

# Laid-off workers eligible for tuition

General Motors Corp. and the United Auto Workers union have announced a \$9.2-million tuition-assistance plan for laid-off GM-UAW workers.

UAW Vice President Donald F. Ephlin, director of the union's General Motors Department, and Alfred S. Warren Jr., vice president in charge of GM's industrial relations staff, said as many as 70,000 indefinitely laid-off GM workers who retain recall or rehiring rights will be eligible.

The program begins Jan. 1, 1984.

"WHAT IS new about his plan," said Warren, "is that all qualified laid-off workers will be able to receive assistance in the form of up-front payment to an accredited college, university or certified vocational school."

"This is in recognition of the fact that laid-off employees are less likely to have 'up-front' money for tuition," he added.

The newly negotiated "GM-UAW National Tuition Assistance Plan for Laid-Off Workers" is an innovative variation of GM's longstanding Tuition Refund Plan, under which GM employees are reimbursed tuition fees after successfully completing educational courses related to their employment.

The plan provides for "up-front" money and requires only that courses selected by eligible laid-off workers be taken at accredited or licensed schools. Courses of study need not be related to the laid-off workers' previous GM employment.

"AS A RESULT of the 1982 negotia-

tions, GM and the UAW have embarked upon an ambitious undertaking — providing working and laid-off members opportunities for education and retraining that will prepare them to re-enter the workforce and rebuild for the future," Ephlin said.

"This new plan is designed to help laid-off employees improve their chances of re-employment either with General Motors or with some other employer."

Ephlin and Warren said the plan will provide for tuition assistance from a special GM-UAW fund. Tuition will be paid directly to the schools teaching the course in which the participant is enrolled. Qualified workers will be eligible for tuition and fees up to \$1,000 a year.

Depending on their seniority with GM and layoff status, program participants may qualify for tuition assistance up to four years or a total of \$4,000.

THE NEW program is another major step toward worker retraining and job placement undertaken by GM and the UAW as a result of their historic 1982 labor agreement.

The 1982 agreement established a Joint Skill Development and Training Committee to promote training, retraining and related activities to upgrade the skills of GM workers nationwide. BM funding of five cents per straight-time hour worked by UAW-GM workers was established under the agreement to assist laid-off workers in this regard.

Several training, retraining and job-placement programs initiated by GM and the UAW since 1982 — including one at Pontiac — also are funded by the so-called "nickel-an-hour fund."

"It is our hope the plan will permit laid-off employees to select virtually any type of vocational training or education they feel appropriate for their personal situation and goals," they noted.

"In addition, there will be no requirement that the education must be related to positions to which the employee can reasonably expect to aspire within his or her general background and experience."

# County parks hold line on entry fees

Admission to Oakland County parks will remain at \$2.50 per vehicle in 1984, although property tax revenue will decline. The non-resident fee will remain at \$4.

Lewis E. Wint, chairman of the county parks and recreation commission, made the announcement after the body adopted a 1984 budget of \$6.4 million — \$5 million for operations and \$1.4 million for capital improvements.

MAJOR CAPITAL project will be completion of a new nature center at Independence Oaks County Park, Independence Township. Funded by a \$250,000 federal grant, the nature center is scheduled to open in the fall.

Other priority capital projects for 1984, Wint said, are:

- Start of a wave pool at Red Oaks Park, Madison Heights.
- Completion of primitive camp-

sites at Addison Oaks, nine miles north of Rochester.

- A maintenance building at Glen Oaks Golf Course, Farmington Hills.

Altogether, the commission operates nine parks, charging entrance fees and collecting 0.25 mill in property taxes.

PROPERTY TAX revenue will drop for the first time in history by 6 percent, according to E. Eric Reickel, parks manager. Reason is the recession-born decline in property valuations.

Despite a \$93,000 decline, taxes still are the biggest single source of revenue — \$3.7 million.

User fees are estimated at \$2.5 million, up 0.2 percent because of increased park usage. Reickel anticipates 1.5-million park visitors in 1984.

## volunteers

The Oakland County Volunteer Bureau (OCVB) has a current file of volunteer opportunities for more than 200 agencies. Non-profit organizations needing assistance may list with the bureau. For further information about these and other volunteer openings, please call the bureau, 642-7272.

MOTHERS — Warm, caring, experienced parents are needed at Beaumont Hospital to work with expectant and/or first-time parents in the parenting program. Volunteers are needed four hours per week, Monday through Friday. Training is provided.

PEER/PHONE COUNSELOR — A woman, 21-years of age or older, who has good listening skills, is supportive, non-judgmental and with crisis-line experience, is needed four hours per week by the Women's Survival Center in Pontiac, Monday, Wednesday or Friday for a period of six months. Training is provided.

PUPPETEER — A woman is needed by Junior Leaguers to work with "The Kids on the Block" program in the Bloomfield Hills schools and possibly others. The show will be trouped 1-3 p.m. on Tuesdays, from mid-January to April.

INTERVIEWER — The OCVB needs someone experienced in volunteer work to handle face-to-face or on-phone interviews with prospective volunteers and/or to solicit volunteer opportunities for Oakland County agencies. The person should be friendly, empathetic and a good listener.



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