



JBS workers from Souderton, PA right before they voted to join UFCW Local 1776

## Local 1776 Members and JBS Workers in Souderton, PA Ratify First Contract

Workers at the JBS Souderton, Inc. meatpacking plant in Pennsylvania last night ratified their first contract as members of UFCW Local 1776. Balloting yesterday and last night on the contract followed negotiations between the local and the company after an October 5, 2010 vote by the 1,200 workers to join the union.

The three-year contract improved the workers' wages and working conditions significantly. A four-year progression to full rate was reduced to 90 days. Starting wages increased from \$9 to \$11. Workers bargained for a weekly guarantee of 36 hours, time-and-a-half pay on Saturday, and double-time on Sunday. Weekly insurance premiums were reduced and policy enhancements mean affordable co-pays instead of high deductibles. Significant grade enhancements mean immediate increases for many workers of up to several dollars per hour.

"We stood together in choosing to form a union," said Bernie Coneghen, of Northeast Philadelphia, who works on the JBS kill floor and has been with the company for 27 years. "Now we have a contract that guarantees wages, improves our health care and vacation benefits and spells out steps for grievance and arbitration when differences arise. We have a voice at work."

Local 1776 President Wendell Young said that the vote yesterday was the successful conclusion of a nearly 20-

year effort by the workers at the plant to win representation. "The election and contract negotiations demonstrate that when workers have a fair and open choice, they choose union representation and create an environment that is fairer and more productive for workers, the company and the community at-large. We applaud JBS for allowing a fair and free process." **OP**

## UFCW Locals Lead Fight for Strong Communities in D.C., Philly, & N.Y.C.



UFCW Region 1, RWDSU District Council of the UFCW, Locals 1500, 888, and RWDSU Locals 338 and 1102 gathered last Thursday at a rally and City Council meeting in New York as part of Walmart Free NYC. Walmart had been invited to a City Council meeting to defend their record, impact on wages and labor practice history, but declined to attend. City Council Speaker Christine Quinn led the rally and meeting saying, "If you're proud of yourself, you show up. If you're proud of yourself, you tout what you have. If you're not proud of yourself- if you know you're lying- you hide in the background. And that is what Walmart has done today."

Yesterday, members of Local 1776, along with coalition partners, gathered outside city hall to raise awareness of the negative impact a Walmart would have in Philadelphia. And a coalition of community groups (*continued*)



including UFCW Local 400 in Washington D.C., the Living Wages, Healthy Community Coalition, gathered to demand that Walmart respect D.C. residents and to push for a community benefit agreement. Coalition members held meetings with city council members to discuss community impact, living wages, and how best to meet retail needs in D.C. **OP**

## Big Box Ordinance, Repealed in San Diego, Moves to State Level in California

On Tuesday, February 1, City Council members in San Diego voted to repeal a big box ordinance that had required big box retailers seeking to sell groceries commission an economic impact report before doing so. City council members who had previously voted in favor of the ordinance said they still supported it, but could not justify spending \$3.4 million of taxpayer money on a special election on the ordinance orchestrated by Walmart.

Last week California State Senator Juan Vargas announced that he will be sponsoring the "Small and Neighborhood Business Protection Act" in the California Assembly. The bill is modeled on the San Diego ordinance. "It is a travesty that an out-of-state, billion-dollar corporation could march into our community, spend a fortune on a misleading campaign that attacked city leaders for standing up for local businesses, and repeal a policy that would have brought much-needed transparency to local government," Vargas said. **OP**

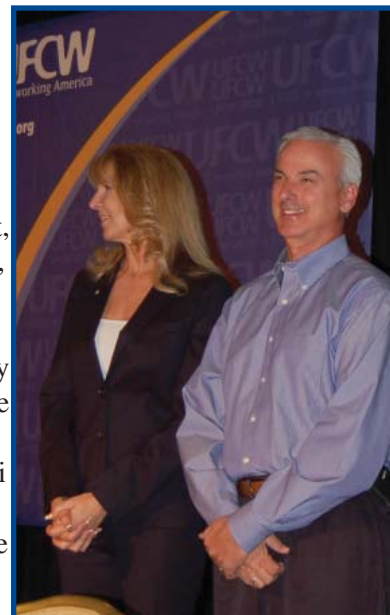
## Local Unions, Local Reps Honored at Board Meeting for Increasing ABC Signups

Several local unions and local union representatives were recognized at the UFCW Winter Board Meeting for their exceptional work in increasing ABC signups and contributions. Awards were given to the local union that signed up the most new members and/or increased their participation by the greatest percentage during the contest, which began in August, 2010. Winners were UFCW Locals 1, 400, 700,

1529, 881, 324, and 1442.

In addition, Local 227 was recognized for raising their ABC contributions from \$18,000 to \$81,000 in 2009, before the ABC contest began. Local 770 was recognized for inspiring the contest and increasing their overall membership participation from 40% to 56%, signing up nearly 8,000 members between June and November.

Local union staff who signed up the most ABC contributors were awarded \$1,000 American Express gift cards. Winners were Bob Lennon, Local 1445; Vernae Jones, Local 1; Anthony Fragapane, Local 1; Robert Brown, Local 400; Tom Rogers, Local 400; Debbie Dease, Local 1625; Juan Garcia, Sr., Local 700; Phillip Scott Barnett, Local 700; Mike Nichols, Local 1059; Celestino Rivera, Local 540; Rose Turner, Local 1529; Mary Keane, Local 881; Mamie Pratt, Local 881; Bob Kleich, Local 881; Maggi Land, Local 324; Frank Simkins, Local 324; Jesse Gonzales, Local 1442; Julian Gonzales, Local 1442; Jeri Hander, Local 324; Deliana Speights, Local 1442; David Simmering, Local 1167; and Simone Tuerling, Local 1428. **OP**



*Maggi Land and Frank Simkins, both of UFCW Local 324, were recognized at the UFCW's Winter Board Meeting for their outstanding work signing up members for ABC. Maggi signed up 806 members at \$1 a week for a total of 70% of her route. Frank signed up 614 members at \$1 a week for a total of 52% of his route.*



## UFCW Commemorates Black History Month: Celebrating Our Own

When Addie Wyatt went to work at the Armour plant in Chicago in 1941, she applied for a job as a typist. But at the time, Armour didn't hire black people to work in its front offices. Instead, she was assigned to the canning department, putting lids on army stew. "If you got hired as a white typist," she explained, "you might make \$17 or \$18 dollars a week. If you were black with a fair complexion, you might have made about \$12. If you were black like me, and got hired at all, you would earn somewhere around \$8 or \$10 dollars a week."

But, thanks to the union contract between Armour and United Packinghouse Workers, her contract meant she would earn more working on the packinghouse floor in three days than she would have made in a week working in the front office as a secretary. So she decided to accept the job—even though that wasn't the position she applied for—and subsequently became an active member of the UPW.

In the early 1950s, Wyatt was elected as vice president of her local union, UPW Local P-56, and was soon elected President. The next year, she left her job at the packinghouse to work full time for the union fighting against discrimination for both women and people of color.

In her efforts to improve contract terms and on behalf of workers, Wyatt said she often found herself fighting on three fronts. "I was a woman, and a black woman at that," she says, "so I was fighting on behalf of workers, fighting as a black, and fighting as a female."

Because of their large, activist membership, UPW was able to wield real power at the bargaining table, and they were able to use their power to benefit society. UPW was deeply involved in Chicago's community-based struggle for racial equality.

In many ways, the UPW was a union ahead of its time when it came to equal rights for black workers and wom-

en. It was the policy of UPW to try to eliminate unfair practices like discrimination against black people and women in hiring and wages. Wyatt and her fellow union negotiators were able to get "equal pay for equal work" written into many UPW contracts well before the Equal Pay Act of 1963.

Wyatt became deeply involved with the ministry and civil rights campaign of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and became



*Addie Wyatt*

labor adviser to King's Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC). She was a leading civil rights campaigner in Chicago during the 1960s, serving on the Action Committee of the Chicago Freedom Movement and organizing protests. Wyatt and her husband also worked with Rev. Jesse Jackson in helping to found Operation Breadbasket, which distributed food to underprivileged people in 12 American cities, in 1962. Wyatt later became involved in its successor, P.U.S.H. (People United to Serve Humanity).

Wyatt was a founding member of the Coalition of Labor Union Women (CLUW), the first woman International Vice President of Amalgamated Meat Cutters, and went on to be the first woman of color to serve on the board of the UFCW after its formation in 1979. She is also a recipient of the UFCW's Women's Network's Trailblazer Lifetime Achievement Award.

UFCW is proud to call Addie Wyatt - an inspiring, pioneering union activist - one of our own. **OP**