

Local 1776 Members at Citterio Ratify Contract with IUF Help



Local 1776 member and activist Mike Palmer signs a community petition after voting on the contract agreement with Citterio.

UFCW Local 1776 members overwhelmingly approved a three-year agreement with Citterio USA late last month that covers 213 workers. The Italian-based company produces Italian specialty meats at one U.S. plant in Freeland, Penn., and seven in Italy.

“We were pleased to reach an agreement with the company that will maintain high quality benefits with minimal or no cost to our members,” said UFCW Local 1776 President and International Vice President Wendell Young, IV.

In addition to securing affordable health care, the new pact improves hourly wages, increases the company’s contributions to the workers’ retirement fund, and adds company funds to upgrade certain job classifications.

Local 1776 secured a fair contract with Citterio by working with the UFCW International’s Global Solidarity Program through the International Union of Food and Allied Workers Association (IUF). The relationship began during negotiations in 2006, when the local’s bargaining committee first collected information on how Citterio operates its unionized plants in Italy. In preparation for this year’s contract, the Global Solidarity

Program helped organize a delegation of stewards to travel to Citterio’s plants in Italy over the winter. Local 1776 stewards met with staff, stewards, and workers at the Italian meat workers’ union headquarters to tour the plants and discuss working conditions, best practices, health care, contracts, and labor law. **OP**

Locals 21 and 44 Merge for Greater Bargaining Power in Washington State

Members from UFCW Locals 21 and 44 in Washington State agreed to a merger last week and are now all part of Local 21. The merger gives greater bargaining power to a membership that includes over 35,000 grocery and retail workers, meat cutters, and food processors. **OP**

Ohio UFCW Locals Tap Joyce Patton as Government Relations Director

UFCW local unions in Ohio recently named Joyce Patton as Government Relations Director. Patton previously worked as Finance Director at the Ohio House Democratic Caucus, where she helped Democrats pick up seven seats in the November elections.

“With Joyce’s hiring, UFCW Locals 75, 880, 1059, and the ICWC have taken a strong step forward in providing our Ohio members with an influential voice when public policy is made,” said UFCW Region 4 Director and International Vice President Larry Plumb. **OP**

American Dream Poll Results Released

Change to Win has just released its latest American Dream survey results to measure workers’ views on the economy, government’s role, the American Dream, and the action agenda favored by working Americans.

- 65% believe the American Dream is still realistic, but also under attack.
- 66% agree that government is a likely ally—not an enemy—in achieving the American Dream.
- 54% believe our current crisis is a result of deregulation and lack of federal oversight.
- 62% agree the time to act on issues like health care, energy, education, and the economy is now.

Go to <http://www.changetowin.org/features/the-american-dream-survey.html> for the full results. **OP**

Local 21 Mobilizes Thousands for Health Care for All Rally in Seattle



UFCW Local 21 helped plan and turn out an army of thousands in support of Health Care for All at a rally May 30 in Seattle, Wash. Close to 200 organizations endorsed the rally, including labor unions, small businesses, community groups, health providers, immigrant rights groups, and faith-based institutions.

U.S. Senator Patty Murray (D-Wash.) spoke at the event, calling for comprehensive reform to be passed this year that improves the costs and quality of health care, protects existing coverage for those who want to keep it, and guarantees health care for those who are without it.

The rally was one of several around the nation organized by Health Care for America Now that is building momentum for the June 25th national event, where tens of thousands will march in Washington, D.C. **OP**

June is Gay and Lesbian Pride Month
President Bill Clinton deemed June “Gay and Lesbian Pride Month” in 2000, a month chosen to remember the 1969 Stonewall Riots in Manhattan when gay men and women fought back against unconstitutional raids by New York city police.

The violent police raids were followed by organized protests, galvanizing gays and lesbians with their first sense of communal pride that would eventually grow

into a national grassroots movement for the equal treatment of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) people.

The gay pride movement is a civil rights and workers’ rights issue. You can be denied employment, fired from your job, or refused promotion at work because you are lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender. In 31 states, it is legal to fire someone because of their sexual orientation.

As we celebrate Gay and Lesbian Pride month, it’s important to get involved in this movement for equality. Unions have been in the forefront of bargaining for contracts that include non-discrimination protections. But we need federal policies and laws to give equal rights to LGBT workers and their families, like the Employment Non-Discrimination Act (ENDA), and extend other workplace benefits to people with domestic partners, such as health insurance coverage and rights under the Family Medical Leave Act.

Go to www.sharedagenda.org to take action for workplace protections like ENDA, and to www.uncw.org/gay_and_lesbian_pride_month for history and information celebrating the LGBT community. **OP**

New Report Shows Low-Wage Workers Benefit from Union Representation
The Community Service Society of New York (CSSNY) commissioned a report highlighting the benefits of union representation for low-wage workers in New York. Among the findings, low-income union households are:

- More likely than their non-union counterparts to report receiving a range of employer-sponsored benefits, and access to job training and education opportunities.
- Much more likely to vote than non-union low-wage workers.
- Less likely to experience economic, food, health, and housing hardships than their non-union counterparts.

Go to www.uncwforfreechoice.org under the “Tools and Materials” section to view the full report results. **OP**