

RWDSU Car Wash Actions Force Employer to Negotiate



RWDSU carwashers in Queens, New York, walked off the job on Friday, forcing their employers to sit down for contract negotiations.

Car wash workers at Off-Broadway Car Wash in Queens, New York, walked off the job on Friday, forcing their employers to sit down for contract negotiations. The 15 RWDSU members shut down the facility on Thursday, picketing the location until management agreed to come to the table.

Even though their wages increased from \$4 an hour to about \$6.25 an hour after they voted to join the RWDSU last November, employees said problems have persisted. Since joining the RWDSU, workers have reported that the owner has retaliated against them by threatening to cut their hours, disciplining them without contacting the RWDSU, and refusing to meet with the union to bargain for a contract that will provide the carwashers better working conditions.

“We’re fighting to better our working conditions,” said car wash worker Refugio Denicia Mora. “This is for all of us; this isn’t just for a couple of people.”

“It’s better, I’m not worried,” said Orlando Hernandez. “We’re doing this to have better wages in the future.”

During the demonstrations, the carwashers idled the business, chanted, and handed out flyers. Eventually the store owner sent word that he would agree to discuss their wage and schedule concerns.

Stephen Hans, a lawyer representing the owner of Off-Broadway, said he expects the workers to win a contract for higher wages and more days off.

The car wash is one of eight citywide that voted to join the RWDSU over the past two years. Roughly 200 workers out of the 5,000 who clean cars in the city now have a union voice on the job. **OP**

UFCW Members Want Year of Action in 2014

Last Tuesday, President Obama delivered his State of the Union address and called on Congress to help him make 2014 a “year of action.” UFCW members interacting on Twitter and Facebook agreed that their elected officials in Washington need to start addressing the important issues facing workers.

Growing income inequality featured prominently in President Obama’s speech.

“Corporate profits and stock prices have rarely been higher,” he said, “and those at the top have never done better. But average wages have barely budged. Inequality has deepened. Upward mobility has stalled. The cold, hard fact is that even in the midst of recovery, too many Americans are working more than ever just to get by.”

To that end, President Obama called on Congress to immediately reinstate emergency unemployment benefits, which expired at the end of last year, and to pass the Harkin-Miller bill, which would raise the federal minimum wage to \$10.10 per hour.

There was a great effort throughout the speech, which numerous UFCW members agreed with, to push Congress to work together and do their job.

“For several years now, this town has been consumed by a rancorous argument over the proper size of the federal government. It’s an important debate — one that dates back to our very founding. But when that debate prevents us from carrying out even the most basic functions of our democracy — when our differences shut down government or threaten the full faith and credit of the United States — then we are not doing right by the American people.”

President Obama also made a strong push for comprehensive immigration reform.

“Finally, if we are serious about economic growth,” he said, “it is time to heed the call of business leaders, labor leaders, faith leaders, and law enforcement — and fix our broken immigration system.”

Overall, the State of the Union made it clear that President Obama wants to assist Americans who are struggling and need help. After being repeatedly obstructed by Congress in 2013, the President indicated that he would do everything within in his power to advance an agenda that aids working Americans and their families.

“America does not stand still, and neither will I,” he said. “So wherever and whenever I can take steps without legislation to expand opportunity for more American families, that’s what I’m going to do.”

UFCW members can read about the State of the Union and other legislative and political issues at www.ufcwaction.org. **OP**

OUR Walmart Welcomes New CEO with Five Ways to Improve the Mega-Retailer

For two years, Walmart workers have been speaking out for change at Walmart. As Doug McMillon becomes the CEO of the largest private employer, OUR Walmart members have five simple things he could publicly commit to do in order to improve the quality of jobs Walmart provides.



5 Things Walmart's New CEO Can Publicly Commit To Do To Get Walmart Back on Track

- 1) Pay workers at least \$25,000/yr.
- 2) Schedule workers for enough hours so they can care for their families.
- 3) End illegal retaliation against workers who speak out for change.
- 4) Respect the people who work for you.
- 5) Listen to your employees.

#WhatIfDoug

OUR Walmart has five suggestions for the new CEO that would get Walmart back on track.

- Pay workers a minimum of \$25,000 a year.
- Schedule workers for enough hours so they can afford to care for their families.

- End illegal retaliation against workers who speak out for change.
- Respect the people who work for you.
- Listen to your employees.

To help welcome McMillon as the new CEO, members are asked to share these suggestions on Facebook and Twitter.

Sample Tweets include:

- #WalmartStrikers have some ideas for new #Walmart CEO Doug McMillon. #WhatIfDoug listened to his workers? <http://bit.ly/MaqV9j>
- New #Walmart CEO Doug McMillon can take the company in a new direction. Here's how: <http://bit.ly/MaqV9j> #WhatIfDoug
- Have an idea for #Walmart's new CEO Doug McMillon? Suggest it here: #WhatIfDoug <http://bit.ly/MaqV9j>
- #WhatIfDoug paid #Walmart workers a decent wage so they could feed their families? <http://bit.ly/MaqV9j>

The full blog of OUR Walmart's suggestions to McMillon can be read at <http://bit.ly/1fLsftZ>. **OP**

Trade Fair Workers and Community Supporters Boycott Store in Protest of Firings

Last week, elected officials joined Trade Fair grocery workers from UFCW Locals 342 and 338, to deliver a petition to the new owner of the small grocery chain. The petition has more than 500 area residents' signatures who are pledging to boycott the store until the workers are rehired. Now, pressure is mounting on the new owner of the supermarket to hire back the 50 workers at the newly-named Global Market.

On December 10, 2013, dozens of union workers reported to work at the Trade Fair Supermarket in Jackson Heights, New York. When they arrived, management informed the employees that the store had been sold and that they were terminated effective immediately. Over 50 employees found themselves suddenly out of work two weeks before Christmas.



Trade Fair grocery workers and community allies delivered a petition to the new store owner stating that they will boycott the store until workers are rehired.

Trade Fair's action violates the collective bargaining agreements with the two local unions. The company's action is also a potential violation of the Warn Act, which in New York State may require employers to provide their workers with at least 90 days notice of a closure.

The Trade Fair Supermarkets consist of nine store locations across Queens, New York. UFCW Local 338 members work in the "front end" (all departments, except meat) of all nine stores while UFCW Local 342 members work in the meat departments. **OP**

UFCW President Hansen Issues Statement on House GOP Immigration Principles

UFCW International President Joe Hansen, released the following statement in response to the principles for immigration reform issued by House Republicans.

"More than one year after President Obama laid out his plan for comprehensive immigration reform and seven months after the Senate passed legislation on a bipartisan basis, House Republicans have put forward their principles for reform. I hope this step, however belated, will move the immigration debate forward. But words alone are not enough. UFCW members, immigrant communities, and the majority of Americans are demanding action. That means passing a bill like H.R. 15 and working with the Senate to get a final product to President Obama's desk. The principles issued by House Republicans are short on details and what is included looks like more of the same. For instance, the idea of additional guest workers and legal-

ization based on enforcement triggers are complete nonstarters. It is long past time for comprehensive immigration reform with a path to citizenship for aspiring Americans and strong protections for immigrant workers. The UFCW calls on House Republicans to stop delaying and bring legislation up for a vote." **OP**

UFCW Honors Bayard Rustin During Black History Month



March on Washington organizer and civil rights pioneer Bayard Rustin is the first to be featured in the UFCW series commemorating Black History Month.

One of the greatest moments of the Civil Rights era was the March on Washington in 1963. The March on Washington brought thousands of people of all races together, in the name of equal rights for everyone—whether they were black or white, rich or poor, Muslim or Christian. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. made one of his most inspiring and famous speeches at the march, which culminated on the National Mall.

History has often overlooked the man who was the driving force behind this monumental event—a man named Bayard Rustin. Rustin was the one who organized the march, bringing methods used by Gandhi as well as the Quaker religion to Washington. Rustin was also a champion of workers rights. In 1965, Rustin and his mentor A. Philip Randolph co-founded the A. Philip Randolph Institute, a labor organization for African-American trade union members. Members can read more about Bayard Rustin at <http://bit.ly/1cQUSWC>.

The UFCW is collecting stories from members and local unions that illustrate Black History Month by celebrating victories and heroes in the fight for equality. Members and local union staff can send their stories, photos, suggestions or thoughts to submissions@ufcw.org to possibly be featured on the UFCW website. **OP**