

DESERT EDGE

UFCW LOCAL 1167

a VOICE for working America

Official Publication of Local 1167, United Food and Commercial Workers Union

April 2009

Meet our new Labor Secretary

Hilda Solis represented the El Monte area in Sacramento and Washington before her nomination by President Obama



Secretary of Labor Hilda Solis is welcomed to the Department of Labor by interim Labor Secretary Edward Hugler on Feb. 25. DOL Photo

America's new Secretary of Labor, Hilda Solis, was confirmed by the Senate on Feb. 24.

Her duties include enforcement of federal workplace laws and overseeing a department with a \$10.5-billion budget.

Throughout her years as a lawmaker representing the El Monte area in Sacramento and in Congress, Solis has been a strong advocate for workers and organized labor.

"When union people get paid good wages, that money stays in the community," she said. "It helps to provide a vibrant econo-

my. It helps to also send their children like me to college and to eventually even run for office."

Local 1167 President Bill Lathrop remembers meeting Solis when she was a candidate for the El Monte School Board and sought the endorsement of the San Gabriel Valley Committee on Political Education (COPE).

"Some candidates know the issues, but few know unions," Lathrop recalled. "Her knowledge of unions and union issues blew us away.

(Please see page 6)

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Be patient! Fixing the country will take time

It's easy to feel down in the dumps these days.

Unemployment is up to levels we have not seen in years. Foreclosure rates are also setting modern records.

State and local governments are financially strapped for cash. This makes life worse for the 46 million Americans who don't have health insurance.

Yes, things seem pretty bad right now. But maybe it's time to step back and take a deep breath.

With the election of Barack Obama, our country is finally on the right path to solve these problems — but it will take time.

Just as it took time — eight years — to get us into this mess.

Almost 80 percent of people responding to a recent poll were optimistic about the next four years under President Obama. This level of good will for the new chief executive exceeds those measured for any of the past five incoming presidents.

This long-term optimism cuts across party lines: 58 percent of the respondents who said they voted for Sen. John McCain in the general election said they were optimistic about the Obama Administration.

The new administration has been in office a little over two months. That may seem like an eternity in this age of instant messaging and email, but in reality it isn't.

President Obama is doing all we can ask of him after stepping into one of the biggest messes this country has ever gotten itself into. But fixing the

(Please see page 2)



By Bill Lathrop

Joe F. Barragan Memorial Golf Tournament

April 27, 2009

Sierra Lakes Golf Club, Fontana Shotgun start at 8 a.m.

For details and reservations, call (909) 626-3333, Ext 241

Discounted Member Rate!

Quarterly Membership Meetings:

June 24, Sept. 23, Dec. 23

All Meetings Held at 7:00 p.m.

855 W. San Bernardino Rd. UFCW Auditorium

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United Food and Commercial Workers
Return in 5 days to:

**UFCW International
Scholarship Program
Extended to
April 15!**
Log on to
www.ufcw.org/scholarship

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: APRIL DUES ARE NOW DUE AND PAYABLE. IF NOT PAID ON OR BEFORE JUNE 1, 2009, YOU WILL AUTOMATICALLY SUSPEND YOURSELF.

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

Non-payment 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!



DESSERT EDGE

Bill Lathrop
Editor

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

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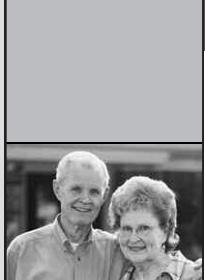
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Publisher

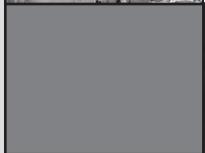











JUST RETIRED

The month of March brought us four new retirees. **Dean Berry** worked for Food 4 Less for 10 years ... **Bernice Chavez** worked in the industry for 22 years with Lucky and Stater Bros ... **Dale Dahlberg** retired after 34 years with Vons ... **Claudia Gallagher** worked for Vons, Safeway, and Expo for 21 years ... **Ivan Gobin** worked in the industry for 31 years with Vons, Expo and Boys Markets.

Congratulations to our retirees! We wish you many healthy, happy years ahead to enjoy your well-earned retirements.

JUST MARRIED

Katherine Mangiapelo, Stater Bros., married Gordon Staup on Oct. 5, 2008. The ceremony was at Heart's Home Farm and the happy couple honeymooned in Idyllwild ... **Salina Evans**, Stater Bros. became the bride of Travis Prior on Nov. 1, 2008. The wedding took place in Idyllwild and the newlyweds honeymooned in Monterey ... **Chelsea Braden**, Stater Bros., said "I do" to Kenneth Gronewald on Feb. 12 at the Hall of Records. Mr. and Mrs.

Gronewald honeymooned in Laughlin. Congratulations to all of our newlyweds!

JUST BORN

Artemio Mejia, Food 4 Less, welcomed **Nadya Celeste** into the world on Dec. 5, 2008. Nadya weighed 7 lbs. 7 oz. ... **Martin Estrada**, Food 4 Less, proudly announces the arrival of **Sofia** on Dec. 31, 2008. Sofia weighed 8 lbs. ... **Karen Escobedo**, Stater Bros., gave birth to **Sarah Morales** on Jan 28. Sara weighed 7 lbs. 6 oz. ... **Bahjah Whitehead**, Stater Bros., welcomed son **Daelen** on Feb. 4. Daelen weighed in at 8 lbs. 1 oz. ... **Melissa Manzar**, Rite-Aid, has a new daughter. **Erica** was born on Feb. 9, weighing 7 lbs. 7 oz. ... **Nicole Rios**, Stater Bros., gave birth to **Laila** on Feb 17. Laila weighed 8 lbs. 5 oz. ... **Patricia Becerra**, Food 4 Less, is pleased to announce the birth of **Lizzet Elena Ruiz** on Feb 23. Lizzet weighed 6 lbs. 12 oz. ... **Liezl Pangandoyon**, Stater Bros., welcomed **Razl** into the world on March 7. Razl weighed 6 lbs. 8.5 oz.

Congratulations to all of our new moms and dads!

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

Fixing country will take time

(Continued from front page)

economy will take time and things may get worse before they get better.

We all need to understand this and cut the President a little slack. We need to keep our sites on the big picture, not at what will get us through the next year.

While no one knows for certain how to fix the economy, most experts agree that the spending plan passed by Congress and signed by the President is a major step in the right direction.

Other positive steps include shifts in tax policies and labor regulations that favor working people and serve the interests of the middle class. In my opinion, we could not have chosen anyone better equipped to lead us through these difficult times than President Barack Obama.

Let's give him all the help and support he needs to succeed.



Three generations of union members

Local 1167 was visited recently by three generations of UFCW members – all in the same family! Pictured, from left, are UFCW member Christine Noriega; Christine's mother, UFCW retiree Virginia Vaughan; and Christine's son, UFCW member David Noriega.

IT PAYS TO BE UNION!

March 2009

YEAR TO DATE

Back pay and benefits restored to members

\$6,109.94

\$17,702.69

Members reinstated

21

48

Grievances settled

77

233



Local 1167 President Bill Lathrop swears Herman Ortega into office as vice president on Feb. 24.

Herman Ortega to serve on Executive Board

After 33 years in the retail food industry, new Local 1167 Executive Board member Herman Ortega looks forward to serving the membership from the "inside" as he assumes a position on the Local 1167 Executive Board.

"I've served the union as a steward," Ortega said. "Now I can represent the entire membership and have a say in how our union operates."

He began his career 33 years ago as a courtesy clerk at Alpha Beta in San Bernardino. He is currently a head meat cutter at Albertsons 6519 in Redlands.

"I've known Local 1167 President Bill Lathrop since 1981, when he was my union representative," Ortega said. "I've followed his career as he moved up in the union and became president."

"Bill was a great union rep and is a terrific president and it is an honor to serve with him on the board."

Ortega said his goal on the executive board is the same as it was as a steward.

"We need to keep our union strong," he said. "That's why I plan to encourage members to become more active. It's the best way to show the employers and the community that we are a force to be reckoned with."

Ortega has known about unions all of his life. His father was a union laborer and his uncles were union bricklayers and plumbers.

He knows the union is the reason members have significantly better wages and benefits than non-union workers.

"Working at union jobs has given everyone in my family a quality life," he said. "You can't get the wages, pension and job security any other way than working at a union job."

He said his union-negotiated wages enabled his wife, Charlotte, to be a stay-at-home mother for their two daughters, Alyssa, 19, and Andrea, 13.

In his spare time, Ortega likes to go target shooting as much as possible.

"I used to hunt deer," he said, "But I haven't gone in a couple of years, so I keep sharp shooting at targets."

He also follows NASCAR and is an avid collector of U.S. coins.

Ortega said he has met a lot of people over his three decades in the industry and he intends to call on them during his term on the executive board.

"That's one of the advantages of being an industry veteran," he said. "I know people at all of the companies and that is a great resource for me when I want to sample opinions on any issue."

UNION REPRESENTATIVE'S REPORT

How to use the Family Medical Leave Act



By Matt Bruno

Recently, one of our members took time off from work to care for his ill mother. Unfortunately, he did not use sick leave or vacation time. He simply did not show up for work and was terminated.

If you need to stay home to care for an ill family member, there is a way for you to do it with no negative consequences for you.

In 1993, Congress expanded the rights of millions of working Americans by enacting the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA).

The law requires most large companies — commercial enterprises with 50 or more employees — to give eligible employees as much as 12 weeks of unpaid leave during a 12-month period for one or more of the following reasons:

- the birth and care of the newborn child of the employee;
- placement with the employee of a son or daughter for adoption or foster care;
- care for an immediate family member (spouse, child or parent) with a serious health condition; or
- medical leave when the employee is unable to work because of a serious health condition.

An "eligible employee" is an employee of a covered employer who:

- has been employed by the employer for at least 12 months; and
- has been employed for at least 1,250 hours of service during the 12-month period immediately preceding the commencement of the leave; and
- is employed at a work site where 50 or more employees are employed by the employer within 75 miles of that site.

The California Family Rights Act (CFRA), passed in 1991 and amended in 1993, provides for the same rights for workers as the federal FMLA, except that CFRA does not cover pregnancy medical leave.

Since Jan. 1, 2005, eligible employees in California have been allowed to take time off to care for registered domestic partners.

Under another law that became effective on July 1, 2004, California workers may be able to take up to six weeks of paid leave per year for the purpose of bonding with a new child by birth, adoption or foster-care placement.

The state's Paid Family Leave (PFL) insurance program is the first of its kind in the United States. It makes paid leave equally available to mothers and fathers. The program also provides paid leave for the care of a seriously ill child, spouse, domestic partner or parent.

The paid-leave insurance program applies to all employees who are covered by the State Disability Insurance program. Under the new law, compensation for covered leave will be funded by employee contributions.

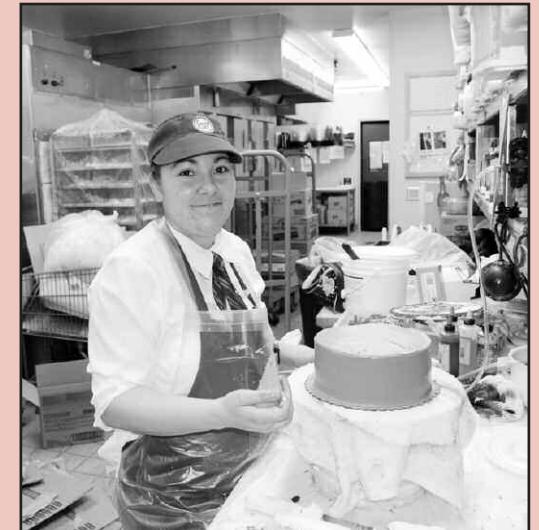
The statute states that PFL leave must be taken concurrently with leave under the federal FMLA and the CFRA.

If you are eligible under the above guidelines, make sure that you submit all of the required forms to your employer and that you obtain all of the necessary documentation from your physician.

Remember to submit all forms and documentation to your company no later than 15 days after the FMLA or CFRA qualifying event.

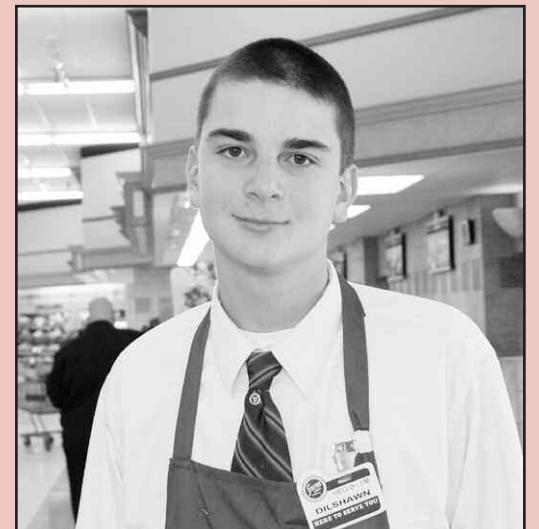
If you do not submit all of the necessary information, your request may be turned down.

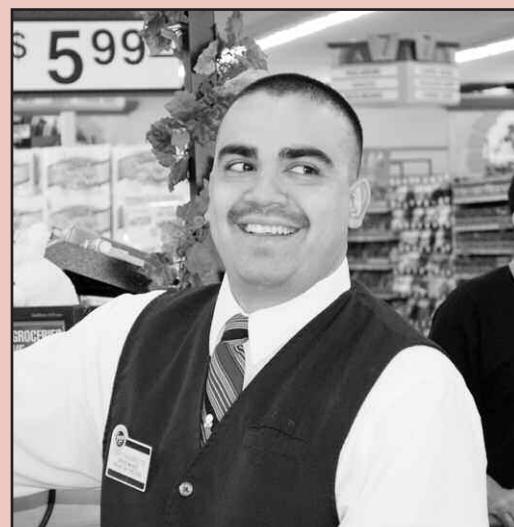
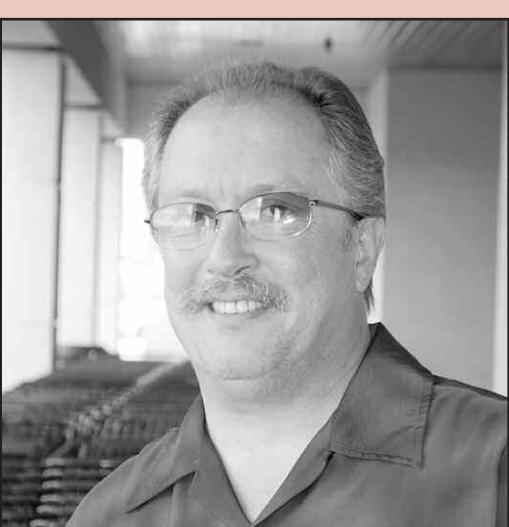
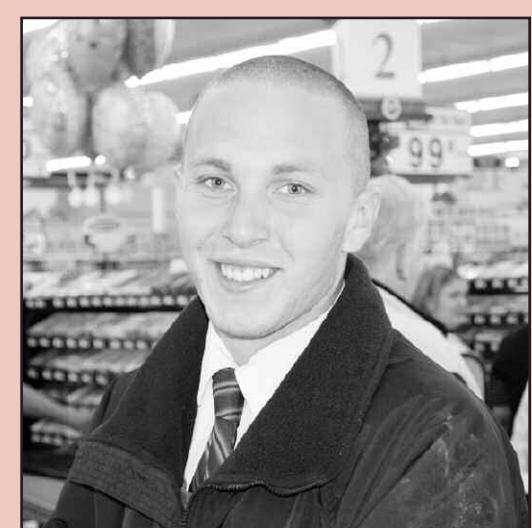
If you have any questions regarding FMLA or any other kind of leave, please contact your union representative.



Members at work

**Stater Bros. 121
San Jacinto**





FOOD INDUSTRY ONLY – SPECIAL NOTICE

Add to your health, add to your savings... ...by sending in your Health Risk Questionnaire!

Attention, Indemnity PPO Medical Plan participants! Local 1167 and the Trust Fund office have been receiving calls from members asking "How can I get more money into my Health Reimbursement Account?"

Did you have to reach into your pocket to cover pharmacy co pays and up-front medical expenses last year?

There's a way to get an *extra* contribution of up to \$250 in your Health Reimbursement Account (HRA). All you need to do is complete a confidential and easy Health Risk Questionnaire (HRQ) between Feb. 1 and May 1.

It's that simple! Take 15 minutes to answer the HRQ — online or on paper — and receive the extra contribution in your HRA.

If you completed the HRQ last year, you are eligible for *another* contribution if you complete the HRQ this year.

Remember, the contributions in your HRA are used to help pay your medical PPO deductibles, your co-insurance (the percentage of covered expenses that would otherwise come out of your own pocket) and even your prescription drug copays.

If you don't use all of your HRA contributions in one year, you can use them to pay eligible health care expenses in the future — as long as you stay in the Indemnity PPO Medical Plan.

Go online and do the HRQ now at www.2009hrq.com.

Have questions or need help? Call (800) 721-2763.

This special benefit is available only to Indemnity PPO Medical Plan participants and their spouses or domestic partners. HRA contributions are not available to HMO members.

Don't lose out! Complete the HRQ today and give a boost to your health as well as your wallet.

IN MEMORIAM

Grace Duncan, a retired meat wrapper formerly employed by Safeway, died Feb. 21, 2009, at the age of 89. She had been a member since June 1958.

William Fuqua, a retired meat cutter formerly employed by Staadham's, Sunshine Market, Rialto Friendly Market and Bert's Market, died Feb. 10, 2009, at the age of 89. He had been a continuous member since January 1971.

Louis Granados, a retired food clerk formerly employed by Safeway, died Feb. 17, 2009, at the age of 78. He had been a continuous member since January 1971.

James Malone, a retired meat cutter formerly employed by Shopping Bag, Cal Fair Markets, Alpha Beta and Stater Bros. Markets, died Feb. 18, 2009, at the age of 86. He had been a member since June 1954.

Carol Scharnow, a retired general merchandise clerk formerly employed by Albertsons, died March 3, 2009, at the age of 74. She had been a member since July 1989.

Aurora Smith, a retired food clerk formerly employed by Albertsons, died Feb. 14, 2009, at the age of 84. She had been a member since December 1972.

Willard Winchester, a retired food clerk formerly employed by Stater Bros. Markets, died March 7, 2009, at the age of 82. He had been a continuous member since May 1956.

Our condolences to the families of these deceased members.

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 the union rep or a letter to our office. It could avoid a big problem with a hospital, medical claim or pension inquiry.

Meet Hilda Solis

(Continued from front page)

"When she ran for the State Assembly, we gave her our full endorsement."

Solis is the daughter of immigrants from Mexico and Nicaragua. Her father was a Teamster who worked at a battery recycling plant. Her mother had a union job on a Mattel assembly line.

The first member of her family to graduate from college, Solis earned a master's degree in public administration from the University of Southern California, as well as an undergraduate degree from Cal Poly Pomona.

She served in the White House Office of Hispanic Affairs during the Carter Administration and later as an analyst at the Office of Management and Budget.

Solis was a member of the California State Assembly from 1992 to 1994. In the following year she became the first Latina elected to the state Senate.

She led efforts to raise the minimum wage in the state from \$4.25 to \$5.75. After being vetoed twice by then-Gov. Pete Wilson, the wage hike was eventually passed as a ballot initiative in 1996.

Solis also worked on legislation to combat domestic violence and define spousal rape.

When she was elected to the state Senate, Solis' district had shelters for abused animals but none for humans. She obtained federal funds to open the district's first shelter for mothers and children. In August 2000 she became the first woman awarded the John F. Kennedy Profile in Courage award for her work on environmental issues. She donated the \$25,000 award to local environmental groups.

Solis was first elected to represent California's 31st Congressional District in 2000 after defeating incumbent Matthew Martinez during a bitterly fought primary campaign.

"She ran for Congress at the request of Local 1167 because we were having problems with Martinez," Lathrop said. "She has more than lived up to what we believed she could accomplish."

A proven track record

"She has a 100 percent union voting record. She always does her homework and would often call us to make sure she knew how an issue would affect union members."

As a freshman House member, her primary role, she said, was to be "a voice for the voiceless" and to help her constituents speak up and ask for help.

She was disappointed early in her congressional career when the Bush Administration and the Republican-controlled Congress rolled back environmental protection and workplace regulations designed to reduce injuries.

"Most of the people affected by those injuries are women," Solis said. "The legislation was rushed through so fast I didn't even have time to get the word out back home. That seemed almost deliberate."

"Government has to be there to correct something that was wrong," said.

Solis said her father was a major inspiration in her life.

"He always reminded us that it was important to stand up for your rights," she recalled. "He said that regardless of who you are and where you come from, you should always hold your head up high with dignity and respect."

In a speech last year, Solis credited unions for her family's success.

"Without the help, protection that we received, and retirement benefits, I know myself and my [six] siblings would not be where they are today," she said.

"It is great to have her as Secretary of Labor," Lathrop said. "We can expect great things from her — namely she'll be a huge advocate for us in passing the Employee Free Choice Act."

Local 1167's Scholarship Awards Competition now available for applicants!

The union local is proud to announce the launch of its scholarship program for certain members only for the academic school year 2009-2010.

Scholarships will be awarded to winners chosen from among qualified contract applicants.

Food contract members, Stater Bros. Meat Distribution Center and Vons Meat Service Center members ARE NOT ELIGIBLE for this program because they may participate in the million-dollar Scholarship Award and Tuition Assistance Programs offered by the Southern California United Food and Commercial Workers Unions and Food Employers Ancillary Benefit Fund (Benefit Fund Scholarships).

Food members who were hired prior to March 1, 2004 (or had 12 months of employment if hired after March 1, 2004 as of October 2008) are qualified to apply for the Trust Fund's Scholarship Award and Tuition Assistance Program and ARE NOT ELIGIBLE for the scholarship program listed here.

Rules and Eligibility Requirements

1. Applicants must establish basic eligibility by applying for a scholarship award and completing the "REQUEST TO PARTICIPATE IN THE LOCAL 1167 COLLEGE (UNIVERSITY or JUNIOR COLLEGE) SCHOLARSHIP AWARDS COMPETITION" application published in this newspaper at the right of this announcement. **The application must be returned to Local 1167 no later than Friday, May 1, 2009.**

2. Those eligible to compete are current active members of the local not eligible to compete in the above described Benefit Fund Scholarship Program, their spouses and their dependent children. Dependent grandchildren of dues-paying retirees are eligible. Sisters, brothers and non-dependent grandchildren are not eligible.

3. Applicants must be at least seniors in high school.

4. Applicants are not eligible if they previously received Local 1167 Scholarship Award monies.

5. To be eligible, the member must be in continuous good standing for at least one year through June 30, 2009. The member whose eligibility is used cannot be suspended, take a withdrawal or transfer to another local. Failure to comply with these eligibility rules disqualifies the applicant.

6. Winners are selected by the Scholarship Committee based on:

- academic record
- leadership record
- community service and volunteer activities
- character and personality
- personal achievement

7. Awards will be made to undergraduate or graduate applicants at the sole discretion of the local's Scholarship Committee.

8. Finalists selected by the Scholarship Committee must provide proof of academic record and submit completed forms (blank forms to be provided by the union) listing leadership activities, community service and volunteer activities, and personal achievements, substantiated by two teachers and two personal recommendations.

9. Finalists may be required to appear for a personal interview.

10. Awards are contingent upon the student being accepted by, registered at and attending an accredited academic institution of higher learning. Trade schools are not included.

11. Winners must be full-time students taking at least 12 undergraduate or nine graduate units or part-time working students taking six undergraduate or four graduate units.

12. Decisions of the Scholarship Committee are final.

**REFER ANY QUESTIONS
TO SHAELYN**

AT

**(800) 698-8329
(909) 877-5000**



Request to Participate in Local 1167 Limited Scholarship Awards Competition

(Please Print)

I understand that in order to be eligible for a scholarship award:

- I am not eligible for a scholarship offered by the Southern California United Food and Commercial Workers Union and Food Employers Ancillary Benefit Fund.
- Membership on which my eligibility is based must remain in continuous good standing through June 30, 2009. This means the member cannot be suspended, take a withdrawal or transfer to another local prior to June 30, 2009.
- I must be at least a senior in high school.
- I am not eligible to apply if I previously received scholarship award money from Local 1167.
- If my address, telephone number or place of work changes, it is my responsibility to inform the local union so that I can receive information in a timely manner.
- If the member is involuntarily laid off or transferred out of Local 1167, I will become ineligible and will notify the local union.
- Finalists will be notified by mail. If I am notified that I qualify as a finalist, I will submit required information and will appear for an interview if invited to do so.
- All decisions of the Scholarship Committee are final.

My cumulative Grade Point Average in High School is/was _____.
(Finalists to confirm with transcripts)

My cumulative Grade Point Average in College is/was _____.
(Finalists to confirm with transcripts)

My cumulative Grade Point Average in Graduate School is _____.
(Finalists to confirm with transcripts)

(Signature of Applicant in acceptance of the above)

Applicant name _____ phone _____

Full address _____

I am a member of Local 1167 (circle one) yes no

Eligibility (office use only) _____

Applicant's Social Security Number _____

Employed by (only if member) _____

Full store address _____

Union Representative _____

I am related to a member of Local 1167 (circle one) yes no

Eligibility (office use only) _____

Relationship to member _____

Member's Name _____

Member's Social Security Number _____

Employed by (only if member) _____

Full store address _____

Union Representative _____

Highest academic level completed by June 2009
(Must be at least a senior in High School to apply)

Year graduated from High School or month and year will graduate

I applied for a Local 1167 Scholarship in (year applied).
(Not eligible if monies received in past.)

Complete and mail promptly to

UFCW Union Local 1167

P.O. Box 1167, Bloomington, CA 92316

Attention: Shaelyn

Return by Friday, May 1, 2009

STEWARD FEATURE

Tim O'Keefe values union membership

As an accredited jewelry appraiser, Tim O'Keefe knows a gem when he sees one — his union membership.

O'Keefe is a customer service representative and steward at Stater Bros. 121 in San Jacinto. He has been a member of Local 1167 for 19 years.

"Being a member of a union is as good as gold," O'Keefe said. "It is the reason we are treated with respect on the job and can't be terminated for just any reason."

"Too many members don't know or understand their rights," he continued. "They will accept what management says and don't realize that there is a contract that protects them."

"If you're mistreated, you can call a union rep who will make sure you are treated fairly."

O'Keefe attends as many union meetings as he can so he can keep up to date.

"As a steward, I keep the members informed and maintain the union bulletin board," he said. "I also serve as a liaison between the union and store management. I have a good relationship with our managers, so we are able to solve problems before they



Tim O'Keefe

become grievances."

O'Keefe learned early on in life about the value of being a union member.

"My uncle, Jon, is president of a Machinists union local in Sarasota, Florida," he said. "He always told me that being a union member is the best thing going."

"He compares it to a close-knit family. He even gave me the money to pay for my initia-

tion fee to join Local 1167."

O'Keefe and his wife, Tamera, have been married for 24 years. They have two children, a girl, Natiera, and a boy, Magnason.

"My wife is disabled," he said. "She has needed a lot of physical therapy over the years. We couldn't have paid for it without our health benefits."

In his spare time, O'Keefe collects gemstones and has his own jewelry business for family and friends.

"I bought jewelry one day, became fascinated with the natural beauty of the stones, and it became a hobby," he said. "Now I have a little business on the side and I'm studying to be a certified gemologist so I can grade gemstones."

"I appreciate the beauty of all of the stones I see, but the yellow diamond is my favorite, because it is so rare. There are only a few over a carat, and the natural yellow is extremely rare."

O'Keefe said his love of stones keeps him going.

"Their natural beauty is always amazing to observe."

Biden welcomes Labor back to the White House

UFCW's Hansen invited to task force

"Folks, I want to thank the outstanding individuals, many of whom are in this room: members of Congress, members of Labor; members of business, interest groups that are here representing non-profits. I want to thank you all for being here today. It's good to see so many of my friends — our friends — from Organized Labor, as well. Welcome back to the White House." — Vice-President Joseph Biden

In keeping with his promise, President Obama formally announced the creation of a White House task force to focus on the problems of the middle class.

The group, led by Vice President Joe Biden, will explore ways to expand opportunities for education and training, improve the work-family balance, restore labor standards and protect retirement security.

In an action unprecedented since George W. Bush took office in 2001, UFCW International President Joe Hansen was personally asked by the White House to leave executive board meetings in order to attend the initial task force meeting.

"With this task force, we have a single, highly visible group with one single goal: to raise the living standards of the people who are the backbone of this country," Biden said.

The vice president also took the opportunity to welcome labor "back to the White House."

The task force has its own website: www.strongmiddleclass.gov. The site not only posts information, but also asks for ideas.



Lobbying for Employee Free Choice

On March 17, President Bill Lathrop (above, second from left) joined San Bernardino Central Labor Council President Laurie Stalnaker (below, left) and other labor leaders to encourage California State Sen. Gloria Negrete-McLeod (below, right) to support the Employee Free Choice Act and bring her attention to other bills important to working men and women in California.

