

RWDSU

UFCW

Summer 2019

R E C O R D

Vol. 67, No. 2

RWDSU: Growing the Cannabis Industry Responsibly

As the industry grows beyond medical, unions can help workers make their jobs better



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Great Contract for 1,800 Poultry Workers in Georgia



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Department Store Union, UFCW
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212-684-5300

Stuart Appelbaum
President

Jack Wurm Jr.
Sec.-Treasurer

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Editor, Levi Nayman
Communications Director, Chelsea Connor

Lenore Miller
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The objectives of the Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Union are to unite into this organization all workers employed in its jurisdiction in order to advance and safeguard their economic and social welfare...The Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Union will strive to preserve democratic processes, protect civil liberties, aid in the adoption of legislation which will promote the economic and social welfare of its members and that of labor in general and to improve the educational, social and cultural standards of society as a whole. *Through unity of purpose and action, through collective bargaining and legislation, the Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Union is dedicated to the ideal of making the jobs of its members the best jobs that can be devised from the point of view of wages, hours of work, physical conditions and human relations. Preamble RWDSU Constitution.*



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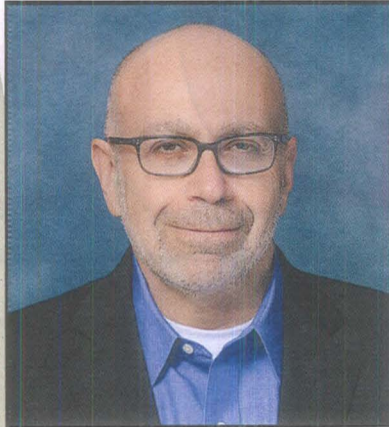
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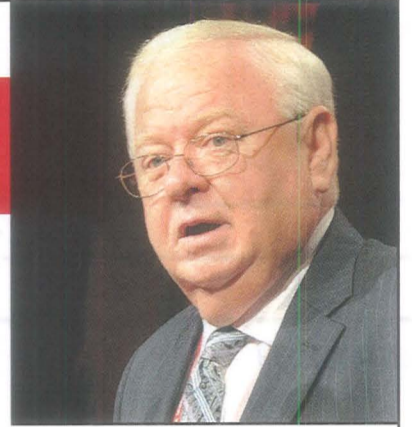
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**MESSAGE FROM
YOUR OFFICERS**

**For Retail Workers, Difficult Times
in a Seemingly Strong Economy**

While the economy seems to be doing well, and retail companies, their CEOs, and their stockholders seem to be doing well, there's a group that's in danger of being left behind; retail workers, many of whom find daily life a struggle to not only advance, but to survive.

And that's wrong, because traditional retail is still a strong and growing sector of our economy. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the retail industry continues to be one of the largest employment sectors in the U.S. and is projected to add half a million jobs through 2026. And while e-commerce is having an impact on brick and mortar retail, it still makes up less than 10 percent of total retail sales in the U.S. Traditional retail is still the dominant player today in the retail industry.

Unfortunately, retail workers have not benefited from growth in the industry, just like most working Americans haven't seen any of the benefits of a supposedly strong economy. The median annual wage for a retail cashier stands at just over \$22,000, and for a retail salesperson at just over \$24,000. The Federal Poverty Level for a family of four hovers at around \$25,000.

Besides chronically low wages, especially for non-union retail employees, retail workers face a number of challenges that can make life a daily struggle of frustration. Scheduling issues abound, with many workers struggling with insufficient and inconsistent hours. The practice of "clopings" - where workers are scheduled for late night shifts followed by early morning opening shifts - can wreak havoc with workers' lives. Harassment and inappropriate treatment by customers and super-

visors is an issue for many retail workers, who are predominantly female.

E-commerce also presents challenges for retail workers, even while traditional retail remains strong. Stores often encourage customers to shop online, even while they are in the store, which can cost employees valuable time and commission pay. Customers will order products online, find they don't fit or just don't like them, and return them at brick and mortar stores, where employees have to process returns instead of making commission sales on the floor.

Above all, retail workers in the U.S. are getting fed up of being treated like commodities and having no say in their schedules, pay, and treatment. That's why over the past decade, many have sought union membership. In New York, workers at H&M and Zara have joined the RWDSU, negotiating strong contracts that give them the representation they need to help build better lives with their jobs. Longtime RWDSU members at retail stalwarts like Macy's, Bloomingdales, and Modell's have continued to negotiate good contracts that are helping adapt to the new realities of the marketplace and the competition and challenges brought upon by e-commerce.

There are almost 16 million retail workers in the U.S., and they are an important part of our communities, neighborhoods, and our economy. And while the retail industry is working for CEOs and stockholders, it isn't working for many of the retail workers whose efforts are the underpinnings of an industry that continues to grow. For our economy to be truly strong, that needs to change. ■

RWDSU WORKERS WINNING A UNION VOICE

Bloomsburg CNAs Win in Pennsylvania

Certified Nursing Assistants at the Bloomsburg Care and Rehabilitation Center in Bloomsburg, Pennsylvania, voted overwhelmingly to join the RWDSU on May 30, after a campaign that saw workers demanding fairness and job security. The unit, with over 65 certified nursing assistant employees, overcame an aggressive employer campaign waged against their goal to win a union voice.

Daily letters, captive audience meetings, and scare tactics proved no match for a strong group of workers who simply want the respect and voice on the job that comes with joining a union. The RWDSU represents thousands of these workers in New Jersey and Pennsylvania, and the union's reputation is helping organize more health care facility workers in the region.

The Bloomsburg employees quickly began organizing themselves. They knew they needed change after losing paid time off benefits and working through short staffing, extremely high and unaffordable health care

benefits, no wage increases for two years, and most of all the lack of dignity and respect from management.

"We were tired and fed up of losing benefits, we stood up and fought for our rights, I'm so proud of my co-workers. We demanded fairness and job security, which are important in helping us give quality care to our residents," said Bloomsburg worker Julia Bachert.

The Bloomsburg CRC organizing campaign moved rapidly, getting to an election in less than two months. Thanks to an outspoken organizing committee on all shifts, the certified nursing assistants united as a cohesive team, remained strong, and recruited other leaders and supporters.

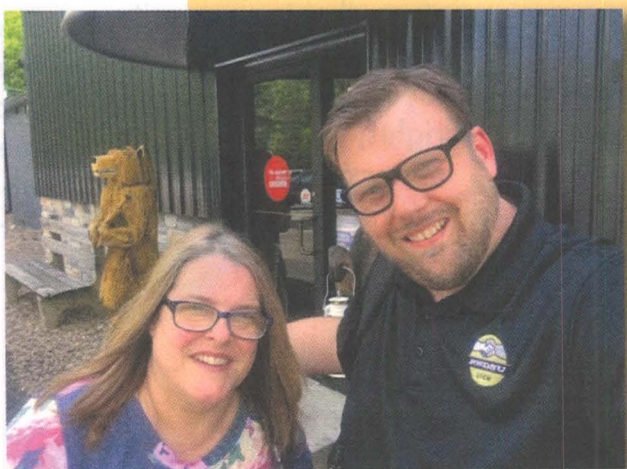


"These workers united and demanded change, and sent management a clear message that they deserve fairness on the job and a guaranteed contract," says RWDSU Organizer Luis Lopez. ■

Bloomsburg Care workers fought for RWDSU representation and won.

West Virginia Workers Organize at CHH Urgent Care

RWDSU Local 379 is proud to welcome the workers at CHH Urgent Care in Huntington, West Virginia, who won their election to join the union in June. Workers at CHH perform many urgent care duties including taking X-rays and performing emergency care and diagnosis procedures. Workers joined to gain a union voice and the respect on the job that comes with union membership. ■



CHH Nurse Amy Farley, here with RWDSU Representative Jason Ware, celebrates joining the RWDSU.

Valley View Manor Workers Vote RWDSU in New York

In June, workers at Valley View Manor Nursing Home in Norwich, New York voted overwhelmingly to join the RWDSU. The workers wanted a voice and fair treatment in the workplace to make their jobs better, and ensure the best possible treatment for clients at the facility.

Valley View employees sought union representation to address a number of important issues, including the need for fair scheduling, paid time off, and fair wages. With their June vote, workers claimed their right to fair representation and a seat at the table when

determining their working conditions.

"When we work together, we win together. For far too long our patients haven't received the care they need due to our poor scheduling practices. I'm proud that we were able to win a voice for both workers and the people we care for every day. Everyone who works alongside me knows that representation from the union will change our future here. We're ready to get to work on a fair contract that will help workers and patients here at Valley View Manor," said Christine Taranto, an LPN at Valley View Manor.

"It's inspiring to see workers from within my community standing up in their workplace for what they believe in. It takes great strength and courage, and they were steadfast in their commitment," said local activist Jason Chesebro, who lives near the facility.



Valley View Manor workers' win was important for both employees and residents at the facility.

The nearly unanimous vote to unionize by workers at Valley View Manor was conducted on June 19, 2019 during two NLRB election sessions. The RWDSU will represent approximately 60 workers at the nursing home facility in contract negotiations. The workers in the bargaining unit handle all operations at the facility and include LPNS, CNAs, laundry, maintenance as well as the dietary and activity programming of patients. ■

RWDSU A VOICE FOR WORKING PEOPLE

Strongest Poultry Industry Contract in Years for 1,800 Tyson Workers in Georgia

Workers at Tyson in Camilla, Georgia, will receive guaranteed annual wage increases, a drastic reduction in health care premiums, and overtime pay for working on personal days after overwhelmingly ratifying a new contract in the Spring. There are over 1,800 workers represented by the RWDSU Southeast Council at the Equity / Tyson poultry processing plant in Camilla. The contract was ratified by an overwhelming 97 percent of the voting members at the plant, a testament to the tireless efforts of the negotiating team that helped secure the strongest contract that workers in the poultry industry have seen in years.

"The people of Georgia are fighters, and especially the workers at Equity / Tyson in Camilla, are a strong force for real industry change – and I could not be prouder to work with them to secure this contract," Edgar Fields, President of the Southeast Council of the RWDSU said.

"Absolutely nothing could stop our members from fighting for the critical provisions of this contract that were going to impact so many workers not just at this facility, but for years to come at so many others – they set a new standard for poultry workers," Fields added.

The contract is the latest strong industry agreement for the RWDSU, which represents poultry workers across the Southern U.S., including workers at Pilgrim's Pride, Wayne Farms, and Tyson locations in Georgia, Alabama, Tennessee, and Mississippi. The union continues to win organizing campaigns and negotiate strong contracts in food processing and distribution among other industries in Right-to-Work states, bringing a union voice for workers in previously vehemently anti-union workplaces. ■



From L-R: Director of Collective Bargaining and Assistant to the President Allen Mayne, Tyson Worker Negotiations Committee, RWDSU Southeast Council President Edgar Fields, and RWDSU President Stuart Appelbaum.

Benefits of New Three-Year Tyson Contract:

HEALTH CARE IMPROVEMENTS:

A large reduction in health care costs to members, which makes it affordable for them to cover their families with medical insurance.



WAGE INCREASES:

Annual general wage increases over the term of the contract equaling \$1.50, an additional \$0.20 cents per hour wage increase based on seniority, and additional classification wage increases in some jobs of up to \$0.75 cents per hour. For example, a senior worker in the live hang job classification could see a first year wage increase of a \$1.45 per hour, and up to \$2.50 cents per hour over the term of the contract.

BETTER PERSONAL TIME POLICY:

Personal days now count as time worked for the purpose of computing overtime. Previously they did not. Additionally, workers can now use personal days on Fridays, Mondays, and on the weekend. Previously they were not allowed to take personal days on these days.



IMPROVED CONTRACT LANGUAGE:

There was a major overhaul of the contract language clarifying many articles in the contract, which will help workers on the job, including strengthening seniority, job bidding rights, layoff and recall rights, and many other provisions in the contract as well.



SENIORITY & PROMOTIONS:

The employer will post all job promotions and openings in conspicuous places in the plant and recognize our members' rights to obtain those jobs by seniority.

RWDSU A VOICE FOR WORKING PEOPLE

Alabama Fresenius Workers Win First RWDSU Contract

When workers at the Fresenius Kidney Care centers in Mobile, Alabama, voted to join the RWDSU Mid-South Council, they sought to win a contract and a union voice. Now, the workers, who stuck together through a tough six weeks of anti-union tactics during their organizing campaign, have unanimously ratified their first RWDSU contract.

The contract ratification comes after the negotiations committee worked tirelessly to secure a strong contract that ensures members' concerns will be heard. The contract will protect the hard-working patient care technicians that provide critical care to patients in Mobile.

The new pact sets a scheduling protection precedent, which will bring stability to both workers and patients' lives. It should

set a standard not just for the global employer, but the industry. The union is also currently in negotiations for a contract at another Fresenius facility in Alabama and is confident that the strong provisions secured here will be part of that contract as well.

"The healthcare workers at Fresenius had one goal in seeking a union contract, care for their patients – and they won," Randy Hadley, President of the Mid-South Council of the RWDSU said. "This first contract will bring so much not only to our members, but to their patients at Fresenius. Together I know we can continue to spread that to so many other facilities where critical care like this is given to so many people suffering from kidney disease and health issues."

The contract will be in effect for four years and includes critical provisions such as: up to 6 percent wage increases in the first

year of the contract, as well as ratification bonuses.

Guaranteed union access to the facility to ensure the collective bargaining agreement is being properly adhered to. The contract also brings guaranteed scheduling protections, which will bring stability to both workers' and patients' lives. ■



The negotiations committee of the Fresenius kidney dialysis facility workers in Mobile, Alabama celebrates the ratification of the new agreement.



Workers at Fresenius organized to change their lives and the lives of patients at the facility.



Local 108 President Charles N. Hall, Jr., speaks with River Front workers and other worker activists at a rally in June.

RWDSU members and community leaders joined RWDSU Local 108 members at River Front Rehabilitation in Pennsauken, New Jersey at events in June, showing solidarity as the members there fight for a fair contract. Contract negotiations at the facility are at a standstill as the company tries to force concessions and givebacks from the workers.

The primary issues at the root of the dispute are the Company's proposed unreasonable givebacks of employees' paid time off and comprehensive health care plan benefits.

Workers and activists stood across from the health care facility demanding that the company negotiate a fair contract in good faith.

"The company's attacks on River Front workers don't just endanger these workers, they jeopardize these workers' ability to provide quality care for patients at the facility," said Local 108 President Charles N. Hall, Jr. "These patients deserve the highest quality care, and the workers who care for them deserve a fair contract that doesn't threaten their quality of life." ■

Rallying for Fair Contract at River Front

RWDSU POLITICAL & LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

Justice for New York Car Wash Workers Moves Forward

Car wash workers in downstate New York, including hundreds of RWDSU members, are awaiting a new law banning the so-called "tip credit" to be signed in to law by the Governor of New York. The bill, passed by the New York State Senate and Assembly in June, will

end sub-minimum wages for car wash workers, and send a clear message to car wash employers that their workers in New York City, Westchester and Long Island should be paid at least the minimum wage.

fied about their inability to live in dignity because they can't afford decent housing for their families; and how they can't look for other work because they cannot afford adequate transportation. Workers struggle with paying their bills and putting food on the table.

In New York last year, RWDSU members and community activists joined together at rallies and hearings in a successful effort to let the public and government know how "tip credit" was enabling wage theft and making life a struggle for many downstate New York car wash workers.



At a press conference, Patricio Santiago speaks about how the new law will protect car wash workers like himself in New York.

Enacting the bill banning the "tip credit" in the car wash industry downstate will help lift up 5,000 car wash workers in New York, and protect these workers from exploitation and wage theft. ■

United States
**Census
2020**

2020 Census: Making Our Communities Count

The new law would be a revolutionary change for underpaid workers, too many of whom often suffer from wage theft, and are forced to struggle to survive in one of the nation's most expensive places to live. It would be a resounding victory for car wash workers, who have been fighting for their rights and better pay since 2012, when the RWDSU, Make the Road New York and New York Communities for Change began working to reform an industry that was rife with exploitation.

Ending the Confusion

The current system - which bases car wash minimum wages on location, car wash size, and anticipated tips per employee - has created a confusing web of 8 different possible sub-minimum wages in New York. That confusion often provides employers with an outrageous license to steal, and even well-meaning employers have sometimes run afoul of the law due to its complicated nature.

At labor board hearings held last year, officials and the public heard first-hand about the struggles workers affected by sub-minimum wages are experiencing. Workers have testi-

The U.S. Census - held every ten years - is happening next year, and it's more important than ever that we make sure each and every one of us, along with our family members, are counted. The Census helps decide where \$675 billion in federal funds - money that goes to pay for schools, hospitals, roads, and public works - are spent. And, the Census results are also used to determine how many seats each state gets in the U.S. House of Representatives and is used to redraw boundaries for legislative districts.

Political power and representation, and how many federal dollars make it to our communities and neighborhoods; that's why a fair and accurate U.S. Census is so very important for working people and their families.

Importance of Accurate Census

The RWDSU is working in coalition with community groups and other unions to make sure that there is a fair count in 2020.

"We are fighting to ensure that communities are properly counted so that representation and government funding is equitable and true," said Edgar Fields, President of the Southeast Council. "The data collected is essential to determine the number of seats in the U.S. House of Representatives and how much federal funds are released in places that need them. That's especially true here in South Georgia."

According to Fields, an accurate Census will help protect working people, and even save lives.

"Too many hospitals are closing because of funding shortfalls. Members and their loved ones are forced to travel hundreds of miles at the risk of their health especially in an emergency. The Census determines things we don't think often about, like utility assistance programs. In places like Albany, Georgia, working families are being crushed under the weight of mounting utility bills trying to make ends meet so that their child's nebulizer machine will work in the middle of night," Fields said.

For the first time most of the census can be completed online, but this improvement also highlights the challenge of rural areas with poor internet coverage. Fair online access to the census in regional areas that have poor internet coverage is still a problem for far too many across the country. That's why the RWDSU supports more funding to create a map of every location without high-speed internet to identify areas that will need state funding for internet construction. Some, like former Georgia Representative Stacey Abrams, have said bringing quality internet to rural areas should be addressed the same way America addressed rural electrification in the 1920s.

Be Counted

Starting in March 2020, you will receive information and reminders about the census, and you will have until the end of April 2020 to provide a response. An accurate Census is crucial for ensuring that RWDSU members and all working people are fairly represented in government and funding over the next decade. ■

RWDSU AROUND OUR UNION

Zara Workers Join RWDSU at Two More NY Stores

Workers at Zara stores in Yonkers and West Nyack joined RWDSU Local 1102 over the Summer, bringing 100 more Zara workers into the RWDSU. Local 1102 now represents over 1,100 Zara employees in New York.

Local 1102 began organizing Zara workers in 2015 focusing on a variety of issues, such as unfair scheduling practices, which inhibited workers' ability to care for their elderly parents and children, go to school or take a needed second job.

During that time, the RWDSU worked with UNI Global Union to successfully secure a Global Framework Agreement with Zara. Under the agreement, Zara pledged to respect the right of workers to organize. Since then, Local 1102 has secured strong contracts for Zara workers with benefits that include paid time off for sickness, holidays and vacation for both part- and full-time employees.

"Zara understands what too many companies don't, that when workers are treated with dignity and respect, stores thrive, and the company will undoubtedly be successful. Our work has secured strong contracts with real paid time off, fair scheduling, and seniority rights for thousands of Zara workers in the New York metropolitan area. We are proud to welcome these new members," said Local 1102 President Alvin Ramnarain. ■



Local 1102 now represents over 1,100 workers at New York Zara stores.

Local 338 Awards Scholarships for Union Families

June 27 marked a proud day for Local 338 members and their families who were honored at the New York local's annual scholarship luncheon. Twenty-two young men and women, who are either Local 338 members or the children of Local 338 members, were recognized for their academic and extracurricular achievements. This year's scholarship recipients come from a variety of backgrounds and are aiming to enter



Local 338 Scholarship winners with Local 338 President John Durso.

Congratulations to all of the Local 338 scholarship winners:

- Gregory Heilbrunn
- Emily Hinck
- Katelyn Hughes
- Md Masbubul Karim
- Taryn Lynch
- Jackson Melnitsky
- Isabella Mineo
- Amy Peterson
- Makenzie Rivera
- Sara Welti

Congratulations to this year's winners of the Book Awards Scholarship:

- Kathryn Austin
- Andrea De Rosa
- Catherine Gonzalez
- Chantal Jenkins
- Dylan Jones
- Yasmin Kadir
- Krista Meyers
- Janice Reggina
- Rhaldni Sayaman
- Justin Schecher

many different fields, including healthcare, law, engineering, and criminal justice.

Emanuel Laub Scholarship Award

Local 338 gave special congratulations to Carly Bales for winning the Emanuel Laub Scholarship Award, which memorializes Local 338's late President. Bales will receive a total of \$8,000 (\$2,000 each year for the next four years) towards her tuition at Binghamton University in New York to pursue a degree in biology.

Continuing Education Scholarship Award

Local 338's Continuing Education Scholarship Award recipients are Melissa Moore (VeriLife) and Maria Rengifo (ShopRite). Moore is currently a graduate student at the University of Buffalo in the Master of Education program as a Science major. Rengifo is a graduate student at Stony Brook University in New York, completing her Master's in Nutrition Sciences.



Carly Bales, with Local 338 President John Durso, won the Emanuel Laub Scholarship, which honors the late Local 338 President.

Cannabis Growing the Industry

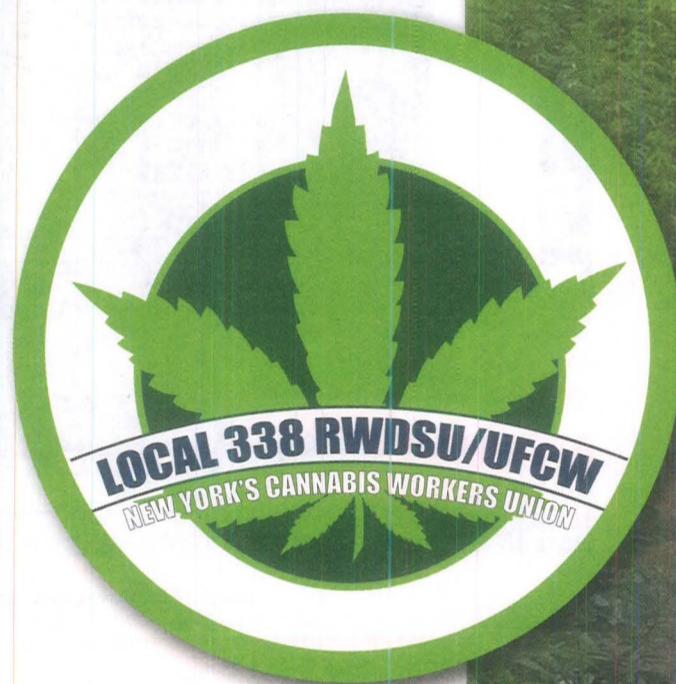
In July, New York Governor Andrew Cuomo signed a law decriminalizing the possession of small amounts of cannabis. The new bill, approved by New York's state legislature earlier this year, will reduce unlawful cannabis possession to a misdemeanor punishable by a fine, and expunge the records of some people convicted on cannabis-related charges. While the law doesn't legalize the adult use industry, with a large majority of New Yorkers favoring legalization, and with elected officials pledging to revive a full-legalization bill in the next legislative session, many view legalization as an inevitability in New York.

Eleven states and the District of Columbia have legalized adult-use cannabis so far, creating new industries in need of quality jobs. In New York, union activists see the potential creation of a new industry that could bring in billions of dollars in annual sales, and bring high quality, union jobs with it. And, legalization could create additional criminal justice reforms that have historically unfairly targeted communities of color.

Legalizing adult use cannabis could also generate tax revenue for use toward education and community reinvestment programs. As New York moves forward on adult use cannabis, the main concerns for advocates is that it is done responsibly. For the RWDSU, that means creating a system that is equitable both for workers and communities.

RWDSU Has Helped Create Good Union Cannabis Jobs

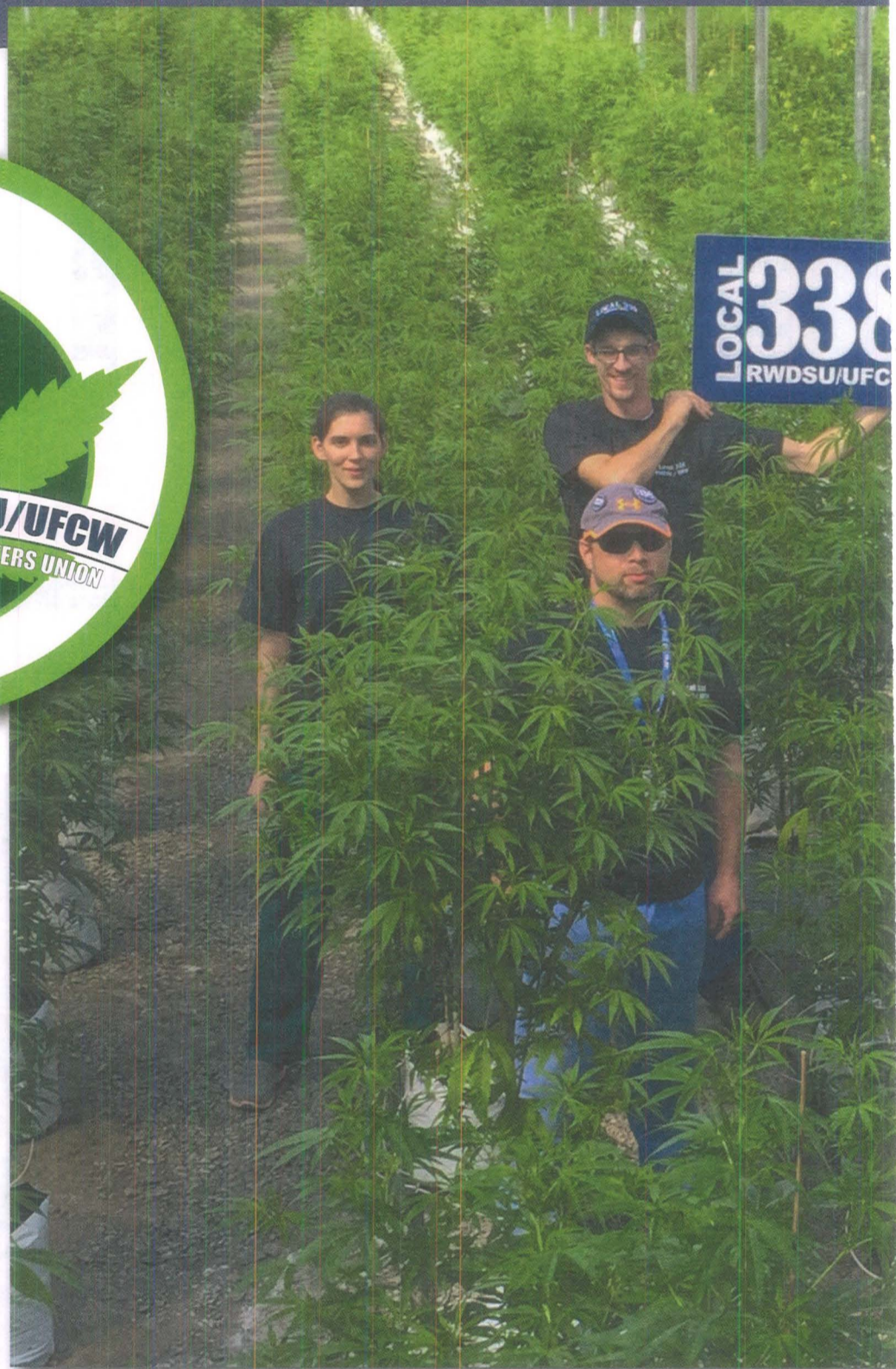
Over the last several years, we've seen the difference unions can make in the cannabis industry in New York. When medical cannabis was legalized in New York in 2014, RWDSU Local 338 fought for the passage of the Com-



Cannabis workers at medical cannabis supplier Vireo have a strong RWDSU contract, and are proving that cannabis jobs can be good jobs for families and communities.

passionate Care Act to ensure the industry created good union careers through the inclusion of labor peace in the new industry. As a result, workers in cannabis cultivation, production, distribution, and retail in New York won union membership with the RWDSU, and in turn, negotiated strong contracts.

There are currently over 300 Local 338 members working in New York's medical cannabis industry. With their strong union contracts, they have won guarantees of full-time hours, significant wage increases, generous paid time off, quality health coverage for themselves and their families at no cost, retirement savings benefits, and other crucial workplace protections and on-the-job training. Unions have made a difference for these workers, and now the goal is to ensure that the same benefits – and the protections of a union voice – are available to workers in the new adult use industry. Local 338 is continuing its efforts to organize workers in New York's medical cannabis industry.



"We've seen unions act as a life-changing force for many workers in the medical cannabis industry," said Local 338 Secretary-Treasurer Joe Fontano. "For many it's the first time they've had good, union jobs with a strong career path and an opportunity for advancement. Many of our members in the industry have been able to transition off Medicaid and other programs thanks to their union contract.

Industry can Move Workers and Communities Forward

While hundreds of workers have already benefited, a new adult use cannabis industry would be much larger and provide even more opportunities for good jobs. That's why the RWDSU is committed to fighting for a pathway to unionization for all cannabis workers to create good, safe, family-sustaining careers.

... in New York: Responsibly



Local 338 members set up a booth at the NY State Association of Black and Puerto Rican Legislators Caucus Weekend in Albany earlier this year to speak about their work and contracts in the legal cannabis industry, and why ensuring unionization in any future adult use industries is so important.

“For many it’s the first time they’ve had good, union jobs with a strong career path and an opportunity for advancement.”

Local 338 Secretary-Treasurer Joe Fontano

The RWDSU is working with our community partners to directly address the issues our communities face. It is crucial that cannabis industry ownership, management, and workforce reflect the diversity that makes New York great.

Local 338 and the RWDSU were key in helping craft responsible, progressive medical legislation earlier in the decade, and are fighting to ensure that adult use legislation requires

labor neutrality for companies in the industry. A top priority is requiring all licensed cannabis companies to agree to local, targeted hiring, and establish affordable and easily accessible skills training certifications so that anybody can seek out a career in the industry. The RWDSU also wants to establish a job training and placement program for workers.

Another important part of adult use legislation is that it opens the door to ownership opportunities for women and minority owned businesses. This will again reflect the state’s diversity and help more people in our communities become involved in the industry at every level.

Legalizing cannabis for adult use would open New York State to an incredible new avenue for job growth, criminal justice reform, and

economic opportunities for small and medium-sized businesses, as well as increased revenue to fund important public services. By making sure that the industry is created responsibly, we can make sure that as the industry flourishes, so do our communities and the working men and women who will help make it happen. ■

UFCW

a **VOICE** for working America



Pioneer Valley drivers celebrate their big organizing win.

Massachusetts Transit Workers Stand Together and Win

In a big victory for transportation workers, 140 Pioneer Valley Transit Authority drivers with National Express in western Massachusetts overwhelmingly voted to join UFCW Local 1459 on June 28.

"Drivers from National Express initially contacted Local 1459 in November of 2018 desiring to improve their current wages, benefits and working conditions," said UFCW Local 1459 President Tyrone C. Housey. "The campaign really took off when workers saw the tremendous success of the recent Stop & Shop strike. They intensified their efforts to support the organizing campaign undeterred by the company's daily barrage of anti-union propaganda."

National Express workers were thrilled to join the UFCW and have the strength of our union behind them as they stood up for the good pay and benefits they've earned and deserve.

"Joining a union brings us many great opportunities," said driver Pedro Maldando.

"Organization will give us all a voice and an equal and fair workplace," added driver Jeanie Child-Steele.

UFCW Local 540 Welcomes More Than 400 Danone Workers

On May 22, more than 400 workers at the Danone North America plant in Dallas joined UFCW Local 540 to ensure they have the good pay and working conditions they've earned and deserve. Danone is a major food and beverage company with a wide range of products, including the organic milk and coffee creamers produced by these workers.

The Danone workers joined UFCW Local 540 to strengthen job security after several employees were terminated or disciplined without any way to voice their disagreement. The workers were also concerned about favoritism, and not having a fair job-bidding system.

"This is a very good example of how the International union and Local Union staff, in solidarity with global unions, can collaborate and work together for a great victory for the workers," said UFCW Local 540 President Johnny Rodriguez. "Let's do it again."

Victory for Local 152 Members Shows Power of a Union Contract



UFCW Local 152 Union Representative Mike Thompson (left) and former Shop Steward Tom Noll celebrate winning arbitration for Johanna workers.

Twelve members of UFCW Local 152 who work at Johanna Foods in Flemington, New Jersey, recently won

\$21,830 in back pay after their employer failed to honor their current contract.

Shortly after the members at Johanna Foods ratified their contract in May 2017, former Shop Steward Tom Noll filed a class action grievance on behalf of twelve UFCW Local 152 members.

Noll and his coworkers should have received a negotiated increase in wages as outlined in their contract, but the company failed to follow through and pay them. Because Noll was part of the Negotiating Committee, he knew that the company was in the wrong and decided to reach out to Union Representative Mike Thompson for help.

Shortly thereafter, UFCW Local 152 filed for arbitration on behalf of the workers. The arbitrator agreed with UFCW Local 152 and the twelve members of Johanna Foods, concluding that the company was at fault and these members deserved the wage increases promised to them—resulting in a back pay award for members totaling \$21,830.

The union's victory showed the power of a union contract, and how employers are obligated to live up to what they agree to in writing.

Indiana Kroger Members Stand Together for a Better Contract

Members of UFCW Local 700 who work at Kroger stores in Indianapolis ratified a new contract in June that includes wage increases and protects benefits. The new contract covers more than 9,000 workers in 71 stores in the Indianapolis area.

The three-year contract, which was ratified by an overwhelming margin, includes guaranteed pay increases over the life of the contract (in addition to lump-sum compensation for top-rated and grandfathered workers and department heads), and higher premiums for the night crews. The contract also includes improvements to health care and contract language and protects the retirement security of our members.

"We stuck together and reached an agreement that increases pay; protects

affordable, quality health care; and secures retirement benefits for the future," said UFCW Local 700 President Joe Chorpensing.



Pay increases and health plan improvements highlight the new contract for over 9,000 Kroger workers.

RWDSU AROUND OUR UNION

Local 262 Officers Elected

RWDSU Local 262 in New Jersey has elected officers to new terms of service. Officers were sworn in by RWDSU President Stuart Appelbaum in May. Newly-elected were: President Daniel Righetti, Secretary-Treasurer Tom Walsh, Financial Secretary Mark Dudley, Board Members Pete Asmar, Jason Walker, Raul Penaranda, Joe Pryce and Daniel Lensen, Recording Secretary Jasmin Petrillo, and Vice-Presidents Rudy Castellano, Tom Loughran, and Victor Giranda. ■



(l to r) Former Local 262 President Pat Sperduto, RWDSU President Stuart Appelbaum, new Local 262 President Danny Righetti, and former Local 262 President Ron Mancini.

Schwartz Elected President at IJB Convention

In June, the Indiana Joint Board held their Convention, electing Eric Schwartz as President of the Indiana Joint Board. Schwartz will also continue to serve as the IJB Business Representative.

In addition to the officer election, the Convention also hosted guest speaker Northeast Indiana AFL-CIO President Lloyd Osborne. Also addressing the Convention were RWDSU Regional Directors Michael Flanery and Rick Marshall. ■



The Indiana Joint Board recently held their convention.

RWDSU Local 21 Helps Fight Hunger

Local 21 is dedicated to help make the lives of area residents in need better.



RWDSU Local 21 is helping communities throughout West Virginia, Ohio, and Kentucky, by partnering with a local food bank to provide meals for seniors in need, lunches for schoolchildren, and emergency meals to keep families from going hungry. The local made a recent donation to the Facing Hunger Foodbank, continuing a partnership that reflects the local's values in helping families get through tough times. Besides donating funds, Local 21 members will continue to volunteer at the Foodbank every month to make sure that help goes to those who need it. ■

Fresh Mark Workers Come Together

The RWDSU represents over 2,800 workers at three Fresh Mark meat-processing plants in Ohio; Fresh Mark Salem, Fresh Mark Massillon, and Fresh Mark Cold Storage. At a meeting recently, Fresh Mark workers met for important steward training, and the union distributed RWDSU red vests for all members so they can show off their RWDSU pride and union solidarity. ■



The Vest Committee distributed the vests to workers at all three plants.

RWDSU CONTRACT NEWS

Cartamundi Local 224 Massachusetts

The Cartamundi Negotiating Committee celebrates the strong new contract with members and New England Joint Board officers.



RWDSU Local 224 members who manufacture popular board games including Monopoly, Sorry!, and Life, ratified a new two-year contract. The workers at the plant, which is in East Longmeadow, Massachusetts, will receive two percent annual raises. Most importantly, the negotiating committee achieved its objective of protecting the health care coverage for the over 300 RWDSU members at the plant. ■

NYU Food Service Local 1102 New York

A new contract that brings strong wage increases and improved medical insurance coverage has been ratified by Local 1102 members working in food service at New York University in New York. The contract also mandates that the company retirement contributions increase, improving retirement security for members. Local 1102 members at NYU prepare and provide food for NYU students on campus. ■

Pictured is the NYU contract negotiating committee: 1102 Secretary-Treasurer, Thomas Rowland; 1102 staff, Yocasta Reynoso and Sonia Peralta; and negotiating committee members, Sally Bouyer, Hamlet Arnaud, John Cangelosi, Jason Brown, Vincent Robbins, Junior Hernandez, Ramon Espinal, Shondell Rivers, Christopher Smith, Ricardo Tabuteau, Rhonda Saunders, Dina Brown, Shaquinda Adams.



PepsiCo Local 513 Rhode Island

RWDSU Local 513 members in Cranston, Rhode Island have ratified a new contract with their employer, PepsiCo. The five-year contract contains strong wage gains of close to four percent annually, and the company will also increase its pension contributions and benefits. The company also agreed to an improved and more flexible vacation policy for sr. employees, and a new Master Mechanic Transport position – along with training for it – has been implemented as an option for employees.

There are 180 RWDSU members at PepsiCo Cranston in manufacturing and transport of Pepsi products. ■



Front Row: from Left Sgt at Arms Bob Wright, Local 513 President Dennis Beaulieu, Attorney Tina Duddy, and New England Joint Board Sec/Treas. Philip D'arcangelo. Back Row: Mike Ando, Greg Laurence (Steward), Tracy Pendleton, Barbara Swenson, Dave Anania (steward), Mike Baillargeon, Wayne Circuolo, Loran Conklin, Sam Arlia, NEJB President Tina Buonaugurio, and Neil Chapman.

National Beef Leathers Local 125 Missouri

In July, members at RWDSU Local 125 in St. Joseph, Missouri, have overwhelmingly approved a new five-year contract with their employer, National Beef Leathers, where 400 RWDSU members process cow hide into blue leather, which is then sold to vendors who turn it into everything from shoes to car seat covers.

The contract increases wages \$2.20 an hour over the term on just the General Wage Increase, but half of the plant will also be able to additionally increase wages in the Maintenance, Environmental and Loft Departments anywhere from \$1.00-\$5.00 an hour on a pay for skill program. Longevity pay increases based on a member gaining five years seniority and again at 10 years seniority also were made. The members also will receive a \$1,000 signing bonus.

There are also improvements in seniority and funeral leave. The agreement also created eight new positions that will be known as a Flex Employee in the Production Department. The Union was able to maintain the Company's medical insurance with little change in the plan starting in January of 2021 with little premium increases to the member.

The Bargaining Committee was made up of Travis Garton, Local 125 President, Bobby Mendoza Chief Steward at National Beef, Darwin Waitkoss, Ed Burdette, Ernie Turner, Rashiene Stewart. They were assisted by Dennis Williams Sr. Business Representative for the Central States Council and RWDSU Representative Roger Grobstich. ■

RWDSU AROUND OUR UNION

Elections for Cheez-It Makers



Members at Local 184-L produce tasty Cheez-It snacks.

RWDSU members at Local 184-L in Kansas City, Kansas, have elected new officers to the Executive Board. Members at the local primarily produce the popular Cheez-It snack crackers for Kellogg's.

Newly-elected were: President Elliot Clemons, Secretary-Treasurer Evyuan Calbert, Recorder SaMatha M. Robinson, Bookkeeper Ginger Rush, Chief Stewards Richard Connally, Jason Ennes, and Larry Smith, Committeeman-at-Large Chris Gayle, Trustees David A. Cervantes, John Arzola, and Jerry Coleman, and Sargent-at-Arms Sylvia Burrell. ■

Family Day for Maryland Mushroom Workers

It was Family Day at the Mushroom Company in Maryland as children of Local 108 members prepare for the new school year.



RWDSU Local 108 President Charles N. Hall, Jr., and Local 108 Representative Patricia Gonzalez were in attendance for an August meeting and Family Day at the Mushroom Company in Cambridge, Maryland. The produce workers and their families spoke with union representatives and enjoyed pizza and soft drinks. Children of Mushroom Company workers received back to school gift bags.

Local 108 representatives also took a walk through of the mushroom plant and met with company officials. ■

Chicago Joint Board Officers Elected

Officers have been elected to new terms at the Chicago Joint Board. Elected were: President Lisa Russell, Secretary-Treasurer Ryan McIntyre, Recorder Ernesto Perez, Local 200 President George Leonard, Local 291 President Ryan McIntyre, Local 853 President Adam Woosley, Local 20 President Jessie Medina, Local 200 V.P. Jaqueline Harvey, and Support Staff Donna J. Johnson and Molly A. Moore. ■



The Chicago Joint Board is sworn in by RWDSU President Stuart Appelbaum. ■

First Ever Contract for Pleasure Chest Workers



Pleasure Chest employees in NYC, shown here celebrating winning their union organizing campaign, have ratified their first contract.

Emloyees at both New York City Pleasure Chest retail locations have ratified their first ever union contract. The RWDSU members become only the second group of adult toy workers in the nation to win the protections and benefits of a union contract, along with their fellow RWDSU members at Babeland stores, also in New York.

Highlights include guaranteed raises in every year of the contract, accrued vacation time for part-time workers (previously only full-timers accrued vacation time), significant improvements in safety protocols and procedures for workers who are threatened or harassed by members of the public, including the right to close the store and remain on paid-time until

the threatening individual(s) have left the premises. This part of the contract addresses one of the main issues brought up by Pleasure Chest workers during their organizing campaign; it's a unique line of work, and comes with unique challenges.

The agreement also creates minimum staffing requirements, and new trainings for management and staff, including a boundary/ safety/ security training for conflict de-escalation and reimbursement for self-defense classes. The contract also contains strong language around non-discrimination and respect for workers' gender identity/expression and pronouns. ■

RWDSU AROUND OUR UNION

RWDSU Supports Grocery Strikers, Cheers Victory

RWDSU members were among the countless worker activists who traveled throughout New England to support striking Stop & Shop workers in the spring. Over 30,000 UFCW members at more than 240 Stop & Shops across Connecticut, Massachusetts and Rhode Island were on strike for almost two weeks, fighting for a good contract and against attempts to reduce benefits and cuts in take home pay. Workers fought back against proposed cuts and givebacks, noting that the chain's parent company, Ahold Delhaize,

reported profits of more than \$2 billion to its shareholders in 2018.

The strike crippled the grocery store chain, drastically reducing customer traffic and causing some stores to close. The workers' solidarity resulted in a strong contract that preserves health care and retirement benefits, provides wage increases, and maintains time-and-a-half pay on Sunday for current members. ■

At a rally in Boston, RWDSU activists showed their support for Stop & Shop workers in New England.



Dozens of RWDSU families enjoyed fun, sun, food, and games.

Local 108 Cookout for Health Care Workers

In July, Local 108 health care workers from the Philadelphia and New Jersey area joined together in Pennsauken Township, New Jersey, for a special worker appreciation cookout. Dozens of families attended for hot dogs, burgers, games, and attractions like face painting and a moon bounce inflatable. The cookout also provided an opportunity for workers to discuss important issues that face all health care workers, and to show solidarity with River Front Reha-

ilitation workers in New Jersey as they fight for a quality new contract. RWDSU President Stuart Appelbaum and Local 108 President Charles N. Hall, Jr., were both at the cookout to show their appreciation for all that health care workers do, and also to talk with workers about the importance of sticking together and fighting for a strong contract that protects paid time off and health care benefits. ■

Judge Orders Mountain View Employee Reinstated

A federal judge has ordered Mountain View Care & Rehab Center in Scranton, Pennsylvania, to reinstate Yolanda Ramos, after the RWDSU filed a complaint in June alleging she was illegally fired for supporting the union. Workers at Mountain View joined the RWDSU last year, saying they wanted to make improvements in their benefits and have a voice in negotiating their working conditions.

U.S. District Judge Robert D. Mariani also ordered the facility to halt intimidating actions like interrogating employees or retaliating against them for supporting the union.

"The interrogation and discharge of Ramos has had a chilling effect on the organizing efforts of the union and has intimidated and restrained other employees from exercising their right to form a labor organization," Mariani said.

The judge also ordered back pay for Ramos of up to \$7,000. ■

Steward Training for Ohio Members



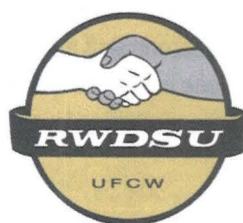
RWDSU Shop Stewards serve a vital role in servicing RWDSU members at work. That's why RWDSU Local 379 in Columbus, Ohio, held a steward training recently, helping shop stewards learn skills like grievance handling and how to better involve members in the union's activities. RWDSU Representative Jason Ware taught the class.



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RWDSU HEALTH AND SAFETY GUIDE



Healthy Workplaces for Health Care Workers

An important focus in next year's national elections will likely be the need for all Americans to attain quality health care which is both accessible and affordable. Equally important is the safety and health of the workers who provide that health care.

Increasing numbers of RWDSU members work in the health care industry, primarily in nursing homes and home health care. Others work in out-patient clinics and hospitals.

Health care work is very hazardous principally because of the heavy lifting these workers do on a daily basis. In 2017 the rate of reported injuries among nursing was more than five times greater than the rate for all workers.

Lifting Hazards

The primary hazard workers in nursing homes and similar care facilities is overexertion related to the repeated need to lift, reposition, transfer and assist patients. Sprains and strains, particularly in the lower back and shoulders, are the most commonly reported injuries. It has been estimated that the average healthcare worker manually lifts 3,600 pounds during the course of an eight-hour shift. Compounding the problem is the increasing weight and age of patients. The most recent Center for Disease Control data indicates that 40 percent of all American adults are obese.

Most workers have received basic safe lifting technique training. But good body mechanics are not enough to prevent injuries because they are based on lifting lower, more stable weights which can be kept close to the body. Patients are often not stable depending on their physical and mental con-



employers to maximize the acquisition and utilization of these lifting aids. Unsafe work conditions can jeopardize the care, safety and well-being of the residents. It is estimated that the total costs related to injuries in the health care industry is \$20 billion annually. The cost of a single back injury may be at least \$30,000. But more importantly the cost to workers of these preventable injuries can be permanent impairment or disability.

Numerous studies have documented how reduced employer injury costs have offset the purchase costs of safety equipment in a relatively short time. The urgency of this issue has resulted in 11 states passing Safe Patient Handling legislation and/or guidelines. New York and New Jersey are two of the states with laws on the books. For members in other states contact the RWDSU Health and Safety Department for more information and assistance on these recommended guidelines.

OSHA does not have standards on lifting and other ergonomic risk factors. But it established a National Emphasis Program for Nursing and Residential Care Facilities in 2012 and has a number of very useful resource materials on their website: (www.osha.gov). The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health also has valuable resources on their website: (www.cdc.gov/niosh). An additional excellent training resource is "Introduction to Safe Patient Handling" which is available at: www.wnycosh.org.



The RWDSU represents an increasing number of health care workers, like these at Silver Lakes Rehab in Pennsylvania, and like all workers they deserve healthy workplaces.

dition at the time. And assisting them often means having to work in an awkward position.

Understaffing is often a common problem in nursing homes. For example, when a patient falls out of bed in the middle of the night a second staff member is needed to assist in a lift, but often one is not readily available. Most states have mandates for proper staffing levels in residential care facilities.

Reducing the Risk of Injury

There is a wide variety of equipment which can be used to minimize physical lifting, from Hoyer patient lifts to devices to facilitate the everyday patient assistance tasks like repositioning, walking, going to the bathroom etc. We need to urge our

Other Hazards

Unfortunately, healthcare workers face a variety of other hazards including exposure to infectious diseases, hazardous chemicals and drugs, workplace violence, blood and bodily fluids. The RWDSU Health and Safety Department can provide information and training on these and other topics and help you build health and safety awareness and activity at your workplace.

Moving Forward

No one knows your jobs as well as you and your coworkers. Share any concerns you have about safety issues with others. Make it a regular part of union meetings. We all care about returning home at the end of the day safe and healthy. We are stronger together, united to make sure our employers meet their legal responsibility to provide a safe and healthy workplace. ■

Resources

Your RWDSU Health and Safety Department can provide additional information and training about specific workplace hazards as well advice on how to develop and strengthen health and safety programs at your workplace. Please contact them at (212) 684-5300 or www.rwdsu.org ■