

## Guitar Center Workers in New York City Vote to Join RWDSU



*Guitar Center workers in Manhattan voted to join the RWDSU and will negotiate for better wages and working conditions.*

Guitar Center workers at the flagship store in Manhattan have voted to join the RWDSU. The 57 workers will press the company for improved working conditions and a reversal of declining wages. This vote marks the first in a series of anticipated union votes at Guitar Center stores around New York City and potentially the rest of the country.

Workers approached RWDSU in late 2012 complaining of worsening compensation, which they said came mainly in the form of falling sales commissions.

“I’m earning significantly less than I used to,” says Brendon Clark, 28, a sales associate at the 14th Street store. After four years with the company, Clark makes roughly \$11 an hour. “During bad months, I’ve had to sell my instruments and max out credit cards to make rent.”

Bain Capital, the private equity firm co-founded in 1984 by Mitt Romney, owns Guitar Center. In the past, Bain has been accused of overly aggressive tactics to obstruct unions.

Sales associate Anim Arnold, says that after workers filed for a vote to join the RWDSU last month, management gathered employees in daily meetings to warn of the dangers of certifying a union. “It felt like reeducation,” says Arnold.

Workers at two other New York Guitar Center stores located in Brooklyn and Queens are holding elections to join the RWDSU next month. **OP**

## Walmart Workers Strike to End Illegal Retaliation: OUR Walmart Members “Ride for Respect”



*OUR Walmart members travel to Walmart headquarters with their nationwide “Ride for Respect.”*

In protest of Walmart’s illegal efforts to silence the growing calls for a change of course at the country’s largest company, Walmart associates walked off the job in California’s Bay Area, Massachusetts, and Miami, while their co-workers in towns and cities across the country are pledging to do the same.

With community leaders rallying in support of workers at their stores and online, the group is beginning their nationwide “Ride for Respect” to take their protests to executives and shareholders at the company’s annual meeting in Bentonville, Ark. In the spirit of the civil rights movement, the “Ride for Respect” is a week long, nationwide caravan during which workers and supporters will be voicing the direct impact that Walmart is having on their lives and the economy.

Over the next few days, the “Ride for Respect” will stop in nearly 30 cities, including Seattle, Los Angeles, the Bay Area, Miami, Orlando, Washington, D.C., Chicago, Cincinnati, and Denver, before arriving in Bentonville on Saturday. Across the country UFCW locals are supporting the OUR Walmart strikers on their historic journey. From handling logistics and hosting rallies to supplying strikers with supplies and sponsoring dinners, UFCW Local unions and active members are showing their solidarity with the strikers.

Despite Walmart workers’ struggle to support their families, plummeting customer service ratings and weak store sales due to understaffing, and preventable tragedies in the supply chain, Walmart has attempted to silence workers’ voices through illegal retaliation, meritless lawsuits, and even firing workers.



*The “Ride for Respect” will stop in nearly 30 cities before arriving in Bentonville, Arkansas on Saturday.*

detailing Walmart’s extensive and systematic efforts to silence associates who speak out for better jobs – including aggressive litigation tactics and more than 150 documented incidents in stores across the country.

In May, OUR Walmart filed nearly 30 federal labor charges against the retailer, including against the illegal firings of two longtime associates, Vanessa Ferriera and Carlton Smith.

“Walmart needs to honor its public commitments about hours and staffing, rather than trying to silence us with lawsuits and threats. We’re on strike and taking our concerns directly to Walmart executives and shareholders because we cannot continue to let Walmart try to intimidate and silence committed associates,” said Dominic Ware, a Walmart associate from Oakland, Calif.

In less than two years, OUR Walmart has grown from a group of 100 Walmart workers to an army of thousands of associates in 600 hundred stores across 46 states. In the last year alone, OUR Walmart chapters have grown by 25 percent nationwide.

Regular updates and photos on the “Ride for Respect” campaign can be found on Twitter at **#Walmartstrikers** and <http://bit.ly/uX3gRR>. A petition to support workers can be signed at <http://bit.ly/1awIxf>. **OP**

“Walmart is one company and it’s the largest employer because of us – the associates and customers. We need to stand up and let them know that what they are doing is not okay and we are taking a stand,” said Barbara Gertz, a Denver, Colo., Walmart worker.

Last week, American Rights at Work/Jobs with Justice released a white paper

## President Hansen Announces New LGBT Constituency Group



*OUTreach is the new LGBT constituency group for the UFCW and is now accepting members.*

In a letter to local unions sent late last week, UFCW International President Joe Hansen announced the formation of a new constituency group—UFCW OUTreach.

According to its mission statement, OUTreach is “dedicated to building mutual support between our union’s International, regions, and locals and the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) community and their allies in order to come together to organize for social and economic justice for all, regardless of age, race, gender, creed, color, sexual orientation, or gender identity.”

“UFCW members care about equality for the LGBT community, whether it affects them, members of their family, or those in their circle of friends,” the letter read. “UFCW’s clear and strong advocacy of LGBT equality, in the workplace and out, assures those members their union is fighting for the issues that matter.”

UFCW OUTreach is now accepting members (a membership application is attached to the end of On Point) in anticipation of electing inaugural officers and being fully operational by the UFCW International Convention in Chicago this August.

“This is a historic time in the fight for LGBT equality,” Hansen wrote, referencing recent victories in the United States and Canada. “UFCW OUTreach can play an important role in ensuring this progress continues.” **OP**

## UFCW Statement on Smithfield Foods Purchase by Shuanghui International of China



*Shuanghui International of China plans to purchase Smithfield Foods in the United States.*

The following statement by UFCW International President Joe Hansen is in response to Shuanghui International of China's plan to purchase Smithfield Foods.

"As the representative of more than 16,000 Smithfield Foods workers in 14 states, the UFCW is pleased that current Smithfield management will stay in place and that all collective bargaining agreements will continue to provide strong wage and benefits for Smithfield workers following the sale.

"The UFCW has a strong labor-management relationship with Smithfield. Our union has productive relationships with other foreign-owned companies in the food industry including Marfrig, Nestle, JBS, Unilever and others. We intend to work with Smithfield's new owners to build on that same spirit of open dialogue and cooperation.

"We will watch the required regulatory process that oversees this proposed sale very carefully to make sure the interests of worker in the pork industry are protected and supported.

"The Chinese market for fresh pork is a rapidly exploding market and this purchase reflects that country's economic need for high quality, U.S.-made pork. The UFCW is pleased that workers in our communities can benefit from the growth and expansion of the U.S. pork industry." **OP**

## UFCW Local 227 Tyson Workers Vote to Ratify New Contract



*Tyson workers from UFCW Local 227 in Kentucky ratified a new four-year contract.*

Recently, UFCW Local 227 Tyson workers in Robards, Ky., overwhelmingly voted to ratify a new contract. The four-year contract covers over 1,300 workers at the poultry processing plant.

In a major win for workers, members stuck together and managed to protect their healthcare when the company sought to have the ability to delete it from the contract. The contract also includes wage increases. **OP**

Continue to the Next Page for  
OUTreach Membership  
Application



# MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

**PLEASE PRINT**

Name

Address

City

State/Province

Zip/Postal Code

UFCW Local Union No.

Region No.

Occupation and Work Location

Email Address

Home Phone

Cell Phone

YES, I would like to receive UFCW text message updates.  
(UFCW does not charge for text messages, but your cell phone carriers' message and data rates may apply.)

Eligibility for membership in UFCW OUTreach is proof of membership in good standing with a UFCW local union or employed by the UFCW or affiliated local union.

## MEMBERSHIP

- Rank and File Member .....  \$15 for one year
- UFCW Staff.....  \$50 for one year
- UFCW Retired Staff.....  \$25 for one year

**Attach your check made out to "UFCW OUTReach" to this form and mail to:**

UFCW OUTreach  
c/o Jay Pascucci  
1775 K Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20006-1598