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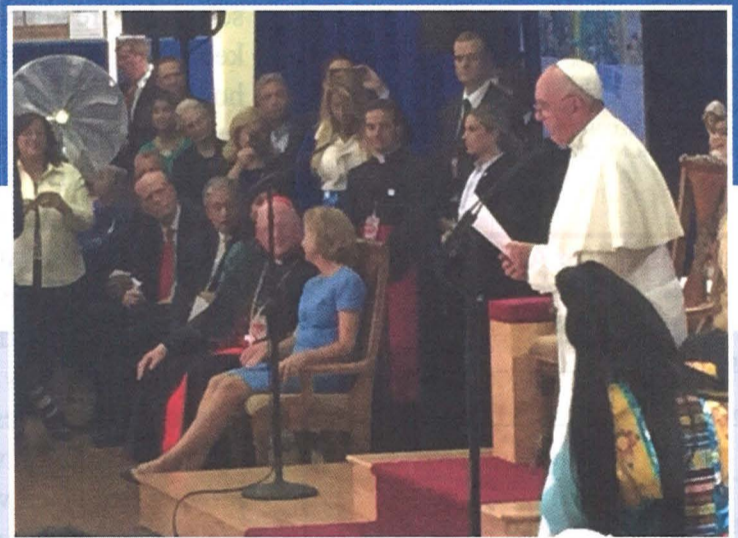
FALL 2015

RECORD

Vol. 63, No. 3

What Do You Want From Our Next President

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Pope Francis Meets With Carwasheros

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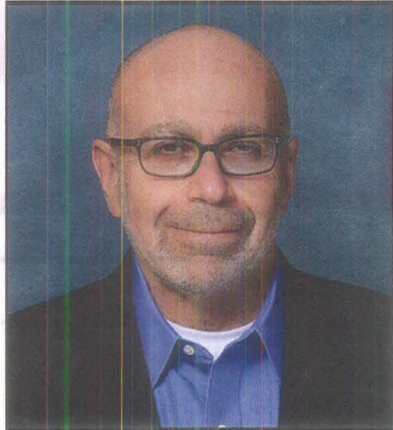
Retail, Wholesale and
Department Store Union, UFCW
170 Seventh Avenue, Suite 501
New York, NY 10001

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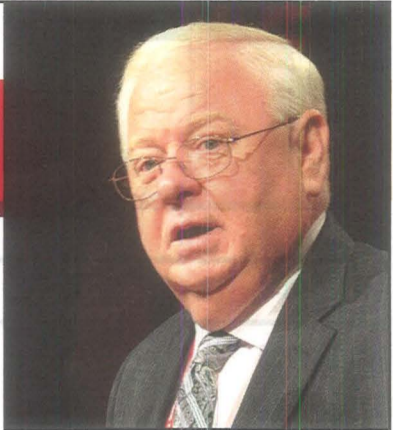
www.rwdsu.org
Printed in the USA

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President
Stuart Appelbaum



Secretary-Treasurer
Jack Wurm Jr.

MESSAGE FROM YOUR OFFICERS

Papal Invite Validates Carwasheros' Struggle

Americans of every faith have been inspired by Pope Francis' visit to our country. The Pope is an extraordinary moral leader on economic justice for all people in this world. He inspires us, he inspires low-wage workers seeking dignity and justice, and he inspires humanity across the globe.

Car wash workers in New York City have also been an inspiration to immigrants and working people. Workers at the city's car washes – who call themselves “carwasheros” – have been exploited by unscrupulous employers, and live in the shadows out of fear that their bosses may use their immigrant status against them. Car wash operators have been forced to pay millions of dollars as a result of charges brought by the New York Attorney General and New York Department of Labor for stolen wages, tips, and overtime pay.

Carwasheros work long hours with no paid time off, health care, or other benefits. Workers' schedules are unpredictable, and bosses routinely keep them on premises for hours and send them home without pay. Workers handle dangerous, caustic chemicals and aren't provided with the proper protective equipment.

The industry operates in a culture of exploitation. But workers are fighting back.

With the help of the RWDSU and community groups Make the Road New York and New York Communities for Change, they are taking control of their lives. By winning union contracts and representation with the RWDSU they are proving that when workers join together, they can make a difference in their lives.



(l to r) Patricio Santiago, Jose Reynaldo Sanchez, Refugio Denicia, and RWDSU Pres. Appelbaum at the Papal visit in Harlem.

That's why it is so fitting that Pope Francis chose to include carwasheros Patricio Santiago, Refugio Denicia, and Jose Reynaldo Sanchez in his visit to Our Lady Queen of Angels School in East Harlem in New York City. The invitation for these RWDSU members to meet with the Pope serves as a message to all people in this country that every worker, regardless of what they do or where they came from, is entitled to be treated with dignity and respect.

Pope Francis has called for an end to an economy he calls one of “exclusion and inequality.” The decision to include the carwasheros in his visit makes a strong statement that when workers stand together, they can win the voice – and the dignity and respect – that all workers deserve. ■

Published by the
RETAIL, WHOLESALE & DEPT. STORE UNION, UFCW

370 Seventh Avenue, Suite 501
New York, N.Y. 10001
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RWDSU RECORD
Official Publication of the Retail, Wholesale &
Department Store Union, UFCW

Produced by RWDSU
Communications Department
Editor, Levi Nayman
Communications Director, Janna Pea

Lenore Miller
President Emeritus

The objectives of the Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Union are to unite into this organization all workers employed in its jurisdiction in order to advance and safeguard their economic and social welfare...The Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Union will strive to preserve democratic processes, protect civil liberties, aid in the adoption of legislation which will promote the economic and social welfare of its members and that of labor in general and to improve the educational, social and cultural standards of society as a whole. *Through unity of purpose and action, through collective bargaining and legislation, the Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Union is dedicated to the ideal of making the jobs of its members the best jobs that can be devised from the point of view of wages, hours of work, physical conditions and human relations. Preamble RWDSU Constitution.*



The RWDSU RECORD (ISSN 00337916) is published by the Retail, Wholesale & Dept. Store Union, UFCW, 370 Seventh Avenue, Suite 501, New York, NY 10001. Subscription price: \$3.00. Postmaster: Send address changes to RWDSU RECORD at 370 Seventh Avenue, Suite 501, New York, NY 10001.

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RWDSU FIGHTING FOR WORKERS IN THE SOUTH

Mid-South Council Convention

RWDSU Mid-South Council members came together in Montgomery, Alabama, on August 22-23 for the Mid-South Council Convention. The convention highlighted the transformative power of the RWDSU in the South, where it has been instrumental in changing the lives of working people.

Part of that power has been seen with the union's organizing efforts. In recent years, the Mid-South Council has added members at poultry plants, supermarkets, and nursing homes. Maintaining union strength and increasing membership at RWDSU facilities has also been a priority, and RWDSU members have been successful in their efforts.

"We are like a family here at the RWDSU Mid-South Council, and we look out for each other," said Mid-South Council President John Whitaker. "We will continue to stand up for each other, and fight to bring a voice to other workers. We are all stronger when there are more union members." ■



UFCW President Marc Perrone (right) joined RWDSU members at the convention, talking about how successful Mid-South Council organizing efforts are strengthening the union.



RWDSU Mid-South Council members are building strength.



(l to r) Mid-South Council Sec-Treas. James Shackelford, President John Whitaker, RWDSU Sec-Treas. Jack Wurm, and RWDSU President Stuart Appelbaum.

Southeast Council Brings Atlanta Health Care Workers a Voice

The RWDSU Southeast Council has helped a courageous group of health care workers at Pruitt Health Virginia Park, near Atlanta, Georgia, take control of their lives and their jobs. On August 20, the 85 employees at the facility won their election to join the RWDSU.

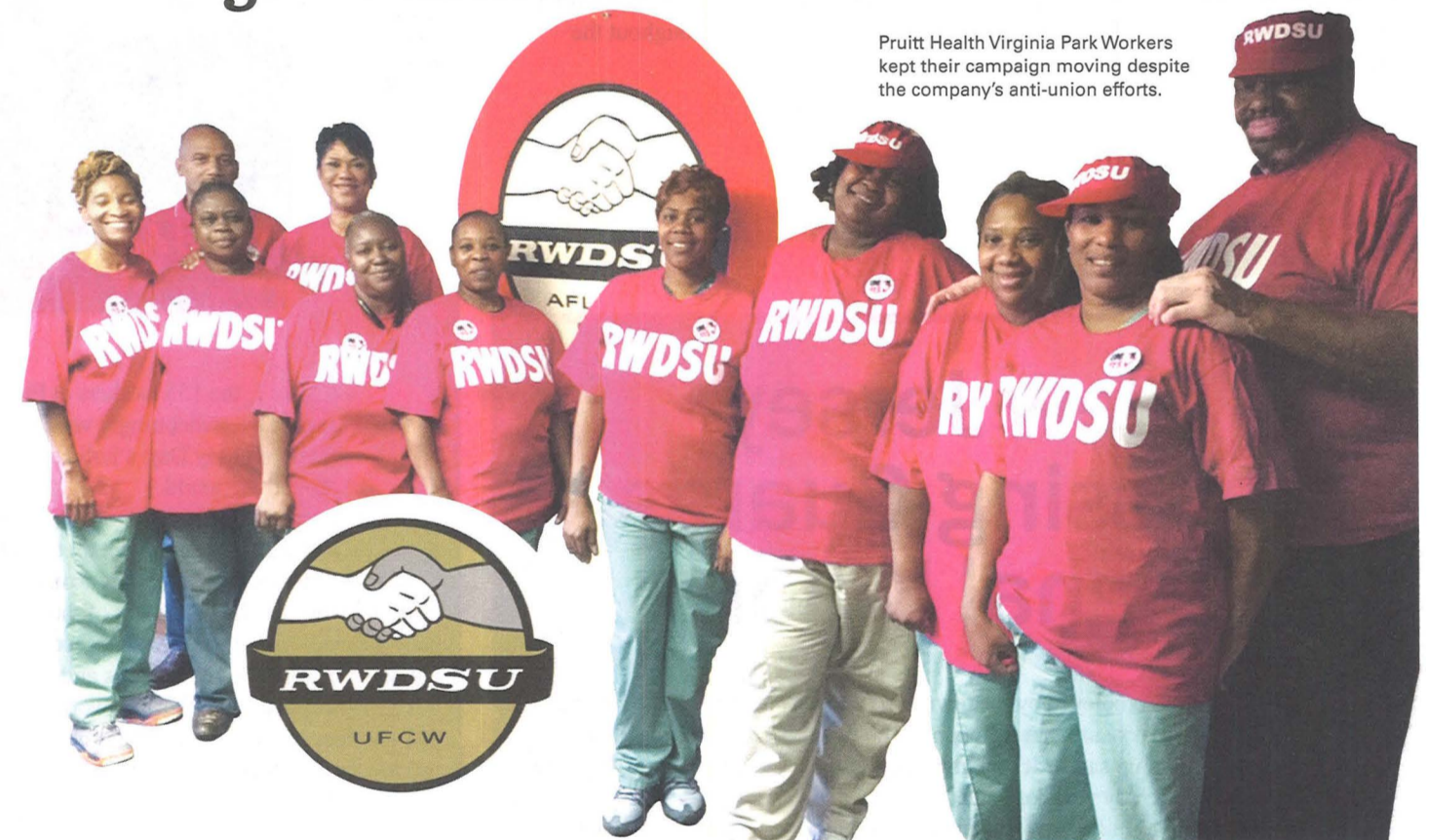
For the new members, it is a change that they eagerly want.

"I came to the RWDSU because we needed a voice at this job, someone to get us the respect we deserve – respect that has been nonexistent," said Deidre Ward, who has worked at Pruitt Health for eight years. "It was time for a change. I and other workers had some experience as union members, and we knew that a union could help us win the change we all need," Ward added.

According to Southeast Council President Edgar Fields, the Pruitt workers deserve all the credit for their victory.

"The company mounted an aggressive anti-union campaign during the month-long organizing drive, but workers weren't swayed by intimidation and other anti-union tactics by management," Fields said. "They kept it together, they supported each other, and they had the courage to make a difference."

Workers met with union representatives during weekly meetings at the Southeast Council offices, and some campaign leaders at Pruitt were in contact with the union every day as they prepared for the



Pruitt Health Virginia Park Workers kept their campaign moving despite the company's anti-union efforts.

election. Workers learned about what unions do, and even about the history of the RWDSU, which showed them the diverse industries represented by the union and its longtime commitment to social and economic justice.

For Southeast Council Representative Sandra Williams, it's been an exciting campaign, and one that signals to other health care workers in the area that the

RWDSU can help them make their jobs better. In fact, the win is already helping to raise union awareness in the area for others at similar facilities. During an interview on a local public radio station about the Pruitt victory, a health care employee called into the radio show to talk union.

"It's inspiring to see that others are realizing they don't need to accept the kind of bad treatment they've always been sub-

jected to at work. Whether it's the Pruitt workers voting yes, or the gentleman who called into the show to talk about bringing a union to his facility, it shows we are making progress," Williams said. "We want to expand our organizing efforts in Georgia, and we hope that this opens the door to union membership to as many people as possible in the health care industry." ■

RWDSU WORKERS WINNING A UNION VOICE

Currency Workers Vote for Change with RWDSU

Workers at Change Group, a foreign currency and tourist services company, recently voted overwhelmingly to join the RWDSU. Change Group, a global company which is based in London, has six locations in Manhattan. Workers at all six Manhattan locations will be represented by RWDSU Local 1102.

"I've worked for The Change Group for two years, and I have to say — the day we won the vote and became RWDSU members was the first time I felt safe at work," says employee Shanole Solomon, 26. "It was the first time I felt like we had someone on our side."

Workers first contacted the RWDSU earlier this year to discuss concerns around disrespect, scheduling, job security, and workplace health and safety. One of the driving issues for many workers was when the company unilaterally decided to bar all NYC employees from attending school. Workers were shocked that the company would attempt to dictate what they could do on their own time, especially when it came to pursuing their education.

Workers went public with their union campaign in late April via a letter sent from the union to the CEO demanding that the company recognize the union. Instead of respecting its workers desire to unionize, the company chose to delay and force an election in an attempt to buy themselves time to disrupt the organizing campaign.

The company hired union buster Russ Brown of Russ Brown Associates to run a campaign of misinformation and emotional manipulation in an attempt to convince workers to vote down the union. Change Group required each employee to attend a minimum of three meetings alone in a room with Brown, and a fourth meeting with Brown and the company's CEO. The company also sent anti-union letters to workers' homes.

In spite of the company's aggressive anti-union tactics, workers stayed strong and won. Workers now look forward to showing the same resolve throughout the negotiating process for their first contract. ■



Change Group workers (l to r) Isabelle Leggat, Saad Shaikh, and Shirley Rollins celebrate winning their union voice.

New Local 338 Members Drive to Victory

Bus drivers at First Student stood up to intimidation and harassment and voted to join the RWDSU.



On May 1, the 135 workers at First Student, a bus company based in New Jersey, overwhelmingly voted to join Local 338. The victory came fittingly on May Day, a holiday that celebrates working men and women around the world.

The organizing drive began earlier in the year, when the workers — fed up with a lack of dignity and respect on the job — contacted Local 338 in order to form a union. Employees said that they worked in unbearable conditions, and alleged that management was cheating them of their wages and cutting hours. When the company learned that the workers were working to join a union, they faced further retaliation, including captive meetings and intimidation.

However despite this, the workers stayed strong in their fight to join Local 338 and they soon embraced their newfound activism. They worked on their time off, meeting with coworkers to explain the opportunities and benefits that come with union representation.

"This was such an exciting campaign," said Local 338 President John Durso. "The workers were looking for a chance to make changes and indeed they've brought great change to their bus depot. We are so proud of our organizers and our new members at First Student. We are proud you are now part of the Local 338 and RWDSU family!" ■

New Jersey Crossing Guards Signal Union

Crossing guards employed by the township of Lakewood in Ocean County, New Jersey, make sure that the people who live there get to school and houses of worship safely. It's an important job, but the crossing guards there felt disrespected by years of neglect.

"We were getting holiday and Sunday pay, but management decided to take that away out of the blue," said one crossing guard. "We complained and they said we were lucky they weren't making us pay them back for time-and-a-half we'd already gotten! We started to look for a union, and decided Local 108 was the best one for us."

It wasn't long before the Lakewood crossing guards decided to join Local 108.

"Many of these crossing guards have been there for over 20 years. Their pay is too low, and they had no holiday, vacation, or sick days, or any other benefits. We are going to work hard to change that," said Local 108 Secretary-Treasurer Kathy Campbell.

Negotiations for the crossing guards' first contract are already underway. ■

RWDSU WORKERS WINNING A UNION VOICE

Over 600 Join RWDSU at West Virginia, Pennsylvania Nursing Homes

The RWDSU has organized seven nursing homes in West Virginia and Pennsylvania. There are over 600 new RWDSU members at these facilities, which were organized in the spring and summer of 2015. Workers joined the union via card check recognition.

Workers wanted a change after years without raises and salary cuts, short staffing, favoritism, unfair evaluations, and poor benefits.

Angela Castillo, a certified nurse aide at Valley Manor, was one of the workers who was ready for a change after years of having concerns ignored by management.

"We were tired of the abuses and lies by management. We all decided that enough was enough. We decided to organize ourselves with a union and demand a voice on the job," Castillo said.

"The workers at these facilities all stuck together and saw their organizing

Members from all seven of the newly-organized nursing homes negotiated a strong first contract for 600 RWDSU members.

campaigns through to success. They were tired of the numerous changes being implemented by management," said RWDSU Organizer Luis Lopez.

New Contract Brings Big Improvements

The bargaining committee worked quickly to help all 600 nursing home workers realize the benefits that joining the union could bring. A new contract was negotiated which

brings wage and benefit increases to workers – many who had never seen any kind of raises.

For RWDSU Director of Collective Bargaining Allen Mayne, the contract showed that the teamwork from workers at all of the locations paid off.

"The entire committee from all seven locations did a terrific job and sticking together and presenting their issues to

management. Because of their hard work we were able to obtain a fantastic first contract the greatly improves medical benefits and reduces the cost to for all of the new members of RWDSU. The contract also provides for a guaranteed wage increase of 9 percent over three years and numerous other wage and benefit improvements," Mayne said. ■



Workers at World's Largest H&M Store Join Local 1102



H&M workers and Local 1102 staff have succeeded in making the largest store in the H&M chain a union shop.

At the new flagship H&M store at Herald's Square in New York City, over 200 workers have joined RWDSU Local 1102. The six-floor, 63,000 square foot retail store is the largest in the H&M chain, and the workers join over 1,400 workers at other H&M stores who are RWDSU members. This is the 13th H&M store to become represented by the RWDSU since 2007.

Employees will be covered under the current contract, including benefits such as paid vacation, sick and holiday pay, wage increases, scheduling rights, seniority rights and job security. Employees also will participate in regular labor management meetings where concerns are expressed to corporate management through union representatives and shop stewards.

H&M members from neighboring stores spoke with new workers, and helped them to learn about the benefits of union membership, resulting in the victory.

"When H&M workers hear from other H&M workers about why it's important to have a union voice, they want to be a part of the movement. That's been a common theme for H&M workers when new stores open in New York," said Local 1102 President Gemma de Leon.

The grand opening of the facility was on May 20. ■

RWDSU POLITICAL & LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

Legislation Would Protect NYC Grocery Store Workers and Communities

In December, 2013, workers at the Trade Fair Supermarket in Queens found out they'd be getting coal for the holidays. The 50 hardworking men and women at the store reported to work, only to find out that the store had suddenly been sold – and that they were now jobless and had to leave the property immediately. The new owner was under no obligation to hire them back, and longtime shoppers at the store now had unfamiliar faces handling their food and tasked with keeping the store clean.

This is just one example of how grocery store workers can be left out in the cold when supermarkets change hands, and how working and health standards in our communities can suddenly take a hit when new ownership moves in at old stores.

A bill currently before the New York City Council would help prevent this kind of injustice, while protecting consumers in the community. The Grocery Worker Retention Act would mandate that when a grocery store is sold, the new ownership would keep current store employees for a 90-day transitional period. The law would bring much-needed job security to the over 50,000 New Yorkers who work in the supermarket industry and give consumers confidence that food safety is a priority in grocery stores.

By requiring that grocery stores retain their employees, workers would be

protected during the transition period. They'd be able to show the new owners that their familiarity with the job and the store's customers is an asset. And, they'd be given time to look for other work while remaining employed. There wouldn't be a sudden and harsh deprivation of wages like those at Fair Trade suffered.

Shoppers at these stores would know that their grocery store would continue to be staffed by workers who understand the industry and are good at their jobs. Experienced grocery workers have knowledge of

The Grocery Store Retention Act would ensure that when a store is sold, the new owners are mandated to keep employees for at least 90 days.

proper sanitation procedures, health regulations, and understanding of the clientele and communities they serve. That's invaluable for grocery store shoppers.

A similar law has been in place in Los Angeles since 2005, San Francisco this

past July, and finally, a statewide grocery store worker retention law just went into effect statewide in California in August.

"New York City needs to join the movement of protecting workers and communities in an industry that has seen too

much exploitation, wage theft, and unfair treatment of a largely immigrant workforce," said RWDSU Political Director Ademola Oyefeso. ■



Local 338 President John Durso speaks at a rally at Trade Fair attended by Local 338 and 11C2 activists.

RWDSU Backs Pro-Worker Mayoral Candidates Throughout Ohio



Paula Hicks-Hudson



Kathy Catazaro-Perry



William J. Healy

Mayoral elections are important to us because it helps to have local governments on our side so we can pass local legislation like city-wide labor harmony ordinances and worker protection laws. And these elections help us develop political relationships on the local level with pro-worker elected officials. That's why the RWDSU is supporting candidates in several mayoral elections this fall in Ohio.

In Toledo, the RWDSU has endorsed Paula Hicks-Hudson, the sitting mayor. As President of the City Council, Hicks-Hudson could always be counted on for supporting worker issues and voting with working people, and as mayor, she has been strongly pro-union. She is running against former mayor Mike Bell, who was a fierce proponent of anti-union legislation SB5, which was defeated with the help of union activists including RWDSU members.

In Massillon, current Mayor Kathy Catazaro-Perry is the RWDSU's choice. Her policies are helping to develop good jobs in Massillon and she is a supporter of union rights. Her opponent is Lee Brunckhart, a staunch conservative whose interests don't lie with working people.

William J. Healy, II has been a strong ally of union members during his entire time as mayor of Canton. He has helped to find work for union building trades members, even during the financial crisis of 2008. He has repeatedly fought back against the anti-worker Governor – including during the SB5 fight – and members of Congress who are pushing an anti-worker agenda. ■

RWDSU AROUND OUR UNION

NLRB Charges Guitar Center with Discriminating and Violating Workers' Rights

Guitar Center – the instrument superstore chain where workers have voted to join the RWDSU in three cities – is being accused of violating U.S. labor law as it refuses to recognize its employees' wishes to negotiate a union contract. The charges, according to a complaint issued in July by a regional director of the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB), say that the chain has refused to bargain in good faith with workers and the RWDSU, and has discriminated against employees by allegedly threatening them with reduced benefits for their pro-union activities. The charges also allege illegal withdrawal of union recognition by Guitar Center management.

The charges relate to treatment of workers at Guitar Center stores in New York, Las Vegas, and Chicago who joined the RWDSU to address issues including low pay, favoritism, poor benefits, lack of transparency, and a complicated "fade" system that made it difficult for workers to earn the commissions that they depend upon to survive. But since workers began unionizing with the RWDSU in 2013, the company has refused to negotiate a fair contract.

"This is validation of what we have been saying, that Guitar Center crossed the line," said RWDSU President Stuart Appelbaum.

The NLRB's general counsel is seeking an order requiring the company to bargain in good faith and to reimburse the union for its costs and expenses relating to the Guitar Center campaign since July of 2013.

A hearing before an administrative law judge is set for October in Chicago. The judge will hear from witnesses – including Guitar Center workers – as well as representatives from the union and company before making a decision on the case. ■



Guitar Center workers in Chicago rally to demand that management bargain in good faith. They may now be ordered to do so by the NLRB.



RWDSU Holds Immigration Naturalization Clinics in Florida and New York

President Obama's immigration reforms promise to help countless working immigrants apply for documentation and a reprieve from deportation. The RWDSU is committed to helping its members and their families apply for the benefits of these reforms.

In June, the RWDSU held immigration clinics hosted by the Southeast Council in LaBelle, Florida. The sessions focused on training staff, union members, and volunteers from different organizations on how to disseminate information, screen members, and assist in applying around three immigration processes: naturalization, deferred action for childhood arrivals (DACA), and deferred action for parental accountability (DAPA).

Twenty-five people participated in the clinic. One of them, RWDSU member Ana Fuentes from Aris Keepsake, became the first Southeast Council member to complete her immigration training and paperwork, and will become a U.S. citizen soon thanks to the training sessions. Two other immigrant residents completed their paperwork for citizenship later in the training.

In July, a similar clinic was held in New York City, where the union helped people fill out their 21-page naturalization forms, providing legal services valued at over \$2,000 as these immigrant workers took their final steps toward citizenship. ■



In Florida, the Southeast Council helped people complete their citizenship training.



The RWDSU's Louis Guida assists an immigrant worker in completing his 21-page naturalization form in New York City.

2016 ELECTIONS

What Do You Want From



The 2016 Presidential election cycle is well underway, and working people have a lot at stake.

The next President of the United States will need to address many important issues impacting our families.

As we choose our next President, we face numerous issues at home and abroad. Working people are struggling with low pay and inadequate hours. It's incredibly important that we elect a President who will work with us to lessen economic inequality, not someone who will ignore the needs of working people in favor of helping the rich obtain even more wealth.

And that's why the 2016 Presidential election will be so crucial for the future of working Americans. Social Security, income inequality, international trade deals, workplace health and safety, health care, a strong National Labor Relations Board to protect workers, Voting Rights; these issues affect us all and the direction our country takes with them will hinge greatly on who occupies the White House.

Elected officials will determine our policies on all of these matters. If we don't take an active role in the political process, people who don't share our views will be the ones making decisions. And time and again we've seen the cost of that as unions and workers' rights have been attacked across the country.

We want to know what you think about the issues and the candidates.

Maybe you are already behind a certain candidate, or maybe you think several of them are worthy of consideration. Or, maybe you are still learning about the candidates and where they stand on the issues that are important to you. We've included a list of all the declared candidates, as well as their web sites so you can get to know them better. And, we'd appreciate it if you took the time to tell us how you feel about the candidates and the issues that are important to you. ■



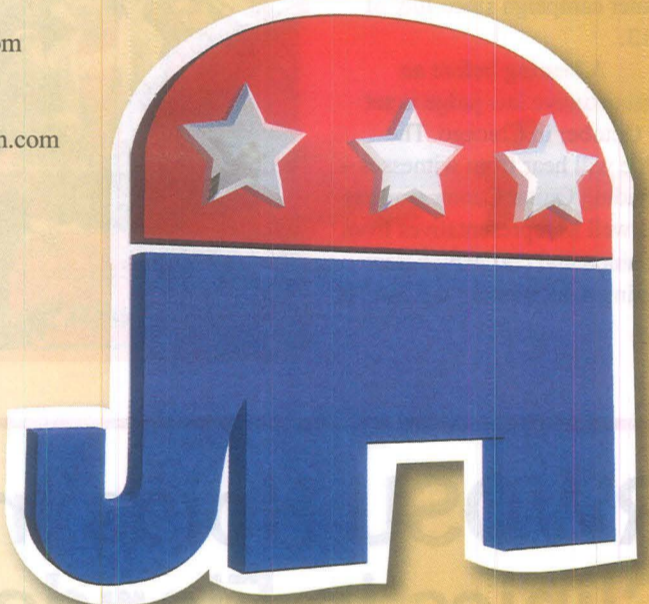
The Candidates so Far:

Republicans

- GEORGE PATAKI**
www.georgepataki.com
- JEB BUSH**
www.jeb2016.com
- RAND PAUL**
www.randpaul.com
- BEN CARSON**
www.bencarson.com
- MARCO RUBIO**
www.marcorubio.com
- CHRIS CHRISTIE**
www.chrischristie.com
- RICK SANTORUM**
www.ricksantorum.com
- TED CRUZ**
www.tedcruz.org
- DONALD J. TRUMP**
www.donaldjtrump.com

Democrats

- LINCOLN CHAFEE**
www.chafee2016.com
- HILLARY RODHAM CLINTON**
www.hillaryclinton.com
- MARTIN O'MALLEY**
www.martinomalley.com
- BERNIE SANDERS**
www.berniesanders.com
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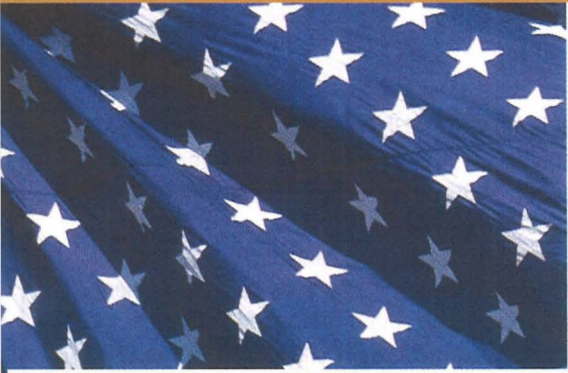
What is your email address and general location?

Are you supporting a candidate already, and if so, who?

If you could tell the candidates which issues are important to you, what would they be and why?

What factors are important to you in deciding which candidate you support?

From Our Next President?



ECONOMY
 NATIONAL SECURITY
 JOB CREATION
 VETERANS AFFAIRS
 ENVIRONMENT
 IMMIGRATION
 HEALTH CARE
 TAXES
 TERRORISM
 FOREIGN POLICY
 FEDERAL DEFICIT

RWDSU Presidential Election Survey

Thank you for filling out this survey. You can do this online at:
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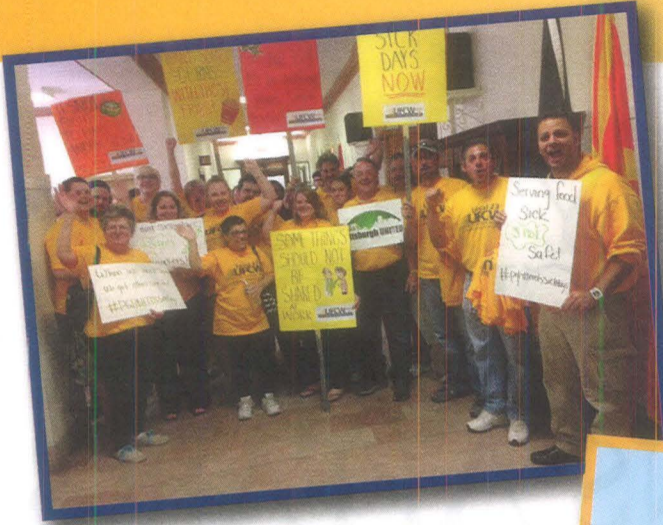
Or, you can fill it out here, cut it out, and mail it to the following address:
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to you,	What should the candidates know about the issues that you face in the workplace?	What would you like to see our next President do when he or she assumes office?
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te to support?	What would you tell candidates about what is affecting your family today?	
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News From Around the **UFCW**

a **VOICE** for working America



Local 23 members worked hard to bring paid sick leave to Pittsburgh's workers.

UFCW Local 23 Helps Pass Paid Sick Leave Law in Pittsburgh

In August, Pittsburgh passed a law that guarantees paid sick days for every worker in the city.

The victory was made possible by UFCW Local 23 members who spent weeks canvassing and building community support for the law.

Thanks to their hard work, more than 50,000 Pittsburgh workers will be eligible to earn paid time off so that they have the opportunity to stay home and get better when they become ill.

UFCW Local 23 is building on the momentum from this victory and pushing for a statewide paid sick leave law so that all workers in Pennsylvania can enjoy the same benefit.

Workers at Stoney Brothers Approve First-Ever Oregon Contract for Marijuana Workers

Workers at Stoney Brothers, a marijuana dispensary in Portland, Oregon, have approved the first-ever union contract for cannabis workers in Oregon and have joined UFCW Local 555. The vote to approve the contract was unanimous and sets a new standard for cannabis workers in Oregon.

"With our new contract, I am excited to have paid holidays and vacation time," said Kyle Maestra, a site manager at Stoney Brothers. "That is unusual in the cannabis industry."

The three-year contract includes salaries starting at \$15 per hour with some making as high as \$34 per hour, regular raises, affordable health insurance through a multi-employer fund, pension contributions, paid vacations and sick leave, as well as seniority and grievance protections.

"All workers deserve the benefits of a union contract," said Dan Clay, President of UFCW Local 555, "and workers in the cannabis industry are no different. Starting with the workers at Stoney Brothers, we can build a home-grown Oregon cannabis industry that respects workers and provides good, family-supporting jobs."

Workers at Stoney Brothers have expressed excitement about their industry-leading compensation package.

"Health insurance is important to me," said Hannah Poole, a patient consultant at Stoney Brothers. "My union health insurance plan is comprehensive and gives me real peace of mind."

Stoney Brothers and UFCW Local 555 look forward to growing together as the company plans to open several new retail and growing facilities in the near future.



Stoney Bros employees Hannah Poole and Kyle Maestra.

El Super Workers Win Justice

In the wake of a nearly two year struggle workers at El Super and UFCW locals have won a significant legal victory against the California based grocer. In July, a federal judge granted the National Labor Relations Board's (NLRB) request for a rare "10j" injunction to stop El Super's unfair labor practices and immediately remedy their unlawful treatment of workers.

In the face of El Super's coercive and threatening conduct designed to silence workers, Chief Judge George H. King issued the significant "10j" injunction, ordering the immediate reinstatement of Fermín Rodríguez, who had been illegally fired for his union activity, and ordering the grocer to restore the company's vacation accrual policy. The company had unlawfully changed its vacation policy and denied workers their earned vacation. After recognizing

its legal obligation to bargain with the workers for a fair contract, El Super and UFCW locals will now resume bargaining on August 18.

After more than a year of operating without a union contract, El Super employees and the UFCW launched a boycott in December 2014 to protest poverty pay, widespread violations of workers' rights and the company's refusal to negotiate in good faith. More than 100,000 shoppers have decided not to enter El Super stores after talking with community supporters and workers at informational picket lines in front of the stores.



Activists picket in front of an El Super store in California.

UFCW Stands with Striking Federal Contractors for \$15 and a Union

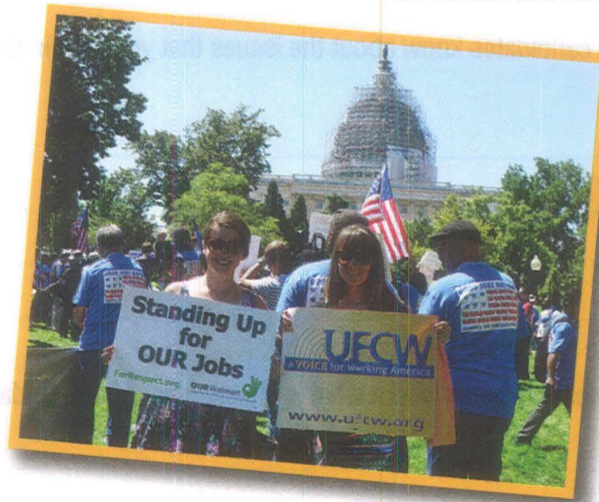
This summer, federal contract workers walked out on strike, calling for \$15 an hour and a union. More than 600 workers from the Senate cafeteria and janitorial services, the Capitol Visitor Center, Pentagon, Union Station, National Zoo, and Smithsonian Institution joined the one-day strike.

As the workers walked off the job, they gathered in front of the U.S. Capitol where the UFCW members and other supporters were rallying in solidarity.

Struggling to live on \$10.59 an hour, Senate Cafeteria cashier Sontia Bailey had to take a second job at Kentucky Fried Chicken and now works 70 hours a week. At the rally, she told supporters,

"KFC actually pays me more than Uncle Sam. I'm here because America needs to know that long hours and low pay hurt working women and families."

At the rally, Sen. Bernie Sanders (I-Vt.), Rep. Keith Ellison (D-Minn.), and Rep. Raul Grijalva (D-Ariz.) introduced a bill to raise the federal minimum wage to \$15 an hour and make it easier for federal workers to join a union.



Breakthrough for NYC CAR WASH WORKERS

Car Wash Assembly Highlights Campaign Victories and Worker Power

On June 10, the same day the New York City Council passed the Car Wash Accountability Act, hundreds of car wash workers and community and worker activists joined together at Guttman College in Manhattan for the Third Annual Car Wash Workers Assembly. The workers gathered together with the RWDSU, New York Communities for Change, and Make the Road New York to celebrate the most recent successes of the three-year old WASH NY campaign – including passage of the legislation and the victory at Vegas Auto Spa in Brooklyn, where workers won a fair contract after months on strike.

Workers joined together, told their stories, and performed skits – all highlighting the difference having a union has made for workers in an industry that was built upon worker exploitation.

Car wash workers, union activists, and elected officials including New York City Council Speaker Melissa Mark-Viverito, New York City Councilmen Brad Lander and Carlos Menchaca, and New York City Public Advocate Letitia "Tish" James were all on hand to celebrate the workers' accomplishments.

"When I started working at the car wash, conditions were terrible. There was theft of tips, and no dignity or respect at work. When we heard about this campaign – that workers were fighting for their rights around New York City – and we thought, if others



can win, we can too," said Miguel Portillo, a carwasher at Jomar Car Wash in Queens.

"And we did win. We won a union, we won a contract, and we won higher wages, paid breaks, and training for the chemicals we work with. But most importantly, we won respect," Portillo added.

By standing together and winning a union voice with the RWDSU, the workers have proven that change is within reach for all working New Yorkers.

Showing the Way for Low-Wage Workers

Carwasheros' victories stand as a testament to the change workers can win when they stand together. With the strike settlement and contract at Vegas Auto Spa, workers at

nine New York City car washes have won a union contract since the campaign began in 2012. And with the passage of the Car Wash Accountability act, for the first time the industry will have proper oversight to protect workers, consumers, and communities.

"Today is a new day, a day that points to a brighter future for low wage

workers as a whole," said RWDSU Recorder and Organizing Coordinator Joseph Dorismond. "They are making a statement that no matter what you do for a living, and regardless of your documentation status, you deserve to be treated like a human being." ■

Signing of Car Wash Law Brings Order to Industry

In June, car wash workers, community leaders, and RWDSU activists joined together with elected officials at New York's City Hall as Mayor Bill de Blasio signed historic legislation to regulate car washes and protect workers. The crowd applauded as pen was put to paper, finally providing much-needed oversight to the car wash industry for the first time.

The Car Wash Accountability Act will require all of New York City's approximately 200 car washes to obtain licenses and obey regulations to prevent wage theft, wage and hour violations and poor working conditions for the mostly immigrant workers. Regulations and required surety bonds will protect workers, consumers, and communities.

"This historic and important legislation will help regulate an industry where unscrupulous owners all too often



Car wash workers and supporters celebrate the passage of the Car Wash Accountability Act.

have exploited workers, engaged in wage theft and violated labor laws," said RWDSU President Stuart Appelbaum.

"This act will protect all workers at all car washes across the city from exploitation and ensure they are treated with dignity and

respect."

"When I started working in the car wash about 10 years ago, I was paid \$30 a day for 12 hours of work," said Claudio Garcia, car wash worker at WCA in the Bronx. "Now that I am in a union, there is no more wage theft happening. And with this law, we will be protected from owners who take advantage of us, and we will be given all the rights we deserve."

The law requires car washes to be licensed and to post a surety bond to ensure that money is available in case of wage theft. The surety bond is \$150,000, except for businesses which are unionized or agree to government monitoring, which will have to put up a \$30,000 bond. It is important to note that owners do not actually post the full amount of the bond, but merely buy insurance at a tiny fraction of the amount. ■

RWDSU CONTRACT NEWS

G&W Labs Local 262 New Jersey

Wage increases highlight a new contract for RWDSU Local 262 members at G&W Labs in New Jersey. The 95 RWDSU members at the South Plainfield pharmaceutical manufacturing plant will see a wage increase of 3 to 35 percent the first year, with an additional 10.5 percent increase over the balance of the contract.

Workers also won improved pension benefits, along with lowered monthly health care costs and an added optical plan at no additional costs. The company will increase its contributions to the prescription plan, and vacation accrual time for members has been reduced. The contract was overwhelmingly approved by membership.

Serving on the negotiating committee were lead negotiator Daniel Righetti along with Tom Walsh, Schmid Datus, Kevin Mance, Gus Simos, Chuck Merryman and Ed Vega.



(l to r) Tom Walsh, Schmid Datus, Kevin Mance, Chuck Merryman, Daniel Righetti, Gus Simos, and Ed Vega served on the bargaining committee.

Swisher Local 531 Florida

The 650 workers who produce cigars at Swisher in Jacksonville, Florida, have a new three-year contract. The contract, negotiated by RWDSU Local 531, includes wage and benefit increases. In addition, for the first time, workers have a one-week severance package, and the medical plan has been protected.

The contract also includes new immigration language that protects workers who may have had name changes during the naturalization process.

Workers at Swisher manufacture Swisher Sweets and other cigarillos.



Swisher workers have a new contract.

Englewood Library Local 108 New Jersey



These Local 108 members won wage increases and improved benefits.

RWDSU Local 108 has negotiated a new contract for workers at the library in Englewood, New Jersey. The negotiating committee fought back attacks on benefits of current and future employees, and won wage increases despite claims from the city's negotiators that budget constraints didn't allow for them. The committee also managed to negotiate additional time off that includes a personal day and holiday weekend closings.

"In tough budgetary times like these, I feel it's important to focus on the main goal of improving the situation of our fellow workers by enhancing or protecting our benefits and fighting for a decent wage. This entails not giving into fear perpetrated by the other side and sticking to a firm principal of fairness," said Steward Marguerite Sansone.

According to Steward David Schwab, the negotiating team stuck together, knowing they had the power of the workers and the union behind them.

"I felt really good about these negotiations because they illustrated the power of unity and a collective voice. If it was not for a Union, the professionals and staff of Englewood Library would have been subjected to town politics and cuts in their pay and benefits," Schwab said.

RWDSU CONTRACT NEWS

River Edge Public Workers Local 108 *New Jersey*

A new four-year contract was ratified by RWDSU Local 108 members who serve as public workers in Borough of River Edge New Jersey. Workers there are responsible for sanitation, recycling, street repair, and other Department of Public Works jobs.

The new contract brings wage increases of over eight percent over the life of the contract. In addition, disability benefits will be improved.

Negotiating the contract were Chief Shop Steward William Camera, Shop Steward Ernie Shultz, and Local 108 Representatives Jasper Parnell and George Giordano.

Rivers Edge public workers have ratified a new contract.



Coles Quality Foods Local 110 *Iowa*



The Coles negotiating committee helped craft a contract with numerous improvements.

Workers at Coles Quality Foods in North Liberty, Iowa, who produce frozen breadsticks for stores and restaurants, have overwhelmingly ratified a new three-year contract. The agreement brings wage increases of \$1.35 hourly over the life of the contract, with a ratification bonus of \$275 per worker.

The contract also guarantees workers 40 hours a week, and protects the health care and vision plans. The 401K match has been increased, and there are improvements in vacation,

training pay, funeral leave, and attendance bonus. In addition, seniority rules have been improved, and the company will be hiring another 65 workers for the weekend shift and maintenance departments.

Members of the Bargaining Committee were Chief Steward Jim Mitchell, Matt Delany, Denise Nolte, Mitch Streets, Local 110 President Shane Forbes, Local 110 Recorder Phil Ondler, Local 110 Chief Steward Bob Dixon, and RWDSU Representative Roger Grobstich.

Local 110 members discuss the new contract.



General Mills/ Yoplait Local 386 *Michigan*

Local 386 members who work at the most productive Yoplait plant in the country, in Reed City, Michigan, ratified a new five-year contract with their employer General Mills. Workers will receive a \$2,000 signing bonus along with wage increases in years two, three, and five, and members will receive improved health care with zero member contributions. Starting new hire and vacation help pay rates were increased, and a "35 Years of Service" longevity bonus has been created.

The Bargaining Committee consisted of: Richard DeKubber, James Becker, Anthony Hatfield, Keith Campau, David Montgomery, and Harold Swales. There are 280 RWDSU members producing yogurt at the plant.

Welch Foods Local 825 *Michigan*

Annual wage increases, three new bid jobs, and improvement in the plan (by moving into the RWDSU's plan) highlight a new contract for Local 825 members at Welch Foods in Lawton, Michigan. Welch Foods produces Welch's products including juices.

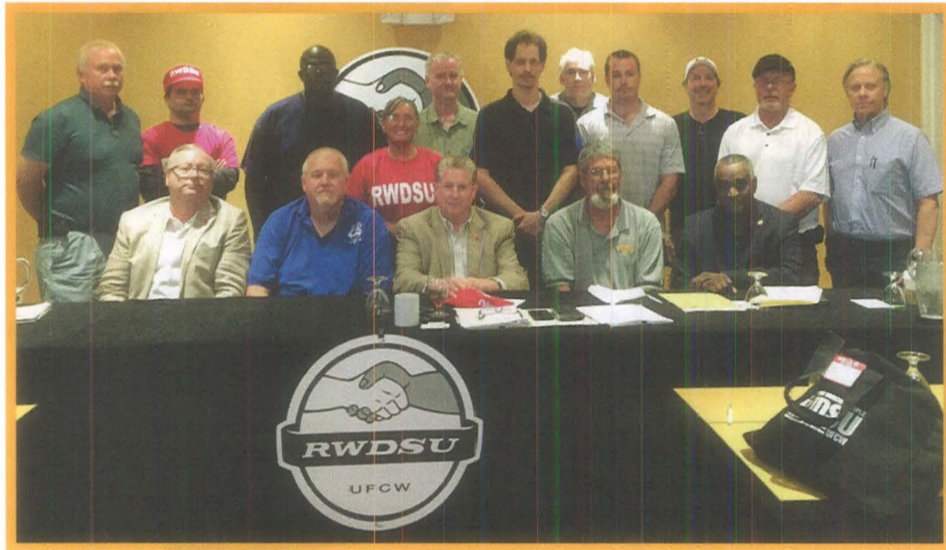
Local 825 President Rick Ross, Secretary-Treasurer Wendy Tompkins, Recorder Laurie Putnam, and Committee Members Jodi Ludwig, Dave Ritter, and Dan Glomski served on the negotiating committee.

RWDSU AROUND OUR UNION

Officers Elected at Indiana Joint Board Convention

At the Indiana Joint Board Convention held in Fort Wayne, Indiana, IJB officers were elected to new four-year terms of office.

Elected were President Dave Altman, Financial Secretary Steve Foster and Recorder Melvin Merz. ■



Members came from throughout Indiana for the Indiana Joint Board Convention.

Local 110 Officers Elected

Local 110 in Cedar Rapids, Iowa has held its officer election on August 28. Starting their three-year terms in September are: Secretary-Treasurer Jason Sennett, 2nd Vice President and Asst. Chief Steward Kelly Bos, Health and Safety Director Kelly Cavalier, 2nd Director-at-Large Cecil Hankins, 3rd Director-at-Large Bob Wells and 4th Director-at-Large Todd Murphy.

Local 110 represents 700 production workers at Quaker Oats (PepsiCo) in Cedar Rapids, Iowa and Cole's Quality Foods in North Liberty, Iowa. ■

RWDSU Office Move

The RWDSU offices in New York City have moved. The union has relocated from the building it has occupied on 29th street since 1979 to new office space on Seventh Avenue near Madison Square Garden and Penn Station.

The new RWDSU address is 370 Seventh Avenue, Suite 501, New York, NY 10001. ■

Local 3 Officer Elections

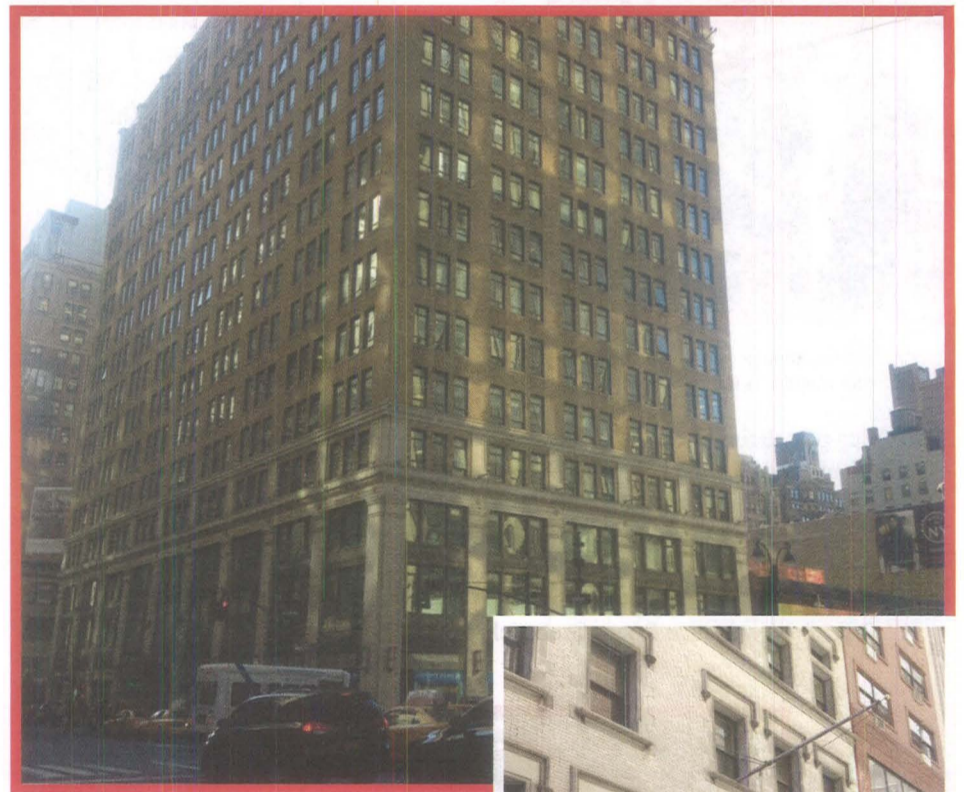
RWDSU Local 3 members who work at Bloomingdales in New York City have elected officers to new three-year terms.

Elected were: President Cassandra A. Berrocal, Secretary-Treasurer Shaun Kavanagh, Recorder Costello Dash and Vice Presidents James Eisenberg, Visual Skilled Trades Division; Kathleen Houser, Fine Jewelry-Sales; John Mancuso, Cosmetic-Non Selling; Brenda Moses, Domestic-Sales; Nina Razza-Callender, Intimate Apparel-Non Selling; Jack Rojas, Office Clericals and Chandler Taylor-Non Selling Over Night Stock.

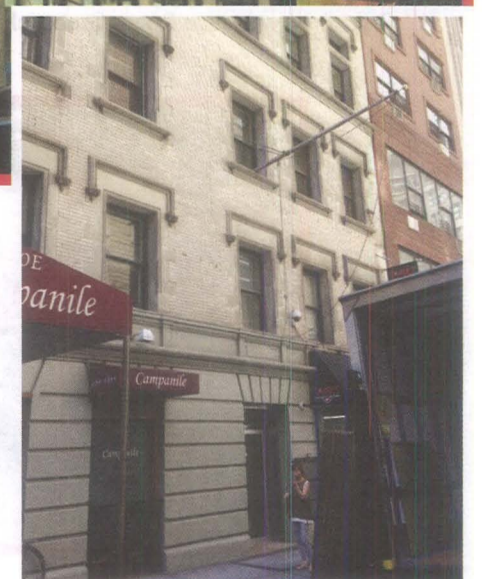
In addition, four Shop Stewards were elected to the Local 3 Executive Board for the first time. Ernestine Evans, representing the Office Clericals; Betty Lloyd from the 5th floor Dresses; Rickford Layne from Men's Lower Level; Clarence Prester, 5th Floor Dresses Non-Selling; and Chandler Taylor will join the Executive Board to serve, monitor and enforce the Union Contract on behalf of the Local membership. ■



Local 3 Officers elected: (Back row left to right) Recorder Costello Dash, Jack Rojas, James Eisenberg, Rickford Layne. (Front row left to right) Antonina Razza- Callender, Ernestine Evans, President Cassandra A. Berrocal, Kathleen Houser, Secretary-Treasurer Shaun Kavanagh. No: pictured are Betty Lloyd, John Mancuso, Brenda Moses, Clarence Prester, and Chandler Taylor.



The RWDSU offices are now located in this building on Seventh Avenue.



The old RWDSU offices at 29th st.



RWDSU AROUND OUR UNION

It Was a Union Summer for Young Activists at the RWDSU

Young activists joined with seasoned veterans for valuable experience at the RWDSU this summer as 15 interns assisted with organizing drives throughout New York City. The interns were mostly involved in outreach efforts, talking directly to workers about the benefits of unionization. The interns helped the RWDSU expand outreach efforts this summer, and at the same time they learned about the effective and innovative strategies the RWDSU is employing to bring workers a union voice.

"We've been going out to car washes, visiting car washes in the city in all five boroughs, and speaking with workers and hearing first-hand about their issues," said Xavier Burke, a recent graduate of Temple University.

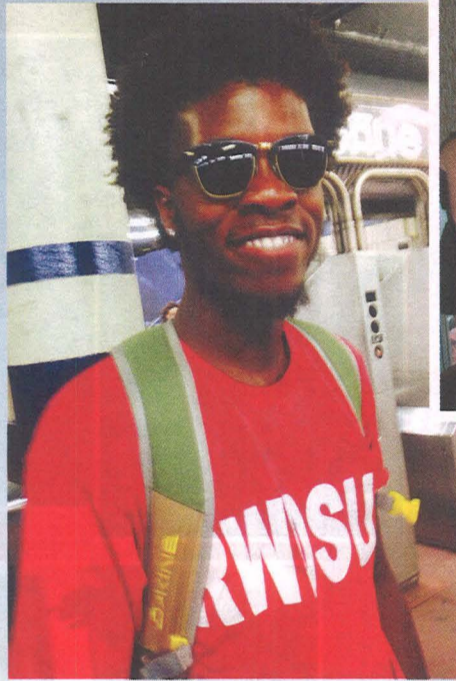
Burke came to the RWDSU through the AFL-CIO's Union Summer program, which places students in labor movement internships around the country. The program was created 19 years ago as a way to introduce activists to the struggles that working people face, and to help cultivate a new generation of union activists. Over the last two decades, Union Summer has given many students and recent graduates insight into how collective action works.

"I've learned a lot about the labor movement, and how labor is the base for everything," Burke said. "I usually do community work, but this summer I got to see how labor and community go hand in hand, and how this relationship is helping bring workers the power of a union."

The RWDSU also had the services of interns from the Movement Activists Apprenticeship Program (MAAP). MAAP is run by the Center for Third World Organizing, and this summer marked the program's 30th anniversary. All of the MAAP interns came from California, and many already had experience with organizing. They also participated in the campaign to reach car wash workers throughout New York. RWDSU Research Director HeeWon Brindle-Khym provided a tutorial about the importance of research in preparation of organizing drives.

"HeeWon gave us a great overview on how to do certain types of research, like how to find property managers, look up lawsuits, things like that. It was a real insight into how corporate research can help make organizing drives more effective," said Brittaney Moore, a graduate student at San Francisco State University.

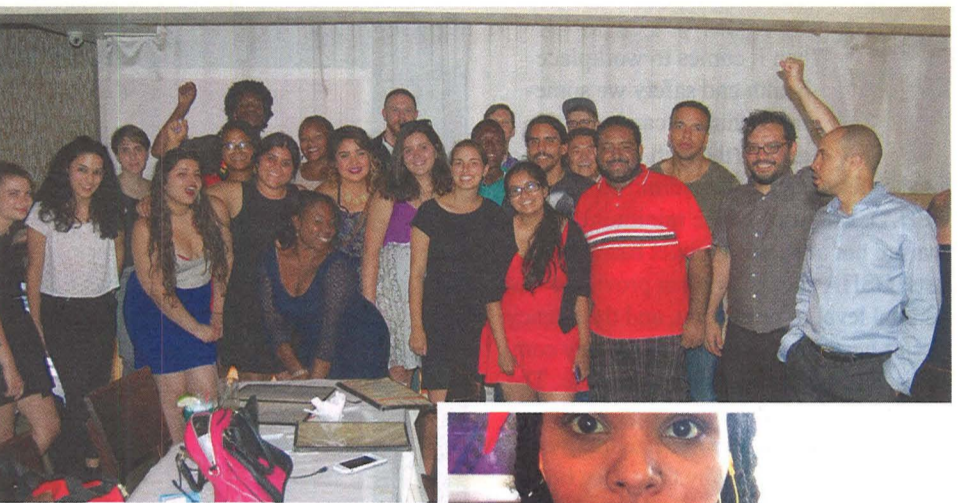
It's all part of the RWDSU's commitment to get more young people involved with the labor movement. Earlier this year, the union participated in AFL-CIO's Next Up conference to discuss strategies for creating a new generation of labor leaders. By



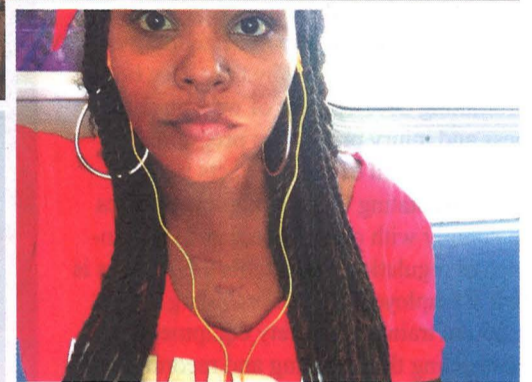
Xavier Burke

hosting interns at the RWDSU office, the union was able to show a group of motivated young students what a huge difference unions can make in the lives of working people.

"Just being able to go to the workers' meetings that they have every Wednes-



Union Summer and Movement Activists Apprenticeship interns worked with RWDSU organizers this summer.



Brittaney Moore

day and see people being effective in fighting for their rights - that was the most exciting thing for me this summer," Moore said.

Xavier Burke also expressed interest in working with unions in the future.

"Directly after this I'm moving to

Columbia to help rehabilitate former child soldiers," he said, "and when I come back I definitely want to stay involved in the labor movement. This summer showed me how it can make a real difference in the lives of workers." ■

New England Joint Board Scholarships

Students who are part of New England Joint Board families have been awarded the Anthony M. Cacciola and T.J. Leone Scholarships to help further their educations. The scholarships honor the memories of Local 513 Business Agent Anthony M. Cacciola and New England Joint Board Representative T.J. Leone.

Winning one or both of the awards were Sydney Vieira, Leah Wihtelin, Kristina Gaffny, Shannon Murphy, Joanna Kalucki, Denise Moreno and Auria Manktelow. ■



(l to r) Sydney Vieira, NEJB Organizer Phil D'Arcangelo, Leah Wihtelin, NEJB President Tina Buonaugurio, former RWDSU Sec-Treas. Charlie Hall Sr., Joanna Kalucki, RWDSU Sec-Treas. Jack Wurm, RWDSU President Stuart Appelbaum, NEJB Sec-Treas. Melvin Drungo, Auria Manktelow, RWDSU Pres. Emeritus Lenore Miller, and Kristina Gaffny.



Improving Health and Safety at the Bargaining Table

When it comes to workplace health and safety we sometimes think it can be taken care of through the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA). But just like the minimum wage laws are not adequate to meet basic living costs, OSHA standards often provide a minimal level of protection, and the agency doesn't have standards covering many common and important workplace hazards. The current OSHA leadership is very aware of their limits given severe underfunding and understaffing. That is why they have been promoting development of workplace illness and injury prevention programs.

Most all of our contracts include language stating that the employer agrees to comply with occupational and environmental regulations. What this then means is that if employers are not providing the required training or safety equipment, or obstructing the reporting and recording of injuries, they are breaking our contract.

Additionally, since health and safety is directly related to working conditions, it is an essential topic of bargaining under the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB).

Health and Safety Committees

Many of our contracts include language to have a joint labor/management health and safety committee. A health and safety committee can be a good beginning in reducing worksite hazards. But we don't need to stop there. Contract language can dictate specific points to help make these committees more effective. We can negotiate for regular meetings, compensated time to conduct safety audits, participate in committee meetings, and follow up on issues as needed. A health and safety committee is only as strong as the contract language that creates it and our determination to enforce it.

Workplace Standards

OSHA does not have standards in many important areas such as Ergonomics, Indoor Air Quality, Occupational Stress and Workplace Violence. In these areas where there are no OSHA standards we may want to include contract provisions, for example,



which: establish lifting limits; develop and implement a workplace violence prevention program; require periodic air quality monitoring and ventilation system cleaning and maintenance or mandate a survey of the workforce to assess the prevalence and contributing factors to work-related stress.

Other important issues, where there are OSHA provisions, can be strengthened through our contract language. Two areas are protection against retaliation for health and safety activity and the right to refuse dangerous work. Here is an example of contract language to strengthen worker rights in this area:

"No employee shall be required to perform work that he/she reasonably involves a substantial probability that serious physical harm may occur. Employees who exercise this right to refusal shall be

A health and safety committee is only as strong as the contract language that creates it.

assigned to other work. The employee shall accept such assignment either at the rate of the job from which he/she was relieved or the rate of the job to which he/she is assigned, whichever is higher. If the employee exercises the right of refusal, the employer shall not assign another employee to the task without first informing the employee to be assigned and the union that the work has been refused under the terms of the contract. The employer shall not discipline or otherwise discriminate against any employee because the employee exer-

cised any right established by this contract."

The Responsibility for Safety

Employers frequently like to talk about how workplace safety is a shared responsibility. It seems to be one of the few areas employers are willing to share responsibility! We are concerned about safety and want to be involved, and our members need to follow established safety rules. But the OSHA law is completely clear that it is the employer's legal responsibility to provide a workplace that is free of recognized hazards which cause or are likely to cause death or serious injury. Contract language can be added to emphasize this principle. Here is one:

"The Employer shall comply with applicable federal, state and local health and safety regulations. Nothing in this Agreement shall suggest or imply that the Union has assumed legal responsibility for the health and safety of employees." ■

More Information

Contract language and the access to information available under the NLRB can be very valuable in addressing health and safety issues in our workplaces. For more information about this and other related issues contact your Health and Safety Department at (212) 684-5300. ■