



**Rhonda Nelson**  
International Chair,  
Women's Network

## PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

### Dear Sisters and Brothers:

Over the last several months women in the U.S. have been attacked at every angle politically and economically. The elimination of collective bargaining rights in Wisconsin, wage discrimination, and access to healthcare have all been proven to have harmful effects on women and their families.

In Wisconsin, women who make up a majority of the public sector employees, and benefited tremendously under the collective bargaining process,

may now find themselves being denied access to fair pay and shortchanged thousands of dollars annually as a result of wage discrimination that was nonexistent under their union contract.

According to the recent White House report on Pay Equity, it is such detrimental policies and gender discrimination that have women throughout the country averaging 77¢ in earnings as compared to every dollar that her male counterpart makes.

In 2009, 28% of unmarried working women with children had incomes below the poverty line. The rate of women without health insurance in this country is on the rise and 14 million women between the ages of 18 and 64 are without health insurance. This all comes at a time when many women who rely on government services for their basic health care needs, may no longer have access to primary and preventive health care services. As we've seen in Wisconsin, this has nothing to do with balancing the budget and reducing the deficit, this is all about politics.

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## UFCW Women's Network Members Meet in Vancouver for Semi-Annual Board Meeting

From across North America, members of the UFCW Women's Network recently met in Vancouver for the network's semi-annual executive board meeting. Like the UFCW Canada National Council Women's Advisory Committee, the UFCW Women's Network works to motivate and encourage women members to become more active in their union and their communities.

"Across North America more than 700,000 women are UFCW and UFCW Canada members," says UFCW Women's Network Communications/Membership Co-Chair Nancy Quiring. "Their active participation strengthens our union and our communities. As sisters, we can also have a tremendous impact on what's going on in the political arena."

Women and politics was a major topic at the two-day board meeting with a Canadian federal election looming, and recall campaigns being

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### Vancouver Meeting *continued from page 1*

mounted in American states where collective bargaining rights are under attack. Dawn Black, the NDP Leader of the Opposition in the British Columbia legislature addressed the Board. Her message had resonance for sisters on both sides of the border. "You have to get involved in order to ensure that women's issues are at the forefront like childcare, and equal pay for equal value, and violence in the workplace."

The Walmart workplace was also on the agenda as Sister Esther Lopez of UFCW International outlined a strategy to battle Walmart in the United States by aligning with anti-

Walmart community activists, as well as bringing political pressure to block Walmart expansion plans in large US urban centers. Sister Rhonda Nelson, International Chair of the Network, led a discussion on the assault on workers rights in Wisconsin and other U.S. states, and the major mobilization of the UFCW membership to counter those attacks.

Sister Suzanne Hodge, the president of UFCW Canada Local 247, was also part of the agenda. Sister Hodge described her two-decade journey as an activist, union representative, and now as

president of Local 247.

A performance by Lucia Misch, a Vancouver spoken-word artist powerfully distilled the challenges and courage that sisters on both sides of the border have shown, and continue to show, as activists and leaders.

Sisters at the meeting also went away with plans to adapt Moneyskills for women members. Moneyskills is a personal financial planning workshop and curriculum that was recently developed and launched by the UFCW Canada National Council Women's Advisory Committee. [WN](#)

### Local 653 Holds Women's Event Network Meeting



*Left to Right: Local 653's Nancy Vaillancourt, Retired International Vice President Pat Scarcelli, and Local 431's Lois-Taylor Honeycutt*

### President's Column *continued from page 1*

Women are half of all American workers and are the primary breadwinners. They are also the co-breadwinners in nearly two-thirds of American families and many families rely on her earnings to keep their head above water. It is

the union contract that raises a woman's wages, her opportunity to receive health care coverage and to ensure that she is treated fairly and equally.

The rights to union representation, pay equity, and access to medical care are all basic

human rights. If we fail to facilitate access to these rights, then women and their families will continue to suffer.

Warmest Regards,  
Rhonda Nelson. [WN](#)

### Women's Network Members Attend DOL's National Dialogue

Local's UFCW 5 and 1428 staff and members of the Women's Network attended the Department of Labor's National Dialogue earlier this year to hear DOL Secretary Solis and others speak about the importance of female hourly wage employees and other issues affecting women in the workplace. Labor Secretary Hilda Solis, the keynote speaker of the event, underscored the importance of flexible workplace policies, and First Lady Michelle Obama also sent a video message discussing changing workplaces." [WN](#)



*Simone Tuerlings, ZaZette Scott, Diane Sedor, Sec. Hilda Solis, Mary Ann Radigan, Laurie Mesa and Cynthia Ramirez at the DOL event.*

### Organizing and Bargaining Around Work/Family Issues in Region 1

On January 25, Region 1 South held a seminar in New Jersey titled "Organizing and Bargaining around Work Family Issues." Jenya Cas-

sidy, from the Labor Project for Working Families, was the facilitator. Nearly 50 staff members from various unions throughout New York and

New Jersey were in attendance to talk about these very important issues that disproportionately affect working women and their families. [WN](#)



### UFCW Women's Network Diversity Co-Chair Ida Torres Retires



Ida Ines Berrocal-Torres was born and raised in New York City, into a union family. She learned about the importance of the labor movement at the dinner table through the words of her father, a co-founder of the Maritime Workers union, and her mother, a "Shop Chair Lady" at the ILGWU. Her union activism took her to the United Office and Professional Workers of America, where she started as a telephone operator. Torres' career in the labor movement

continued as she became a finance clerical employee at District 65, and in 1954, office manager at RWDSU Local 3 United Storeworkers, the union representing Bloomingdale's department store workers. In 1965, the 4,000 Bloomingdale's workers in New York City went on strike, and Torres became actively involved in the fight for justice at the department store. After the 15-day strike ended, Local 3 members rallied around her.

She rose through the ranks, becoming a vice president in 1977, secretary-treasurer in 1984, and finally, president in 1998, an office she held until her retirement. Torres also went on to serve as the treasurer of the New York City Central Labor Council, and was instrumental in the founding of the Coalition of Labor Union Women as well as the National Conference of Puerto Rican Women. Torres has also been active in the UFCW Women's Network

and The United Latinos, the NACCP, the National Conference for Puerto Rican Civil Rights, the Hispanic Labor Committee, and the Labor Council for Latin American Advancement. The fight for workers' rights and the civil rights struggle have intertwined for Torres. Upon her retirement, Torres was appointed President Emeritus by the Local 3 Board. Torres will continue serving Local 3 members as the Director of The Storeworkers Security Plan, which is the Local 3 Health Benefits Fund.

The UFCW Women's Network wishes our dear friend and sister congratulations on her retirement. Ida has fought hard for working families, especially women and people of color. As Diversity Co-Chair of the Network, she has reminded us all that diversity is a intrinsic part of our union and that we must all understand and embrace every individual in order for our union to survive. [WN](#)

## UFCW WOMEN'S NETWORK E-NEWS



*UFCW Local 5  
Women's Network  
Members and Allies  
Rallied On April 4th  
for Good Jobs*

## UFCW WOMEN'S NETWORK EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE



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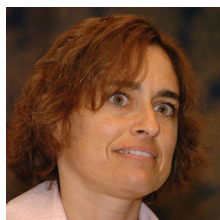
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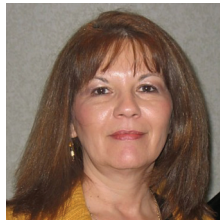
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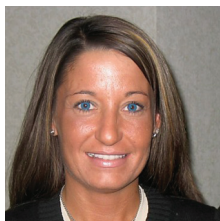
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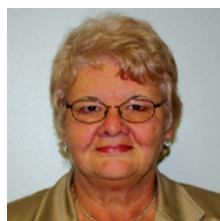
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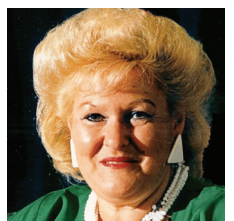
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## UFCW WOMEN'S NETWORK E-NEWS

### UFCW Women's Network Membership Application

Name: ☐ New Membership ☐ Renewal

Street Address:

City/State/Province Zip/Postal Code:

UFCW Local No.: Occupation:

Work Location:

Home Phone: Work Phone:

Email Address:

Active membership, open to all UFCW members in good standing, includes voting rights in Network activities. Associate membership, open to those who aren't active members but support the goals and purpose of the Network, is open to all other supporters, including former members, retirees, and members of other unions. Women's Network membership renewals are due each January.

#### Active Member

☐ Regular member - \$25 for one year

☐ Regular member - \$70 for three years\*

☐ Contributing member - \$50 for one year

☐ Sustaining member - \$100 for one year

☐ Retired member - \$10 for one year

☐ Lifetime member - \$350 one-time payment

#### Associate Member

☐ Associate Member - \$25 for one year

☐ Associate member - \$70 for three years\*

\*Members wishing to pay for three years may do so at reduced rates



**Please attach your check made out to UFCW Women's Network to this form and return to:**

UFCW Women's Network  
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