

New Union Programs Offer Special Savings for UFCW 951 Members

The Members' Only Tax Preparation Program is the first of several new money-saving benefits that UFCW 951 will offer members beginning in 2014. See page two for details.

The Voice of 951

Fall 2013

Union Challenges Capping of Members' Hours at Meijer

UFCW 951 is challenging Meijer's attempt to join a nationwide trend among employers to limit their part-time workforce to less than 24 hours per week.

"This situation clearly shows the advantage of union membership and the protections of a union contract," John Cakmakci, UFCW 951's president, said.

would fight using the grievance procedure, arbitration and any other tool available to us to stop this attack on members' rights."

After learning of a Meijer corporate memo instructing managers to cap part-time employees' hours to 24 per week, the union began monitoring schedules.

"When we saw the corporate memo, the union immediately

Part-Time Employees: Stand Up for Your Rights!

As UFCW 951 prepares to take on Meijer regarding the company's attempt to cap part-time workers' hours, members can help their union build its case by standing up for their rights and making sure they are receiving all the hours they are entitled to under the union contract.

The UFCW 951 contract with Meijer requires part-time workers be scheduled in line of seniority for the largest block of hours on a scheduled day, up to 30 hours per week. Part-time workers scheduled less than 30 hours have the right to claim hours from a junior part-time employee's shift, and should file a grievance if their claim is denied by management.

Members must request a schedule adjustment by 2 p.m. on Saturday from the department manager; otherwise, the schedule is deemed acceptable and not subject to the grievance procedure. Members who are denied a schedule adjustment have 10 days to file a grievance.

Members should also inform their steward or union representative if management grants their request for a schedule adjustment.



"We will not back down from this fight. Members are counting on us to not only protect their rights, but their paychecks."

John Cakmakci
President, UFCW 951

"Unlike non-union workers, Meijer members are protected from having their hours arbitrarily cut."

The UFCW 951 contract with Meijer requires the company to follow scheduling procedures which give part-time workers the ability to use their seniority to work the largest block of hours on a scheduled day up to 30 hours per week within their department, classification and scheduling group.

"Meijer can't change the terms of the contract because they want to limit part-time employees' hours," Cakmakci said. "To do so would be a blatant contract violation that the union

contacted Meijer and told them arbitrarily capping members' hours would violate the union contract," Cakmakci said. "We made it clear that as soon as one member was affected by a cap, the union would take action."

For months, no member was impacted by a cap as every valid request for additional hours was granted. However, since early September, UFCW 951 has filed grievances for several members whose claims for schedule adjustments were denied.

The local fully expects to take the case to arbitration where a legally binding decision on the case will be made. Members can help the union build their arbi-

tration case by taking the actions outlined in the sidebar above.

"We will not back down from this fight. Members are counting on us to not only protect their rights, but their paychecks," Cakmakci said. "We have many members who are part-time employees but have consistently worked upwards of 30 hours a week for years, and in some cases, decades. Members are relying on these hours to make

ends meet. To arbitrarily limit their hours at 24 is not only a contract violation that will cost workers thousands of dollars annually, it's also the wrong way for a company to treat dedicated, hard working employees who they rely upon."

While the capping of workers' hours may cost members thousands, the move has the potential to save Meijer millions.

"Some say the cap is an at-

tempt to avoid providing health insurance to workers under the new law, but don't lose sight of the fact that Meijer can save a bundle in wages, paid time off and retirement contributions by instituting a cap," Cakmakci said. "They can save even more money by gutting full-time jobs, which would happen as a result of the cap. Let's be clear, the cap is not just an attack on part-timers, but full-time employees as well."

Workers Vote to Join UFCW 951

UFCW 951 became the only local union in the region, and one of only a few in the UFCW International union, to organize a new workplace in 2013 when workers at Steeltech elected to join UFCW 951.

"We voted for the Union because we all want to make a little more money; it's just not enough money for the kind of work we do. The company makes a lot, and we deserve an increase," Santiago Ramirez, a Steeltech worker, said. "We also want respect at work. If the company needs to say something or discipline us, they should do it in a respectful manner and not use profanity."

Most Steeltech workers start out earning minimum wage and receive a 25 cent per hour increase after five years of employment.

"Steeltech workers saw joining Local 951 as a way to improve their standard of living and working conditions," John Cakmakci, UFCW 951's president, said. "They stood united during their union organizing drive and remain



Steeltech bargaining committee members look forward to the protections of a union contract.

united as we prepare to negotiate their first union contract."

The union bargaining unit includes approximately 30 workers at the Grand Rapids metal parts fabrication plant.



Volume: 9 Issue: 2

Official publication of United Food and Commercial Workers Local 951, CTW & CLC
3270 Evergreen Drive N.E.
Grand Rapids, MI 49525

John Cakmakci

President

Dave Way

Secretary-Treasurer

Karin Hopman

Recorder

Morna Holt & Shirley Perez

Executive Vice Presidents

Toll-free: 1.800.999.0951

Direct: 1.616.361.7683

Fax: 1.616.447.1000

Website: www.ufcw951.org

www.facebook.com/UFCW951

Email: Information@ufcwlocal951.com

Inside

Member Holiday Parties



Page 2

New Tax Time Discounts



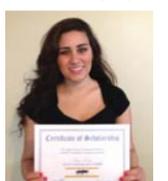
Page 2

Workplace Safety Committees



Page 3

Scholarship Winners



Page 4



Child Care Scholarship Winners Share in Excitement



**Trisha Fowler
Meijer #250**



**Candi Harding
Meijer #43**



**Shana Heuser
Knouse Foods**



**Megan Mohr
Kroger #852**



**Krystle Price
Kroger #888**



**LaDreama Simpson
Meijer #188**

Most parents think of a scholarship as a way to reduce college costs for their nearly grown children, but for UFCW 951 members, winning a scholarship can also mean help with expenses incurred for their young children requiring child care.

UFCW 951 launched its new child care scholarship program in the beginning of the year to make life a little easier for members with young families.

"We know many members are parents who go to work every day to be able to provide for

their children," John Cakmakci, UFCW 951's president, said. "The local implemented the child care scholarship with the hopes of easing the financial strain child care expenses can put on the family budget."

Based on the reaction of the scholarship winners, it appears the local has achieved its goal.

"It's pretty awesome not having to worry about paying nearly two months of daycare. Thank you so much," Candi Harding, from Meijer #43, said.

Harding is just one of 12 mem-

bers who will receive a \$750 UFCW 951 Child Care Scholarship in 2013.

"I was so excited when my union representative told me that I had won," Trisha Fowler, from Meijer #250, said. "I really appreciate the help. Thank you!"

Since members' child care needs may change throughout the year, the scholarship program selects three winners each quarter from the applications received for the year. Applications are valid for the entire year in which they are submitted.

To be eligible for a 2014 scholarship, members must (1) have one year in good standing as of January 1, 2014, (2) be a parent or legal guardian of a dependent child(ren) enrolled in full-time or part-time child care, and (3) receive child care provided during their working hours from

a licensed child care center, registered group or family child care home, or legally certified child care provider.

Applications with complete rules and regulations are available from union representatives, at www.ufcw951.org, and the union office at 1.800.999.0951.

Special Savings for UFCW 951 Members

During 2014, UFCW 951 will be expanding the services it provides to members. The first program to be unveiled is the Members' Only Tax Preparation Program. The union has negotiated special low rates exclusively for UFCW 951 members with its accounting firm.

"Through the local's new tax preparation program, members will be able to have their taxes done by trusted tax professionals at a special discounted rate," John Cakmakci, UFCW 951's president, said. "The program will also offer a great benefit for members who prefer to do their own taxes: free answers to their filing questions."

Appointments and walk-in services will be available on select days in February in Grand Rapids, Lansing and Farmington Hills.

"If the program is popular, the local will look into expanding it in the future," Cakmakci said. "For its first year, we will test it in areas with the heaviest concentration of members."

Watch your union bulletin boards, website, facebook page, and other upcoming communications for details on how to access this new benefit, along with announcements of other money-saving benefits of UFCW 951 membership.

"The tax program is just the first of several new programs UFCW 951 will unveil in 2014 that will offer members special discounts," Cakmakci said. "These programs will offer members real savings, and continue to increase the value of their union membership."

**Reduced Cost
Tax Preparation
Plus
FREE Tax Help**

Through the new UFCW 951 Members' Only Tax Preparation Program, members can have their 2013 taxes completed by tax professionals from Kushner, Kippelman & Taub, P.L.L.C -- the same firm that completes the union's taxes -- at reduced rates including:

- 1040EZ -- \$50 (including city and state)
- 1040A (base return) -- \$75
- 1040 (base return) -- \$100

Members completing their own taxes will be able to call a free tax hotline, exclusively for UFCW 951 members, to receive answers to their tax preparation questions.

Watch your union bulletin board, website, facebook page and other communications for program details.

To make better use of its resources, UFCW 951 closed its Detroit area office in March and will not renew its Lansing office lease at the end of 2013.

"I believe in continually evaluating how we allocate resources by asking the question, 'How does this expense add value to the services the union provides to the membership?'" John Cakmakci, UFCW 951's president, said. "When it came to the satellite offices, it was clear they were an idea that had outlived their usefulness."

The offices were originally opened to help union representatives working outside of the Grand Rapids area (where the local is headquartered) perform their duties more efficiently.

"Staff no longer need to go to an office to send a fax, check their email, send a letter, or return members' phone calls," Cakmakci said. "Advances in technology have made it easy and inexpensive to do all this work and more from a laptop computer or smartphone."

The office closings will save the local thousands of dollars each year.

"The cost savings include more than just the lease payments,"

Cakmakci said. "When you add in the cost of equipment, maintenance agreements, insurance, internet and telephone fees, and all other expenses associated with maintaining an office, even a small satellite office, it really adds up quickly."

The closing of the Bingham Farms office has gone unnoticed by the membership. The local expects the same reaction when the Lansing office closes.

"The satellite offices no longer mean anything to the members," Cakmakci said, "but the increased services and opportunities the local can provide them as a result of the cost savings will."

To save additional money, the UFCW 951 Executive Board recently approved putting the Grand Rapids office up for sale.

"When they saw how much money could be saved by selling the Grand Rapids office, the Executive Board enthusiastically endorsed the idea of putting it on the market," Cakmakci said. "We could operate just as effectively from a smaller office, and save a tremendous amount of money that we could then invest in services that provide a direct benefit to the membership."

UFCW 951 HOLIDAY PARTIES

All parties feature food, children's crafts and games, and pictures with Santa for only \$2 per person (donated to the UFCW 951 Foundation).

Ticket Order Form

Tickets are limited and will not be sold at the door. Tickets sold on a first come, first serve basis. Mail completed order form and a check or money order made payable to UFCW Local 951 to: UFCW 951; 3270 Evergreen Dr. N.E.; Grand Rapids, MI 49525. Incomplete forms will be returned without tickets. For more information contact the UFCW 951 Communications Department at 1.800.999.0951. Tickets will be mailed to the address listed below.

Select desired location. All parties are from 5 p.m. to 8 p.m.

<input type="checkbox"/> Thursday, December 5 Grand Rapids UFCW 951 3270 Evergreen Dr. NE	<input type="checkbox"/> Monday, December 9 Saginaw Pulaski Hall 6525 Weiss St.	<input type="checkbox"/> Tuesday, December 10 Lansing UAW 652 426 Clare St.	<input type="checkbox"/> Tuesday, December 17 Madison Heights UFCW 876 876 Horace Brown Dr.
---	---	---	---

Please print neatly

Member or Retiree's Full Legal Name: _____

Employer & Unit Number: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Email: _____ @ _____ Phone: _____

Total Number of Tickets: _____ x \$2 = (total amount enclosed): _____

UFCW 951 -- a Union That Works for You!

Every day and in a variety of ways, UFCW 951 works to make members' lives better. The following are recent examples of your union at work.

Union Gets Members Reinstated and Thousands in Back Pay

UFCW 951 helped two wrongfully terminated members obtain their jobs back along with nearly \$10,000 in combined back pay!

Their employer's progressive disciplinary policy issues "points" for various work performance and attendance issues, and calls for the termination of workers who accrue 12 points. It also requires management to have discussions with members at two, four, six, eight, 10 and 12 point accumulations for attendance.

Following their terminations for reaching 12 points, both members contacted their union representative contesting their termination on the grounds the company failed to make them aware of their last four points.

An investigation by the union representative confirmed that

no meeting was held for either worker upon the issuing of their eighth point for attendance, and grievances were filed seeking reinstatement and back pay.

The company denied the grievances at the Step 1 and Step 2 meetings maintaining the individuals had progressed through the disciplinary system and were

UFCW 951 Helps Member's Family Obtain Citizenship and Save \$15,000



Thanks to UFCW 951, this family has U.S. citizenship and saved \$15,000 in attorney's fees.

"The union has been a great help to our family. With the assistance of the union's attorneys, my family members went through the citizenship process at no cost to us, saving us

therefore properly terminated.

The union disagreed and scheduled the cases for arbitration. Before the arbitration was held, the company agreed to the settlement requested by the union -- bringing both members back to work, and issuing them individual backpay checks of \$3,226.25 and \$5,902.

thousands of dollars that we would have had to pay private immigration attorneys in this matter. Thank God for the existence of the union and their good willed staff."

These are the words of a UFCW 951 member whose children and their father went from green card holders to U.S. citizens with the assistance of UFCW 951 staff members who are also attorneys.

The free service saved the family \$15,000 and provided them with the peace of mind and opportunities that come with citizenship status.

President's Message

Expect More from Your Union

As your local union president, I want you to expect more from your union; I know I do.

When I took office slightly more than a year ago, my goal was to make the organization better than when I took the helm. That is not an indictment on my predecessors, rather a personal belief that when you are entrusted to lead an organization, your job is to make it better.

Part of achieving my goal to improve the union is to expect more from the people who are a part of the organization, and I do.

I expect your union representatives to provide members with improved servicing by returning members' telephone calls within 24 hours. Additionally, I expect them service their assigned units on all shifts and on the weekends, as well as during the week. I also expect them to complete grievances in a timely manner, and make sure members understand the protections included in their contracts and other benefits offered by their union. I expect a high level of service from your union representatives and you should, too.

I expect your Executive Board members, also known as UFCW 951 Vice Presidents, to be active union representatives at your workplace. You should be able to receive accurate information about your union and your contract from your Executive Board members. I also expect Executive Board members to help conserve the union's resources and strengthen the organization by assisting the union with various programs and events. I expect a high level of knowledge and involvement from your Executive Board members and you should, too.

Each of you has at least one union steward at your workplace. These individuals are your co-workers who serve as your workplace union representatives. I expect your union stewards to have an excellent understanding of your union contract and the ability to effectively solve workplace problems, properly filing and reporting grievances if necessary. I expect union stewards to attend the trainings offered to them by the union and to assist union representatives in administering the local's programs. I expect excellence from your union stewards, and you should, too.

I also expect each and every one of you to do your part and become an educated UFCW 951 member and become involved in your union to the extent your schedule allows. Maybe it's simply wearing a union button or sticker, or donating one dollar a week to help your union give you a political voice. If you have more time, I invite you to participate in our union events, volunteering at a holiday party, phone bank or rally.

Most of all, I expect you to contact me if your union is not living up to your expectations.



John Cakmakci

I believe that when you are entrusted to lead an organization, your job is to make it better. That is why I expect more from the people who are a part of it.

Show Your Union Pride & Win a Prize



**Samantha Brown
Meijer #21**



**Corine Kelly
Knouse Foods**



**Travis Paisley
Meijer #57**

We're proud of our union and want you to be, too!

That's why UFCW 951 recognizes members who wear their UFCW 951 buttons, badge holders, or pins at work. These items are available from union representatives and the UFCW 951 office at 1.800.999.0951.

UFCW 951 officers and union representatives visit two units in each of the local's three regions every month and award the first member they see wearing one of these items a Union Pride prize package containing a union t-shirt and a \$25 gift card. Recent Union Pride winners include:

William Bassett, Meijer #231

Ajene Brown, Meijer #188

Samantha Brown, Meijer #41

Janice Clemons, Meijer #63

Angelina Darin, Meijer #185

Tonya Gajni, Meijer #222

Tracey Gray, Meijer #46

Carol Haughey, Meijer #140

Corine Kelly, Knouse Foods

Nadine Kohler, Meijer #72

Lynn Koyl, Meijer #242

JoAnne Mickelson, Meijer #229

Leigh Moore, Meijer #50

Derek Noonchester, Meijer #122

Travis Paisley, Meijer #57

Theresa Paxton, Meijer #69

Gerald Richards, Meijer #197

Deanna Stokes, Meijer #177

Exercise Your Right to a Safe Workplace

All workers in the United States have the right to a safe workplace. However, exercising this right is much easier for UFCW 951 members than their non-union counterparts.

"Non-union workers often feel like they are putting their job in jeopardy by reporting a safety concern, a risk most aren't willing to take because they have little faith the company will correct the situation," John Cakmakci, UFCW 951's president, said. "In fact, safety concerns have been a primary reason workers have sought UFCW 951 union representation at their workplace."

Due to the protections of their union contract and support of their union representatives, UFCW 951 members can report an unsafe working condition secure in their job and confident the situation will be addressed.

"To facilitate safe workplaces,

make it even easier for members to report a safety concern and ensure hazards are fixed, the local has established safety committees at a majority of members' workplaces," Cakmakci said. "Our goal is for all members to have access to a safety committee at their workplace."

Committees ensure members' safety concerns are corrected in a timely manner.

"If the situation isn't corrected in a reasonable time frame, the committee would then use the grievance procedure to get the problem fixed," Cakmakci said.

The JBS safety committee, one of the most active within the local, has secured many improvements for members at the slaughterhouse and production facility.

To reduce pain injuries to workers in the Fabrication area, the committee convinced JBS to replace old one-size-fits-all work

stations with adjustable ergonomic stands.

It took filing a grievance to get the company to replace the plastic gloves worn by workers in the Kill Department, but workers are no longer being told they can't have new gloves because they tore their old ones on purpose.

"The JBS Safety Committee is a great example of what can be achieved when members, along with their union, are committed to improving the safety of their workplace," Cakmakci said. "UFCW 951 is committed to helping all members exercise their right to a safe workplace and encourages each and every member to take an active role in making sure their workplace is free from unsafe conditions."

To learn more about your safety committee and exercising your right to a safe workplace, contact your union representative.

Be on the Look Out for Common Workplace Safety Issues

The following is a list of common workplace hazards; however, members should immediately report any situation they feel is unsafe to their safety committee.

In Grocery and Retail

- Dock doors not working properly
- Dock door lights not working
- Fans not working for heat relief
- Improper use of electrical cords
- Check lane mechanical issues
- Fire aisles blocked
- Wet slippery floors in food prep areas
- Stock not shrink wrapped on skids
- Sharp edges on doors, registers or corners
- Water leaks in floors, food prep areas, coolers, and freezers
- Eye safety kits not available, updated, or accessible
- Gondolas or merchandise racks not bolted down

In Processing Plants

- Line speed
- Dull knives
- Lack of appropriate equipment or clothing
- Short staffed
- Too hot or cold

In Warehousing

- Pallets too high at the white staging line
- Excessive wood on the dock
- Aisle congestion



Union's Discounted Activities Make for a Fun-Filled Summer for UFCW 951 Members

This summer, thanks to discounts offered by their union, UFCW 951 members had a chance to take themselves out to the ball park, the zoo, and the amusement park — all without breaking the bank.

"We've found that members appreciate the union offering low-cost and discounted events," John Cakmakci, UFCW 951's president, said. "We surveyed the membership to get ideas on what events they'd most like to attend. Our summer schedule offered some really popular outings, and some new opportunities for low-cost fun."

The union's summer time events included two baseball games — a Detroit Tigers match-up with the Houston Astros, preceded by an all-you-can eat barbecue, and a West Michigan Whitecaps game with an all-you-can-eat pre-game picnic. Other trips included a day at the Detroit Zoo with a picnic lunch, and a day of roller coasters, water rides and a cookout at Michigan's Adventure.

"It was a wonderful day," Donny Tyus, Meijer #253, said of the Tigers game. "We had so much fun. It was an excellent opportunity for family and friends to experience a Tigers game together at a good savings."

John Vantil, Meijer #312, agrees with Tyus.

"It's always exciting coming to the Whitecaps....We bring our granddaughter with us," he said. "For \$10, you can't beat it — all-you-can-eat food, the ticket and fireworks after. You get your money's worth just on the tickets."

See page two for information on a several upcoming family holiday parties.

2014 will also feature a full calendar of events for UFCW 951 members to enjoy low-cost fun with family and friends. Watch your union communications, website and Facebook page for more information.

DETROIT TIGERS

"I'm so glad we came. We loved it! We'll definitely do it again. The union has made it affordable for a family - it's a really great deal. It's also a chance to meet union members from other cities, which is really nice." — *Diane Williams, Meijer #233*

DETROIT ZOO

"I like these events because they bring people together and you can meet people from different areas. This is a place you can meet and you don't have to talk shop. This is more like family." — *Connie Smith, Meijer #231*

MICHIGAN'S ADVENTURE

"Thank you for taking on and organizing the Michigan's Adventure event. It was a great day... others were in line commenting on how expensive it was, but I was thinking, 'I'm with my union. How lucky we are. It makes it affordable for my family to go.'" — *Jan Sienko, Meijer #312*

WEST MICHIGAN WHITECAPS

"We used to go to the games all the time. We stopped going because of financial reasons. The special package allows us to come and enjoy a night out." — *Bob Stevens, Meijer #20*



Summer Time

FACEBOOK PHOTO CONTEST WINNERS!

Thank you to all members who entered UFCW 951's Summer Time Facebook Contest! Participating members posted photos featuring a UFCW 951 logo item or communication piece in a summer time setting on the local's Facebook page. The five photos receiving the most likes were awarded prizes as listed below. Congratulations to all who won! To see the winning photos, visit www.facebook.com/ufcw951.



1st & 2nd Place — \$150
RACHEL WHITE-WEEKS

3rd Place — \$50
LUCIA CAKLOSOVA BAKER

4th & 5th Places — \$25
CONNIE TRAGER
NOAH ARMSTRONG

Congratulations UFCW 951 Scholarship Winners

For more than a decade, the UFCW 951 Foundation has helped ease the cost of attending college for UFCW 951 members and their families. The 19 winners of the 2013/2014 \$2,000 scholarships and five \$400 textbook winners are listed below.



Tara Elias



Jeremy Bryan



Heidi Ali

\$2,000 Scholarship Winners

Heidi Ali, Meijer #21
Jeremy Bryan, Kroger #681
Garry Buchanan, Meijer #233
Emma DeWyse, daughter of Daniel DeWyse, Meijer #48
Tara Elias, Meijer #237
Jacqueline Johnson, Kroger #410
Andrew Jordan, Meijer #64
Patrice Kettlehut, Meijer #72
Lyndsay Leachman, Daughter of Christopher Leachman, Meijer #42
Samantha Parison, Daughter of Monica Parison, Meijer #65
Chantal Sanders, Daughter of Denean Sanders, Meijer #188
Christine Satterfield, Meijer #63
Brittney Sprague, Meijer #30
Kylene Stanyer, Meijer #163
Spencer Tobias, Kroger #888
Kayleigh Vigh, Granddaughter of Louann Kuzma, Meijer #93
Christopher Wensley, Meijer #72
Dara Young, Meijer #268
Andrew Zimmerman, Son of Catherine Zimmerman, Plumb's #673

\$400 Textbook Scholarship Winners

Alyssa Back, Daughter of Cheryl Back, Meijer #179
Cindy Moore, Meijer #231
Marisa Osborn, Daughter of Dale Osborn, Meijer #44
Nichole Stevens, Polly's #5
Anthony Wilburn, Son of Robin Vance, Meijer #119

Applications for the 2014/2015 UFCW 951 Foundation Scholarship are available at www.ufcw951.org and from union representatives.