

Fred Meyer Workers Form Wall-to-Wall Union with UFCW Local 21



Burlington, Wash. Fred Meyer workers celebrate their union victory.

Non-food retail workers at Kroger-owned Fred Meyer stores in Burlington and Bremerton, Wash. recently voted for a real voice at work with Local 21. During elections held January 22 and April 23 in the 80-worker units, the workers voted 2 to 1 to stand with their grocery co-workers for representation with Local 21, despite an anti-union campaign by Kroger management.

“Now that we have our union we are not going to be second class employees anymore,” said Fred Meyer worker and organizing committee member Barbara Copley. “Management has to listen to us. We are excited to join our grocery co-workers and have fairness for everyone in the store. Being treated with fairness and respect is what a union is all about.”

Workers at these two Fred Meyer stores will immediately join their co-workers in ongoing contract negotiations. **OP**

Value World Workers Choose a Union Voice on the Job with UFCW Local 876

Workers at Value World, a 13-store Michigan chain of thrift stores, have begun to stand together to form a union with Local 876. The first 30-worker unit of this

company to ever be organized voted “Union Yes” on March 5.

Local 876 continues to organize workers at other Value World stores across Michigan. Local 876 also reports that a recent electoral victory at a CVS store in their jurisdiction, but celebrations are on hold as the company has filed legal appeals to deny these workers their union voice. **OP**

Local 23 Members Protest Walmart & Tell Shoppers: Support Our Local Stores



More than 150 members and supporters of UFCW Local 23 gathered outside a Pittsburgh Walmart for a “Shop Local, Shop Union” rally last Tuesday.

As Local 23 begins bargaining with Pittsburgh, Pa. grocery powerhouse Giant Eagle, members and their supporters from the community decided to demonstrate their support for local union grocery workers.

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“Giant Eagle is a regional employer. The money that is spent in their stores stays in the community and the majority of its employees, our members, have collective bargaining rights,” said Local 23 President Tony Helfer.

“Walmart, on the other hand, sends its money to Bentonville, Arkansas then overseas to countries like China and basically has a take it or leave it policy with its employees. Collective bargaining rights are nonexistent.”

For Local 23 member Deb Wieloch, it was even simpler. “I have been a proud member of Local 23 for 34 years,” she said. “I believe we all have a right to decent living wages and respect in the work place. I believe in us, the union”. **OP**

Sears Outlet Store Workers Get Union Voice with UFCW Local 152



Sears Outlet Store workers with UFCW 152 organizers outside their store in Deptford, N.J.

Fifteen workers at the Sears Outlet Store in Deptford, N.J. were victorious in their campaign to form a union with an overwhelming pro-representation vote with Local 152 on April 29.

The organizing effort began with Sam Rocco, former President of UFCW Local 1360, who is now working at the Sears store. He started talking with his coworkers and then approached Local 152.

“It was a pretty intense anti-union campaign,” said Local 152 President Brian String. “But the committee stuck together and made it clear that they wanted a union. We’re confident we’ll be able to negotiate a good contract.” **OP**

Locals 789 and 1360 Stand with Striking Shaw’s Workers

Local 789 in South Saint Paul, Minn. and Local 1360 in Berlin, N.J. have joined their UFCW colleagues across the country to stand with striking Shaw’s workers in Methuen, Mass. President Don Seaquist of Local 789 and Sam Ferraino, Jr. of Local 1360 have sent letters to Supervalu CEO Craig Herkert expressing their disapproval of Shaw’s callous behavior that forced Local 791’s members out on strike. To send your own letter to Herkert visit www.JusticeAt-Shaws.org. **OP**

Food Bazaar Workers in Bridgeport, Conn. Join UFCW Local 371

A majority of workers at a newly opened Food Bazaar in Bridgeport Conn. signed authorization cards and were subsequently recognized by the company as having joined UFCW Local 371. When the store is fully up and running, Local 371 will represent between 150 and 180 full and part time workers. The Bridgeport Food Bazaar is the first location for this grocery chain in Conn., but workers at at least five locations in New York are already represented by UFCW Local 342.

“Local 342 was instrumental in getting Connecticut workers and Local 371 to the table with Food Bazaar,” said Brian Petronella, International Vice President and President of Local 371. “Together we negotiated how we could bring Connecticut workers the same union voice on the job as their co-workers in New York. Close to the opening of the store, Food Bazaar allowed our organizers access and we signed up members. We are looking forward to growing with this company as they expand in this state,” Petronella said.

Contract negotiations begin on Thursday, May 13. **OP**

UFCW Locals Give Nearly a Half Million to Rebuild Schools in Haiti



International Vice President/Executive Assistant to the President Christyne Neff and Joseph Dorismond, Organizer, RWDSU Council of the UFCW, present a donation check to Dr. Rodrigue Mortel (center), founder of the Mortel Family Foundation.

When the devastating earthquake struck Haiti earlier this year, millions were moved to make generous donations. Because of these swift acts of generosity, dozens of international relief organizations were able to act to bring the Haitian people their most basic and immediate needs—food, water, shelter, and medical care. Today, Haitians face a long road to recovery, but they are working to rebuild their infrastructure, their country and their lives.

Immediately after the earthquake, UFCW local unions and members from around the country pledged generous funds for Haiti relief. Contributing locals include 1, 5, 8GS, 21, 23, 27, 38, 75, 99, 108*, 135, 324, 328, 338*, 371, 400, 455, 464A, 540, 555, 648, 653, 655, 700, 770, 876, 881, 919, 1059, 1167, 1262, 1428, 1445, 1459, 1473, 1500, 1546, 1776, 1994, 1995 and 1996 along with the Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Workers Council and the International Chemical Workers Union Council; Regions 2, 4, 5, and 6; the District Council of New York/New Jersey, the New England States Council, the Mid-Atlantic Regional Council and the Loveall Foundation. Together, we raised more than \$430,000.

UFCW local unions decided to work together with two organizations: The Mortel Family Charitable Foundation and Hope for Haiti, both of whom are working to rebuild or expand schools in devastated parts of the country.

According to a recent UN report, even before the earthquake, only 50 percent of Haitian children were able to attend elementary school. Of those, only 20 percent go on to secondary school. For children living in abject poverty access to any school is extremely limited.

Through the Mortel Family Charitable Foundation, UFCW funds will support the building of a computer lab and library with complete furnishings on the second floor of James Stine College, a high school in St. Marc, Haiti, an area where thousands of Haitians have migrated since the earthquake. The school will provide quality secondary education to poor Haitian children who have completed elementary education in the city and neighboring towns and parishes.

Through Hope for Haiti, the UFCW is also supporting the rebuilding of a computer lab and library at St. Francois de Sales in the neighborhood of Riviere Froide, commune of Carrefour, Port-au-Prince. Before the earthquake, the school provided education to more than 1,350 students in the kindergarten, primary, and secondary levels. Carrefour is near the epicenter of the earthquake, and the school was reduced to rubble. UFCW funds are being matched by Hope for Haiti so that the entire project can be completed.

For more information about these organizations, please visit www.hopeforhaiti.com and www.highhopesforhaiti.org (Mortel Family Charitable Foundation).

If your members would like to donate to the fund that will support these efforts, please make a check payable to the UFCW Charity Foundation, Inc. Write in the memo that the check is for UFCW Help for Haiti, and send it to: Help for Haiti, UFCW International Union, 1775 K Street, NW, Washington, DC 20006. **OP**