It's true – it takes money to run a strong, progressive union. Union dues give the United Steelworkers (USW) the power to fight for your rights. And the money you contribute comes right back to you through a collective agreement and a wide range of union services.

You have a say in where your money goes. Dues are set democratically at the union's convention by delegates from your Local Union. As a union member, you help to oversee how your dues are set and how they are administered. Keep in mind you don't pay a cent in dues until you have voted to accept your first collective agreement.

Here's how each dollar is split up:

**44¢ to your local union**

When a group of workers joins the Steelworkers, a new Local Union is formed or the group joins an existing Local. This Local elects its own officers and runs its own affairs. Almost half of every dollar paid in dues* – 44¢ – comes back to the Local Union so that it helps pay for:

- Administration of Local Union Affairs;
- Collective Bargaining;
- Member Education Programs;
- Arbitration; and
- Sending delegates to important conferences and International Union Constitutional Conventions.

It's clear that the Local Union is the mainstay of the whole organization. And so, a large part of your dues dollar goes toward keeping the Local Union active and effective.

Your Local Union spends its money according to your priorities. Financial controls ensure that the membership oversees all spending. Local Union books are audited regularly. So are the books of the entire union. In addition, the International Secretary-Treasurer issues an audited public report to the Local Unions each year. And all of this financial information is available to you.

**3¢ to organizing**

Just as you are now considering Steelworkers membership, other workers across North America want the same chance. To bring the benefits of the Steelworkers to new members, 3¢ of each dues dollar* (in addition to 2 cents per hour) pays for the resources needed to keep the Steelworkers growing in all sectors of the U.S. and Canada.

**1¢ to political and legislative action**

The USW takes a stand on governmental policies that affect working people, their jobs, their economic security, their retirement and issues of social justice. One cent of each dues dollar* helps promote pro-worker political action.

**1¢ to education**

The workplace is changing rapidly and our members need the skills to properly take care of their interests. That's why the Steelworkers offer the most extensive education program of any union. Courses on collective bargaining, labor law, Local Union leadership, health and safety, human rights, women's issues, and many other topics are available to all members. A 1¢ share of each dues dollar* supports this vital activity.

**7¢ to the strike and defense fund**

A healthy Strike and Defense Fund means a strong union. As one of the largest unions in the U.S., it's essential that we keep this fund well supplied. With 7¢ of your dues money plus 15¢ of gross earnings going into the fund, we are confident that we can keep it healthy. The fund currently exceeds $150 million.

At the bargaining table, an ample strike fund gives us more influence and respect. Companies know we have money behind us and they know they have to consider our proposals seriously. Because of this strength, 98% of our collective agreements are settled without a strike. But, if a strike can't be avoided, and you vote to strike, the fund helps our members get by while negotiations continue. It's comforting to know that although strikes in the Steelworkers are rare, the Strike and Defense Fund is there if the need arises.

This fund is also for the Defense of our members' collective bargaining agreements. The USW is well known for its long-standing commitment to resisting employer abuse. A primary way the USW does this is through "strategic campaigns." These are generally initiated when an employer strongly resists reaching a labor agreement. The USW Strike and Defense fund helps the Strategic Campaigns Department involve an organized and mobilized membership to intervene in an employer's key relationships in order to generate pressure on them to act fairly and reasonably.

Note: *Refers to dues of 1.3% of gross earnings. Additional amounts are directed to the Organizing Fund and Strike and Defense Fund. See outside flaps of this brochure for further explanation.