

# RWDSU

UFCW

SPRING 2018

RECORD

Vol. 66, No. 1

**MASSACHUSETTS:**  
Strong contract at Pepsi.



**ALABAMA:**  
Health care workers organize.



**NEW JERSEY:**  
Laminated workers win voice, contract.



**GEORGIA:** Chemical workers join.



## RWDSU Moving Forward with Strong Contracts, Inspiring Organizing Wins

Pages 8-9

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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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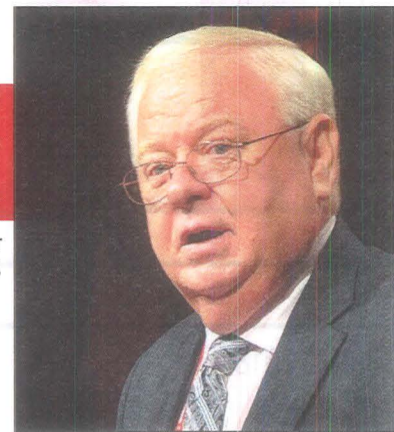
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**MESSAGE FROM  
YOUR OFFICERS**

**Our Values Motivate Everything We Do**

**T**his month – March, 2018 – the RWDSU joins together in Atlanta, Georgia, for the union’s 23rd Quadrennial Convention. The convention is the most important decision-making authority for our union, when members gather together to revise our constitution and elect leadership. Most importantly, the convention brings us all together, allowing us to take stock of the past four years and set a course for the union for the next four years.

It’s been a tumultuous time. Politically, our country has never seemed more divided. And economically, we’ve seen change in many of our industries in ways we couldn’t even imagine just a few years ago. Consumers are flocking to e-tailers such as Amazon, and abandoning the old way of shopping. Instead of going to stores where retail workers are employed, they are buying from websites.

But what has not changed – and what will never change – are the values that continue to be the foundation of our strength, regardless of the turmoil that surrounds us.

Our values – economic and social justice, equality and tolerance, and solidarity in the belief in the power of a collective voice – will continue to be the catalyst for all that we do. These are values that recognize the importance of justice in our society, and that joining together in a union is the most effective way for working people to achieve economic justice, equality, and a fair day’s pay for a fair day of work. Working people are the foundation of our society, and America’s future is dependent on a vision of fairness and decency and shared prosperity.

We’ve seen these values in play in our recent successes. Strong contracts at the flagship stores of retail icons such as Bloomingdale’s, Macy’s, and Saks have protected and furthered retail workers, addressing the changing responsibilities of

RWDSU members in these jobs as well as the changing retail landscape and commissions. We’ve won our first contract at a “big box” chain, bringing union representation to workers at musical instrument behemoth Guitar Center. We’ve expanded our reach to unorthodox industries including medical marijuana and adult toy chains, and won organizing drives and union contracts proving that all workers want – and need – union representation to make their lives better. We’ve continued fighting for strong contracts for poultry workers, cola bottlers, cereal workers, bakery workers, and all workers who believe they deserve to be treated fairly and deserve fair compensation for helping their employers succeed.

**Under Attack, Rising to the Challenge**

While we’ve continued moving forward, there’s no mistaking the fact that working people and unions are under attack like never before. Workers’ rights, women’s rights, civil rights, human rights, LGBTQ rights; all are being targeted by an emboldened far-right which sees this era as their opportunity to roll back progress and redefine what America is all about. And we are increasingly hearing nationalistic and even racist rhetoric from people who are trying to send the message that this country isn’t for everybody anymore and neither is economic prosperity.

It’s immoral, it’s shocking, and it’s dispiriting considering the progress our country has made in the decades leading up until now.

But we will not give up. We can and must fight back, for working people and for everyone who makes up the diverse fabric that makes our country strong. Through the power of our union, we will continue to combat inequality and injustice in the workplace and society. We will never stop standing for our values. ■



## RWDSU WORKERS WINNING A UNION VOICE

# On Long Island, 240 H&M Workers Win With RWDSU

In 2007, hundreds of workers at fast-fashion retail mainstay H&M in New York City joined RWDSU Local 1102, gaining union representation for the first time and making their jobs better. Since then, Local 1102 has continued to organize more H&M stores. Now, that organizing campaign has extended to Long Island, with workers at 6 stores joining the RWDSU. There are now approximately 1,300 RWDSU Local 1102 members employed at H&M, at 6 stores on Long Island and 12 stores in Manhattan.

The organizing drive culminated successfully after meetings in all six Long Island stores, with workers choosing to join the union and claim their union voice.

Current H&M workers in Manhattan were influential in explaining the benefits union



membership brings to the job. Long Island workers were eager to join after hearing about the better pay and benefits, and most importantly, the voice on the job and representation at work enjoyed by the Manhattan workers.

Local 1102 has formed a negotiating committee to begin the process of securing a contract for the Long Island H&M employees so that the Long Island workers can secure schedul-



ing rights, improved working conditions in stores, and the voice on the job that Manhattan workers have won.

**H&M workers have won the voice on the job that comes with RWDSU representation.**

"We want to welcome all the new H&M Long Island employees to the union family," said Local 1102 President Alvin Ramnarain. ■

Mmmm...bacon. This popular Vosges chocolate bar is as good as it sounds.



# How Sweet it is as Chocolate Workers Join RWDSU



Workers at Vosges, a high-end chocolate store in New York City, voted unanimously to join the RWDSU.

The workers at Vosges Chocolate Store in Soho, New York City, voted unanimously to be represented by the RWDSU in their fight for a voice and fair treatment in the workplace, as well as job security and fair wages through a collective bargaining agreement. It was a sweet win for the workers at the retail store, who sell luxury chocolate and exotic confections including Sri Lankan Coconut and Curry bars and Coconut Ash and Banana Super Dark chocolate, and their popular Mo's Chocolate Bacon Bars.

"I am proud to be among the newest members of the RWDSU," said Roxy Monroe, Vosges Chocolate Sales Representative. "Our small but mighty team deserves to be heard by the company and I am confident that with the support of the union we will have a strong contract that protects us all."

"Spend one minute with a new member at Vosges Chocolates and you'll hear first-hand that a day in luxury retail is no better for workers than at a discount retailer – and that's critically significant in this union-yes vote," said RWDSU President Stuart Appelbaum. "All workers deserve a strong union voice at the bargaining table and we are proud to be representing the hard-workers at Vosges as we push to secure a fair contract." ■



# RWDSU A VOICE FOR WORKING PEOPLE

## RWDSU Members Win in Fight Against Faster Poultry Lines



(l to r) Poultry workers and RWDSU members Veronica Darby and J.R. Harris, and Mid-South Council Rep. Joshua Brewer traveled to Washington, D.C., to deliver this box of petitions to the USDA. The "blood" and feathers represent the carnage that would result for workers if line speeds increased.

The RWDSU represents over 10,000 poultry workers in the South. These workers process the chickens millions of Americans eat every day, and it's dangerous work - repetitive motions, chilling temperatures, slick floors, and sharp tools are a recipe for potential injury.

That's why the recent proposal by industry group the National Chicken Council to increase poultry line speeds beyond the already lightning-fast 140 birds-per-minute was so dangerous for workers. And that's why RWDSU members in Alabama, Tennessee, Mississippi, Louisiana and Georgia worked tirelessly to defeat the proposal. And on January 30, they won their fight to protect RWDSU members - and all workers - in U.S. poultry plants. They defeated a proposal that would have put not only workers' lives at risk, but also the lives of every American that eats chicken.

Many of the RWDSU's members across the South went door-to-door, made phone calls, and spoke directly with fellow members at worksites to sign the postcards. Mid-South Council members traveled to Washington, D.C., to attempt to deliver thousands of petitions in person to the USDA in December, but were denied in person delivery. The message, however, was so strong, clear, and loud, that it was heard by the USDA and the National Chicken Council in their stunning defeat.

"Workers in the South are a force to be reckoned with. Today's victory is no small measure of the power of RWDSU members. Increasing the line speeds would have hurt thousands, if not hundreds of thousands of poultry workers across the country - not to mention poultry consumers, our members stopped this proposal in its tracks," said Southeast Council President Edgar Fields.

"In this fight, we showed that when we stand for our values, and we stand for working people we can and will be heard in Washington, D.C., I am proud of the work of our members to defeat this horrific proposal and we will continue to fight against any proposal that will increase the speeds," said Mid-South Council President Randy Hadley. ■

## Nursing Home Workers Win in Northeast

The RWDSU's reputation for helping nursing home workers make their jobs and their lives better is helping more health care workers claim their union voice. In New Castle, Delaware, Licensed Practical Nurses (LPNs) at Arbor Nursing Home overwhelmingly voted yes, joining the RWDSU. The 21 LPNs join the existing unit of 105 workers including service and maintenance, dietary, nurse's aides, laundry and housekeeping units. The group will be included in the contract negotiations later this year.

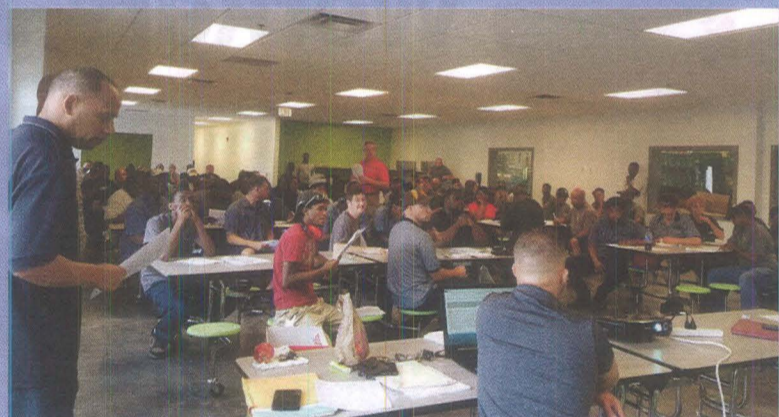
In New Jersey, tired of dealing with constant changes in policies and working conditions, short staffing, unaffordable healthcare premiums and benefit reductions, nearly 100 dietary, housekeeping, maintenance and nurse's aides at Genesis in South Plainfield voted to join Local 108 RWDSU. The units will be combined into one contract. Local 108 represents 1,000 Genesis workers at various locations. ■

## Autoneum Workers use their Union Voice to Win Improvements

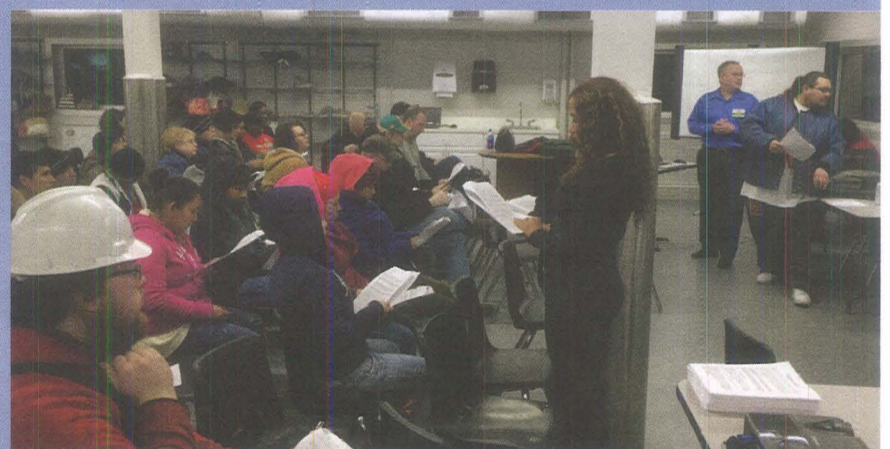
RWDSU members employed at two different Autoneum auto parts plants have ratified new contracts. In Aiken, South Carolina, Southeast Council members ratified their first ever RWDSU contract after their inspirational recent organizing win. The contract guarantees workers there a voice in scheduling, overtime access, and a voice on the job for the first time, fulfilling the promise of their organizing campaign.

In Toledo, Ohio, RWDSU Local 379 members who work at the Autoneum plant there ratified a new contract with wage increases, improved health care at no increased cost, and more control over overtime and scheduling.

Workers at the Ohio plant, who have been RWDSU members for years, and workers at the South Carolina plant, who only just joined the RWDSU, are using their union voice to improve their jobs. ■



In Aiken, South Carolina, Southeast Council members ratify their first union contract.



Local 379 members in Toledo, Ohio, vote for their new contract.



# RWDSU AROUND OUR UNION

## Locals 108, 338 Give Back to Community



Local 108 Representative Flohisha Johnson (far right) with other Local 108 volunteers provided meals for the community.

RWDSU Locals have been active in their communities, brightening up the holidays and helping less fortunate families year-round.

For Local 338, that has meant participating in frequent "Local 338 Volunteer Days" at the Mary Brennan INN, a soup kitchen in Hempstead, New York. The facility serves 300-500 guests per day and provides meals for people who need them. Local 338 has also been active in the John Theisen Children's Foundation based in Wantagh, New York. Local 338 has been working with this organization for the past

20 years, helping them distribute toys and school supplies to both children in need and children at local hospitals throughout the year.

Local 338 also participated in two food drives in which the local distributed more than 400 turkeys to soup kitchens and religious establishments in New York City, Westchester, and Long Island.

"We will proudly continue to support these incredible outreach centers and focus on making a difference in the lives of thousands more of the men, women, and children



The Local 338 team helps pack up gift packages for needy families.



Local 338 Executive Board Members Jerry De Cola and Brad Worfler with gifts for local families.

throughout New York and New Jersey," said Local 338 President John Durso.

In New Jersey, Local 108 donated time and financial support to area churches this past holiday season to help provide meals for needy families in the Newark area. Local 108 members helped churches provide holiday dinner meals for over 1,000 families. The local works

with Local 108 employers including supermarkets to provide the meals.

"The staff of Local 108 feels it is a good thing to reach out and lend a helping hand to people in need in the community. There are so many people in need of help, I wish and pray that we could do more," said Local 108 President Charles N. Hall, Jr. ■

## Indiana Local Elections

RWDSU Local 1096 members concluded two consecutive days of voting in Indianapolis, Indiana for Local officers. Elected to a new three-year term of office were Kenny Bellamy, President; Karen Burnside, Secretary-Treasurer; Terry LaMon, Recorder; Lewis Allen, 1st Vice-President; Paul Pearson, 2nd Vice-President; and Sean Baldwin, 3rd Vice-President.

RWDSU Local 1096 represents workers at Coca-Cola Bottling Company Consolidated in Indianapolis, Indiana and at the Pepsi Beverage Company in Seymour, Indiana.

In Fort Wayne, Indiana, Local 935 members of the Coca-Cola Bottling Company unit elected officers to new two-year terms. Elected were Travis Fleischman, Chairman and Delegate; and Bruce Reuille, Vice-Chairman and Delegate.

There are 31 RWDSU Members at the Fort Wayne, Indiana Coca-Cola Bottling Company Consolidated facility who work in the Warehouse/Route Truck Loading Department, Cold Drink Equipment Services, New and Remanufactured Equipment Department, and the Fleet Department. ■



(left to right) Bruce Reuille and Travis Fleischman.



Local 1096 officers (left to right) Terry LaMon, Lewis Allen, Sean Baldwin, Karen Burnside, Kenny Bellamy and Paul Pearson.



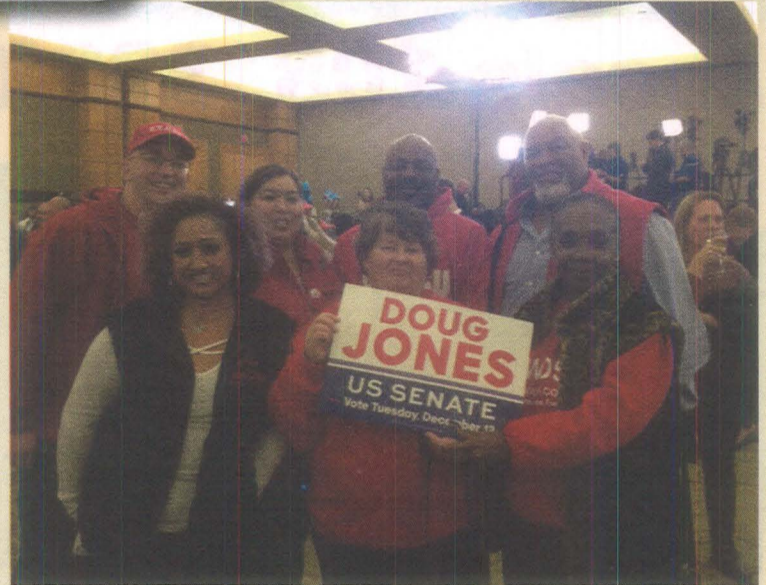
# RWDSU POLITICAL ACTION

## Mid-South Council Members Push Jones to Stunning Win

In a huge upset win, Doug Jones defeated Roy Moore for the open Alabama Senate seat in December, the first time a Democrat has won a Senate seat in Alabama in decades. It was a winning result for a progressive, pro-worker candidate that seemed unimaginable when the campaign began last year.

"We talk all the time about how important it is to get involved and fight for the candidates we support, and who will support us. And sometimes, we are disappointed by the results, and it can be disheartening," said Mid-South Council President Randy Hadley. "But this stunner proves that we can make a difference, and that

RWDSU members were on hand to take in the jubilant scene at the Doug Jones victory party.



RWDSU Mid-South Council members worked the phone banks to drive up voter attendance.

our efforts can pay off as we build the foundation of a government that helps workers get ahead, instead of hurts us, Hadley added.

RWDSU members in Alabama were there every step of the way, fighting for a candidate who will bring the concerns of Alabama's workers to Washington by assisting the campaign and getting out the vote. RWDSU members worked the phone banks, distributed literature at poultry

plants and other worksites, and went door to door to tell their neighbors how important it was to vote for Doug Jones. At the end of it all, RWDSU members celebrated at the Doug Jones victory party.

It's a scene that RWDSU members hope to see repeated throughout the U.S. after election days in 2018. ■

## RWDSU Endorses Cuomo for New York Governor



New York Gov. Cuomo with car wash workers at the New York Labor Day Parade.

On January 15, the RWDSU became the first union to endorse New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo's bid for re-election, which will be his third term as Governor of the Empire State. The RWDSU was the first union to support Cuomo in his first campaign for governor, as well as in his earlier campaign for Attorney General.

The RWDSU endorsement recognizes a record of progressive action and achievement. Under Cuomo's leadership, New York has passed marriage equality, raised the minimum wage, established paid family leave, proposed statewide scheduling reforms to protect workers and their families, and has begun a review of the sub-minimum wage that tipped workers - including car wash workers - receive.

"At a time when New York needs to show the country an alternative way, Andrew Cuomo has become our standard bearer," said RWDSU President Stuart Appelbaum. "Two good terms deserve a third." ■

## RWDSU Backs Dettelbach for Ohio Attorney General

The RWDSU, along with numerous UFCW locals and other unions in Ohio, has officially endorsed Steve Dettelbach for Ohio Attorney General.

"The time has come for Ohio to have an Attorney General who puts people before politics. Steve has spent his career fighting for justice for working people, no matter who they work for, Steve is not afraid to stand up to business owners who hurt working people - no matter what," said RWDSU Regional Director Rick Marshall.

"We will fight for him to win this election, because we know he will fight for us as Attorney General," Marshall added. ■

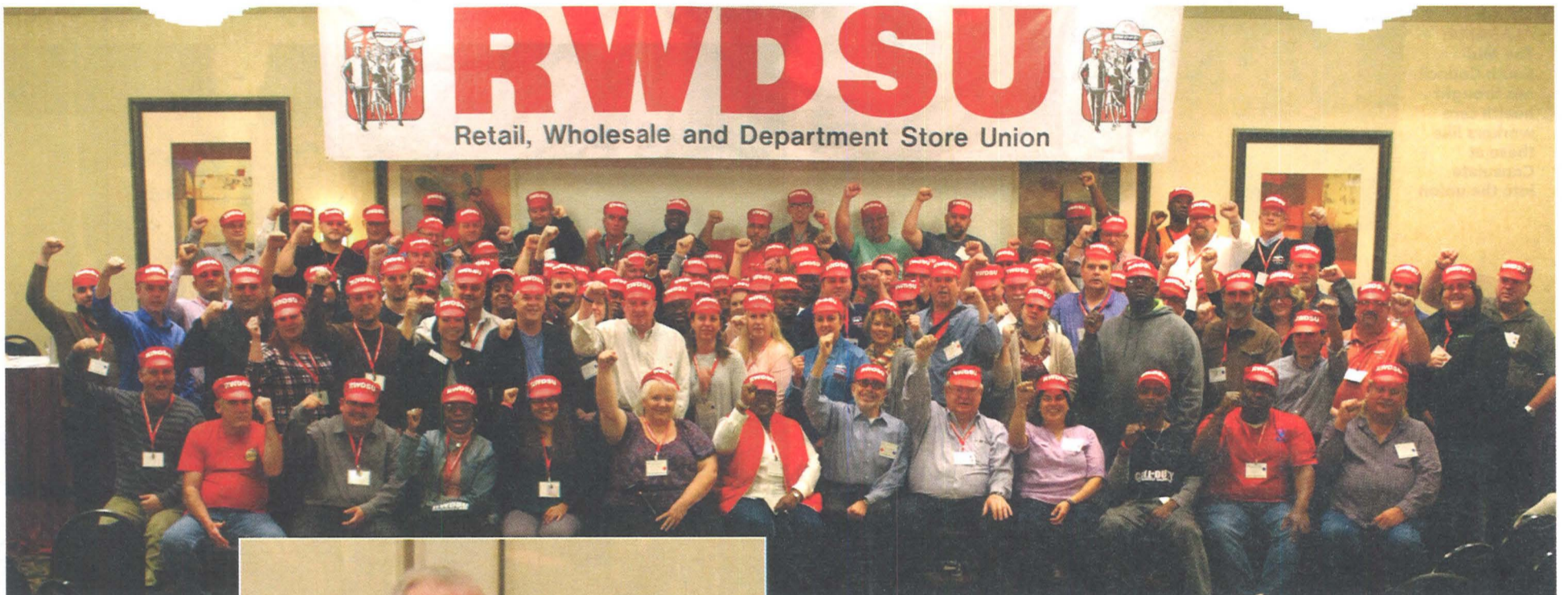


RWDSU Regional Director Rick Marshall, with RWDSU Ohio members, shakes hands with Ohio AG candidate Dettelbach.



# RWDSU AROUND OUR UNION

## Over 160 Attend Six-State Conference in Michigan



Members came from throughout the Midwest for important training to serve fellow members better.

Retired RWDSU Regional Director Randy Belliel was honored for his career and dedication to the union during the Six State Banquet.



On November 4-5, RWDSU members from Illinois, Indiana, Pennsylvania, upstate New York, Ohio, Michigan and West Virginia came together in Grand Rapids, Michigan, for the annual Six-State Conference. It was the largest such meeting in many years, attracting over 160 members, many of them shop stewards and many of them first-time attendees, for important training to help them serve fellow members. In addition to a steward training course, which focused on handling grievances and duty of representation responsibilities, there were sessions dedicated to workplace health and safety and also political action and involvement.

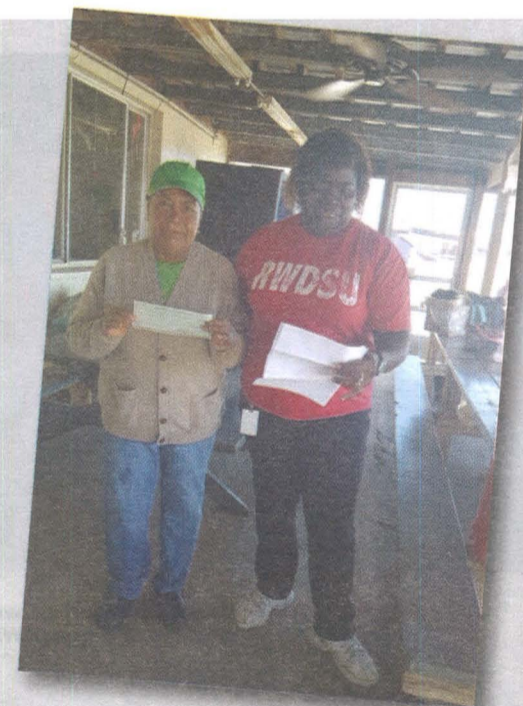
Officers and representatives from throughout the RWDSU were also on hand for a special tribute to retired RWDSU Regional Director Randy Belliel, who was honored for his dedication to the members of the RWDSU throughout his 40-year career of union activism in the Midwest.

"This is a special organization where everyone from the top on down fights to make lives better for working people, and I am proud to have spent my life working with everyone here," Belliel said. ■

## RWDSU Citizenship Clinic Helps Florida Member

RWDSU members who are also immigrants continue to participate in citizenship clinics throughout the country, and it's making a difference in their lives and helping them become United States Citizens. The clinics are free to members and their families and provide information and financial resources to immigrants and legal permanent residents wishing to become United States Citizens.

In Florida, Maria Rodriguez, a Local 595 member employed at Aris Horticulture in Fort Meyers, has become a U.S. citizen with the help of the RWDSU's program. Rodriguez received a reimbursement check for \$500 for her citizenship application fee after attending an RWDSU Southeast Council immigration clinic. Rodriguez and her fellow RWDSU members at Aris Horticulture produce high quality ornamental plant products, including Keepsake Azaleas, tropical Trade Winds Hibiscus and Hydrangea. ■



Local 595 President Tammie Graham (right) presents Maria Rodriguez with a citizenship application fee check.





**ALABAMA:** The Mid-South Council has brought health care workers like these at Consulate into the union

Since our last Convention in 2014, things haven't gotten any easier for working men and women. Economic inequality continues to grow, and we live in an economy that sees the wealthiest controlling most of the political, social and economic power.

And while the deck continues to be stacked in favor of big business, the bosses, and those who stand to benefit by exploiting workers, those with all the advantages don't control us. When we – the working people of America – stand together and amplify our voice with the power of a union, nobody controls us. And, we can accomplish great things for ourselves despite the hardships we face. We don't back down, and we keep moving forward, standing for our values by negotiating better contracts that address the concerns of today's workers, and by bringing more people into our union and adding strength through traditional as well as innovative organizing campaigns.



**PENNSYLVANIA:** Manor Care workers were among many health care workers to choose RWDSU.

# With Strong Inspiring Org RWDSU is Stand



**NEW YORK:** Bloomingdale's workers won a strong new contract.

## Growing in Retail

The changing retail climate is affecting organizing and contract negotiations, as more people shop online and retail brick and mortar stores cut back on their labor force. And yet, the RWDSU has been able to score some major wins in one of our core industries, retail.

In New York, Local 1102 celebrated the largest retail win by a union in many years, signing up over 1,000 workers at eight Zara stores. These workers, who are the first Zara workers in the U.S. to join a union, also negotiated their first contract, bringing them guaranteed wage increases, scheduling protections, and a voice on the job for the first time. Local 1102 has also continued to organize more H&M stores, adding hundreds of members during a successful campaign that has continued to grow over the course of a decade (see story on page 3). In the South, we've seen hundreds of Mid-South Council members added at M.M. Retail Groceries and the venerable Piggly Wiggly chain. Local 338 in New York has continued to organize grocery workers in chains large and small.

## All W

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# Contracts and Organizing Drives, Standing for our Values



**SOUTH CAROLINA:** Autoneum auto parts workers win voice, contract.

**CHICAGO, MASSACHUSETTS, NEVADA, NEW YORK:** Guitar Center workers win a hard-fought contract.

## Workers Need Representation

Workers, which is why the RWDSU has reached out to help better life. The RWDSU continues to expand in the health care industry, adding 600 new members since our last convention in Virginia, and Delaware. The Mid-South council has also added new members in health care in Alabama, Florida, and Texas, and also had success organizing workers at health care facilities in New York.

Multi-toy chains Babeland and Pleasure Chest have joined our progressive union as the most effective tool for addressing workplace issues. The union's car wash campaign added 10 New York City car washes, and Local 108 has added more car washes in New Jersey.

Workers at A.T. Wall in Rhode Island, who produce magazines, organized the New England Joint Board. And, the Southeast Council is organizing workers and winning a first contract at a manufacturer in Aiken, South Carolina. It's the third contract won by the RWDSU after the two in Ohio that have been won in years. The Southeast Council also brought in hundreds of new members, including at EcoLab, a chemical manufacturer, and a

contract more important for workers than a union voice, and we are working hard to bring one to them throughout the U.S.

## Negotiating Strong Contracts

Throughout the RWDSU, members and representatives have spent the last four years building upon the foundation of previous contracts, and negotiating strong foundations for the future with first contracts for new members.

RWDSU members in New York City at Local 1-S (Macy's) and Local 3 (Bloomingdale's) negotiated strong new contracts at big retail chains' flagship stores, with hundreds of union members coming to rally in support in both cases when negotiations stalled. Guitar Center workers in stores in New York City, Chicago, Las Vegas, and Danvers, Massachusetts achieved victory after a long struggle and won their first contract, including guaranteed base wage increases over the three-year term, and access to union-provided health care insurance. Local 338 in New York won a contract for Vireo Health workers, making them the first medical marijuana workers in the Empire State to ratify a union contract.

Cola bottlers and route drivers in New England, cereal workers in Michigan, highway maintenance workers in Indiana, Del Monte distribution workers in Illinois, bakery workers in West Virginia, poultry workers in Tennessee, health care workers throughout the U.S.; in a wide range of industries, with diverse workforces, members have ratified strong contracts. By standing for our values, we have been able to make the most of our most valuable assets: our solidarity and each other. Strong contracts help us negotiate more strong contracts and add more members and strength, and regardless of any obstacles in our path, we've been able to continue to make our jobs better and our communities stronger. ■



**NEW YORK:** Macy's workers rally and win a new contract.



# News From Around the **UFCW** a **VOICE** for working America

## Consolidated Nuclear Security Workers Join in Tennessee

**R**adiation technicians at Consolidated Nuclear Security's Y-12 plant in Oak Ridge, Tennessee, voted to join ICWUC Local 252C by an overwhelming margin on Dec. 13. The ICWUC is a council of the UFCW.

The workers wanted a voice in their workplace and an end to "at will" employment. They also wanted to become a part of ICWUC Local 252C and the Atomic Trades and Labor Council. ICWUC Local 252C President Greg Malone, Chief Steward James Woody, Recording Secretary Jackie Martin, Secretary Treasurer Chris Beatty, Vice President Thomas Duncan, and the members of ICWUC Local 252C played a key part in this organizing victory.

"I would like to thank the members who worked hard to make this happen," Malone said. "I would also like to thank Charles Smith and Rhonda Hawn for helping our committee understand the complex issues associated with the Rad Techs."

The unit consists of 95 workers.



Consolidated workers joined the union because they wanted increased job security.

## First Contract for 800 at Seaboard Triumph Foods



Workers at Seaboard Triumph will see wage increases of \$2 an hour over the life of the contract.

**S**ome 800 members of UFCW Local 222 who work at Seaboard Triumph Foods in Sioux City, Iowa, have ratified their first union contract. Seaboard Triumph Foods is a new, state of the art pork slaughter and processing plant, which opened in 2017. In the near future, the company will add a second shift, which will increase the size of the unit to over 2,000 workers.

The new contract includes an immediate 40 cent per hour wage increase upon ratification and an additional \$1.60 per hour increase over the life of the agreement. The agreement also provides good benefits.

"I am very excited for our union contract that lays a foundation for good wages and benefits," said Yvette Bayona, who works on the kill floor at Seaboard Triumph Foods and served as a member of the negotiation committee. "I am looking forward to help build a strong union in our facility."

## Central NY Health Care Workers Join Local One

**O**n Jan. 19, workers at Presbyterian Home for Central New York in New Hartford, New York, voted in favor of joining UFCW Local One's Professional and Health Care Division. The unit consists of licensed practical nurses, certified nursing assistants, as well as housekeepers, secretaries, and service, maintenance, and dietary workers.

"We are delighted to welcome our newest members from the Presbyterian Home," said UFCW Local One President Frank DeRiso. "This organizing committee had to endure an onslaught of anti-union efforts, unfair labor practice charges, illegal captive audience meetings, benefit promises and more. It's nice to see that they stuck together and worked so hard for this."



These workers have won a union voice with the UFCW.

## Indiana Resins Workers Join the Union

**W**orkers at AOC Resins in Valparaiso, Indiana, recently voted to join the International Chemical Workers Union Council (ICWUC) of the UFCW by an overwhelming margin. AOC is a plastic fabrication company, and the workers wanted a voice in their workplace.

"Working class people have no one to trust but themselves. We know what we need and we know as individuals our voices are ignored," said Kyle Gatlin, an operator at AOC Resins. "It's only when we accept the idea 'what's good for one is good for all' will we be able to change the conditions of our labor. For the past few months, we have driven towards a common goal of unionizing all hourly employees and accomplishing that goal felt amazing. The ICWUC has been with us for every need along the way."

Workers at AOC are currently preparing to negotiate their first union contract.



Workers at AOC Resins joined the union because they wanted a voice at work.



# RWDSU Scholarship Winners Know Union Difference

Five young men and women – four children of RWDSU members, and one a member herself – have won the annual RWDSU Alvin E. Heaps Scholarship. The scholarship, named after former RWDSU President Al Heaps (1919-1986), promotes higher education for RWDSU families and recognizes scholastic performance and an understanding of the difference union membership has made in their lives, and how unions can help all working families.

## RWDSU SCHOLARSHIPS



Local 108 Secretary-Treasurer Gary Barker with biology major Haley Moore.



(l to r) IJB President Dave Altman, Robert Bardi, and his father George.

■ **ROBERT BARDI** is the son of George Bardi, a Local 835 member employed at Lewis Bakery in Fort Wayne, Indiana. Bardi is attending Ivy Tech Community College in Fort Wayne, Indiana, and is majoring in aviation maintenance technology.

*My father is a union member, and it has given our family everything. My father came to this country with practically nothing, but now he is living a stable life and enjoys what he does for a living. He can choose when he wants to take vacation, knows his work schedule well in advance, and he has a great retirement set up for when his career is over. The union helps provide him and his family with a life that anybody can be satisfied with.*

■ **NICOLE BOUSQUET** is the daughter of Michael Bousquet, a Local 513 member employed at Coca-Cola. She is attending University of Massachusetts Amherst and is an animal science major.

*My father's battle with cancer illustrated the importance the union has in our lives. The health benefits he receives through his union contract has helped immensely with the financial burden of his cancer treatments, as well as lessening the stress that came with the diagnosis. And, the yearly wage increases have helped him support our family through this difficult time. It's a big contrast to my mother's old non-union job, where she never received a raise even when management said one was coming. She had no way to fight for changes or improvements. A union is able to bring change and benefit workers.*



NEJB President Tina Buonaugurio and Secretary-Treasurer Phil D'Arcangelo present Nicole Bousquet with her scholarship award.

■ **HALEY MOORE** is attending Westminister College in Pennsylvania where she majors in biology. She is the daughter of Terri Moore, a Local 108 member who works at Littman Jewelers.

*My mother has been an RWDSU member for 29 years, and this long-term security has provided our family with numerous benefits including higher pay and better health care. The union contract has provided my mother with annual wage increases, paid vacations, and holidays we look forward to every summer. Most importantly, the union has given her a voice that allows her to express her opinions about how she deserves to be treated at work. Strong unions create strong communities and allow each individual worker to be heard.*



Delia Morales and her father Eduardo at the Stop and Shop store where he works.

■ **DELIA MORALES** is the daughter of Eduardo Morales, a Local 338 member who works at Stop and Shop. Morales is attending Pace University in New York City, and is studying arts and entertainment management.

*Union membership helped my father keep his job. He started working at one store, which was sold to another, and then sold to another. The people buying out the companies he worked at could have easily replaced him, but the union protected him. He was able to keep his job and his seniority as ownership changed, and rather than having three different start dates he has one record of continuous service. We never had to worry about him losing his job and not being able to provide our family with the same level of support.*

■ **RAVEN PEOPLES** is a Local 932 member who works at Diversicare of Montgomery. She is also attending Wallace University of Selma in Alabama and is majoring in nursing.

*Before I began working at Diversicare, I worked in another health care facility that didn't have union representation. At that job, I had no benefits, no paid vacations, no sick time, no personal days, and worst of all, no raises. That's all different here, and I'm thankful for the union. The union helps provide a better way of living, ensuring raises and paid time off. The union stands behind its members to ensure the job is secure and workers are treated fairly. By being a union member you have a voice on your side. For instance, I requested vacation time and was denied, so I spoke with a union representative, and we spoke with management, and I was able to handle the situation and get the vacation time I needed. As a single parent, I need the support of the union, and I'm thankful to have it.*



RWDSU Rep. Curtis Gray presents Raven Peoples with her scholarship award.



# RWDSU CONTRACT NEWS

## Fresh Mark Ohio



Members celebrate the strong new contract at Fresh Mark.

Over 750 workers at Fresh Mark, a meat processing plant in Massillon, Ohio, secured a four-year Agreement which includes wage increase and improvements in vacation pay. It's a strong contract at the plant, marking the first time that workers there have won an hourly increase for all 4 years. The increase in vacation pay is also the biggest they've ever received.

The new contract also keeps employee healthcare premiums at minimal levels, with no increases throughout the term of the contract. Workers at the plant make meat products including pre-cooked bacon, bacon bits, and vacuum sealed bacon. Restaurant chains like Wendy's are customers of Fresh Mark. ■

## Ecolab Southeast Council Georgia

When workers at EcoLab in McDonough, Georgia, joined the Southeast Council, their biggest reason was for a voice on the job and proper representation. Now, the new RWDSU members have used their voice to win their first union contract. Their contract includes numerous improvements and creates a strong foundation for future negotiations.

When EcoLab, a \$14 billion company, hired an anti-union attorney, the negotiating team knew it would be a battle. "It took months to grind out a contract, fighting for every sentence," said RWDSU Director of Collective Bargaining Allen Mayne. "The new deal includes very good wage increases, a ratification bonus and all the union protection language that the workers deserve," he added.

Workers at the plant manufacture chemicals including acids, sanitizers, preservatives and washroom soaps. There are 100 workers at the plant, and this is the second EcoLab plant to join the RWDSU, including the plant in Garland, Texas, where workers are represented by the RWDSU Tennessee District Council. ■



The new RWDSU members at EcoLab have won their first union contract.

## Bimbo New England Joint Board Vermont

A new five-year contract for Bimbo bakery warehouse workers in Vermont has been ratified. The new contract - unanimously ratified - brings workers good wage increases of 2.5 percent the first year and 2 percent in the subsequent four years, improved pension benefits, and an improved night differential. ■

## Aluma Systems Southeast Council Florida

Workers at Aluma Systems in Tampa, Florida, have won their first ever RWDSU contract, winning substantial improvements in wages, vacation, and holiday pay. One important element of the contract protects the rights of part-time workers. But most importantly, these workers now have a union voice, and a contract guaranteeing them better treatment.

Workers, who had previously been paid much less than workers at another Aluma outpost in Atlanta, will see hourly wage increases of \$3-\$4, greater healthcare contributions from the company, three additional holidays, and company provided uniforms. The company also agreed to hire second chance employees - people coming out of correctional facilities who are looking to rebuild their lives.

Southeast Council Secretary-Treasurer Greg Scandrett, said "The workers were tired of their unfair treatment and terrible pay and working conditions. They had no sick days, now they have six. No one could afford the healthcare insurance. Now everyone has insurance. This was a great victory and the workers deserved it for their solidarity. They voted 100 percent for the contract and 100 percent signed union cards to join the union." ■



RWDSU Rep. Mike Mesa and SEC Sec.-Treas. Greg Scandrett (black shirts kneeling down) with Aluma Systems workers, celebrating winning their first contract.



NEJB President Tina Buonaugurio (left) with Bimbo workers in Vermont.



# RWDSU CONTRACT NEWS

**American International College Local 566**  
Massachusetts

RWDSU members employed at American International College in Springfield, Massachusetts, perform maintenance and custodial duties at the school. Now, they'll see ten percent in wage increases over the life of a new three-year contract. The 37 members there will also see an increased night differential, increased pension benefits, secured time off, and other improvements. The negotiating committee also protected all existing benefits, making the new pact a very strong and secure contract. ■



The custodial workers at American International College will see wage and benefit improvements in their new contract.

**Wollaston Foundry Local 444**  
Massachusetts

RWDSU Local 444 members at Wollaston Foundry in Massachusetts ratified a new two-year contract with two percent annual wage increases. Members also received a \$400 bonus upon signing the contract, and most importantly, they will switch over to the RWDSU health and dental insurance plans. ■



NEJB Sec-Treas. Phil D'Arcangelo, Local 444 President Paul Mahabir, and NEJB President Tina Buonaugurio negotiated the new contract at Wollaston Foundry.

**Connor Corporation Local 835**  
Indiana

Workers at Connor Corporation in Fort Wayne, Indiana, a manufacturer and distributor of components for the automotive and home appliance industries, voted unanimously to approve a new three-year contract. The new pact includes \$1.50 in hourly wage increases over the life of the contract, and maintains the employees' health insurance coverage and pension benefits. The new contract also includes expanded non-discrimination language, improves the funeral leave, and establishes paid personal days for employees. Chief Steward Roger Humphrey and Indiana Joint Board President Dave Altman served on the negotiating committee. ■

**Carson Manufacturing Local 512**  
Indiana

RWDSU Local 512 members who work at Carson Manufacturing unanimously voted to accept a wage and benefit reopener that will give each worker a \$200 ratification bonus as well as an hourly wage increase. The contract also maintains the employees' union health and insurance coverage. RWDSU workers at Carson build switches for the HVAC industry, solder circuit boards for voting machines, and build siren assemblies for emergency vehicles.

Chief Steward Janet Muse and Indiana Joint Board President Dave Altman negotiated the reopener. ■

**New Milford Public Library Local 108**  
New Jersey

A new contract for Local 108 members employed at the Public Library in New Milford, New Jersey, contains substantial wage increases of 2.5 percent annually during the four-year pact. Another important element of the contract is protection of the health care and retirement plans for workers at the library. ■



(l to r) Local 108 Representative Jasper Parnell, and librarians Marie Elena Bochicchio and Lisa Sereno negotiated the contract.



# Don't Leave Earned Income Tax Credit Benefits Unclaimed

Working families who earn below a certain amount, or have children, may be able to receive tax breaks from the government. The Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC) is intended to lessen the burden on low-income families struggling to make ends meet. Families qualifying for tax credits will receive a rebate check from the IRS after taxes are paid. Even if taxes aren't owed, the benefit check can still be received, as long as taxes are filed.

Working men and women should look into these tax credits and make sure they are taking advantage of all of the tax breaks available to them. It's estimated that 20 percent of EITC benefits go unclaimed – if you are eligible, claim your benefits!

## Earned Income Tax Credit Aids Low-Income Families

Under the EIC program, working families earning up to \$48,340 can qualify for tax credits as high as \$6,318. Single or married people who worked full or part-time at some point in 2017 can qualify for the EIC, depending on their income.

A worker who supported two children in 2017 and earned up to \$45,007 can claim up to \$5,616.

Single workers without children, who earned less than \$15,010 can get an EIC of up to \$510. Workers who were raising one child in their home and had a family income of less than \$39,617 in 2017 can get an EIC of up to \$3,400.

The salary limits are higher if you are filing your taxes jointly.

For the EIC, "qualifying children" include sons, daughters, stepchildren, grandchildren and adopted children, as long as they lived with the taxpayer for more than half of 2017. Nieces, nephews, children of a friend or foster children can qualify if they lived with the taxpayer all year and were cared for as members of the family.

Children must be under the age of 19, or under 24 if they are full-time students. Totally and permanently disabled children of any age are also considered "qualifying children." A valid Social Security number is required for any child born before December 31, 2017.

## Child Tax Credit an Additional Help

The Child Tax Credit (CTC), passed in 1998, is also in place to aid working families. The

Number of Children	EITC up to	Income Limit (2017)
Three or more children	\$6,318	Less than \$48,340 (or less than \$53,930 for married workers)
Two children	\$5,616	Less than \$45,007 (or less than \$50,597 for married workers)
One child	\$3,400	Less than \$39,617 (or less than \$45,207 for married workers)
No children	\$510	Less than \$15,010 (or less than \$20,600 for married workers), ages 25 and 64

Earned Income Tax Credit benefits are available to a wide range of working people.

credit is worth up to \$1,000 per child under the age of 17. Unlike the EIC, credit is only received if needed for taxes, not if the amount of the credit surpasses the total income tax of the family.

Single or married parents may claim the CTC. Qualifying children must be under the age of 17 at the end of 2017, must be a U.S. citizen or resident alien, and must be claimed as a

dependant on the taxpayer's 2017 federal tax return. The dependant must be a son, daughter, adopted child, grandchild or stepchild. Foster children count if they are dependants and lived with the taxpayer the entire year.

## Claim Your Tax Breaks

Despite the availability of these benefits, millions of dollars worth of tax credits go unclaimed because families don't file for them. To receive the EIC, taxpayers must file either form 1040 or 1040A and attach schedule EIC. Married workers must file jointly, and workers without children can file any tax form. Just make sure to write "EIC" on the EIC line on the form.

The CTC can be obtained using the same 1040 and 1040A forms. To receive information from the IRS, call (800) 829-1040. This number can also be used to obtain information on the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance program. VITA is a program run by the IRS, and it can help clear up tax form confusion.

The CTC and EIC do not interfere with any other food stamp, welfare, Social Security, Medicaid or federal housing assistance programs. ■

## RWDSU Joins Coalition to Close Rikers, Fight Mass Incarceration

The RWDSU has joined JustLeadershipUSA's #CLOSErikers coalition, making the RWDSU the first union to support the long overdue closure of the violent and corrupt jails on Rikers Island in New York City. The RWDSU has been on the front lines of several historic civil rights and political battles and criminal justice reform is no different – and as a #CLOSErikers coalition member RWDSU will be a forceful voice for the long overdue closure of this violent facility.

The RWDSU is joining the coalition to actively change the criminal justice system and reduce crime and incarceration by helping people earn fair wages and build communities that offer real opportunities and meaningful alternatives to incarceration.

"For far too long Rikers Island has been a point of no return for so many young people. Their days, weeks, months and some-



time years of violent and needless detention there irreparably changes the course of their lives forever – it's a place that needs to close and we need to take the money wasted there and reinvest it in local communities," said RWDSU President Stuart Appelbaum. "No one should be detained in a facility like Rikers and we should work to build programs that reduce incarceration instead of building facilities that foster violence like the jails on Rikers Island."

JustLeadershipUSA is a national, member-driven advocacy organization that seeks to cut

the U.S. correctional population in half by 2030 by empowering people who have been directly impacted by the criminal justice system to drive criminal justice reform.

The #CLOSErikers campaign has the support of prominent leaders and figures including musician John Legend, author and activist Piper Kerman, and author and activist Kerry Kennedy, as well as the support of over 160 other advocacy organizations. For more information on #CLOSErikers, visit [www.closerikers.org](http://www.closerikers.org). ■

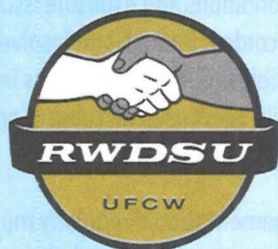


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# RWDSU HEALTH AND SAFETY GUIDE

## We Have the Strength to Make Our Workplaces Safer

**O**ur union has been a leader in its commitment to workplace health and safety because of our basic value that life is precious, and no one should have to sacrifice their health for their paycheck. We know that work-related injuries can be prevented when there is a will to do so.

We have always supported OSHA because its existence established both the public health importance of workplace health and safety, and the critical need to improve it. But we also know that OSHA has been drastically underfunded since its creation in 1971. OSHA is only a part of the picture. Today it has fewer inspectors than it did in 1980, and vacancies at the agency are not being filled. It would take OSHA well over 100 years to inspect all the workplaces it is responsible for.

The challenge of fewer outside resources is our opportunity to make safety at our workplaces more successful than ever, through more effective use of the internal knowledge, experience, and commitment we already have. No one knows our workplaces as well as we do. And no one cares about returning home safely more than we do.

### Hazards

First let's recognize the culprit: Hazards. Injuries at work are caused by our exposure to hazards. If there were no hazards, there would be no injuries. Hazards are not lost hearing, painful arms, cuts, respiratory problems or burns. They are the things which cause these problems: noise, knives, machinery, toxic chemicals, repetitive work etc. We need to keep our eyes on the prize which is reducing or eliminating hazards in our workplaces. Various personal protective equipment may provide a barrier between us and a hazard, but they never reduce the hazard itself.



Secondly, we need to document hazardous conditions and exposures. Pictures are best if permissible. Written notes or a reporting form are useful too. We need an established means of internal communication so that all members know how to report their hazard concerns. And we need to identify individuals in our workplaces who are willing to coordinate health and safety related activity.

Good communication is critical. Members need to know what issues have been raised and how they can help to get them resolved successfully.

Employers control the what, why, how, and when work is done in our workplaces. That is why they have the legal responsibility to maintain workplaces which are free from recognized hazards that are causing or likely to cause death or serious physical harm. Unlike wages and benefits, our employers frequently say they are committed to continually work to improve employee safety. But talk can be

cheap. Is employee safety really as important as production at their workplace? We need to hold our employers responsible on safety.

### Good Policies for Preventing Injuries

There should be regular joint meetings on health and safety and workers should be encouraged to report hazard exposure concerns and be involved in all safety audits and investigations of injuries and "near miss" incidents.

Hazardous conditions and exposure issues should be recorded, tracked, and resolved as soon as possible. Injury and near miss investigations should be focused on prevention rather than discipline.

Plant management should regularly monitor their supervisors to ensure their full support and implementation of company safety policies and work practices, and they should eval-

uate them on their safety performance. Workers should be encouraged to report all injuries, and the company will not discriminate against them for doing so.

Workers' Compensation benefits can be very important to our injured brothers and sisters when prevention has failed. We should encourage them to apply and support the claim throughout the process. Their lawyer may take care of the legal issues, but the experience can be very stressful and frustrating. They need to know that they are not forgotten and that we continue to care about their wellbeing.

### Using Our Union Power

Being in a union affords us many opportunities to significantly improve our workplace health and safety. "At will" workers likely would get nowhere trying to implement the employer policies suggested above. Under the National Labor Relations Act, we have the right to information that goes beyond what the OSHA law requires. And we have the right to negotiate about workplace conditions. Let's work to put meaningful health and safety provisions in our future contracts.

We also have a grievance procedure. Let's not be afraid to use it. Many unions resolve safety issues more successfully and in a much shorter time through grievances, rather than relying on the OSHA inspection process. And as we know, many serious hazard issues in our workplaces (ex. excessive lifting, line speed, temperature, indoor air quality, workplace violence, harassment) are not covered by any OSHA standards.

As we come together for our convention let's work to expand our communication within the union about health and safety issues. We need to share our concerns, information and, most importantly, our successes in winning a better, safer work environment. ■

### More Information

For more information about health and safety issues affecting poultry workers or other health and safety concerns, contact the RWDSU Health and Safety Department at (212) 684-5300. ■