

## Bestway Workers Win Union Recognition with UFCW Local 400



*Bestway grocery workers in Virginia went back to work after being illegally fired in retaliation for forming a union.*

On Monday, 31 workers at a Bestway supermarket in Falls Church, Virginia, went back to work after being illegally fired in retaliation for forming a union. The workers picketed their store for more than ten days before reaching an agreement with Bestway last week to reinstate the workers and begin negotiations for their first union contract.

“We are so happy to be going back to work today,” said Matilde Reyes, a veteran worker who has been with Bestway for more than 13 years. “Bestway has agreed to respect us and follow the laws that protect workers’ rights. I can’t wait for the day when workers at all Bestway Supermercados get the same rights that we now have at our store.”

The workers at the Bestway store formed a union in late September, with the overwhelming majority of store employees signing cards to join UFCW Local 400. But Bestway ignored the workers’ requests to recognize their union and set bargaining dates. Instead, the company engaged in systematic illegal retaliation against union supporters by cutting hours, changing schedules, holding one-on-one interrogation meetings, and threatening to call immigration on the workers, among other scare tactics.

Workers staged a one hour work stoppage on October 9 to protest the retaliation and Bestway’s failure to recognize the union. Bestway retaliated against its staff again, and fired 31 workers, an action that violated national labor laws.

But the workers refused to back down, staging a daily picket line outside the store to educate customers on the unfair treatment

and violations of labor law. After seeing a noticeable decrease in business, Bestway reached an agreement with workers on Friday to reinstate all terminated workers, recognize UFCW Local 400 as their union, provide back pay to terminated workers, and begin contract negotiations with workers this week.

“This has always been about respect and dignity on the job,” said Nerida Castro, a Bestway worker whose two daughters walked the picket line with her. “My girls saw the power people can have when we stand together for what’s right. I did this for them.”

Carlos Hernandez, who works in the seafood department, credited the support of the local community for convincing Bestway to recognize the workers’ union. “Our customers were really on our side. So many customers turned their cars around after hearing our stories. It’s their actions that helped convince management to listen to us. I want to thank each and every one of our customers and I look forward to seeing them back at Bestway now that we are a union shop.”

The workers will begin bargaining with Bestway this week to negotiate a union contract that ensures that the store complies with all labor regulations and provides living wages and benefits. **OP**



## Grocery Workers Avert Strikes and Reach Tentative Agreement with Grocery Chains



*Grocery workers from UFCW Locals 21, 367, and Teamsters 38 averted a strike and reached a tentative agreement with four companies.*

Yesterday, Seattle-area grocery workers from UFCW Locals 21, 367, and Teamsters 38 reached a tentative agreement in contract negotiations with the national grocery chains Albertsons, QFC, Fred Meyer, and Safeway. The tentative agreement was unanimously recommended by the union member bargaining team. Ratification votes will take place in the coming days after arrangements have been made to schedule the votes. **OP**

## OUR Walmart Members Support Workers' Strike in Miami

Last Friday, over 80 Walmart workers frustrated by low-wages, poor working conditions and perceived mistreatment by management, walked off the job at a Miami-area store. The strike comes on the heels of Walmart workers nationwide who have been standing up and speaking out for better jobs. The Miami strikers join hundreds of Walmart workers who have been protesting to bring awareness and to change Walmart's poverty wages and acts of illegal retaliation against workers.

Paul Toussaint, a Miami-area OUR Walmart member stated, "Walmart workers nationwide have been standing up and speaking out for better jobs, better wages, and an end to Walmart's illegal retaliation against workers who speak out. And these courageous



*Frustrated Walmart workers in Miami walked off the job last week to protest low wages and poor working conditions.*

strikers are in solidarity with Walmart associates across the country who have been calling for change, striking against retaliation and even been arrested in non-violent protest. We've been calling on Walmart, a company that made nearly \$17 billion last year, to pay us a wage of \$25,000 a year so that we can live without having to rely on public assistance. That's what these strikers are fighting for and I am proud to stand with them."

More photos and information on the action can be found at <http://changewalmart.tumblr.com/>. **OP**

## NYC Car Wash Workers Ratify Four New Contracts with City's Biggest Car Wash Owners

In the span of 24 hours, workers at four New York City car washes have signed contracts with the RWDSU/UFCW. Workers at the Webster Car Wash and WCA/Rico Pobre Car Wash in the Bronx, and the Jomar Car Wash and Sutphin Car Wash in Queens have ratified three-year contracts similar to two other union car washes that ratified within the last few months.

The three-year contracts include an immediate wage increase upon signage with three more raises over the life of the contract and bringing workers to a minimum of \$9.18 an hour. The contracts also protect immigrant workers, expand protections against discrimination, increase job security by requiring layoffs to be done by seniority, and require that a shop steward supervise the counting and distribution of tips.



*RWDSU Workers at four car washes across New York City ratified their first contracts.*

Starting next year, workers will get five paid days off per year and two personal days, in addition to the right to take family leave and to attend to immigration issues.

The contract says an employer must have just cause to fire a worker and establishes a grievance procedure and binding third party arbitration. Workers will have a schedule posted each week, with hours and overtime distributed fairly and equally among the workers. Workers will also receive holiday bonuses for Christmas, Thanksgiving, New Years Day, Easter, and Labor Day

“This is going to be a great change for our car wash. More importantly we were able to show other workers that it makes sense to fight and win what seemed impossible,” said Luis Rosales, who has worked at Jomar for more than five years.

Ernesto Salazar, who works at Webster Car Wash said, “I am very happy that we achieved our objective. All the sacrifices and fights were well worth it. Now we will validate our rights under the contract at work. We will no longer be treated without dignity, now the bosses have to respect us. We hope to serve as an example to other carwasheroes!”

The signings cement a major victory for the workers, the RWDSU and the WASH New York campaign. The campaign has already scored several important victories winning seven NLRB conducted elections to unionize car washes throughout New York City, winning a successful strike at the Sunny Day Car Wash in the Bronx, saving the jobs of workers at the Soho Car Wash, securing union contracts at Hi-Tek and Sunny Day Car Washes and improving workplace safety conditions at car washes across the city.

There are about 200 car washes in New York City, with an estimated 5,000 employees. Most are immigrants who are paid low wages and are often denied overtime, to which they are entitled by law. **OP**

## Congressional Leaders Join Calls on Walmart to Improve Working Conditions, Support the Economy



*Congressional leaders will hold a forum with Walmart workers to discuss the impact of Walmart's low-wage work on the economy.*

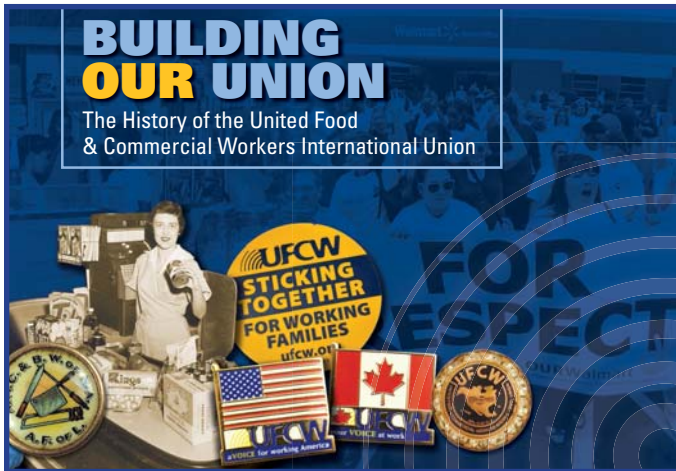
Congressional leaders from across the country will hold a congressional forum on Walmart jobs tomorrow. Rep. George Miller (CA-11), Rep. Jan Schakowsky (IL-9), and Rep. Alan Grayson (FL-9) will join members of OUR Walmart to discuss the larger implications of Walmart’s low-wage work on the federal budget and national economy. The forum will also address calls on the company to pay a minimum of \$25,000 a year, stop retaliation against those who speak out, and provide more full-time work.

With Walmart workers earning less than \$25,000 a year, members of the House Democratic Caucus will discuss the company’s drain on limited public resources as a result of Walmart’s low wages, insufficient hours and decreased access to healthcare. Earlier this year, a Congressional report calculated that Walmart workers are forced to rely on \$900,000 in taxpayer funded supports, including food stamps and healthcare, at just one of the company’s 4,000 stores. This number is expected to grow as more workers get coverage through Medicaid because they are ineligible for Walmart healthcare plans.

The forum will take place on October 23 at 10:30 AM in the Cannon House Office Building in Washington, D.C. **OP**



UFCW 7th Regular Convention  
Timelines and Panoramic Photo  
Available to Order



A limited number of UFCW timelines from the UFCW 7th Regular Convention are available in both English and Spanish. Local unions interested in ordering copies of the UFCW Timeline can contact Amy Gray at [agray@ufcw.org](mailto:agray@ufcw.org).



Local unions may order the UFCW Convention panoramic photo online by visiting [www.ufcwphoto.com](http://www.ufcwphoto.com). Alternately, a high resolution .jpg of the photo is available for download on the Local Union SharePoint site at <https://locals.ufcw.org>. **OP**