

UFCW Joins Department of Labor and Mexican Embassy in Innovative Labor Rights Week Initiative



President Hansen and Mexican Consul General of Chicago, Manuel Rodríguez Arriaga (center) at the kick-off of Labor Rights Week in Chicago.

International President Joe Hansen joined the Mexican Consul General of Chicago, Manuel Rodríguez Arriaga, and local community leaders yesterday in Chicago to launch “Semana de Derechos Laborales,” or Labor Rights Week, a national outreach and education program.

Semana de Derechos Laborales is a partnership between the UFCW, the Embassy of Mexico, and the U.S. Department of Labor and allied organizations. The activities will continue through September 4 and will focus on the inclusion of Mexican nationals in American workplaces and communities. The program includes workshops and informational sessions on labor, immigration, and human rights.

“Our communities and neighborhoods are better, safer places to work and live when all workers know and exercise their rights,” Hansen said. “*Semana de Derechos Laborales* is a perfect way to empower Mexican national workers with information and promote full participation in the civic fabric of our nation. The UFCW has been a union of immigrants for more

The UFCW is holding several Labor Day events around the country next week. Go to www.ufcw.org/labor_day_events.cfm to keep up-to-date with events and campaigns that renew our commitment to workers' rights. Due to the Labor Day holiday, the next issue of *OnPoint* will be available on Wednesday, September 9, 2009

than 100 years and this week's program helps ensure that a new generation of workers has the resources to have their voice heard on the job.”

UFCW local unions—including locals 5, 99, 135, 540, 770, 881, 1500, and 1996—participated in Labor Rights Week kick off ceremonies across the country, and will be working with consulate offices across the country on a variety of programs suited for their communities. **OP**

UFCW Challenges Walmart to Live Up to American Values

Executive Vice President and Director of Organizing Pat O'Neill today announced a new national comprehensive values-driven agenda to challenge Walmart to live up to American values.

The UFCW was joined by Nelson Lichtenstein, author of *The Retail Revolution: How Walmart Created a Brave New World of Business*; Kim Bobo, Executive Director of Interfaith Worker Justice; and a broad coalition of labor, consumer, environmental and community groups calling on Walmart to support core American values of worker rights, quality jobs, equal opportunity, corporate responsibility and a healthy environment.

“So we challenge Walmart to work with us---labor, civil rights, women's, minority and faith organizations---to develop a code of conduct for Walmart to protect the rights of workers consistent with legal and human rights standards that promote the economic well-being of working families and communities,” said O'Neill.

“When a company gets to be as big as Walmart and employs so many workers – more than any other private enterprise in the world – it is no longer a ‘private’ entity,” said Lichtenstein, a professor of history at the University of California, Santa Barbara, and a leading expert on business, labor and politics.

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“It sets the wage and benefit standard for every other mass retailer and influences the business practices of just about every firm in America’s huge service sector. So Walmart is part of this country’s debate: on health care, wages, equal employment, and the role of trade unionism in our democracy,” Lichtenstein added.

As a part of the launch, WakeUpWalmart.com is releasing two new TV ads calling on Walmart to offer quality, affordable health care coverage to all its employees. Both ads highlight Walmart’s failure to cover 700,000 of its employees, nearly half of its workforce. You can view the ads at <http://www.wakeupwalmart.com/feature/commonsense/>.

For more information on the campaign, go to www.wakeupwalmart.com. **OP**

UFCW Continues Push to Inform Customers about Whole Foods CEO’s Position on Health Care Reform

UFCW members and staff continue to handbill Whole Foods customers in stores across the country to make sure they are aware of Whole Foods CEO John Mackey’s attempts to undermine health care reform.

Numerous UFCW Locals have taken action to combat Mackey’s extremist ideology that health care is not an inherent right. These locals are: 21, 75, 99, 135, 324, 371, 400, 648, 711, 770, 1059, 1442, 1445, 1500, 1564, 23, 27, 227, 653, 655, 700, 789, 1473, 1625, 1994, and 1996.

You can view pictures of UFCW members and staff in action at Whole Foods stores around the country at www.mackeysgottago.org. Just click on the flickr link on the main page to watch the slideshow. The Web site has more information on the campaign and includes a link to Mackey’s op-ed. **OP**

Former UFCW Employee Named Chief of Staff at OSHA

Deborah E. Berkowitz, the former UFCW Health and

Safety director, has been named chief of staff at the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA).

Berkowitz led the UFCW Occupational Safety and Health Office from 1989 to 1998. Her natural leadership qualities and encyclopedic knowledge of workplace safety and health were tremendous assets to UFCW members.

In her new position as a senior member of the agency’s management team, Berkowitz is responsible for giving instruction from the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Labor to OSHA’s office directors.

She is the latest of several former UFCW officials tapped to serve in the Obama administration. **OP**



UFCW Local 555 and unions throughout the state of Oregon joined together in downtown Portland this past weekend to say, “Health Care Can’t Wait!” The HCAN event was well attended by hundreds of community supporters and activists seeking to focus attention on the need for universal health care. **OP**