



Rhonda Nelson
International Chair
Women's Network

CHAIR'S COLUMN

Dear Sisters and Brothers:

It was heartening to see so many of you at our 10th biennial convention in Lake Buena Vista, Florida, on May 3-6. This convention provided us with an opportunity to share our stories and focus on issues that affect us all—including anti-worker and anti-women policies that have been adopted or proposed by the right wing in the U.S. and Canada.

During this important election year, we thought it was fitting to focus on the current

economic and political landscape which has affected all of us as workers and as women, in particular. Our conference speakers—including International President Joe Hansen, Executive Vice President and Director of Organizing Pat O'Neill, and President of the National Organization for Women Terry O'Neill—all underscored the fact that the economic and political landscape has changed drastically in both the U.S. and Canada since our last convention in 2009.

Since we last gathered three years ago, we have witnessed the rise of the Tea Party and extreme right wing policies that have had a profoundly negative impact on women and their families. As you know, many Republican policies are designed to eliminate the collective bargaining rights of workers and their families. Additional policies have targeted women and are designed to take away access to basic health care such as contraceptives and cervical and breast cancer screenings. House Republican Paul Ryan has introduced policies that cut away at many of the social

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Political Action Tops Women's Network Convention Agenda

Politics was a key word at the recently held 10th Biennial Women's Network Convention. Similar to the UFCW Canada National Women's Advisory Council, the UFCW Women's Network works to motivate and encourage women members to become more active in their union and their communities. The three-day convention focused on the challenges and opportunities facing UFCW sisters across Canada and the U.S., including the need to take political action to protect the gains women have made and defend against the rising right wing agenda in both the U.S. and Canada.

"Everything we have fought for can be taken away if we don't elect the right people," said Women's Network Chair Rhonda Nelson in her opening address to the convention. "This is not something we can take for granted. We must engage women in our union and in our communities to vote in their best interest."

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UFCW International President Joe Hansen spoke to convention members on May 4 about the findings from the recent diversity survey. "Women need to play a bigger part in the leadership of the UFCW at all levels," he said.



Executive Vice President and Director of Organizing Pat O'Neill (left) also spoke at the convention and is pictured with Judy Hryciuk of Local 1400, Marie Buchan of Local 832 and International President Joe Hansen.

Political Action *continued from page 1*

International President Joe Hansen's keynote address also pointed to the right wing threat to workers in the U.S. and Canada. "In the U.S., it is being fought in states like Wisconsin, Ohio, Michigan and Indiana," Hansen said. "In Canada, Mr. Harper and some of the provincial leaders have followed the lead of the radical right wing in the U.S. We need to continue to fight. The more active you are, the more power you can have in politics — and power in politics equals power at the bargaining table and better lives for the members."

Nancy Quiring, UFCW Canada's director for the Western Provinces, as well as chair of the UFCW Canada National Council Women's Advisory Committee, also attended and

spoke at the conference. "Our sisters in the Women's Network are focused on the upcoming American elections in November and mobilizing to elect leaders who fully respect the rights of women in the workplace, and their rights to personal choice when it comes to health and family planning issues," Sister Quiring said.

"In Canada, the same kind of right wing is attempting to roll back labor rights and social programs which would have a very serious impact on women and families. So UFCW Canada's commitment to political action makes it all that more important to engage women members in their union and politics in order to protect our rights and our families and communities." **WN**



Of the 200 delegates who attended the convention, 40 were UFCW Canada members, staff and officers from UFCW Canada Locals 175, 206, 247, 401, 500, 832, 1000A and 1400. Staff members from the Eastern Provincial Council and the national office also attended.

CONVENTION HIGHLIGHTS



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New Resolutions Empower Women and Workers

The following resolutions were passed during the UFCW Women's Network Convention on May 3-6:

Resolution #1: Women Organizing Women: Growing the UFCW

The Network will encourage local unions to identify, recruit, train and develop women organizers. The Network will inform and sensitize organizers to issues and concerns that are specific to women workers, and work closely with the Coalition of Labor Union Women, the National Organization for Women, and other groups to build political and legislative support for UFCW organizing programs.

Resolution #2: Preserving and Enhancing the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA)

The Network will work with the UFCW Legislative and Political Action Department to oppose any changes that would weaken FMLA, and urge all of its members to educate and lobby lawmakers to protect and enhance FMLA.

Resolution #3: Preventing Workplace Violence

The Network will encourage bargaining proposals that establish programs to train and educate workers on the issue of workplace violence

and prevention strategies. The Network will lobby for legislation to increase the penalties for crimes and violent acts inflicted on workers, and continue to work with UFCW Canada and the UFCW regional offices and local unions to educate and train local union activists about workplace violence.

Resolution #4: Diversity, Inclusion and Civil Rights

The Network will work with the UFCW leadership to ensure that we recognize the diverse workforce in our core industries, and create programs to help women and minorities develop the skills necessary to serve as union leaders. The Network will ensure that the leadership of the UFCW reflects the workforce we strive to represent, and continue to achieve equality for all people by fighting against prejudice and discrimination everywhere in the world.

Resolution #5: Immigration

The Network will support the legalization of all immigrant workers, and continue to support efforts to organize all workers in our core industries, whether native or foreign born.

Resolution #6: Women's Health Issues

The Network will work to inform and educate UFCW women about the importance of health care by having an annual check-up, and engaging in healthy eating, exercise and use of contraceptive

measures.

Resolution #7: Mobilizing Young Workers

The Network will work to develop and train young UFCW members to become UFCW leaders and activists.

Resolution #8: Active Ballot Club (ABC) and UFCW Political Agenda

The Network will support ABC and the UFCW political agenda and assist in GOTV efforts.

Resolution #9: Support for the UFCW Canada Political Agenda and the New Democratic Party of Canada (NDP)

The Network will support UFCW Canada's political agenda, and work with the UFCW Canada National Council Women's Advisory Committee to support Tom Mulcair and the NDP.

Resolution #10: Welcoming Medical Cannabis Dispensary Workers

The Network will welcome the inclusion of medical cannabis workers into the UFCW, and support efforts to organize medical cannabis workers and secure collective bargaining agreements for them that provide fair wages, benefits and safe working conditions.

Resolution #11: Support Walmart Workers

The Network will support the efforts of Walmart workers through OUR Walmart, and work with Making Change at Walmart to educate the public about the retail giant. [WN](#)

UFCW WOMEN'S NETWORK E-NEWS

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safety nets that help poor families, especially women, during every stage of their lives. This plan is so radical that it contains cuts ranging from early educational opportunities for children to Medicare, where older women depend on it most, all while lowering tax rates on the rich and corporations.

That is why the UFCW is fighting any action by lawmakers who want to protect the wealthy few at the expense of the poor and middle class. We have activated our Network to work on voter

registration, voter education and GOTV in the coming months.

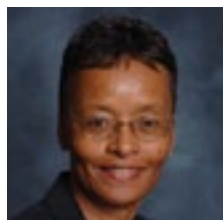
We are building and strengthening our relationship with women's organizations at the national and local level. We are also supporting the UFCW's Political Action Committee, the Active Ballot Club (ABC), to strengthen the UFCW's ability to fight for issues that matter to working families.

Sisters and Brothers, we must make every effort to help reelect President Barack Obama and other worker-

friendly leaders in Congress and state houses across this country in November. The Republican Party and their corporate donors will spare no expense to defeat President Obama. We must fight back! For every bit of effort you gave in 2008, we need even more in 2012. Together, let's make sure President Obama is reelected so that workers can continue to have a champion in the White House.

To contribute to ABC, please visit http://www.ufcwaction.org/site/PageNavigator/UFCW/ABC/UFCW_ABC. [WN](#)

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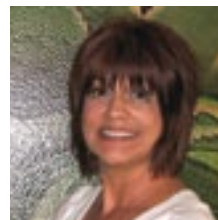
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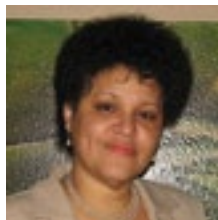
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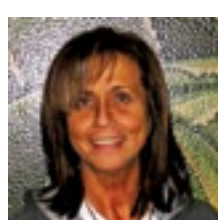
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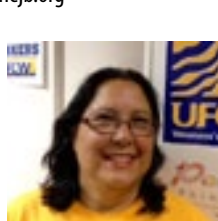
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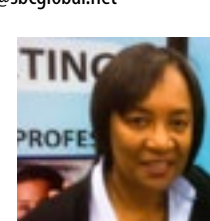
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UFCW WOMEN'S NETWORK E-NEWS

UFCW Women's Network Membership Application 2012

Name: ☐ New Membership ☐ Renewal

Email Address:

Street Address:

City State/Province /Zip/Postal Code:

UFCW Local No.: Occupation:

Work Location:

Home Phone: Work Phone:

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 dues are payable annually. Dues paid in October, November and December will be credited for the next year.

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:

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THANK YOU!