

Passion and purpose

New Local 152 Secretary-Treasurer Dan Konczyk's union career

For Dan Konczyk, his new role as secretary-treasurer of UFCW Local 152 is the next step in a lifelong quest to fight on behalf of working people.

His journey started before he even entered the grocery industry. Growing up in a union family, he learned union values from an early age from his mother, Ann, who worked at Acme Markets, and his father, Bernie, the secretary-treasurer of Teamsters Local 676 in Collingswood, N.J.

'My passion is what drives me.'

"We were always a union household," he remembers. "My dad would always tell us we had to get a union job because of the wages and pension. We even had to go by seniority when we sat in the car. Being the youngest of five, I didn't get the front seat much."

Most importantly, his parents

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Members of George Wells Meat Co. at their recent ratification, with Union Representative Lisa Sanders.

New contracts bring significant benefit improvements to members

Since the beginning of 2022, Local 152 has negotiated several significant contracts in many of the industries that the union serves. As a result, union members will enjoy a host of improvements to their benefits, providing new cost savings, better access to services and overall enhancements.

Local 152 continues to work tirelessly to improve the lives of our members — before, during and after contract ratifications. For a comprehensive description of specific benefit improvements, contact your Union Representative.

In addition to the decrease in out-of-pocket expenses for ShopRite and Acme workers detailed in the Spring 2022 issue of *Unity*, we're proud to announce these new improvements.

Paid sick leave at ShopRite

Local 152 negotiated for many months to ensure members in New Jersey in the meat, seafood and deli departments covered under the new ShopRite Meat contract would be able to earn sick leave under the New Jersey Earned Sick Leave Act.

Our union was successful, and now, retroactive to Jan. 1, 2022, all

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STAY CONNECTED!



UFCW Local 152 Unity

Official Publication of
United Food and Commercial
Workers Local 152

EDITOR

Brian String

UNION HEADQUARTERS

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100% Union

New contracts bring benefit improvements to members

Continued from front page

members in New Jersey covered under the contract will accrue paid sick time at the rate of one hour for every 30 hours worked, up to a maximum of 40 hours of paid sick time per year.

The following rules apply:

- Members must give their employer a minimum of two hours notice when the use of sick time is foreseeable.
- Any accrued and unused sick time will be paid out at the end of the year.
- Employees can use paid sick leave in any manner consistent with the requirements of the New Jersey Earned Sick Leave Act.

This memorandum does NOT affect any other paid time off, such as vacations and holidays. This new sick time is in addition to all the other time off to which you are contractually entitled.

Because this memorandum is retroactive to Jan. 1, most members will have already accrued enough time to start using this new sick leave immediately.

Please note that because this is a New Jersey-specific law, this newly negotiated sick leave only applies to members who work in New Jersey. In the event that neighboring states implement similar laws, Local 152 will negotiate for the same paid sick leave time for our members in Delaware, Maryland and Pennsylvania.

Improved pre-paid legal services

The Local 152 pre-paid legal services plan helps members in both troubling and joyful times in their personal lives. It's no secret that private legal services are expensive; therefore, we feel that having trustworthy, discounted counsel is invaluable.

That is why we are pleased to announce another benefit enhancement for members in plans that participate in our pre-paid legal benefits.

O'Brien, Belland & Bushinsky, the legal provider for the Local 152 Legal Services Plan, has provided legal guidance for thousands of members

Please see next page

IT PAYS TO BE UNION!

Grievances filed or resolved:

Total through 2nd Quarter 2022

114

Back pay and benefits restored to members:

Total through 2nd Quarter 2022

\$141,413.56



Members at Rich Products in Vineland, N.J., recently ratified a new contract.

Benefit improvements

Continued from previous page

and their dependents over the last two decades. They have graciously agreed to the following enhancements effective immediately:

1. Family Law Enhancement

The firm is enhancing the family law benefit by increasing coverage up to 50 hours per matter for all family law matters, including divorce, child custody, child support and related issues. This is a 25% increase!

2. Municipal Court Enhancement

Members will now have coverage for two municipal court matters per year, an increase from one matter. This includes all motor vehicle moving violations, driving while under the influence offenses, disorderly person offenses and most simple assault charges.

These improvements are offered at no extra cost to our members.

Vision plan benefits upgraded

For members with vision benefits, the wholesale frame allowance for

eyeglasses has doubled.

As inflation continues to affect the prices of goods and services, we are pleased to announce this newly-negotiated benefit improvement with Vision Benefits of America.

This new frame allowance will give members a retail value of approximately \$100 to \$120 to spend on eyeglasses. This change dramatically increases the selection of covered frames available.

This benefit comes at no cost to our members and is effective immediately.

More choice with dental plan improvements

Effective Aug. 1, 2022, members of the Local 152 Health and Welfare Fund will have a new dental program through United Concordia Dental.

United Concordia Dental offers access to many quality providers throughout the country. Members can save money by choosing an in-network dentist.

Co-pays for covered dental services

will now be a flat amount, instead of the current percentage-based co-pays, which will decrease out-of-pocket expenses for members.

There is no change in the dental benefits provided. The calendar year maximum will remain the same.

Introducing Health Reimbursement Accounts

All active members in the ShopRite Meat and Acme Markets Meat contracts will now have access to a Health Reimbursement Account (HRA) for qualified health care spending.

Establishment of these accounts is the result of the recent agreement between Local 152 and the employers. These changes will go into effect on Sept. 1, 2022, for all active members with 18 or more months of service. This applies to members who are both full- and part-time.

The HRAs will receive a monthly contribution of \$50, per the agreement.

This newly negotiated benefit will give members up to \$600 per year that can go toward reimbursement of out-of-pocket expenses like copayments, deductibles, X-rays, lab work, prescription drug copayments, and many more services not generally covered by other plans.

To take advantage of this new benefit, members must complete and return the Health Reimbursement Account Claim Form to the Health and Welfare Fund when submitting reimbursable expenses. The Claim Form must be submitted with receipts and/or an Explanation of Benefits (EOB) from your insurance company. All receipts and EOBs must include the provider's name and address, patient's name, date of service, type of services, the amount charged and balance due.

All qualifying members will receive a notice from the Health and Welfare Fund which will go into greater detail. For any questions, please get in touch with the Health and Welfare Fund office at (856) 793-2501.

Inflation shapes new trends

□ In this column, analyst Jeff Metzger looks at developments in the supermarket industry around the country.

Inflation remains the nation's biggest story and the numbers for June provided no relief.

Overall, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, prices increased 9.1 percent year-over-year and food-at-home inflation reached a 40-year high, spiking to 12.2 percent. The June grocery total marked the sixth consecutive month that prices have risen one percent or more, and with fuel prices declining slightly, expect food-at-home costs to become the leading inflation category when July's numbers are released.

Some particular items that broke the 12.2 percent barrier include butter/margarine, +26.3 percent; chicken, +18.6 percent; milk, +16.4 percent; and rice/pasta, +14.2 percent.

On the digital scorecard, according to research firm Brick Meets Click, e-commerce grocery revenue increased 6 percent to \$7.2 billion last month compared to June 2021. As has been the trend recently, "pickup" remained the largest digital-driven segment, contributing about 46 percent of all e-commerce sales. Ship-to-home remained the segment in greatest decline, dropping 14 percent last month.

"Inflation and COVID are creating cross-currents in the market as higher prices motivate customers to look for ways to avoid paying more than necessary," David Bishop of Brick Meets Click said, "and ongoing concerns about contracting the virus motivate shoppers to use online grocery as a way to stay healthy."

Local notes

An interesting story in *The Press Of Atlantic City* notes that a planned 44,000 square foot ShopRite store slated for Atlantic City may be delayed or scrapped altogether because of a \$500,000 incentive that Village ShopRite is allegedly requesting to cover potential losses. The store was originally slated to open late this year, but as one source noted, "We're in lawyer-land now."

□ Jeff Metzger's "Taking Stock" column appears in *Food World* and *Food Trade News*.

Happy retirement!



Valerie Savage

(at right, with Union Representative Lisa Sanders)

Hanover Foods



Stephanie Moore

(at left, with Union Representative Ed Fuller)

Acme Markets

Keep your union up to date!



To continue to receive important news and updates from Local 152, visit ufcwlocal152.org and complete the "Change of Address" form if you move.

From the Local 152 website, you can also update your address with the Health and Welfare Office and renew your voter registration.

Scan this QR code with your smartphone to update your information right now:



Study shows the benefits of working union

Members of Local 152 are acquainted with the benefits of belonging to a union such as ours. Time after time, we have negotiated contracts that guarantee wages, health care, pensions and workplace protections that far exceed the standards at non-union workplaces.

This is true across all of the many industries we serve, from supermarkets to food processing plants, from warehouses to manufacturing facilities, from assisted living residences to cannabis shops and more.

What's more, we are proud to be associated with a broader union movement that has achieved, and continues to achieve, so much for workers across the continent and around the world.

Now, a report from the Economic Policy Institute has quantified the effects of unions — not just for those who directly benefit from the “union advantage,” but for all people who work for a living.

Specifically, the report documents a correlation between higher levels of unionization and a range of measures affecting the economic, personal and social wellbeing of those who live in the 50 states and Washington, D.C.

Reducing income inequality

On average, the report's authors write, a worker covered by a union contract earns 10.2% more in wages than a peer with similar education, occupation and experience in a non-unionized workplace in the same industry.

“But unions don't just help union workers — they help all workers,” the researchers note.

“When union density is high, non-union workers benefit, too, because unions effectively set broader standards — including higher wages — which non-union employers must meet to attract and retain the workers they need. The combination of the direct wage effect for union members and this ‘spillover’ effect for non-union workers means unions are crucial to raising wages for working people

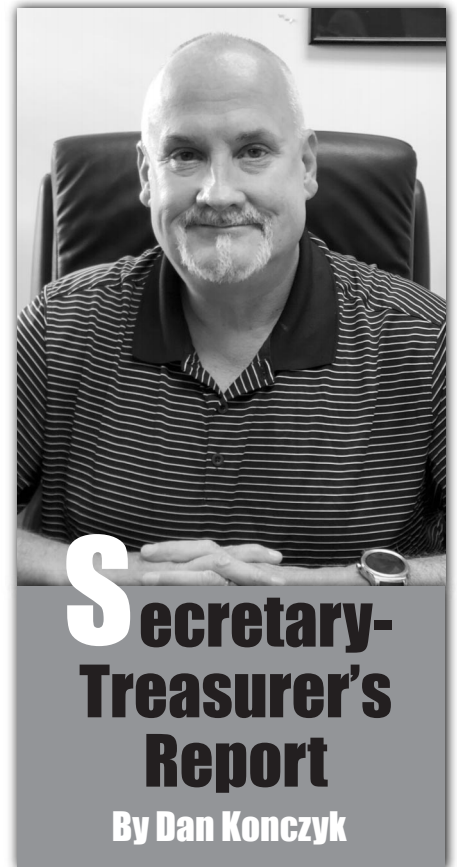
and reducing income inequality.”

Here are some of the report's findings:


- On average, the 17 states with the highest densities of union membership have minimum wages that are 19% higher than the national average.
- Those 17 states have median incomes \$6,000 higher than the national average.
- Residents of those states are more likely to have health insurance, as well as paid sick leave and paid family and medical leave.
- All of the states with the highest union densities have chosen to expand Medicaid under the Affordable Care Act, protecting their residents from falling into the “coverage gap.”

The authors conclude: “In the same way unions give workers a voice at work, with a direct impact on wages and working conditions, the data suggest that unions also give workers a voice in shaping their communities.”

All of this adds up to one more reason



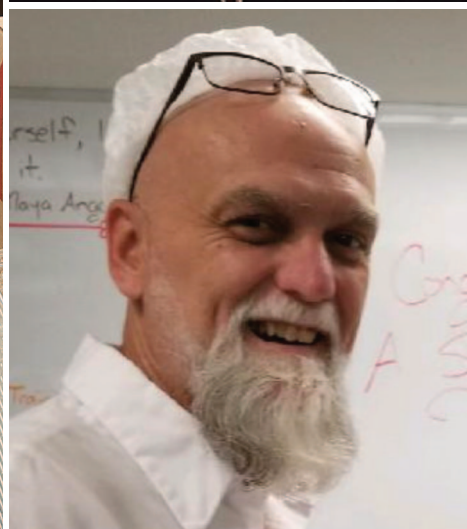
for us to be proud as members of UFCW Local 152. We're not just helping ourselves; we are helping all of our fellow Americans get the most out of life.



Would you like to earn some extra cash? Provide an organizing lead to Local 152 that results in a union election. Some involvement will be required.

By getting involved, you are helping to make your union stronger and you have an opportunity to earn \$1,000!

For additional information, contact Local 152 Director of Organizing Mike Thompson at (888) 564-6152 or via email at organizing@ufcwlocal152.org.



LOCAL 152
MEMBERS AT WORK



2022 Irv R. String Local 152 Scholarship Winners

Each year, Local 152 members and their dependents can apply for a college scholarship from the Irv R. String Local 152 Scholarship Fund. After careful deliberation by the Scholarship Committee, 10 award winners were selected from this year's applicants. Congratulations to the 2022 winners. Best wishes for the upcoming 2022-2023 school year and beyond!



Scholarship Dinner 2022

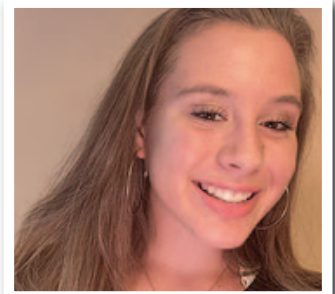
President
Brian String
congratulates this
year's winners.



2022 Scholarship winners stand with the scholarship committee.



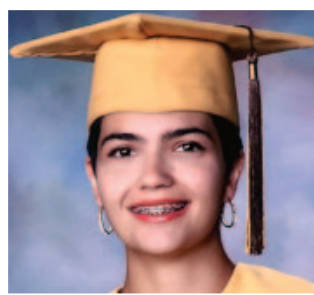
Gabriela Armijos



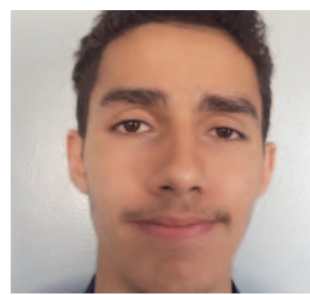
Emma Benson



Elizabeth Buch



Sophia Fagan



Gianni Hernandez



Nicole Kramer



Maxene Modesto



Stephen Steigerwalt



Emily Varner



Kayla Weber

Manufacturing industry update

New contract at Envirochem

Local 152 members at Envirochem, Inc., a manufacturer of private label detergents for kitchens and laundries, ratified a new contract on June 1.

Members work in production, maintenance, clerical, in the warehouse and in other roles at the facility.

Upon ratification of the five-year contract, all members received a significant pay increase along with additional raises every six months for the life of the contract. The union also negotiated for the company to significantly increase its weekly contribution to the members' 401(k) accounts.

All members have gained an extra paid holiday and now have the option to "pay out" some of their paid time off days (PTO) at the end of the year. Additionally, members who work on a holiday will now be paid double time to reward their dedication and sacrifice.

Members at Envirochem will now also receive prepaid legal benefits, have the option to participate in additional, voluntary supplemental benefits such as life insurance for their families.

The Negotiating Committee included Union Representatives Tom Hartle and Jose Echevarria, and Shop Steward Anthony Gonzalez.

Members at Family Food Products vote YES

On June 20, Family Food Products members voted to ratify a new three-year agreement.

These members work in production, shipping, receiving and driving at the meat processing facility.

As part of the agreement, members received a large lump sum ratification bonus as well as a schedule of larger yearly wage increases.

Junior members now accrue their increased yearly vacation time faster, which eliminates a longstanding tier in the contract. By shortening the length of service needed to receive additional time off, all members are treated equally.

Members also maintained their excellent union-negotiated benefits for medical, prescription, dental, vision and prepaid legal benefits. In addition, a Local 152 representative or shop steward will now have an opportunity to sit with newly-hired employees and introduce them to the union, their Weingarten Rights, their collective bargaining agreement, the benefits of their union contract, member discounts and more.

Finally, stronger steward language was added to the contract as an additional layer of day-to-day protection for our members.

The Negotiating Committee included Director of Collective Bargaining Dan Ross, Union Representative Jose Echevarria, Shop Steward Raysa Abreu-Espinoza and members Santos Rivas and Grisselle Morena.

Health care industry update



Congratulations to Local 152 member **Janice Drake** on becoming a new Shop Steward at Cape Regional Medical Center in Cape May Court House, N.J. Janice is an RN on the C shift.

Exclusive discounts for Local 152 members!

UFCW Lifemart

- Auto
- Child care
- Electronics

TicketsAtWork

- Hotels
- Movies
- Theme Parks

Union Plus

- Personal loans
- Supplemental Insurance
- Theme Parks

Jersey Shore

- Morey's Piers
- Casino Pier
- Fantasy Island

Entertainment

- Adventure Aquarium
- Big Kahuna's
- Clementon Park & Splash World
- Philadelphia Zoo

...and more!

Visit ufcwlocal152.org for details

New Local 152 Secretary-Treasurer Dan Konczyk

Continued from front page

stressed the value of union-negotiated benefits. After being diagnosed with asthma at a young age, Konczyk needed good health insurance to keep up with the costs of inhalers and other medical needs.

"I always knew the value of a union," he said. "I knew that was the right way to work. My dad would take me to membership meetings as a kid and I would be standing next to picket signs that were taller than I was."

"Seeing what my father did, he was a hero to me," he continued. "He fought for his members, and I try to do the same."

At age 15, he started at Acme Markets as a bagger before becoming a cashier and later joining the night crew. He worked at several Acme locations throughout Cape May County until 1998, when he was approached by his union because he was such an active and engaged member and for his experience as a shop steward.

"I was pretty aggressive, I would say, fighting for the people who were not being treated right," he said. "That made me stick out to the union."

Making a difference

He became a "business agent" (union representative) for UFCW Local 1358 and eventually its secretary-treasurer. He credits great mentorship from union leaders Joe Quinn and Irv and Brian String, as well as respect from his members, as the keys to his success.

"My passion is what drives me," he said. "I know I can make a difference. It's fulfilling to help people who are disadvantaged. I felt like I had to be vocal for people who couldn't stand up for themselves."

As a business agent, his motto was "People make mistakes — if they didn't, they wouldn't put erasers on pencils." He tried to communicate that philosophy to management when members faced disciplinary action.



Dan Konczyk with his wife, Donna

"Just because people had problems at home, it doesn't mean they were bad employees," he said. "They just needed direction. I would tell management to give them another chance to prove themselves. I got to see a lot of people improve and make themselves better."

He also learned how to transition from one-on-one interactions with members in stores and facilities as a business agent ("that's what I loved most about the job," he said) to learning the ins and outs of negotiating contracts and managing health and welfare funds as a secretary-treasurer.

When Local 1358 merged with Local 56 to create Local 152 in 2006, Konczyk took on the role of executive assistant to the president. In the early days of the merger, he compared his responsibilities to "developing a bench" in baseball.

"My job was to help identify and build a staff that would enable us to succeed," he said. "We needed to come together as one and treat each and every member as important."

"Developing that team is what I'm most proud of in my career," he continued. "There has always been change since the very beginning, but I needed to make sure we didn't miss a beat as people moved on. We were going to maintain the excellent

service we provide to the members."

Meeting the challenges ahead

Since July 1, Dan Konczyk has been secretary-treasurer of Local 152, following the retirement of Anthony Benigno. In his new role, he plans to continue to be hands-on with the development of staff while also taking on more fiscal responsibilities and keeping the local in sound financial health.

"Part of being responsible is to make sure we are always expanding and investing in organizing," he said. "Whether it's further expansion into nursing homes and health care facilities or making sure Local 152 is the premier union for representing cannabis workers, increasing the membership keeps us strong."

Alongside organizing is a continued focus on improving contracts for existing members (detailed in the "Benefits Improvements" article in this issue of *Unity*) who have been on the frontlines of the COVID-19 pandemic for more than two years and counting. Increasing communication is also a priority, through the newsletter, social media and membership meetings.

"Unions everywhere have to do a better job of promoting ourselves, not just to non-union people but also to our existing members," he said. "The incredible value of representation and a union contract — we're making sure our staff is out there every day communicating that to the membership."

Konczyk looks forward to tackling these challenges and appreciates the faith he's been given from those he has worked alongside.

"I've always had a strong relationship with the members," he said. "They've believed in me. It's really an honor to be in my position. I'm thankful every day that I can come to work and serve the members."

Happy retirement!

Robert G. Allsop	06/01/2022	Saker ShopRite
Carolyn C. Barr	05/01/2022	Acme Markets
June S. Benegar	07/01/2022	Various Supermarkets
Anthony J. Benigno	05/01/2022	UFCW Local 152 Staff
Joseph P. Bertolino, Jr.	07/01/2022	Acme Markets
Michael A. Bordi	07/01/2022	Zallie's Supermarkets
Samuel Brigandi	06/01/2022	Acme Markets
Margaret M. Brogan	05/01/2022	Acme Markets
Michelle L. Brown	06/01/2022	Acme Markets
Miguel Burgos	07/01/2022	George L. Wells Meat Co.
Muriel H. Garman	07/01/2022	Village ShopRite Rio Grande
Karen M. Carroll	06/01/2022	Acme Markets
Marion M. Cecala	07/01/2022	Various Supermarkets
Dixie Chambers	07/01/2022	Super Fresh
Edmond T. Cornwell	06/01/2022	Acme Markets
Deborah A. Cramer	06/01/2022	Pathmark Stores
Kimberly D. Dalton	06/01/2022	Acme Markets
Sharon L. Derecola	06/01/2022	Delaware Supermarkets
Noreen P. Figard	06/01/2022	Pathmark Stores
Leona T. Flynn	06/01/2022	Acme Markets
Carl R. Giacchina	07/01/2022	Acme Markets
William Greenfield	09/03/2022	Cape Regional Med. Center
John P. Havelin	05/01/2022	Acme Markets
Barbara Jardel	06/01/2022	Acme Markets
Margaret M. Kalanty	05/01/2022	Acme Markets
Loretta A. Laserre	06/01/2022	Acme Markets
Mary E. Leonardi	05/01/2022	Acme Markets
Josephine M. Matt	07/01/2022	Acme Markets
James J. Mchugh	06/01/2022	Acme Markets
Nello A. Mercoli	05/01/2022	Various Supermarkets
Carol Lyn Miller	07/01/2022	Acme Markets
Diane Miller	06/01/2022	Acme Markets
Carol Mosley	05/01/2022	General Supermarkets
Francesco M. Narda	06/01/2022	Dietz & Watson
Regina A. Nippins	05/01/2022	Acme Markets
Margaret Oleksiak	06/19/2022	Cape Regional Med. Center
Theresa Olexa	06/03/2022	Cape Regional Med. Center
Bernadette Perez	07/12/2022	Cape Regional Med. Center
Maryann Pregnor	08/31/2022	Crothall
Sherrie A. Purdy	05/01/2022	Acme Markets
Johna M. Rambow	06/01/2022	Super Fresh
Tanya M. Richter	06/01/2022	Acme Markets
Marion D. Ricks	06/01/2022	Acme Markets
Sandra J. Rogers	06/01/2022	Acme Markets

RETIRE WITH DIGNITY

Local 152 members have peace of mind
in retirement with health benefits
and a pension that provides guaranteed
monthly income for life.

Toni S. Schmidt	06/01/2022	Super Fresh
Barbara Ann Scott	05/01/2022	Various Supermarkets
Denise Scott Anderson	05/01/2022	Pathmark Stores/Local 152
Robert F. Sharp, Jr.	05/01/2022	Acme Markets
Elizabeth A. Smith	05/01/2022	Saker Shoprite
Joseph F. Stathius	05/01/2022	Local 152 Staff
Joseph E. Steck	05/01/2022	Acme Markets
Stephen P. Tasker	07/01/2022	Holiday Markets
John R. Thompson, Sr.	07/01/2022	Village ShopRite
Deborah D. White	06/01/2022	Pathmark Stores/Local 152
Louis Yacovelli	07/01/2022	Acme Markets

In memoriam

Robert Adams	05/29/2022	
Nancy L. Bennetch	05/02/2022	Acme Markets
Kim R. Clymer	05/22/2022	Acme Markets
Margaret Coyle	05/13/2022	Acme Markets
Elaine P. Critelli	07/19/2022	ShopRite
Anna M. Davis	07/28/2022	Acme Markets
James P. Denning	05/11/2022	George's Market
Arnold Dinicolantonio	05/07/2022	Acme Markets
Barbara Dovico	07/16/2022	Super Fresh
Samson Evans	06/18/2022	Medford, Inc.
David M. Farraday, Sr.	07/03/2022	Bill Bobon, Inc.
Lawrence E. Field	07/24/2022	Acme Markets
Donald Geiger	05/29/2022	A&P Tea Company
Jeffrey Glenn	07/07/2022	Acme Markets
Mary A. Graziano	07/30/2022	Village ShopRite Absecon
Charles Hall	06/20/2022	Kunzler Packing Co.
Mildred C. Hardy	05/19/2022	Super Fresh
Anna M. Hemmer	07/11/2022	Progressive Supermarket
Peter Husowitz	05/23/2022	A&P Tea Company
Bruce Hutcheson	05/25/2022	Acme Markets
Louis Iannone	05/05/2022	Super Fresh
Albert Ingram	05/27/2022	Medford Inc.

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Leonard K. Johns	06/04/2022	Ball Park Brands
Margaret Johnson	06/12/2022	Super Fresh
Helen Kudla	06/28/2022	Brown's Superstore
Donald R. Lafaw	06/11/2022	Acme Markets
Ralph A. Lewis	05/17/2022	Acme Markets
Terry L. Lex	06/20/2022	Super Fresh
Charles J. Lippincott	07/12/2022	Milmay Inn Enterprises, Inc.
Sandra R. Lorenzo	06/06/2022	Acme Markets
Dorothy Lotz	08/05/2022	Acme Markets
Joan F. Malin	07/28/2022	Acme Markets
Margaret Mastriano	07/04/2022	Super Fresh
Bernard M. McGovern	06/15/2022	A&P Tea Company
Herman G. Menth	05/10/2022	Village ShopRite
Malcolm E. Moss	05/13/2022	Acme Markets
Lillian E. Needles	05/09/2022	Super Fresh
James E. Platt	06/05/2022	Medford, Inc.
Curtis Pritchard	05/21/2022	Super Fresh
Luciano Procopio	05/05/2022	Dietz & Watson
Gonnie M. Ransone-Jones	06/27/2022	Pickwell SHS Enterprises
Robert D. Regalbuto	05/17/2022	Delaware Supermarkets
Monserate P. Rodriguez	06/10/2022	Louis Burk Co.
Bernard Roth	06/13/2022	Berks Packing Co.
Mary L. Skupakus	06/20/2022	Trevoze Shop-N-Bag
Robert Smallwood	06/05/2022	Cross Bros Hotel Supply
Virginia Steffier	05/01/2022	Acme Markets
Salvatore Tancredi	05/08/2022	Super Fresh
Ronald A. Trosino	05/27/2022	Super Fresh
Judith A. Vedutis	05/28/2022	Acme Markets
Walter F. Wexler	05/03/2022	Foodlane Store #27
William Whitehead, Sr.	06/22/2022	General Supermarkets
Howard J. Williams	06/29/2022	Local 152 Staff
Richard Wittlif	06/09/2022	Super Fresh
Nancy L. Yoder	05/16/2022	Super Fresh



www.facebook.com/ufcwlocal152

Upper Township workers choose Local 152

Public sector workers in Upper Township, N.J., have chosen Local 152 to be their voice on the job. Local 152 was certified by the state of New Jersey to represent these nine clerical workers in May after a majority expressed interest via "card check" for union representation.

"We're excited to welcome these new members to our union and we look forward to working hard on their behalf," Local 152 President Brian String said.

In New Jersey, after a majority of public workers at a workplace sign cards ("card check") expressing their intent for union representation, the employer by law must recognize the union and begin the process of bargaining a union agreement.

"The card check process is a fair and efficient way for a workers to gain union representation if they choose," President String said. "It removes the extended period before a secret ballot election when employers often use intimidation and scare tactics to prevent a union. Card check accomplishes in weeks what sometimes takes months or even years."

Workers at Upper Township in Cape May County reached out to the union with the desire for representation in order to best serve the town. Many of the new members at the location have decades of experience and want to ensure they can continue to proudly serve the town regardless of changing political administrations, String said.

Negotiations will begin in the near future on the first contract for these members, focusing on improving working conditions and protecting and enhancing wages and benefits.

Happy retirement!



Francine Briggs
Maryland Plastics

UFCW Local 152
3120 Fire Rd., Suite 201
Egg Harbor Township, NJ 08234

Periodical
Postage Paid
at Trenton, NJ

Strong bargaining results in improved benefits

Many readers of this publication are aware of what we call the “Union Advantage.” This is the phrase we use to describe the many ways workers are better off when they have a union giving them a voice at their workplace.

Union members enjoy a wide range of advantages because they have the power of bargaining collectively with their employers to determine the terms of their employment. This basic right gives union members much more power than if they tried to negotiate as individuals. What’s more, the terms they reach with their employers are guaranteed in legally binding contracts.

These contracts also help protect workers from unjust treatment, including arbitrary firings, wage cuts, suspensions and reassignments at the whim of the employer.

No wonder, then, that unions are being embraced by a new generation of workers at such corporations as Starbucks, Amazon, Trader Joe’s, REI and Apple, to name just a few.

These new workers are smart and educated. They know that union employees make an average of 30% more than non-union workers. They also know that those

who work under a union contract are far more likely to have job-related health care as well as guaranteed pensions.

At UFCW Local 152, we’re justifiably proud of the benefits we have been able to negotiate for our members in a wide variety of companies and industries.

For example, Local 152 negotiated for many months to ensure members in New Jersey in the meat, seafood and deli departments covered under the new ShopRite Meat contract would be able to earn sick leave under the New Jersey Earned Sick Leave Act. Our union was successful, and now, retroactive to Jan. 1, 2022, all members in New Jersey covered under the contract will accrue paid sick time at the rate of one hour for every 30 hours worked, up to a maximum of 40 hours of paid sick time per year.

We’ve also improved the quality of care received by many of our members covered by our negotiated health benefit plans. As a result, these members pay less out of their own pockets for health care for themselves and their families.

In addition, we’ve expanded vision and dental benefits, as well as legal services provided through the union’s arrangement with the O’Brien, Belland & Bushinsky law firm.



If you have any questions about these or other benefits of your union membership, contact your union representative or call our union office.

Get informed so you can make the most of your Union Advantage!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Brian String'.