

Desert Edge

UFCW LOCAL **1167**
a **VOICE** for working America

Fall 2020

Official Publication of United Food and Commercial Workers Union Local 1167

Stay safe!

**Maintain social
distancing and
wear a mask
around people**



President's report:
Your VOTE is important!

**Union
offices
closed**

- Nov. 26 & 27
- Dec. 24 & 25
- Jan. 1

Due to the COVID-19 outbreak, visitors to the union office will be required to wear face coverings.

NOTE: December Quarterly Membership Meeting tentatively scheduled for Dec. 16.

Date and format to be determined by COVID-19 guidelines set forth by the CDC and State of California.

Meetings start at 7 p.m.

Social distancing will be maintained.

New Member meetings are postponed until further notice.

DESERT EDGE

Joe Duffle
Editor

Official quarterly publication of Local 1167, United Food and Commercial Workers International Union Serving San Bernardino, Riverside and Imperial Counties, California.

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Members from Stater Bros. 200, Rancho Cucamonga

CORRECT ADDRESS AND PHONE NUMBER A MUST!!

You lose out if there is no correct address and telephone number on file for you. We know the problem: People move frequently. But it only takes a phone call, a minute with your Union Rep or a visit to our website, **ufcw1167.org**, where you can complete an address change form. It could avoid a big problem with a hospital, medical claim or pension inquiry.



If you have problems with alcohol, drugs, children & adolescents, family, emotional issues, gambling, marriage and/or financial/legal issues, eligible active or retired members can call the toll-free MAP number at the Health Management Center any time, day or night, 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

All calls are confidential.

Food Division

call (800) 461-9179

Drug Division

call (866) 268-2510

Notice to all members: Your dues are now payable!

If you are one of the few members of the local who are NOT YET signed up for dues checkoff: YOUR DUES ARE NOW DUE AND PAYABLE. IF YOUR DUES ARE NOT PAID ON OR BEFORE THE FIRST OF EVERY MONTH, YOU WILL AUTOMATICALLY SUSPEND YOURSELF.

With dues checkoff, all future dues can be deducted automatically from your pay check. If you do not have an authorization form, call the local and one will be sent to you immediately.

Nonpayment or payment of the incorrect amount will automatically suspend you — a costly and inconvenient mistake. Although not required, the local, as a courtesy, normally sends billing notices by first-class mail to those not on dues checkoff. It is the member's obligation to pay dues in a timely manner. Not receiving a notice is not an excuse for failure to pay dues on time.

Avoid suspension. Authorize dues checkoff today!



Watch your mailbox!

for important information from your health benefits Trust Fund.

Got questions? Contact the Trust Fund (ext. 424):

(714) 220-2297 • (562) 408-2715 • (877) 284-2320 • www.scufcwffunds.com

Your VOTE is important, especially in these times

Few things are certain in this election year, but we do know that your vote will play a significant role in determining the future course of California and the country at large.

California remains the most populous state by far, with 40 million residents. This gives our state a whopping 55 votes in the Electoral College, which determines who will win the upcoming election for president.

In addition, the Golden State has 53 representatives in the United States House of Representatives — again the largest number of any state — and every one of those seats are up for election this year.

Those congressional seats will have a significant impact on national policy on every conceivable issue, from labor rights to workplace safety, from environmental protections to support for public education and more.

The power of your vote also extends to the state, county and local levels, where decisions made by our representatives have direct effects on our everyday lives.

Leadership against COVID-19

In these times, there is no issue that affects our lives more directly than the COVID-19 pandemic, which has killed more than 180,000 Americans so far and sickened hundreds of thousands more. It has caused additional economic hardship for millions of others.

There's plenty of blame to spread around for our country's inability to take control of this pandemic from the outset.



JOE DUFFIE
President

Check your voter
registration status and
register to vote at
UFCWVotes.org



On the federal level, we can point to failures in preparing for a potential public health crisis and marshalling the resources necessary to confront it when it arrived.

Even now, our response remains hampered by a widespread distrust of science and the trained experts on whom we must rely for accurate information and advice. This distrust is actively encouraged by some individuals in public office.

It is more important than ever for all of us to accept our responsibility to elect leaders who are actively committed to reason and respect for all who are coping with COVID-19, regardless of who they are or where they live.

To achieve this, we must all learn to discern between facts and emotionally-charged rhetoric and misinformation. And we must vote for those who are aligned with the aspirations and interests of working Americans.

Not a single citizen, let alone a union member, can afford to leave these choices for others to make. This is not a time to be passive or indecisive.

Please be sure that you are registered to vote. And while polling places will be open on Election Day, Nov. 3, you can avoid long lines and their potential health risks by requesting an absentee (mail-in) ballot. For information visit: sos.ca.gov/elections/voter-registration or UFCWVotes.org

Don't let apathy or lack of information deprive you of your right to participate in this historic election. Too much is at stake.

What's Happening



Just Born

Gerardo Contreras, Rite Aid, had a baby boy, Francisco Joel Contreras.



Just Married

Medardo Monforte, Stater Bros., married Kristine Vanneman on June 22 in Santa Ana. "When you find your soulmate you never let go!!!"



Just Retired

Lawrence Labrador, worked for Albertsons, for 40 years ... **Roxie Coulson**, worked for Smiths, Lucky and Albertsons for 30 years ... Albertsons 40 years Rodrigo Gutierrez Vons 41 years ... **Tommy Lamb** worked for Alpha Beta and Ralphs for 20 years ... **Susan Boyce** worked for Stater Bros. for 24 years ... **Jackie Blackwell** worked for Stater Bros. for 23 years ... **Danita Coyle** worked for Rite Aid for 25 years ... **Esmeralda C. Turnbull** worked for Albertsons for 29 years ... **Jeff Swenson** worked for Albertsons, Max Foods, Ralphs and Stater Bros. for 30 years ... **Ross Bangle** worked for Stater Bros. for 32 years ... **Pamela St. Amarn** worked for Lucky and Albertsons for 31 years ... **Terry Connor** worked for Lucky and Albertsons for 32 years.... **Dani Waggoner** worked for Albertsons for 35 years

... **Marilyn Loera** worked for Vons for 31 years ... **Linda Hedberg** worked for Stater Bros. for 34 years ... **Rutls Arriaga** worked for Alpha Beta and Ralphs for 33 years ... **Roberto Aguirre** worked for Vons for 33 years ... **Denise King** worked for Stater Bros for 35 years ... **Kathleen Alfaro** worked for Lucky and Stater Bros. for 34 years ... **Lisa Kitchens** worked for Stater Bros. for 35 years ... **Frank Valenzuela** worked for Stater Bros. for 36 years ... **Desiree McGowan** worked for Alpha Beta, Smiths and Stater Bros. for 34 years ... **Ruben Cordero** worked for Stater Bros. for 35 years ... **Martha Armbruster** worked for Vons for 39 years ... **Margaret Neal** worked for Lucky and Stater Bros. for 39 years ... **Elizabeth Cramp** worked for Safeway and Ralphs for 41 years ... **Elias Jackson** worked for Alpha Beta, Lucky and Albertsons for 42 years ... **Roxanne Hodges** worked for Stater Bros. for 42 years ... **Deborah Petersen** worked for Stater Bros. for 40 years ... **Samuel Meador** worked for Safeway, Vons, McCoy's and Alpha Beta for 48 years ... **Terry Dunn** worked for Albertsons, Alpha Beta and Stater Bros. for 48 years ... **Wayne Waddell** worked for Stater Bros. for 49 years.

In Memoriam

Madeline Arnone, a retired food clerk formerly employed by Market Basket, Thrifty Drug and Rite Aid, died on July 27, 2020, at the age of 94. She had been a member since December 1945.

Maria Baldiviez, a retired food clerk formerly employed by Vons, died on June 7, 2020, at the age of 58. She had been a member since May 1989.

Anthony Caggiano, a meat wrapper employed by Stater Bros. Markets, died on July 4, 2020, at the age of 63. He had been a continuous member since December 2019.

Jean Cote, a retired food clerk formerly employed by Safeway, died on Sept. 13, 2019, at the age of 94. He had been a member since June 1957.

Dorothy Evans, a retired meat wrapper formerly employed by Smith Bros. Markets and Alpha Beta, died on April 4, 2020, at the age of 92. She had been a member since August 1958.

Jon Folkestad, a meat wrapper employed by Stater Bros. Markets, died on Mar. 16, 2020, at the age of 33. He had been a member since January 2005.

Shane Fredenburg, a food clerk employed by Stater Bros., died on July 18, 2020, at the age of 50. He had been a continuous member since May 1991.

Ruben Garcia, a barber employed by Hair Connexion, died on Aug. 11, 2020, at the age of 81. He had been a continuous member since December 1994.

Andrea Gil, a food clerk formerly employed by Albertsons, died on Aug. 1, 2020, at the age of 53. She had

been a continuous member since December 2019.

Carlos Gomez, a retired general merchandise clerk formerly employed by Lucky Stores and Albertsons, died on May 13, 2020, at the age of 68. He had been a member since July 1988.

Jeffrey Herr, a drug clerk employed by CVS Pharmacy, died on May 17, 2020, at the age of 49. He had been a continuous member since August 2019.

William Heyes, a retired food clerk formerly employed by Alpha Beta, died on May 9, 2020, at the age of 83. He had been a continuous member since June 1964.

Robin Hollmann Molz, a retired food clerk formerly employed by Hughes and Ralphs, died on May 23, 2020, at the age of 58. She had been a member since June 1991.

Michelle Jeffers, a food clerk employed by Albertsons, died on May 16, 2020, at the age of 50. She had been a member since January 1997.

Verna Lindsey, a retired food clerk formerly employed by White Front, Mayfair and Ralphs, died on Aug. 5, 2020, at the age of 100. She had been a continuous member since January 1952.

Otto Lutz, a retired meat cutter formerly employed by Shopping Bag & Vons' El Monte Meat Service Center, died on July 21, 2014, at the age of 81. He had been a continuous member since March 1951.

Irene McLain, a retired drug clerk formerly employed by Rite Aid, died on July 11, 2020, at the age of 63. She had been a continuous member since June 1999.

James Obrymski, a general merchandise clerk employed by Stater Bros. (Continued on page 18)

Union members awarded \$25,000



Anthony Abril

Anthony Abril and Lisa Monson were awarded more than \$25,000 in compensation from Albertsons as the result of an arbitration filed by UFCW Local 1167's Grievance Department.

Abril received a check for \$18,254 that covered \$13,254 in back wages, \$972 in pension contributions and \$3,062 in health contributions, as well as owed vacation pay, sick pay and holiday pay.

Monson received a check totaling \$6,845 that included \$3,719 in owed wages, \$519 in pension contributions, \$1,631 in health contributions, and sick pay and holiday pay.

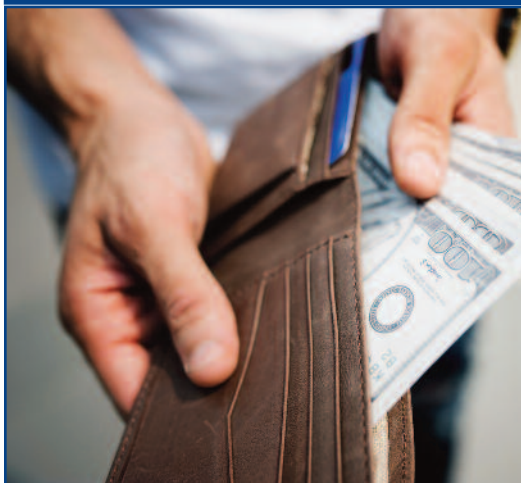
"The company fought us tooth and nail on these violations," President Joe Duffle said. "Carmen Paz and the Grievance Department did an exceptional job keeping this arbitration case moving despite the challenges the company put us and our members through.

"I'm glad we were able to fight for these members and get them the pay they deserved," he added. "They earned this money, and thanks to the union contract, they got what they were owed."



Lisa Monson

It PAYS to be UNION!



**Back pay and benefits
restored to members**

\$68,224.93
(YTD as of August 2020)

Members reinstated

144

Grievances settled

611

Editor's Note:
Presidential
candidate
Joe Biden
understands
the critical nature
of our members'
work. Please take
a moment to read
his letter:

**Check
your
voter
registration
status and
register
to vote at
UFCWVotes.org**



BIDEN PRESIDENT

August 2020

Dear friends:

This is a historic moment for our nation.

In November, we have an opportunity to harness the anger and the fear that so many Americans are experiencing, unite around our shared values, and remind the world that when we stand together, there is no challenge we can't overcome. This election is an opportunity to restore the backbone of our nation—the middle class—and ensure that working families, the women and men who built this country and keep it moving, even amid an unprecedented public health crisis, are treated fairly, with dignity and respect.

The last six months should be a wakeup call. While industries and entire sectors of our economy have gone remote, we're reminded daily of the essential nature of the jobs done by UFCW workers. Even in good times, UFCW workers are critical to keeping our families well-fed and well-supplied. And amid a global pandemic that has taken the lives of so many, your duty remains the same while the conditions worsen, and the danger grows. We owe it to you to ensure that you receive the benefits and protections you need, now and after this crisis ends. Make no mistake, if I am elected president, the UFCW will have a friend, an advocate, and a partner in the White House.

This commitment stems from a simple premise: Wall Street didn't build this country—the middle class did, and unions built the middle class. The basic bargain between workers and their employers—that if you work hard, you share in the prosperity created by your work—exists only because of workers who organized unions and fought for the protections that workers enjoy nationwide. But this bargain has been broken and as a result, the middle class has suffered. It's time to restore this basic bargain by instituting financial penalties on companies that interfere with workers' organizing efforts, including firing or otherwise retaliating against workers. I'll include in economic recovery legislation I send to Congress a series of policies to build worker power to raise wages and secure stronger benefits. This legislation will make it easier for workers to organize a union and collectively bargain with their employers by including the Protecting the Right to Organize (PRO) Act, card check, union and bargaining rights for public service workers, a broad definition of "employee," and tough enforcement to end the misclassification of workers as independent contractors. And building on the strong record of the Obama-Biden Administration, my administration will use federal contracts to raise wages and benefits, improve worker safety, and eliminate discrimination against workers.

The sacrifices made by unions—the dues paid, the picket lines walked, the negotiations sweated through—do not just benefit members. They benefit every American worker. Minimum wage, overtime pay, the 40-hour workweek, weekends off. Non-union workers only have these rights because of the work you've done to secure them and it's critical that we continue to empower workers everywhere to fight for their rights and demand they be treated with dignity.

American workers are not a means to an end—without them, there would be no corporate profits. Your work matters. Your jobs matter. You matter. And it is the fundamental right of every American worker to be able to afford the basic building blocks of a good life.

Thank you for everything that you do for our country. I am grateful for your support and I look forward to continuing this fight with you. Stay safe, healthy, and hopeful.

In solidarity,

Local 1167 member donates kidney to his father

Justin Ath, a 19 year-old member of UFCW Local 1167 who works as a general merchandise clerk at Stater Bros. in Highland, recently underwent a life-changing procedure.

It wasn't just his own life that was changed. By donating one of his kidneys, he was also able to provide a new start for his father, John.

John had been on the waiting list for a new kidney for nearly six years. He had been diagnosed with kidney failure during a routine doctor visit and was hooked up to an at-home dialysis machine for 10 hours each day. Because of his condition, his diet and physical activities were severely limited.

"Unless you have a family friend or something, you're at the bottom," Justin said of the kidney donors list. "It takes years. Your blood type and other factors have to be a perfect match."

Justin's older brother wanted to donate his kidney to their father several years ago, but even though their blood type was a match, the doctors determined his kidney would not be compatible.

Justin wanted to help out in any way he could, so throughout high school he donated blood as often as possible. When he turned 18, he began talking to doctors about the possibility of donating one of his kidneys.

He received the news that he could be a possible donor shortly after starting his freshman year at California Baptist University in Riverside in the fall of 2019. Several months of blood draws, testing and x-rays were needed to determine his compatibility as a donor.

In January of this year he learned he was a good match and could proceed with the donation.

"My father was ecstatic when he heard the news," Justin



From left: Justin Ath and his father, John Ath.

said. "He was really happy and thankful to have a son who wanted to help and was able to.

"Words can't explain how grateful he is."

The successful surgeries took place in early August. John will soon be able to realize his dream of playing sports with his family again and hopping back on a jet ski for the first time in years.

Justin, following a two-week recovery period in bed, will be restricted from heavy lifting for six months. He'll no longer be able to participate in contact sports and his body will tire more easily with only one kidney.

He'll still be involved in the sports world as he continues to pursue a degree in exercise science at a new school, San Bernardino Valley College, shortly after his recovery period. He is also planning to switch to a less physically demanding position when he returns to Stater Bros.

The entire experience has been a positive one for Justin.

"It's very rewarding to be able to help out my dad," he said. "It's something I've wanted to do ever since we first learned about his condition.

"I told myself 'I've got this — I can do this.'"

UFCW and senators call on grocery companies to extend hazard pay

In a national telephone press conference hosted by the UFCW, U.S. Sens. Sherrod Brown (D-Ohio) and Elizabeth Warren (D-Mass.) called on top grocery and retail companies to reinstate hazard pay for frontline workers as COVID-19 cases continue to spike across the country.

During the July 17 call, Sens. Brown and Warren also called on major supermarket executives to implement CDC recommendations for workplace safety for the duration of the pandemic.

Brown and Warren revealed a letter to the top 15 grocery chain CEOs that was signed by themselves and fellow Sens. Bernie Sanders (I-Vt.), Kamala Harris (D-Calif.), Richard Blumenthal (D-Conn.), Chris Murphy (D-Conn.), Kirsten Gillibrand (D-N.Y.), Sheldon Whitehouse (D-R.I.), Tammy Duckworth (D-Ill.), Jack Reed (D-R.I.), Dick Durbin (D-Ill.), Bob Casey (D-Pa.), and Cory Booker (D-N.J.).

“My fellow Democratic senators and I wrote this letter to 15 major grocery store chains with a clear message: the pandemic is not over, and grocery store CEOs need to extend their pay increases and bonuses to frontline workers,” Brown said. “If workers deserved hazard pay in April, they certainly deserve it now.”

“Grocery workers’ lives are at increased risk every day as they do critical work to keep America functioning – and they deserve robust hazard pay to account for that risk,” Warren said. “I’m in this fight with the UFCW and Sen. Brown to demand grocery chains extend hazard pay for their essential workers.”

“The next coronavirus relief package must include my Essential Workers Bill of Rights to guarantee this and a whole suite of benefits and protections like enforceable health and safety protections, universal paid sick leave and family leave, and child care,” Warren added.

UFCW Local 1167 President Joe Duffle observed that “it’s no secret America’s grocery workers are on the front lines of the COVID-19 pandemic, bravely putting themselves in harm’s way every day as millions of Americans work from home.”

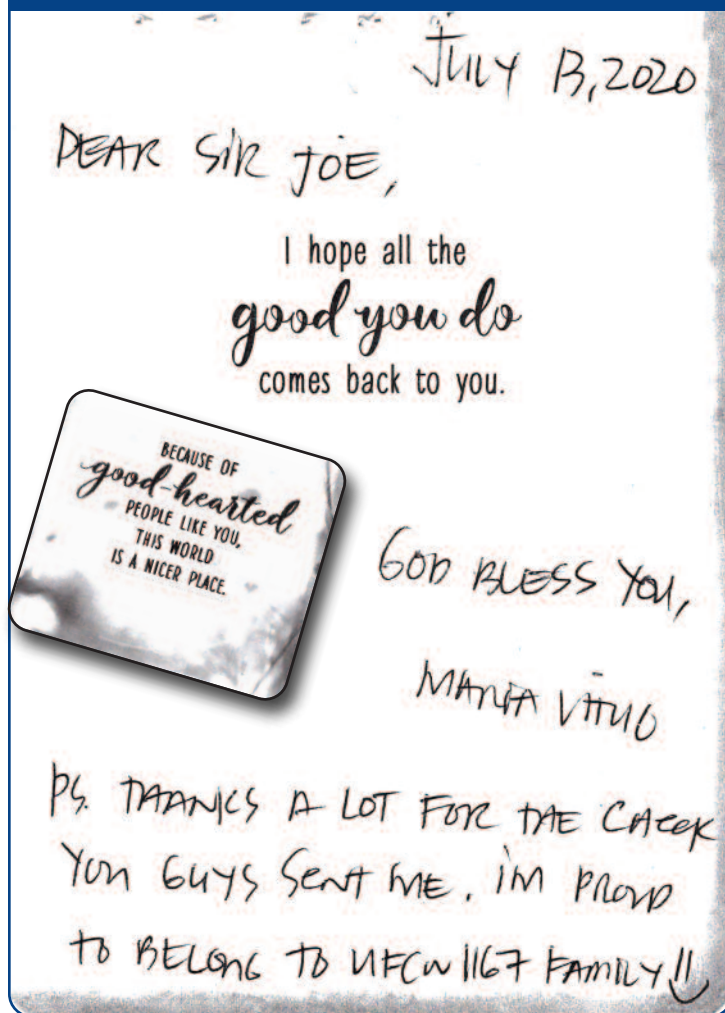
Since the beginning of the pandemic, the UFCW has called for hazard pay, increased access to COVID testing and PPE, and enforcement of mask mandates in stores to keep workers and shoppers safe, he said.

“It is disgraceful that top grocery chains in our jurisdiction and across the country have cut hazard pay for essential workers,” Duffle said. “The danger of COVID-19 continues to grow as they rake in billions in profits.”

“Leaders in the White House and CEOs in countless retail boardrooms have simply failed to do their jobs to protect the American people,” he added.

“These CEOs have a responsibility to fight this virus and provide a safe place to shop and work. The time has come to establish not just a national mask mandate, but to guarantee hazard pay for all American frontline workers.

A note of thanks, from a thankful member...



New union representative Lisset Gallegos takes on unexpected challenges

Lisset Gallegos was excited about learning the ropes at her new job.

After 13 years of working for Stater Bros. and another five years in the union's Insurance Department, she had been recruited as Local 1167's newest union representative. She was eager to get her training in the usual way and start serving the membership.

This was back in mid-February, before the pandemic.

Then, suddenly, Gallegos' training became anything but usual. The members needed help in ways that few anticipated, and she had to learn to give a lot of that help by getting out in the field and doing it.

"When the pandemic hit, it was insane," Gallegos remembered. "Every single call we got had something to do about the coronavirus. It was like there were no other issues out there."

"This month [July], I'm officially on my own," she said. "But I feel I've been training for this position forever."

Becoming a steward

Prior to joining the union's staff in 2015, Gallegos worked in the dairy department and also as a receiver and customer service representative at Stater Bros. 175 in Fontana. During that time, she served as the shop steward at her store.

"The members at my store would always come to me with questions about the union—especially the new employees," she said.

"I went to the union a lot to get the answers I did not know, and when it came time, I figured I might as well become a steward. I was thankful for the opportunity."

"When I worked in the Insurance Department, I helped the members as much

as I could, which was very satisfying," she continued. "But being a rep is so different."

"A rep is in the stores working one-on-one with the members. It's a ton of work and it's my life now, and I'm proud to be so much more involved in everything from gripes and grievances to contract negotiations."



Lisset Gallegos

"It's the direct contact with the members that I enjoy most. It's not for everybody, but I feel like I'm meant to be a rep. It's a calling."

Gallegos' route includes stores in the High Desert areas of Adelanto, Apple Valley, Barstow, Hesperia, Phelan and Victorville. She also serves members working at Bear Valley Dental and Plaza Family Dental.

Accepting the challenge

She said working during this pandemic continues to be a challenge for everybody.

"None of this is in the contract and

we've been working hard for the safety and benefit of our membership on a level none of us have ever seen," she said.

Still, she said, "We've come a long way."

"For example, we've pushed hard for more PPE (personal protective equipment) for the safety of our members. Now you can see the results of our efforts with plexiglass screens, washing stations, hand sanitizer and other protections."

"More can be done, and we continually push our employers," Gallegos added.

"Workers are watching their 'hero pay' or 'appreciation pay' or 'hazard pay' being taken away, even though the numbers of those infected keep rising, and the hospitals are filled to capacity."

"The danger is not gone, but on the rise. And now, since it's not part of the union contract, they can end it at their discretion."

"There are things in a union contract that are guaranteed for our members. Employers can't take those things away with a stroke of a pen. That has great value for our membership."

She said the union is getting more calls from workers who currently don't have a union but want the protections a union contract brings. "They see that unions are fighting for their members and all workers," she said.

Gallegos married Eddie, her long-time boyfriend, about three years ago and she has twin sons, Brandon and Brian, 17, and a daughter, Katherine, 15. The kids are occupied with online school and are teaching themselves self-reliance through their online education.

"They're older, so they can do it on their own," she said.

Like their mother, they'll learn how to handle many of life's challenges by taking them on in the real world.

Members at Work - Rite Aid 6482, Fontana



Rite Aid and CVS expand COVID-19 testing throughout the U.S.

Rite Aid and CVS have expanded COVID-19 testing to most, if not all, locations in UFCW Local 1167's jurisdiction.

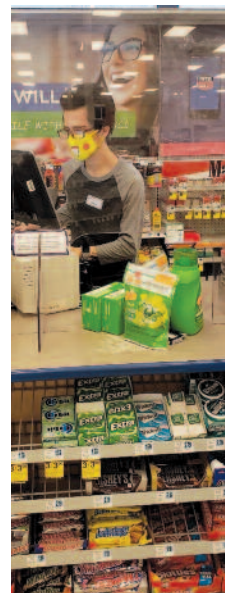
Thanks to a recent California Executive Order, a pharmacist may order and collect specimens for authorized COVID-19 tests. Pharmacists may also serve as qualified laboratory testing personnel to perform COVID-19 tests, but only in an appropriately licensed or registered laboratory, and only under the direction of a laboratory director.

Rite Aid recently announced its COVID-19 testing sites now span from coast to coast, with added locations in California, Oregon and Washington, as well as Idaho, Mary-

land, Massachusetts, Michigan, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania and Virginia. CVS also offers free testing at more than 1,800 locations nationwide.

COVID-19 nasal tests are available for all adults, regardless of whether they are experiencing virus symptoms, in accordance with guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Previously, members needed a doctor's order or direct exposure to the virus.

At all testing locations, patients are required to provide government-issued identification and be at least 18 years old. They also need to pre-register online at riteaid.com or cvs.com to schedule a time slot for testing at their preferred locations.





Local 1167 member shows kindness through cooking

Jodie Hernandez cooks for her neighbors in need

Doing the right thing sometimes gets noticed.

Jodie Hernandez, the produce manager at Stater Bros. 126 in Palm Springs, didn't think anything of it when her neighbors became sick earlier this year. At first, she thought it was just the flu.

"They were sick for a couple of weeks in self-quarantine and they asked me to bring them Orange Juice and vapor rub," she said.

Not long after, her phone rang.

"My neighbor called us the next day to let us know her husband passed away due to complications with coronavirus," she said. "She got better, but he didn't."

"It was so tough to get through," she continued. "He used to be a hotshot fireman and then a forest ranger. It's so sad. My husband Larry and I got to be really close with them."

Good deeds

Her neighbor was then quarantined an additional 21 days after her husband passed.

"When that happens, you just don't know what to say," Hernandez said. "So

we let her grieve and she finally one day called for help. She said she was so hungry and asked if we could make her a grilled cheese sandwich."

Hernandez made the sandwich and placed it outside of her neighbor's door. She needed to be careful because she is immunocompromised, having COPD, asthma and liver problems.

"We helped her because it was the right thing to do," Hernandez said. "We needed to take care of her and we have been helping her as much as we can.

"We were thinking she'd probably run out of food, so we just started making her breakfast, which turned into meals," she continued. "We fed her for 21 days of her quarantine."

Word got out about her good deeds and recently Hernandez was interviewed on camera by NBC Palm Springs in her store. Her kindness was recognized with a prize from Honda and Toyota of the Desert.

"They all played it off — folks were saying the store won a Fourth of July display or something when the TV cameras rolled in," she said of her surprise TV interview. "During the interview I was so nervous. I kept rolling a tomato around and I'm amazed I didn't squash it on TV.

"I'm completely honored and thankful to be appreciated in this manner," she said. "To be honored and awarded for doing simply what we're supposed to — because it's the right thing to do — it's very humbling."

Getting through it together

Hernandez has been off and on work

schedules because of quarantining orders from her doctor during the past several months, including a month-long stretch in July and August.

"These are crazy times," she said. "I read and play games on my phone. I tell ya, I've cleaned out every cupboard and drawer in my home and even painted the bathroom to keep busy."

Hernandez is a 22-year member of Local 1167 and applauds what the union is doing to keep its members safe.

"I really appreciate the union's concern for us and its work for protections and worker safety. It means a lot."

She said the membership can do more to help the union and the community.

"Always wear a mask, practice social distancing, wash your hands and use sanitizer as often as you can," she said. "Most customers are considerate. Some really love us. I had a couple call me to make sure I'm OK.

"The love we have from our customers is totally sweet and keeps us going."

Hernandez has five grandchildren: two in college, two in middle school and one in elementary school. She has been married to Larry for 32 years and they have two grown children.

"We do what we can together," she said. "We catch up on YouTube videos and do a lot of reading.

"Larry is good at meditation. He's gotten into it lately — it's helped him a lot. He's starting to get me into it, too, so I'm starting on-chair yoga and looking forward to getting onto mat yoga again."

COVID-19 disproportionately hits Inland Empire's Latino residents

The COVID-19 pandemic has disproportionately affected Latino communities in the Inland Empire, according to a report sponsored by the Economic Hardship Reporting Project.

Report author Miranda Green writes that Latinos account for 55 percent of COVID-19 cases and 45 percent of COVID-related deaths, despite only representing 39 percent of California's population. Nearly half of Riverside County and about 84 percent of Imperial County is composed of Latino residents, Green writes.

She notes that many Latinos lack access to basic health care and have underlying health conditions that make them more susceptible to respiratory illness. They also tend to live together in multigenerational homes and work in essential jobs as farm pickers, prison workers and nurses, which increases their likelihood of contracting the disease, she says.

Imperial County is one of California's COVID-19 hotspots and its hospitals are so overrun with coronavirus cases that its main hospital needs to use portable military-style tents to treat patients, often in 100-degree heat, Green writes.

Climate change makes things worse

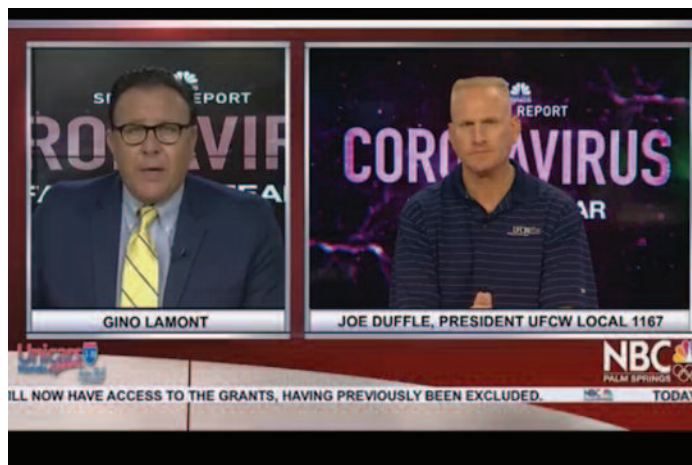
Climate change is also exacerbating the spread of COVID-19, Green writes, noting that the communities surrounding the Salton Sea are already hit hard by respiratory illnesses brought on by evaporation of the lake.

Since 2003, water from the Colorado River that formerly flowed through the lake has been diverted to San Diego. The dwindling water supply has shrunk the lake by as much as a football field in certain parts and it has exposed areas that contain toxic materials that can get into people's bloodstreams just by inhaling it.

In June, the California Legislature appropriated \$47 million to mitigate a looming environmental disaster at the Salton Sea. Two projects are expected to break ground within the next year.

"Our communities have paid a heavy price for the bureaucratic inaction that led to this mess, but we are finally making meaningful steps in the right direction," UFCW Local 1167 President Joe Duffie observed.

"Meanwhile, Local 1167 will continue to fight for increased protection for front line workers and we will not rest in this fight."



President Joe Duffie is in regular contact with the news media as a voice for union members, urging elected officials to maintain and improve protections for all workers.

Duffie assails El Centro officials' role in COVID-19 surge

A surge in cases of COVID-19 has led to more than 20 percent of Imperial County residents testing positive for the coronavirus, and UFCW Local 1167's president lays the blame squarely on local officials.

In a July television interview, Local 1167 President Joe Duffie told NBC Palm Springs that officials in El Centro have behaved irresponsibly in making the crisis worse than it had to be.

"There was no planning in place, and our initial phone calls were falling on deaf ears," President Duffie said. "Right now, what's happening is the city of El Centro is singlehandedly, in my opinion, creating an atmosphere that allows for the spread of the coronavirus."

Since lockdown orders were issued by Calif. Gov. Gavin Newsom in March, El Centro's mayor and city council have blocked or encouraged defiance of the orders meant to prevent the spread of COVID-19, Duffie said.

"I hold them absolutely accountable for this," he said. "You've got elected officials from the state level and from the county level saying, look, we'll work with you. And every time there's a mandate from the governor's office you're getting pushback from El Centro."

While the city has distributed touchless thermometers and face coverings to local businesses, enforcement of face coverings and social/physical distancing is lacking, he said.

"It is absolutely shameful that the city council is allowing people to die needlessly, all to play a political game," Duffie said.



Local 1167 is hiring!

We are looking for a web administrator, networking administrator, and communications representative who will be responsible for administering the Local 1167 website, Apple and Android Mobile Apps, Facebook, Instagram and Twitter Accounts.

Primary duties include conceptualizing and implementing creative ideas for Local 1167's website, as well as creating visual elements with our website branding, computer administration, audio and video equipment administration, and interoffice computer networking. The communications person will be working closely with our Executive Staff, Union Representatives and Organizing Dept to create and implement media content plan and coordinate Local 1167 events.

Applicants will need to have a diploma in the web design field, excellent visual web design, and networking skills. Applicants must be proficient in graphic design software such as Adobe Dreamweaver, Adobe Illustrator and Photoshop, Final Cut, Motion, Keynotes, Pages, Numbers, and other and other audio and visual design tools.

Key skills to have

- A relevant diploma in web design field
- Conceptualizing creative ideas
- Proficiency in front-end development web programming languages such as HTML, CSS, JQuery and JavaScript
- Testing, maintenance, repair and improving the design of Local 1167 website, computers and network
- Establishing design guidelines, standards, and best practices
- Working with different content management systems
- Good understanding of search engine optimization principles
- Current experience with international web protocols, standards, and technologies
- Creative and open to new ideas
- Adaptable and willing to learn new techniques
- Excellent communication skills
- Basic Understanding of contract language labor agreements
- English/Spanish reading and writing proficiency is required

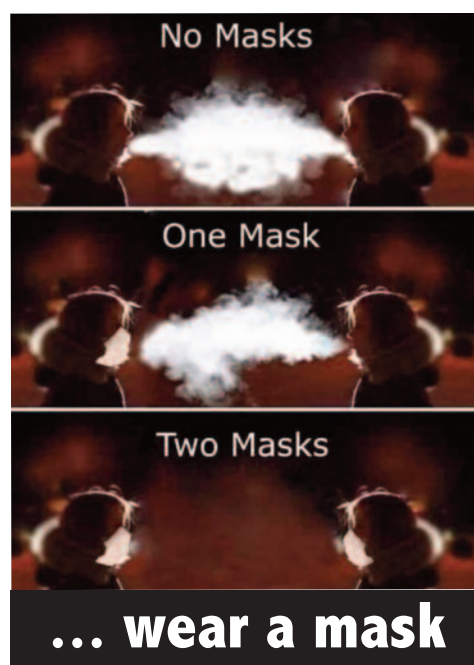
Virus claims heavy toll on grocery workers in U.S.

The United Food and Commercial Workers International Union announced on July 21 that 93 members who work at grocery stores have died from COVID-19 and 12,405 members at grocery stores have been infected or exposed to the virus.

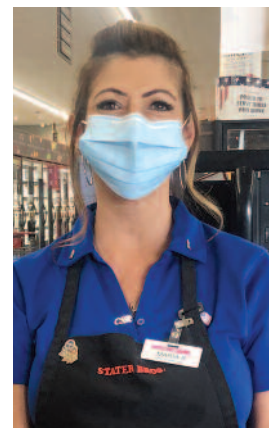
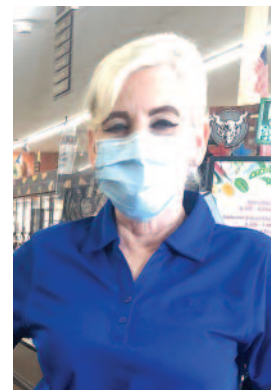
The UFCW also released the results of a national poll of 4,000 grocery workers highlighting the challenges these workers face on the front lines of the COVID-19 pandemic:

- Nearly one in two workers are more concerned about COVID-19 now than two weeks ago.

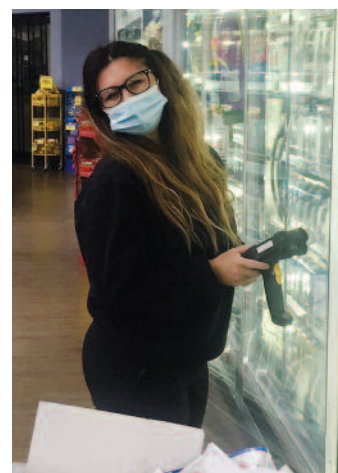
- Too many customers are not wearing masks and companies are less concerned about employees.
- More than half of the workers worry about bringing COVID-19 home and getting their families sick.
- Nearly seven out of 10 workers say their employer is not enforcing mask mandates.
- More than seven in 10 workers want COVID-19 hazard pay, given the risks they face.
- 75 percent of workers say an even worse second wave of COVID-19 cases is coming.



Front Line Heroes at Work - Stater Bros. 200, Rancho Cucamonga



Front Line Heroes at Work - Ralphs 13, Rancho Cucamonga



IN MEMORIAM

Dr. Ronald A. Kascius
May 14, 1947-March 16, 2020



Under union contract since 1987, Dr. Kascius Optometry was a pioneer in helping the members of UFCW Local 1167.

"Dr. Kascius wanted his office staff to be members of the union and he wanted to help the people who helped him in the community," President Joe Duffle said.

"Under a deal with Former Local 1167 President Bill Sauriol, he agreed that whatever the Trust Fund would pay for optometry care, that's what he would accept as payment in full for our members. He never changed that policy."

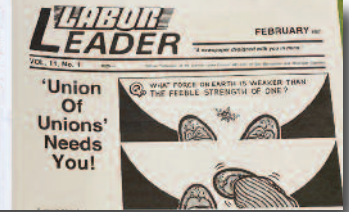
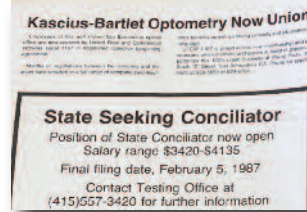
"His memory belongs to all of us," said Celia Almanza, who worked in Dr. Kascius' office for 32 years. "His patients and his office staff were his family."

Almanza said Dr. Kascius had many UFCW members as his patients. At the time of his passing, he was taking care of his fourth generation of patients.

"He was a people lover," Almanza said.

"He was fascinated with people and where they came from. He loved to travel and collected many artifacts from his travels."

Dr. Kascius is buried with his family in New York.



AFL-CIO Labor Leader newsletter from February 1987, announcing Dr. Kascius' contract with UFCW Local 1167.



"We will strive to continue his legacy of community service and support of the union," said members of Dr. Kascius' Office Staff. From left: Jeanine, David, Celia, Emily and Catherine.

