

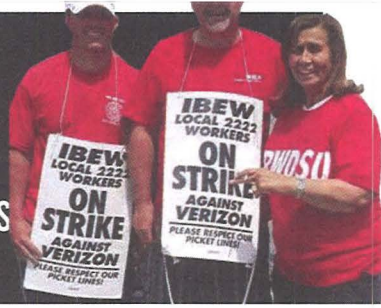
Over 1,000  
**Zara Workers**  
Join  
THE RWDSU  
PAGE 5



Donald Trump's  
**Anti-worker**  
RECORD  
PAGE 7



RWDSU  
**Stands With**  
VERIZON WORKERS  
PAGE 14



# RWDSU

UFCW

SUMMER 2016

## RECORD

VOLUME 64, NO.2



**STRONG NEW CONTRACT**  
FOR 5,000 MACY'S WORKERS

PAGES 8-9

Retail, Wholesale and  
Department Store Union, UFCW  
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Stuart Appelbaum  
President  
Jack Wurm Jr.  
Sec.-Treasurer

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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.

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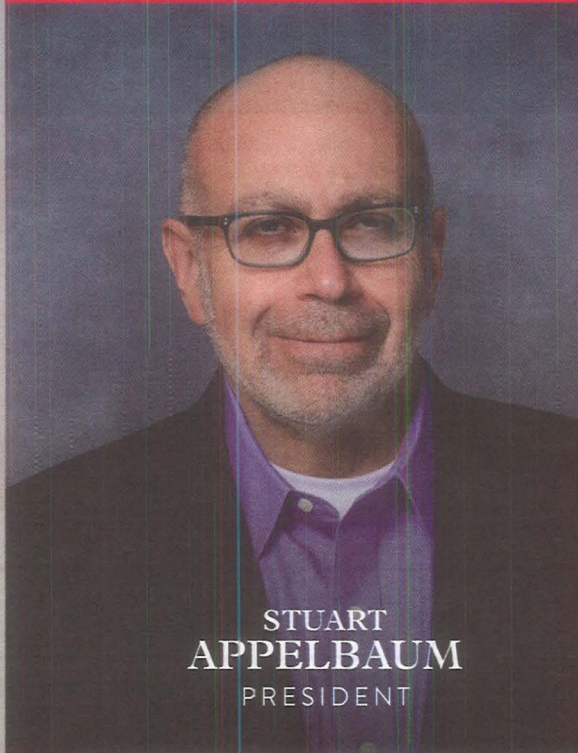
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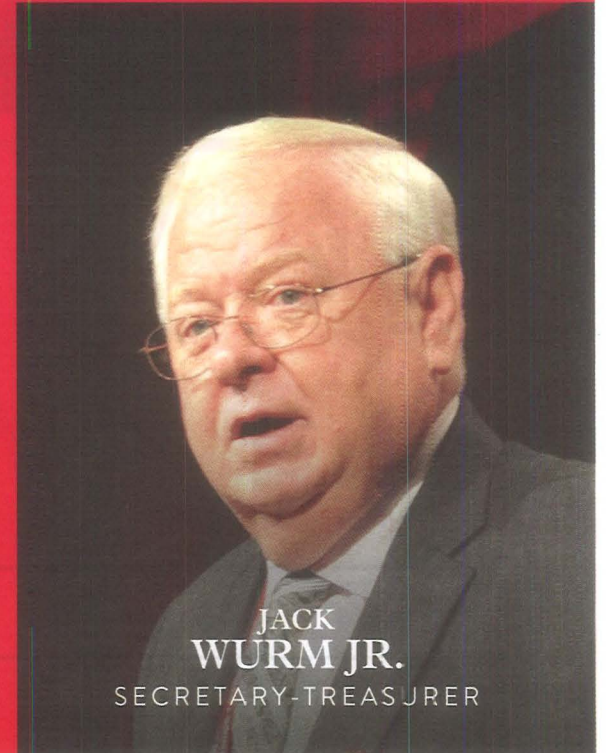
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# MESSAGE FROM YOUR OFFICERS



STUART  
APPELBAUM  
PRESIDENT



JACK  
WURM JR.  
SECRETARY-TREASURER

## GIVEN A FAIR CHOICE, WORKERS CHOOSE UNIONS

Over 1,000 employees at Spanish-owned Zara fashion retail stores in New York City have overwhelmingly chosen to join the RWDSU. It's the biggest retail organizing win in recent years, and Zara workers can now look forward to having a voice on the job, and changing things for the better in their workplace.

But unfortunately, American-owned companies rarely treat their employees' legally guaranteed right to join a union with respect, as Zara did. At many American companies, the right to join a union is disrespected or downright ignored. When workers in the U.S. attempt to organize, they often face a barrage of harassment, intimidation, and other tactics to prevent them from exercising their legal right to a union voice.

Bosses hold captive meetings with employees, telling lies about unions and claiming they are bad for workers. They threaten workers' jobs, and say that they will end up closing the workplace if they join the union. They'll make empty promises about changing the way they do things if workers don't unionize, or even dole out small raises or make other long-overdue changes in the workplace in hopes of keeping the union out.

And, orchestrating it all are so-called "consultants" – union busters – who are paid big money to scare, threaten, and lie to workers. These lowlifes make their living doing whatever it takes to confuse and frighten working people into voting against their own interests. Republican Presidential candidate Donald Trump

recently spent over half a million dollars on union busters in a failed effort in Las Vegas to keep workers at his Trump International hotel from joining a union.

But it doesn't have to be this way.

The RWDSU, the UFCW and Zara reached an agreement earlier this year where the employer agreed to remain neutral and not interfere with the organizing drive at the world's largest clothing retailer. This agreement allowed workers at Zara the chance to decide for themselves if they wanted a union, without intimidation, harassment, or the usual bag of underhanded tricks. No union-buster showed up to scare them, and nobody threatened to fire them or close the store. It's a different approach from U.S.-owned companies, and one that helps make workers and the company stronger.

Zara workers – on a fair, level playing field – chose to join RWDSU Local 1102, and now the company and the workforce will move forward with a strong relationship based upon trust and respect. American companies should follow the model of Zara and others who respect the right of freedom of association. ■

**"AT MANY AMERICAN COMPANIES, THE RIGHT TO JOIN A UNION IS DISRESPECTED AND DOWNRIGHT IGNORED."**



# RWDSU AROUND OUR UNION

## LOCAL 338 MEMBERS STAND UNITED FOR FAIR CONTRACT

Local 338 members who work as monitors in Mount Vernon, New York, city schools do not receive paid time off if they are ill and many workers feel obligated to go to work as scheduled, regardless of their health. Workers there feel it is a potentially dangerous and unhealthy situation for the community's children.

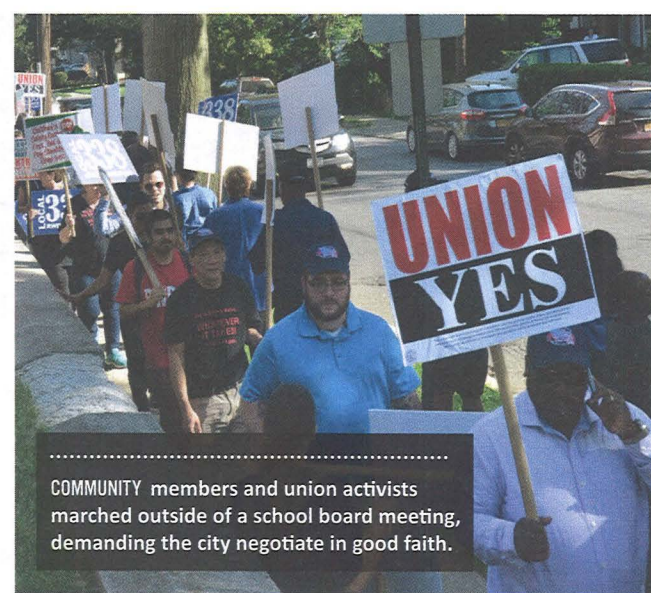
That's why in June, union activists, parents, and community members joined together in Mount Vernon to stand in solidarity with the workers, who were picketing outside of the Mount Vernon City School Board meeting to demand paid time off, along with improved wages and benefits. And, they want the school board to negotiate in good faith with workers there.

"Sometimes you get sick and that's beyond anyone's control. It isn't fair that I have to choose between getting well and paying my bills," said Local 338 member Junicka Patrick. "That's why I'm fighting for paid sick days in my union contract. It's not just about dignity in the workplace, but also making sure my students stay healthy."

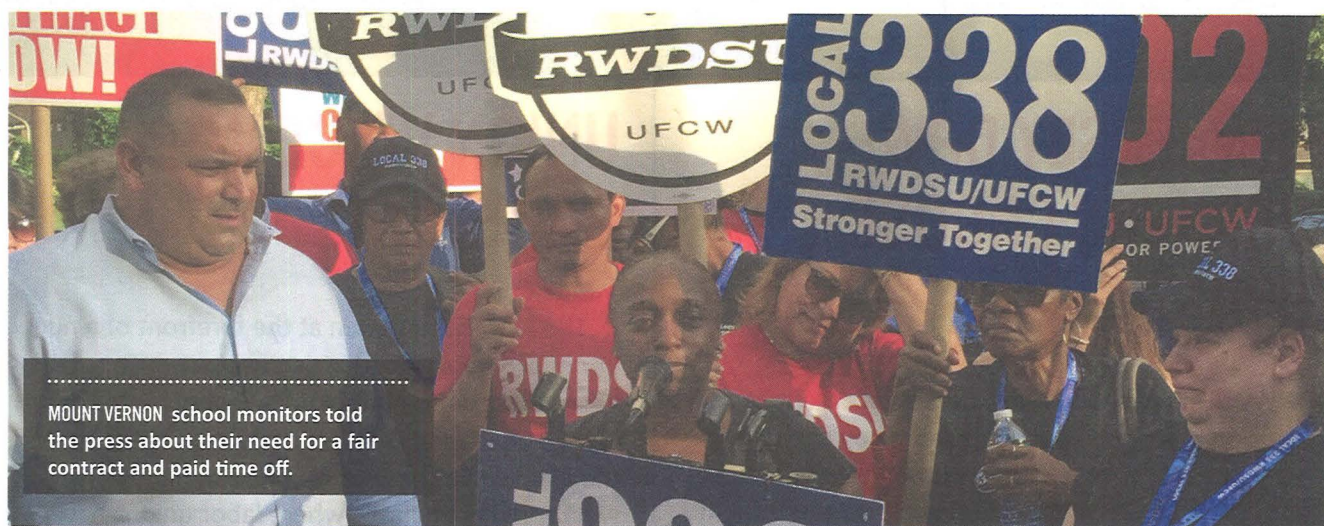
The Mount Vernon School Monitors number approximately 100 employees; some part-time and

some full time. These monitors, who are charged with the safety of the children in the playground, trained in first aid and CPR, and who help to keep things running smoothly in the cafeteria by lending watchful eyes to the comings and goings in the hallways, are crucial to the health and safety of the students and lend much needed support to faculty.

"The school monitors will be the first to tell you how much they love their jobs and the School District should recognize their dedication," Local 338 President John Durso said. "These hardworking men and women deserve a good contract that provides them with economic stability and the ability to take time to get well if they or their child get ill." ■



COMMUNITY members and union activists marched outside of a school board meeting, demanding the city negotiate in good faith.



MOUNT VERNON school monitors told the press about their need for a fair contract and paid time off.

## QUEENS CARWASHERS WIN \$130,000 SETTLEMENT

In June, workers at a Queens car wash fought back against wage theft by their employer, and won a \$130,000 settlement against an owner who they say paid them below the minimum wage, withheld overtime pay and committed other wage and hour violations.

In the lawsuit, workers at A.J.A. car wash said they were paid far below the minimum wage, as little as \$5 to \$7 per hour, and worked 60 to 70 hours or more without overtime pay. The suit also said the car wash improperly handled tips, failed to provide payroll records and failed to pay the workers when they reported to their jobs and were sent home due to rain or snow.

The settlement is the latest example of how the Wash New York car wash organizing campaign is changing lives in the car wash industry in New York.

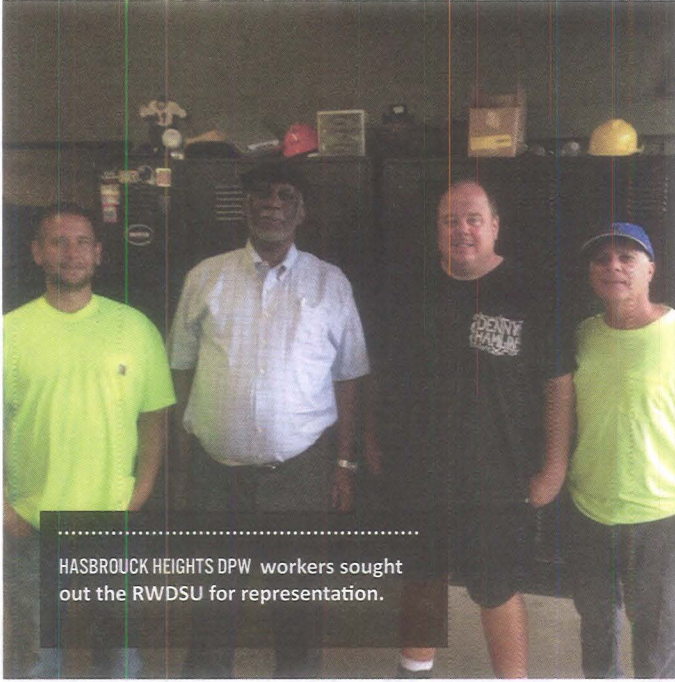
Carwasher Andres Pu, 52, who worked at A.J.A. Car Wash for more than 10 years, said: "My coworkers and I are so happy that we won a settlement in our case. The owner never paid us overtime or minimum wage and he tried to intimidate us when we fought back. This money we won will help me to support myself and my family. Most of all, I hope this is a message to other carwashers to continue fighting for their rights." ■

The settlement is the latest example of how the NYC car wash campaign is changing lives.





# RWDSU WORKERS WINNING A UNION VOICE



HASBROUCK HEIGHTS DPW workers sought out the RWDSU for representation.

## NEW JERSEY DPW WORKERS CHOOSE RWDSU

RWDSU Local 108 in New Jersey has a strong reputation among the public workers they serve. That's why, after doing their homework, Department of Public Work employees in Hasbrouck Heights sought out membership with the union. In June, the workers joined Local 108 via card check recognition.

"Workers checked out unions online, and talked with workers in bordering communities, and chose Local 108," said Local President Charles N. Hall, Jr. "In New Jersey these days it's about protecting your benefits amidst cutbacks, and an ability to communicate and work with elected officials. That's what Local 108 does for public workers in the state, and it's what Hasbrouck Heights workers were looking for."

The 40 DPW employees who joined work in a variety of jobs, a veritable soup-to-nuts of public sector jobs: sanitation, building maintenance, road repair, electricians, and car and truck mechanics. To put it simply, these workers help the town of Hasbrouck Heights run. Now, they'll have the RWDSU on their side as they do it.

Richie Giarratana, an employee at the Borough of Hasbrouck Heights DPW said he had union representation in the past elsewhere and knew they needed union representation. After speaking with other City DPW workers, Local 108's name kept coming up as being a premier union representing public sector workers in the State.

He spoke with Ryland Batchelor, Local 108's Shop Steward employed at Rutherford DPW and decided Local 108 would be the best union to represent Hasbrouck Heights DPW. ■



BABELAND WORKERS want better training and more transparency around workplace policies.

## UNION VOICE IN BABELAND

The RWDSU has been at the forefront of a number of progressive organizing campaigns in recent years. From supermarket deliverymen, to car wash workers and retail workers at Guitar Center stores, the RWDSU has been committed to fighting for worker rights in places where labor unions have not previously been engaged. In May, workers and the RWDSU did it again when employees at Babeland, an adult toy store with three locations in New York City, voted overwhelmingly to join our union. The move, workers said, would help them address a number of wage and training issues, as well as some concerns related more specifically to the nature of adult retail work and to a handful of transgender employees.

The employees said they needed plenty of changes in their workplace: more transparency around hiring, promotion and disciplinary decisions, and support for airing grievances and navigating workplace disputes. But most importantly, workers wanted to address the issues that are unique to working at an adult toy shop, including abusive or inappropriate customers.

"There has been fear of losing our jobs because of speaking up, or confronting some of the problems in the workplace," said Babeland worker Katherine Wolf. "For me one of the things I find most challenging is difficult customer interactions, and feeling like I have to sacrifice my own safety or boundaries in order to accommodate customers who are making sexual advances and saying inappropriate things."

Babeland worker Lena Solow added: "Before we unionized, we had no idea how to handle issues that threatened our safety. We need to have a fair process for dealing with people who come into the store and make comments to employees and fellow customers that are tantamount to hate speech or even abuse. And we need to know that we won't be fired or disciplined for taking steps to ensure Babeland remains a safe space for the community."

The employees have advocated better training and support from management to deal with

problematic customers. They had pushed for caller ID, for example, to help weed out the threatening phone calls workers said they received on a daily basis.

"This is the only adult toy shop that's organized anywhere," said RWDSU President Stuart Appelbaum. "And I think that's significant. It shows workers anywhere can stand with the RWDSU and make their jobs and their lives better." ■



BABELAND workers celebrate their historic win as they set out to address the unique issues they face in their workplace.

"There had been fear of losing our jobs from speaking out."



# WORKERS WINNING A UNION VOICE **RWDSU**

## BIG WIN FOR ZARA WORKERS – 1,000 JOIN RWDSU

After a majority of the workers at Zara's eight stores in Manhattan signed cards stating they wanted to be represented by RWDSU Local 1102, the company has agreed to recognize the union. The agreement covers over 1,000 retail workers at all of Zara's stores in Manhattan. These are the first Zara workers in the U.S. to join a union.

Zara, the Spanish fashion chain owned by Inditex, is the world's largest clothing retailer. The RWDSU, the UFCW and Zara reached an agreement earlier this year where the employer agreed to remain neutral and not to oppose the union's attempt to organize its workforce.

"Zara's approach to recognize the right of its workers to form a union, without intimidation, is a message to all retailers – you can be successful and still respect the right of your employees," said Local 1102 President Gemma de Leon.

It's the largest retail organizing win in New York City in recent years. By choosing to join the RWDSU, employees at Zara can now look forward to working in an environment where they can make their jobs better, and create better lives for themselves and their families.

"This victory is a huge step for retail workers in



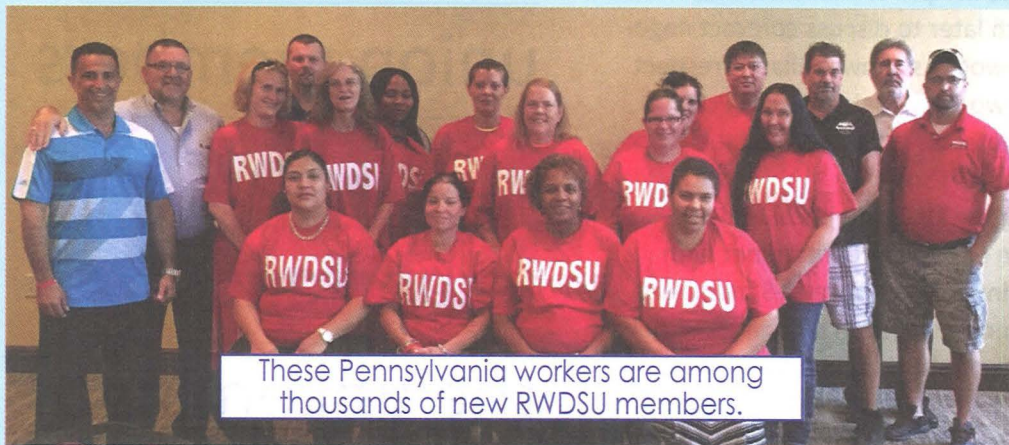
New York. Zara, the largest fast-fashion retailer in the world, is sending a strong message that you can remain profitable and still recognize your workers' right to dignity, justice and respect on the job," said RWDSU President Stuart Appelbaum. "Unfortunately, too many American employers refuse to respect their workers' right to freedom of association and intimidate and threaten workers who try to organize." ■

**"You can remain profitable and still respect the rights of your employees."**

## Help Bring a Union Voice to Others!

You can help friends, family, and neighbors improve their lives by connecting them with RWDSU.

As a union member, you know the union difference:



These Pennsylvania workers are among thousands of new RWDSU members.

- A voice on the job
- Better pay
- Better benefits
- Job security

Have them call the Organizing Department at

**(866) 781-4430**

or email us at [organize@rwdsu.org](mailto:organize@rwdsu.org)

More information is also available at [www.rwdsu.org](http://www.rwdsu.org)



# RWDSU CLINTON vs. TRUMP



During a whirlwind day of campaigning CLINTON took time to speak with RWDSU members at Hi-Tek car wash in Queens, New York.

## HILLARY CLINTON: STANDING WITH RWDSU MEMBERS

With the campaign for the White House in full swing, Democratic candidate Hillary Clinton has made meeting with working people – including RWDSU members – a top priority.

This summer, Clinton met with two different groups of RWDSU members, lending her support and pledging to help move working people forward as President. She didn't just deliver a speech to RWDSU members, she talked with them about the issues that affect working people today in the U.S. – the day to day challenges like scheduling, the struggle for sufficient hours, and the obstacles working people face in having their voice recognized in the workplace. In doing so, she made clear her understanding of the importance unions make as workers try to build better lives for themselves and their families.

**“It’s something the workers she spoke with will not forget.”**

In April, on an incredibly important and busy morning for her on the day before the Democratic primary in New York State, Clinton visited the Hi-Tek car wash in Queens, New York. She congratulated the workers for their pioneering success as the first car wash to become unionized on the East Coast, recognizing the courage it took to organize where no other workers had before. Clinton also talked about the need for better pay and job protections throughout the car



HILLARY met with Macy's workers in Las Vegas.

wash industry, and lent her support to the Car Wash Campaign.

“I’ve campaigned at a lot of gas stations, some of which had car washes,” Mrs. Clinton said when asked if that was her first campaign stop at a car wash. “But this is special because the workers here at this car wash have been organized.”

“That Clinton took the time out of her whirlwind campaigning schedule in April to meet with car wash workers, and a month later to discuss contract negotiations with Macy’s workers shows Hillary’s respect and commitment to workers,” said RWDSU Political Director Ademola Oyefeso. “It’s something the workers she spoke with won’t forget.”

And in May, during the UFCW Political and Legislative Conference in Las Vegas, Clinton met with retail workers including RWDSU Local 1-5 members from Macy’s, who were engaged in difficult (and now resolved) contract negotiations. Clinton and Macy’s workers discussed the negotiations and the important things the workers were fighting for, and she offered her their support.

“Hillary knows she can depend on our support, but she still has made listening to RWDSU members a priority on the campaign trail,” said RWDSU President Stuart Appelbaum. “This is the kind of ally workers need in the White House, and in this incredibly important election we all need to remember that.”



BILL CLINTON speaks with RWDSU members in New York.

## BILL CLINTON VISITS THE RWDSU

The RWDSU and former President Bill Clinton have a long history – our union was the first one to endorse him for President back in 1992. In April, while campaigning for Hillary in advance of the New York Democratic primaries, that relationship continued when Bill Clinton visited the RWDSU office in New York City.

Bill spoke with RWDSU members about how important the upcoming election is for working people, and how workers need to mobilize to ensure workers continue to have a voice in Presidential politics. He touted the experience and qualifications of his wife, Presidential candidate Hillary Clinton, and emphasized his family’s support for unions and working people. ■

**Bill spoke with union members about how important the upcoming election is for working people.**



## DONALD TRUMP: GOOD FOR TRUMP, BAD FOR WORKERS

Republican candidate for President Donald Trump portrays himself as a champion of all Americans, and has based his campaign on promises to get everyday Americans back to “winning,” whatever that is supposed to mean. During his scorched Earth campaign to secure the nomination during the primaries, his positions on issues important to working people were all over the map. Some of his ever-changing positions have been very troubling.

He’s said that he loves unions, but he’s also said he loves right-to-work laws that make it difficult for workers to organize.

He’s said that the minimum wage is fine and that it should stay the same, which is surprising considering he’s a billionaire and he thinks people can live on \$7.25 an hour. At other times, he even seemed to advocate for lowering the minimum wage, stating that in America “our wages are too high.”

Trump blustered that he would raise taxes on the rich, but then released an official plan that provided an enormous tax cut for billionaires like him. And, when British voters chose to leave the European Union, causing markets to tank and endangering the bank accounts and retirement savings of millions of working Americans, Trump crowed that the economic chaos was a good thing because it might increase visits to his Scottish golf course for the wealthy. As always, Trump is looking out for Trump.

### A BAD BOSS

It’s not surprising, because Trump has a long history of enriching himself at the expense of working families. According to a report in USA Today, the real estate mogul is notorious for failing to pay money that he owes to laborers who have already performed work for one of his many corporations. Over the past three decades, Trump has been involved in thousands of lawsuits for refusing to honor debts or pay owed wages to ordinary Americans. He has stiffed dishwashers, cabinet makers, glaziers, plumbers, and waiters at various Trump businesses nationwide.

And it doesn’t stop there. Since 2005, the Department of Labor has slapped Trump’s organizations with dozens of violations for failing to pay minimum wage or overtime. And rather than pay his debts when he’s caught, Trump has a habit of dragging lawsuits out for years so that workers can’t collect. Trump has shown that he is happy to use his multibillion-dollar company to steal wages from working people who are counting on that income to get by.



(IMAGE ABOVE) Donald Trump’s positions on issues important to working people seem to change with the wind.

Trump has done everything in his power to prevent his hotel workers from unionizing.

(IMAGE BELOW) Workers at a Trump casino in Las Vegas protest their boss’ refusal to negotiate with their union.



### NO FRIEND OF UNIONS

Trump is also aggressively anti-union. On the campaign trail, the Republican nominee occasionally will mention in one of his rants that he has worked well with unions in the past. But that was only because he was involved with New York real estate in the 1980s. In that environment, it was impossible to build any project without using union labor. He employed union labor because he had to, not because he wanted to, and is now trying to take credit for this in his appeal to working class Americans.

But as his empire has spread to other parts of the country, Trump has done everything in his power to prevent the workers at his hotels from unionizing. In 2008, picketers marched outside his Chicago hotel after Trump refused to follow through on a pledge to negotiate a neutrality agreement. At his hotel in Las Vegas, Trump’s organization faces a series of charges for threatening, firing, and retaliating against workers who support unionization. Despite that, the hotel workers came together in April and voted to unionize. But Trump has repeatedly delayed negotiating a contract, even as he travels around the country telling reporters how good he is for workers.

The simple reality is that with his constantly conflicting statements, taking Trump at his word is tougher than one of the poorly-reviewed steaks he once peddled with his failed meat-by-mail business. Trump will say whatever he thinks his audience wants to hear, so there’s no real way to tell if he actually means any of it. But if you look at his actions, you start to get a sense of who Trump really is when dealing with workers: a terrible boss who steals wages, a union-buster, and someone who doesn’t respect labor laws or his workers’ wishes. American workers need a President who respects them and will fight for them, not one who simply panders to them. Trump’s record suggests that workers would not have a friend in the White House if he were to become President. ■



COVER  
STORY

# AT MACY'S, A GREAT NEW CONTRACT FOR 5,000 RWDSU LOCAL 1-S MEMBERS

In June, over 5,000 unionized Macy's workers at four stores in the New York City emerged from the negotiating process with a strong new contract. Negotiations extended into the evening of the June 15 deadline, with Local 1-S members – united and strong – hours away from going on strike to win the fair contract they believed they deserved. And with the power of the entire union and the labor movement behind them, that's exactly what they got.

"We are glad that Macy's addressed our key concerns in the final hours of negotiations, and that we have won a good contract and didn't have to strike," said Macy's worker Debra Ryan. "All along, we just wanted a contract that recognized our contributions, and that workers are the real magic of Macy's."

The contract covers RWDSU Local 1-S members at four different stores, including Queens Center Mall in Elmhurst, Queens, Parkchester in the Bronx, White Plains in Westchester County, and the famous flagship Herald Square store in midtown Manhattan – the national historic landmark store that has been serving customers from around the world for 114 years since 1902.

## CONTRACT BOOSTS MACY'S WORKERS

The new contract protects what Macy's workers have won over the course of decades, and includes numerous improvements. It was voted upon via secret ballot and workers at the four stores overwhelmingly approved the new agreement with 97.5 percent saying "yes" at the ballot box.

The new agreement includes the following key provisions that will improve the quality of their jobs: substantial wage increases; a better and more affordable healthcare plan; and fair scheduling, including no mandatory requirement to work holidays including Thanksgiving and Christmas.

"We are very proud of this contract. It will significantly improve the lives of thousands of Macy's workers we represent. By standing strong throughout the negotiations, our members were able to secure big improvements in wages, healthcare, and benefits," said Local 1-S President Ken Bordieri.

## "AN ENTIRE UNION BEHIND US"

The contract negotiations got off to a rough start, with company demands that would have set workers and the contract back many years. Macy's employees were facing an offer from management that included cuts in retirement benefits and harmful changes in scheduling and other work rules. In May, Local 1-S members voted to authorize a strike if management failed to negotiate the fair contract that workers wanted.

Macy's workers weren't alone in their fight. They had the power of the entire union – along with a diverse group of workers, activists, and elected officials – behind them as they stood together for a new agreement.

Throughout negotiations, RWDSU members volunteered their time to stand outside of Macy's entrances so they could hand out glossy flyers letting customers know about the ongoing contract negotiations and that workers were in contract negotiations. RWDSU activists handed out thousands of flyers in English and Spanish to customers and passerby in one of New York City's busiest areas.

On June 2, hundreds of Macy's workers and supporters spent a sunny afternoon on 34th street in front of the store rallying for a fair contract as the deadline approached. Union leaders and elected officials spoke to the workers – many of whom spent their lunch break at the rally – to lend their support and let them know New York City stood with them. A band played rock and soul classics – often changing the lyrics to relate to the contract negotiations – and helped keep the upbeat crowd on its feet, as well as drawing attention from tourists, passerby, and drivers, many of whom honked to show their support. RWDSU members and officers came from near and far to stand enthusiastically with Macy's workers. Members came from throughout New York and New

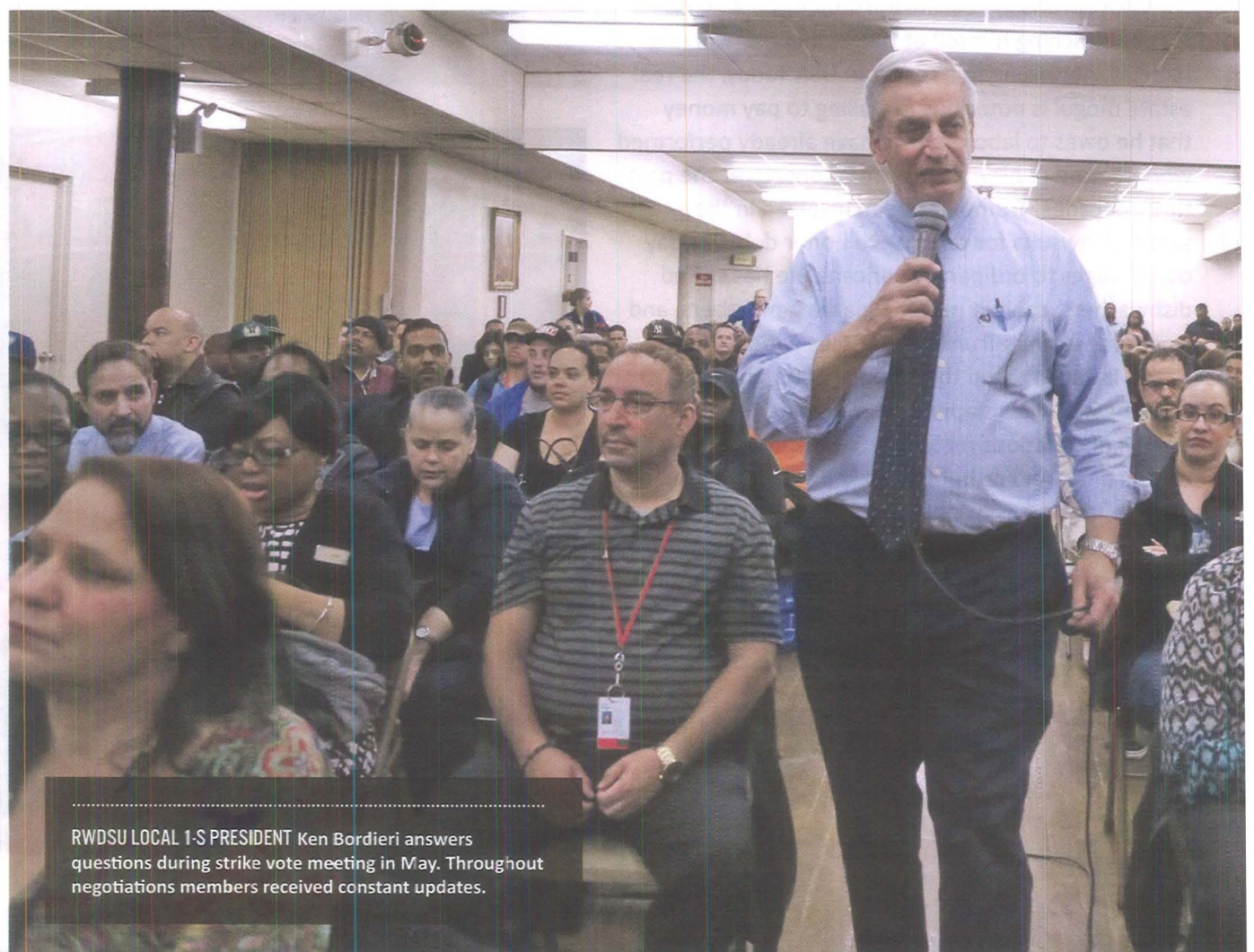
Jersey and also from the New England Joint Board and Mid-South Council.

"It made a real difference to us, during the rally, and leafletting, and the entire process, to see that everybody in the RWDSU supported us and was watching the contract negotiations closely," said Local 1-S member Earnestine Gay. "There were thousands of us united together at Macy's, and thousands more who were on our side. We had an entire union behind us."

## SOLIDARITY PAYS OFF

On the evening of June 15, Macy's members – prepared to do whatever it would take to protect and improve their jobs – received the news that the union and Macy's had reached a tentative new contract. Over the next week, workers at all four stores (in separate secret ballots) voted overwhelmingly to ratify the new agreement. The workers' solidarity over the previous months had been rewarded with a strong new four-year contract. News of the new contract spread quickly, with stories in national press including USA Today, CBS News, and the New York Times.

"This contract is a major victory for Macy's workers and for New York City. It raises the bar for what retail jobs can be and should be. This contract shows that Macy's workers are the real magic of the company. It's a major step forward for the entire retail industry, and it shows the importance of what our union does to empower retail workers," RWDSU President Stuart Appelbaum said. ■



RWDSU LOCAL 1-S PRESIDENT Ken Bordieri answers questions during strike vote meeting in May. Throughout negotiations members received constant updates.



**THE RWDSU** negotiating committee and Macy's management reached a tentative agreement on June 15. Throughout the negotiating process, the committee knew that 5,000 Macy's workers stood behind them 100 percent. **(image to the right)**



During negotiations, **RWDSU MEMBERS** handed out thousands of informational flyers in both English and Spanish to shoppers at the 34th Street Herald Square store. The flyers let shoppers know that workers were trying to win a fair contract and fight back against attempts to slash benefits and make life harder for workers, who are the real "Magic of Macy's." **(image below)**



**ON JUNE 2**, hundreds of supporters – including RWDSU members from throughout the country – gathered in front of the Macy's store on 34th street to demand a fair contract. In one of the busiest areas in NYC and during the busiest time, the entire city got to see the support that Macy's workers had during negotiations, and the spirit and energy on display by Local 1-5 members who refused to back down. **(image bottom right)**



**MACY'S WORKERS** overwhelmingly voted yes on the new contract.





# NEWS FROM AROUND THE UFCW

a VOICE for working America



Eastland workers stood together and won a union voice.

## EASTLAND FOOD WORKERS JOIN LOCAL 328

IN MAY, the hard-working men and women at Eastland Food Products Inc. in Cranston, Rhode Island, took a major step to address workplace issues by voting 74-37 to join UFCW Local 328. Despite the anti-union tactics of management, they remained united and proved once again that when workers choose to stand together, they can be resilient no matter the opposition they may face.

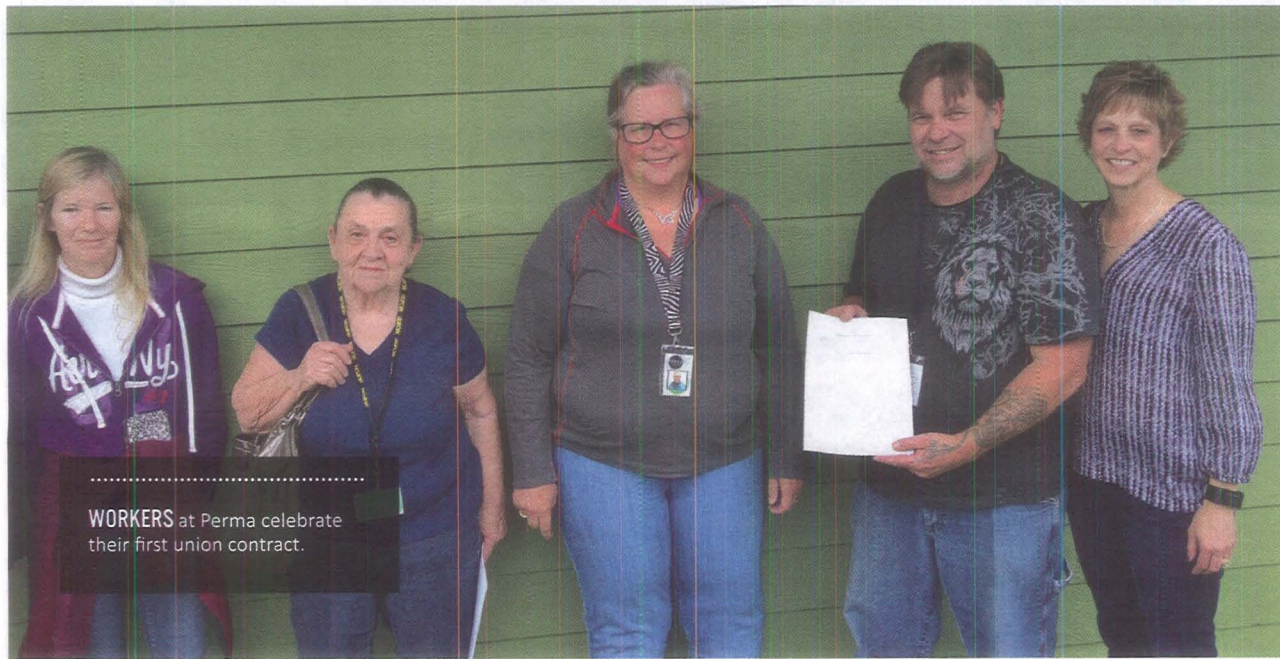
The company cleans, cuts and packages fruits and vegetables for supermarkets up and down the east coast.

UFCW Local 328 staff were first introduced to the Eastland Food workers when they were invited to attend a delegation led by the workers. The objective of this delegation was to demand that management address the allegations of sexual harassment at the plant. Workers and union organizers continued to meet to address the major issues and working conditions at the plant, including workers who were only earning minimum wage, the lack

of paid vacations, sick days or holidays, a lack of adequate break time for 17-hour long shifts, and allegations of wage theft.

After learning their rights, the process, and the benefits of organizing, workers began to sign authorization cards and shortly thereafter a petition for a union election was filed.

"I am very pleased and excited for the folks at Eastland Food," said UFCW Local 328 President Tim Melia. "I am also very proud of the strength and unity that they displayed during this most recent organizing campaign."



WORKERS at Perma celebrate their first union contract.

## CANNABIS WORKERS WIN FIRST CONTRACTS

ON MAY 25, Crème of the Crop workers in Tacoma, Washington, voted to ratify their first union contract. Crème of the Crop is a women-owned and operated

cannabis retail shop, and 100 percent of the workers, who are members of UFCW Local 367, voted to ratify the contract.

The two-year contract raises wages for budtenders and shift managers, and includes health insurance, an employer paid defined benefit pension plan, seven paid holidays, paid vacation and sick leave, and a seniority and grievance procedure.

On June 9, the hard-working women and men at Perma, a cannabis producer-processor in Tacoma, Wash., unanimously approved their first union contract. The workers at Perma are also members of UFCW Local 367.

"My grandfathers would be so proud of us for organizing," said Janie Wallace, a processor at Perma.

The three-year contract raises wages, and includes health insurance, an employer paid defined benefit pension plan, six paid holidays, paid vacation and sick leave, and a seniority and grievance procedure.

Two-year contract raises wages for budtenders and shift managers, and includes health insurance and more.

## MISSION FOOD WORKERS CHOOSE UFCW REPRESENTATION WITH LOCAL 1776

ON MAY 12, nearly 450 workers at the Mission Foods plant in Mountain Top, Pa., voted to join UFCW Local 1776. Mission Foods workers make a full line of Mexican food products,

including tortillas, wraps and salsas used in restaurants and sold in supermarkets on several continents.

"This is one of the greatest moments of my life knowing that we are not going to fend for ourselves anymore, but have representation," said Nadia Vlavonou, a Mission Foods employee.

The workers' victory was the successful conclusion of a months-long campaign, and is a piece of the program that aims to raise

wages and benefits for all workers in the meatpacking and poultry industries.

"This is a victory for all of us," said Benito Tapia, a Mission Foods employee.

The Mission Foods workers will join thousands of UFCW Local 1776 packinghouse and food processing workers in Pennsylvania at plants such as Empire Kosher Poultry in Mifflintown, Cargill in Hazelton, JBS in Souderton and Citterio USA in Freeland.

The workers' victory was the conclusion of a months-long campaign.



**HOLSUM  
BAKERY**

**LOCAL 835  
INDIANA**

**RWDSU LOCAL 835 MEMBERS** in Fort Wayne, Indiana, have overwhelmingly ratified a new three year contract with their employer, Holsum Bakery. The 78 RWDSU members at the plant work in maintenance and production of breads under the Lewis Bakeries label. The new agreement provides many improvements in the areas of seniority and overtime, schedules, funeral leave, paid holidays and sick days, job classifications, and maintenance advancement programs. Along with wage increases, the new contract maintains the employee's health coverage, with the company being required to pay all premium increases. And most importantly, the new agreement maintains the employees' pension benefits. The Bargaining Committee consisted of Chairman Kevin Degitz, Vice-Chairman Paul Harless, Jr., and Chief Steward Lloyd Schaper, Jr. They were assisted by Indiana Joint Board President Dave Altman.

**MINIBUS AND VAN DRIVERS** at the Transdev company transport seniors in Essex County, New Jersey. They all work very hard and take special care of the seniors in Essex County, going above beyond the call of duty and in many cases have special relationships with the seniors. And now, the drivers have their first ever RWDSU contract, which was ratified by an overwhelming margin. Workers joined the RWDSU last year to address an unaffordable health care program, low wages, and limited time off with benefits. The new contract addresses these issues. The bargaining unit includes drivers, schedulers and reservationists. The agreement increases wages of lowest-earning workers by \$1.45 an hour incrementally in an 18 month period. Other workers will see increases between \$1 and \$1.50 per hour. The employees – who prior to negotiations only had 40 hours of paid time off – will now receive up to 128 hours of paid time off. "The concept of a union was all new to me. I had an opportunity to sit at the bargaining table as an equal with management and discuss the concerns of the drivers. At the end of the negotiations, we made several improvements that could be measured," said Transdev employee Tawana Smith.

**TRANSDEV**  
**LOCAL 108  
NEW JERSEY**



TRANSDEV workers in Essex County, New Jersey, ratified their first RWDSU contract.



**SAM'S  
DEPARTMENT  
STORE**  
**LOCAL 108  
NEW JERSEY**

**PROFESSIONAL SALES EMPLOYEES AND TAILORS** at Sam's Department Store in Livingston, New Jersey, have ratified a new three-year contract. The employees at the men's and boy's clothing store were difficult, with management aggressively coming after workers' benefits. "Andi Wiener, a veteran shop steward and salesperson at the store, did a great job at the bargaining table," said Local 108 President Charles N. Hall, Jr. "She and her team defended the hard won benefits workers at the store have." Besides protecting the union pension plan and paid days off, the contract also brings wage increases for the tailors and salespeople at Sam's. And, workers won a significant increase in retirement benefits.

**ECOLAB**

**TENNESSEE DISTRICT COUNCIL  
TEXAS**

The **MORE THAN 100 WORKERS** employed at the EcoLab plant in Garland, Texas overwhelmingly ratified a new pact that hikes wages and improves benefits. The workers at EcoLab make chemicals used to clean industrial machinery.

**DINING  
MANAGEMENT  
/COMPASS**

**RWDSU  
MICHIGAN**

**RWDSU MEMBERS** who work for Compass in the Dearborn, Michigan Ford plant cafeteria overwhelmingly ratified a new three-year agreement. A paid day off was added so that workers now have a total of nine, and the vacation policy was improved so members qualify for a third week of vacation one year sooner. Health benefits were protected and lowered in cost, and all members now have the option of a company 401K plan. In addition there will be a three percent wage increase for each year of the contract.



# RWDSU ELECTIONS



PICTURED ABOVE (LEFT + RIGHT) are Daniel O'Dell and David Fricker.

## BUNNY BREAD

LOCAL 835  
ILLINOIS

In June, the **BUNNY BREAD UNIT** of RWDSU Local 835 in Edwardsville, Illinois held their unit officer election. Elected to a new two-year term of office were Chief Steward David Fricker and Recording Secretary Daniel O'Dell. RWDSU Members who work at Bunny Bread are Shipping Clerks and Store Door/Transport Delivery Drivers.

**LOCAL 835 MEMBERS** of the Perfection Bakery production and maintenance unit in Fort Wayne, Indiana held their unit officer election. Elected to new two-year terms were Chairman Eric Schwartz, Vice-Chairman John Whetstone, Chief Steward Ed Jones, and Sergeant-At-Arms Larry Christman. There are 81 workers represented by the RWDSU at the Fort Wayne Perfection Bakery.

## PERFECTION BAKERY

LOCAL 835  
ILLINOIS



## FAYETTE COUNTY EMS

LOCAL 512  
INDIANA

**FAYETTE COUNTY EMS** unit workers in the City of Connersville, Indiana, held their unit officer election. The Local 512 members elected the following to new two-year terms: (left to right in photo) Chief Steward David Stephens, Alternate Steward Charles Mitchem, and Executive-Secretary James Burns. RWDSU members at Fayette County EMS serve as Paramedics and Advanced EMT's.

## DEL MONTE FOODS

LOCAL 17  
ILLINOIS

**RWDSU LOCAL 17** members in Mendota, Illinois, have elected the following to new two-year terms: President Dan Witalka, Secretary-Treasurer Milford Krager, Recorder Mark Maronde, Vice-President Mike McGeorge, Chief Steward Joe Grey, and Trustees Zach Larson and Steve Stallings.



## PEPSI

LOCAL 1096  
INDIANA

**RWDSU MEMBERS** in Seymour, Indiana, elected officers to new three year terms on July 13. Elected were: Chief Steward Dana Freese, Recording Secretary Henry Conner, and Alternate Steward Christopher Dean. Local 1096 members who work at the Pepsi are Forklift Operators, Service Mechanics, Merchandisers, and Delivery Drivers. Pictured are (l to r) Dana Freese, Henry Conner, and Christopher Dean.



## 99 YEARS AND A BIG PENSION: SETTLEMENT BRINGS \$450,000

After Ralph Guarno, a longtime member of Local 1-S of the RWDSU suffered an unfortunate fall last year and finally started contemplating retirement, he made a startling discovery -- he was owed hundreds of thousands of dollars in pension payments.

Thanks to his union membership, Guarno received more than \$450,000. "Now I don't have to worry about anything," he said.

Guarno - who is 99 and lived through The Great Depression and served in the Pacific in WWII - became a Local 1-S member in June 1964, working at Macy's White Plains Auto Center. He earned the then-minimum wage of \$1.25 an hour at his job, which consisted mainly of replacing mufflers and tires.

His union membership protected his job when the Auto Center closed in the early 1980s, and he was moved into the store as a housekeeper at his same salary and with the same benefits.

He was old enough to retire back then, but he wanted to keep working.

"It was hinted at various times that I should retire, but they couldn't force me because of the union," said Guarno, who has survived his wife, Rose, and his son, Ronald. "I was grateful for the job, but they (Macy's) were never all that friendly."

Unbeknownst to Guarno, he was entitled to start receiving pension benefits at age 70, something he did not discover until he suffered a fall and began to consider retirement.

Officials at Local 1-S were able to secure a lump sum payment of well over \$450,000.

Guarno said he is glad to have received the monies owed to him, but he has no immediate plan for spending the windfall.

"I wish I had it during the Depression," Guarno said. "After all, I'm almost 100 years old."

But he's glad for the security it provides and for his continued good health. And he's also glad that he had his union to fight for him so he could keep working and could recover money that was rightfully his.

**"Now, I don't have to worry about anything."**



LOCAL 1-S member Ralph Guarno.



(L TO R) LOCAL 1102 Rep. Mayra Valladares, Elsa Barera, and Local 1102 Rep. Jeff Guardado.

## NEW YORK CHILD CARE GRANT BENEFITS RWDSU MEMBERS

The RWDSU is part of the New York Union Child Care Coalition, a group of unions that developed and promoted the Child Care Facilitated Enrolment Project to help provide affordable child care for working families in the state. By working with New York State Senators Jeff Klein and Diane Savino, the RWDSU was instrumental in helping to establish the program.

And RWDSU members are starting to benefit. Elsa

Barrera is a Local 1102 member and a mother of three. On top of her dedication to raising her three children, Elsa also works full-time at Flying Foods -- an airplane food service supplier - at JFK airport. Barrera has received a grant from the program, and will be able to send two of her children to a camp program for the summer at nearly no cost. This support will help Elsa make ends meet and help her children receive the care and security they deserve. "Workers like Elsa are truly deserving of this kind of grant," said RWDSU Deputy Political Director Jessica Garcia. "This program will help many others provide for their families while ensuring their children get quality care."

Other RWDSU members at Macy's and H&M have also seen their child care costs drastically reduced thanks to the program.

## RETIRED RWDSU VICE PRESIDENT IDA TORRES PASSES

Ida Torres, President Emeritus of Local 3 and Director of The Storeworkers Security Plan and a former RWDSU vice-president, passed away on June 5 after a brief illness.

"Ida was a dedicated unionist who spent 60 years servicing RWDSU Local 3 members," said Local 3 President Cassandra Berrocal. "Her spirit will live on in the continuing work of our union."

Torres retired in 2011 as Local 3 President, an office she held since 1998. She was born and raised in New York City, into a union family. She learned about the importance of the labor movement at the dinner

table, through the words of her father, a co-founder of the Maritime Workers union, and her mother, a union representative at the International Ladies Garment Workers Union. Her background in union activism took her to the United Office and Professional Workers of America, where she started as a telephone operator.

Torres' career in the labor movement continued as she became a finance clerical employee at RWDSU District 65, and in 1954, office manager at RWDSU Local 3 United Storeworkers, the union representing Bloomingdale's department store workers.

In 1965, the 4,000 Bloomingdale's workers in New York City went on strike over wages and a number of other issues, and Torres became actively involved in the fight for justice at the department store, coordinating efforts for rallies, picket lines, and other aspects of the strike. After the 15-day strike ended with workers winning 26 cents an hour in wage increases and other improvements, Local 3 members rallied

around Torres, who accepted their calls to become a union organizer. Torres steadily rose through the ranks of Local 3, becoming a vice president in 1977, secretary-treasurer in 1984, and finally, president in 1998. "She was a remarkable woman and an inspiration to all of us," Berrocal added.



Former Local 3 PRESIDENT IDA TORRES retired in 2011 after a lifetime in the labor movement.



# RWDSU AROUND OUR UNION

## FIGHTING FOR A HIGHER WAGE IN NJ

In May, the New Jersey State Assembly passed a minimum wage bill to raise pay to \$15 an hour in the Garden State. The bill still has to be passed by the State Senate, and would then face a veto by Gov. Chris Christie. Supporters of the bill want to bring a minimum wage hike to a referendum and let voters decide after Christie's expected veto.

Working Families United for New Jersey, of which RWDSU Local 108 President Charles N. Hall, Jr., is chairman, has been a leader in the coalition to raise New Jersey's minimum wage.

"New Jersey is one of the highest cost of living states in the nation. It's time to provide real relief to working families. A \$15 minimum wage is far from generous, and would simply give workers a fighting chance to make ends meet," Hall, Jr., said upon the State Assembly's passage of the bill.

"We live in one of the most expensive states in the country and have one of the lowest minimum wages. It's not fair to our citizens," Hall, Jr., added. ■



LOCAL 108 President Charles N. Hall, Jr., with members of the New Jersey Assembly.



LOCAL 1102 members have helped feed needy families this summer.

## LOCAL 1102 HELPS STAMP OUT HUNGER

RWDSU Local 1102 has been a proud partner this summer in the Letter Carriers' Stamp Out Hunger Campaign. Members throughout Long Island, New York, have collected non-perishable food to donate to those in need. Local 1102 staff volunteered to help sort the donated food at Island Harvest, a Long Island food bank.

"We are proud to partner with our Letter Carrier brothers and sisters and Island Harvest to aid this great cause," said Local 1102 President Gemma de Leon. ■

## RWDSU MEMBERS STOOD WITH VERIZON STRIKERS

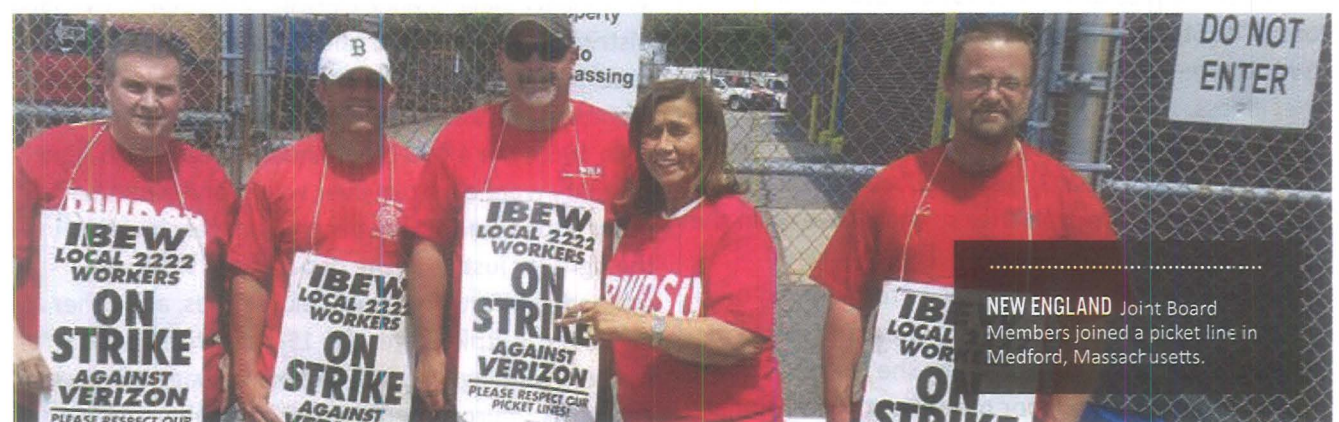
Many times in recent years, RWDSU members have had to stand up to their employers – big and small – who refused to negotiate a fair contract. In rare instances, it's been necessary to either authorize or even go out on strike and take to the picket lines.

That's why RWDSU members supported nearly 40,000 striking Verizon employees during their 45 day strike, which ended on June 1 when the Communication Workers of America (CWA) and the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW) returned to work. It took over 11 months of negotiating and 45 days on the picket lines, but finally the ordeal was over. The strike sent an important message to corporate America that union workers will stand up for what they believe in, and stay strong in the face of unfair management demands. Verizon management was attacking pay and benefits, was harassing workers with an unfair employee review system, and was threatening to close U.S. call centers and outsource work at low pay.

"We believed in this strike and wanted to give workers our support," said New England Joint Board President Tina Buonagurio, who led NEJB members at picket lines throughout Massachusetts. "We've seen the same kind of unfair demands throughout the RWDSU and we know how important it is to show the power that workers hold." ■



LOCAL 1102 AND LOCAL 338 showed their support for striking Verizon workers on Long Island.



NEW ENGLAND Joint Board Members joined a picket line in Medford, Massachusetts.





# PLEDGE TO BUY **UNION-MADE** IN THE USA



Did you know that for every \$1 spent on American-made goods, an additional \$1.32 is invested in the U.S. economy? Union-made products are better quality products and they support companies that provide good jobs for working people right here in the United States.

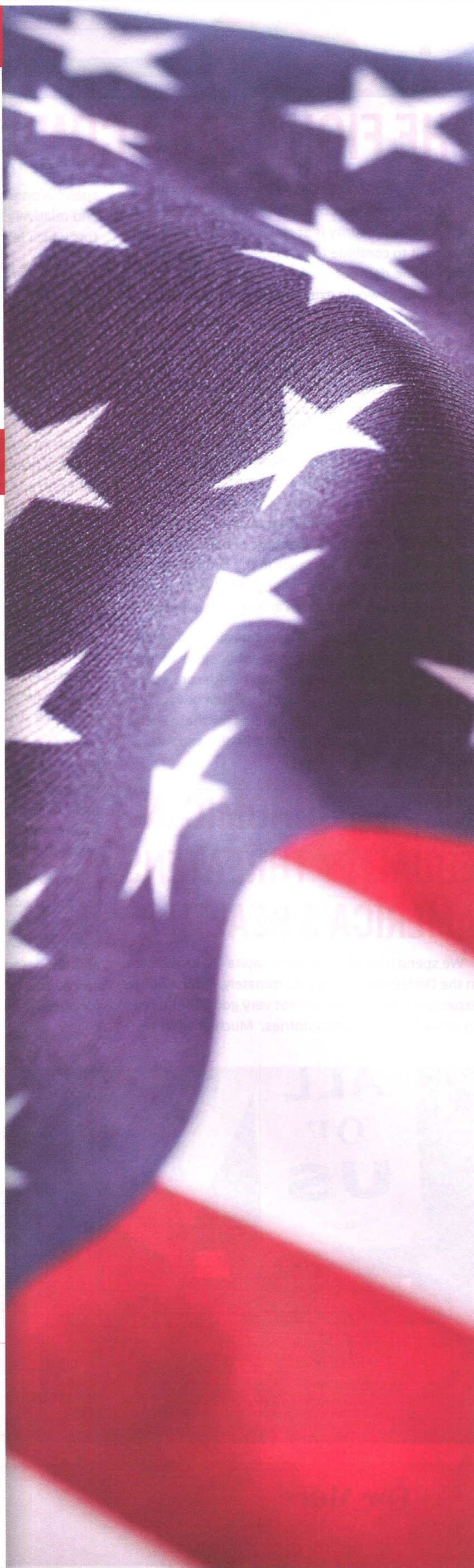
Buying union is an easy choice, but it does take extra time to check the label. Take the pledge to take the extra effort. Because having each other's back is what being a union member is all about.

TAKE THE PLEDGE TODAY!  
**UnionPlus.org/UnionPledge**

Text **PLEDGE** to **22555\***



\*Msg&Data Rates May Apply. Reply STOP to opt-out. Reply HELP or contact info@unionplus.org for help. Expect no more than 2msgs/mo.







# THE FIGHT FOR ECONOMIC JUSTICE AND OUR HEALTH

We face critical choices in the coming months about the future direction of our country. We know our economic security is at stake as we resist those who want to continue to privatize, outsource, and diminish the rights of working people and advocate policies which would expand economic inequality.

As we fight for economic justice we are fighting for our health. It has long been established that individual and family financial resources are directly tied to their health. Countless studies have shown that those with fewer financial resources have higher rates of virtually every disease.

But recently studies have shown that an even stronger factor related to health outcomes is the relative income disparity in a country. For example a 2012 World Bank survey showed that in countries with lower levels of economic inequity, people lived longer. Examination of life expectancy in the United States found that states with a smaller gap between upper and lower income had a high average life expectancy.

Those states with greater economic inequity were ones which have invested less in public services like education, housing, nutrition, and health care - programs politicians who are hostile to labor always want to cut. The lack of adequate funding for these social service programs undermines our health and future opportunities for our children.

## RISING ECONOMIC INEQUALITY THREATENS AMERICA'S HEALTH

We spend a lot of money per capita for health care in the United States and unfortunately, in terms of life expectancy, the results are not very good compared to other industrialized countries. Much of what we

spend is on treatment after disease has appeared, and relatively little on reducing the predisposing factors which lead to disease.

Today the level of income disparity in the United States is astounding. While wages for the average worker have stagnated over the past 30 years, and failed to keep pace with the rapidly rising costs of health care, housing and higher education, the income of the wealthy has skyrocketed. CEOs who once made 30 times what their company's average worker made now enjoy a level 10 times greater.

High levels of economic disparity negatively affect health because these differences reduce community cohesion and result in higher levels of stress, fear and insecurity. As a union we have always believed that any hazard, condition, exposure, work process or policy which negatively affects a worker's physical or psychological well-being is an occupational health and safety issue. Low wages, wage theft, understaffing, inadequate scheduling and work hours, unrealistic work demands and hostile supervision create high levels of stress and are all occupational health and safety concerns which impact our health. These issues are not covered by OSHA standards, but together through a strong union we can make a difference.

We know raising the minimum wage, closing tax loopholes and other legislative initiatives are useful, those gains can be taken away or undermined overnight by legislative or judicial action. The best way to build our economic strength and security is through organizing and growing our union.

We need political leadership which is committed to the public good and not beholden to the corporate elite. But even more importantly we need to build our union. Working together we can achieve the benefits we deserve: fair compensation, safe workplaces and adequate future financial and health resources for ourselves and our families. ■

Economic inequality results in occupational health and safety issues which impact our health.



RWDSU and Retail Action Project members joined hundreds of activists at a rally last year in New York City calling for an end to economic inequality. Studies have shown that rising inequality threatens workers' health. (image above and image below)



### For More INFORMATION

on how you can work together to make your workplace safer, contact the RWDSU Health and Safety Department at (212) 684-5300, or email [sbmooser@rwdsu.org](mailto:sbmooser@rwdsu.org). ■