinner. Donations to the STAR Fund are tax deductible and range from \$100 to \$5,000. A \$5,000 "Visionary" contribution includes 16 anniversary dinner tickets and recognition in the dinner program. A \$100 "Activist" contribution includes a dinner ticket and recognition in the dinner program. Dinner tickets are \$60 each.

For more information about the anniversary dinner and/or the STAR Fund, call LERC at 541-346-5054.

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