

UFCW Locals 1776, 27, 1994 and 400 Help Lead Historic 136-Mile March for Health Care Reform



Local 1776 members and staff at the send-off rally in Philadelphia last Wednesday.

UFCW Locals between Philadelphia and Washington, D.C. have mobilized their members in support of Health Care for America Now's (HCAN) march for health care reform.

The 136-mile march from Philadelphia to Washington, D.C., named Melanie's March in honor of health care activist Melanie Shouse who succumbed to her battle with breast cancer because of lack of affordable health insurance, will culminate with a visit to Congress tomorrow Wednesday, February 24, 2010.

"We are going to D.C. to send a message to Congress that we won't be deterred and that we want health care for all now," said Local 1776 Political Director John Meyerson at the send-off rally last Wednesday in Philadelphia.

From Philadelphia, Pa., to Wilmington, Del., to Newark, N.J., to Havre de Grace, Joppa, Baltimore and College Park in Maryland, UFCW members turned out at rallies and other events to support the marchers and to send a clear message to Congress that they must get health care done and get it done right.

You can support the marchers by joining a virtual march for health care reform. Log on to <http://ufcw.blogspot.com/>. Click on 'Join the Virtual March' and fill in your information. A fax will be sent to your Senator on your behalf. You will also get a reminder to call Congress tomorrow as the marchers arrive in Washington, D.C. **OP**

Unionization Increases Overall Compensation, New Study Finds

A report released earlier this month by the Center for Economic and Policy Research (CEPR) in Washington, D.C. found that in the typical state, unionization leads to an increase of about 15 percent in hourly wages (roughly \$2.50 per hour).

The Unions of the States, which focuses on the period 2003-2009, is based on reviews of unionization rates, the size and composition of the unionized workforce, and the wage and benefit advantage for union workers in each of the 50 states and the District of Columbia. Further findings of the report include:

- Unionization leads to a 19 percent increase in the likelihood of having employer-provided health insurance.
- Unionization leads to a 24 percent increase in the likelihood of having employer-sponsored retirement plans.
- Unionization rates vary substantially across the states, from five percent in South and North Carolina, to over 25 percent in New York and Hawaii.

You can read the full report at <http://www.cepr.net/documents/publications/unions-states-2010-02.pdf>. **OP**



This past Wednesday, members of UFCW Local 648 in San Francisco, Calif., helped deliver more than 150,000 servings of protein to the San Francisco Food Bank. The UFCW donation last week was part of the joint UFCW/Smithfield coast-to-coast "Feeding the Hungry" tour to help address the need for hunger relief in the country. Food Network celebrity cook, Paula Deen, along with volunteers from the Food Bank helped unload the donation. The UFCW/Smithfield tour plans to deliver 20 million servings of much-needed protein to food banks around the country over the next three years. **OP**

Join WakeUpWalmart.com and Give Walmart a Demerit Badge



WakeUpWalmart.com has partnered with Momsrising.com, an organization dedicated to building a worker and family friendly America, to raise awareness about the negative effects of Walmart's sick day policies.

In the wake of the recent H1N1 influenza outbreak last year, it became apparent that Walmart's policies are not conducive to a productive and healthy work environment. In fact, the company ignored government recommendations to let H1N1 victims stay at home without being punished. Such policies create a hostile environment in which workers feel they have to make a choice between spreading the flu and keeping their jobs.

The Demerit Walmart campaign is building a movement of hundreds of thousands of people, including Walmart customers and employees, to stand up to the company and demand that they do the right thing for their own employees and for the customers they serve.

To give Walmart a demerit badge, log on to http://blog.wakeupwalmart.com/ufcw/2009/11/give_walmart_th.html. You can also sign a petition which will be delivered to Walmart Headquarters, along with real demerit badges for the company executives. **OP**

REMINDER: Upcoming UFCW Legislative and Political Conference

An important legislative and political conference will be held from **Monday, March 15 to Thursday, March 18, 2010**, at the **Capital Hilton Hotel, 1001 Sixteenth Street, NW, Washington, D.C. 20036**.

The UFCW: A Union with a Proud African American Tradition



Rev. Martin Luther King, Jr. at a 1957 UPWA Conference

Black History Month is a time of remembrance, and UFCW members can take pride in the rich history of our union's involvement in the African American Civil Rights Movement.

The United Packing Workers of America (UPWA), one of the precursor unions of today's UFCW, was one of the most powerful and progressive worker organizations seen in the history of the labor movement.

The UPWA was at the forefront of union support for the struggle for racial equality: UPWA districts and locals passed resolutions supporting the 1956 Montgomery Bus Boycott; the UPWA attended the founding meeting of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) in 1957; in addition, the UPWA and its members provided funding to support the work of the SCLC, and they also actively participated in telegram and letter-writing campaigns, and the 1963 March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom.

It is no surprise that the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr., addressing the 1962 UPWA Annual Convention, said: "If labor as a whole, if the administration in Washington matched your concern and your deeds, the civil rights problem would not be a burning national issue, but a problem long solved, and in its solution a luminous accomplishment in the best tradition of American principles." **OP**