

“Spirit of Solidarity” Monument Set

GRAND RAPIDS, MI, April 12, 2007– In preparation for the "Spirit of Solidarity" Monument dedication on April 19 in Ah-Nab- Awen Park near the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Museum, labor unions and signatory contractors volunteered their services to set the Monument in place. The nine-foot-tall Monument of three bronze figures commemorates Grand Rapids' historic 1911 furniture strike.

Sculptor Roberto Chenlo who designed "Spirit of Solidarity" was present to direct the precise location of each figure. Construction volunteers then endured cold Michigan weather in setting the monument. Harry Deur of Robinson Cartage delivered the bronze figures to the site and Steve Anderson of Erickson, Inc., used a boom truck in lifting each figure high across the sky to construction workers who were setting each figure. Tom Scheuneman of Ironworkers Local 340 and Mark Mangione, United Association Local 174 located each statue, precisely on its granite base.

The Monument site has four pathways leading to the actual sculpture. Union plaques were also set at the site this day. Davenport Masonry employees Lyle Vance and Don Place, who are members of Bricklayers and Craftworkers Local 9, were busy setting each plaque.

Commemorative plaques from the following unions adorn the Memorial including those from the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers; International Union of Bricklayers and Allied Craftworkers; International Brotherhood of Teamsters; United Food and Commercial Workers; Communications Workers of America; United Auto Workers/General Motors Division; United Auto Workers Local 1D; National Education Association with affiliate unions of the Michigan Education Association, Grand Rapids Education Association and Kent County Education Association. The pathways are also lined with personalized paving bricks from persons and organizations throughout Michigan.

The “Spirit of Solidarity” Monument is the only labor monument located at the Gerald R. Ford Presidential Museum which gets over 300,000 visitors each year.



Mark Mangione, United Association Local 174 on the left and Tom Scheuneman, Ironworkers Local 340 are pictured setting the first figure on the granite base.