



## Merger of Two UFCW Locals Strengthens Voice for Worker Rights

Members of UFCW 21 and UFCW 81 have overwhelmingly approved a merger of the two locals. The merger goes into effect on April 1, 2011.

After the merger, UFCW 21 will have over 37,000 members in Washington State working in grocery store, retail, health care, meat processing and other industry jobs.

UFCW 81 members bring additional strength to UFCW 21, in particular by adding over 1,500 meat cutters and wrappers with a long tradition of union activism.

“We have already proven the power of taking action collectively,” said Dave Schmitz, President of UFCW 21. “With the attack on worker rights at a fever pitch across the nation, now is a very important time for us to unite and give more strength to the voice of workers across America. This merger helps in that effort.”

“This merger brings even greater efficiency to our members – allowing us to provide better organizing, communications, and negotiations to protect the rights of workers,” said Mike Williams, President of UFCW 81 who becomes a Vice President of UFCW 21 and Director of a newly created Meat Division.

For more information go to [www.ufcw21.org](http://www.ufcw21.org) **OP**

## Thousands Attend Los Angeles Labor Rally

On Saturday, March 26, in what was the largest action led by L.A. labor in recent history, more than 20,000 people, including members from UFCW Locals 5, 324, 770, 1167, 1428, and 1442, took to the streets of downtown Los Angeles to demand good jobs and stand with workers in Wisconsin and other states fighting to protect collective bargaining.

Carrying signs and banners to “Stop the War on Workers” and “Stand with Wisconsin Workers,” tens of thousands of construction workers, hotel workers, fire fighters, city, county, and state workers, truck drivers, grocery workers,

telecommunications workers, nurses, homecare workers, farm workers, actors, musicians, camera operators, teachers, parents, students, faith leaders, immigrants, community members, and more filled the streets for more than a half mile.



Six international union leaders, including UFCW President Joe Hansen, marched with their members and rallied the massive crowds.

To see news coverage from the rally, go to [http://www.nbclausangeles.com/on-air/as-seen-on/Labor\\_Rally\\_in\\_Downtown\\_LA\\_Los\\_Angeles-118719524.html](http://www.nbclausangeles.com/on-air/as-seen-on/Labor_Rally_in_Downtown_LA_Los_Angeles-118719524.html) **OP**

## UFCW Members in Ohio Resist Anti-Worker Agenda

On March 23, nearly 150 UFCW members from across Ohio joined together at the statehouse in Columbus to lobby their state legislators on issues affecting working families.

Members from UFCW Locals 1059, 75, RWDSU, and the Chemical Workers Council visited nearly 60 State Representatives and around 30 State Senators, talking with lawmakers about SB 5, HB159, and HB61, all harmful pieces of legislation that attack Ohio working families.

Later in the day, Local 75 was recognized on the Senate floor, and several representatives, including Representa-



tive Connie Pillich and Representative Mike Foley stopped by to join UFCW members during lunch and thank them for their hard work.



With the passage of SB 5 on March 29, the pressure on Ohio's middle class is growing and it is more important than ever to let lawmakers know UFCW members oppose the anti-worker agenda that threatens to take root in our communities.

You can see pictures from UFCW's lobby day here: <http://ufcw.blogspot.com/2011/03/nearly-150-ufcw-members-converge-in.html> **OP**

## White House, Department of Labor Event Celebrate Women Organizers

On March 28, in commemoration of the 100th anniversary of the tragic Triangle Shirtwaist Factory fire, the White House and Department of Labor hosted a forum with women workers and organizers, discussing their courageous roles in organizing their workplaces.

U.S. Secretary of Labor Hilda Solis and Valerie B. Jarrett, Senior Advisor to the President and Chair of the White House Council on Women and Girls, were joined by women who are currently working to organize their workplaces, including Ernestine Bassett, a Walmart Associate from Laurel, Maryland.

"We are still fighting to provide adequate working conditions for all women and men on the job, ensure that no person within our borders is exploited for their labor, and uphold collective bargaining as a means to give workers a seat at the tables of power," said President Obama in a

proclamation released at the event.

"I am committed, despite significant intimidation from my employer, to winning respect for my fellow associates at Walmart," said Ernestine Bassett. "We are organizing to ensure safety and a better life for all Walmart associates."

To watch video from the event, go to: <http://ufcw.blogspot.com/2011/03/video-walmart-worker-ernestine-bassett.html> **OP**

## Supervalu Court Order Remedies Disability Discrimination

An Illinois federal court recently ordered SuperValu, Inc. to remedy alleged disability discriminatory practices at its Illinois, Indiana, and Wisconsin Jewel stores. These remedies can be applied to other SuperValu facilities and companies nationwide.

The court order resolved claims that SuperValu violated the Americans with Disabilities Act by prohibiting workers who were on or eligible for one-year paid disability leave from returning to work unless they were 100 percent healed and firing workers who were unable to return 100 percent healed. The decree eliminates SuperValu's 100 percent healed policy and requires these stores to reasonably accommodate disabled workers who need accommodations in order to return to work. SuperValu must also modify job descriptions to remove unnecessary strenuous physical demands. Additionally, these facilities must inform employees of possible accommodations to common physical limitations employees experience following injuries so they may be able to return to work with medical restrictions.

Unions can use the terms imposed on SuperValu's mid-west stores as authority to eliminate the discriminatory 100 percent healed rules found in bargaining agreements nationwide. Unions can also bargain with employers to make jobs no more strenuous than necessary to successfully perform them, and to identify reasonable accommodations for employees who return to work with medical restrictions. Furthermore, unions can assist unorganized workers in fighting these discriminatory employment conditions. **OP**