

THE LOCAL 371 REPORTER

Fall 2022



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Pictured on Front Cover: Donna Crowe, bakery employee in Unionville Stop and Shop.

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A Message from President Ronald M. Petronella

Involvement in Politics a Matter of Survival

It's easy to get so tied up in work and family and balancing all of the parts of our lives and say "I don't get involved in politics", or "they are all the same, they don't help us." The reality is, all of the work we accomplish through organizing and at the bargaining table can be undone with the signing of one bad law. Anti- worker politicians can take away our rights to join a union, to bargain for wages and benefits, or to organize non- union workplaces. On the other hand, worker friendly politicians can dramatically improve the lives of our members. That is why Local 371 stays involved in politics and supports candidates who support us.

In the past few years, union friendly candidates in CT and MA have increased our minimum wage nearly \$5, instituted paid sick leave, and created a paid family leave program. **Governor Lamont** and the CT legislature also instituted an essential worker premium pay program and a workers compensation fund for members who fell ill during Covid. Finally, after over ten years of lobbying, Governor Lamont, supported by Attorney General William Tong and our legislature, signed a bill making it illegal to force workers to sit through anti- union meetings during working hours. Nationally, our House and Senate and **President Biden** increased the child tax credit, capped the cost of child care, created free high quality pre-k, lowered the cost of a college education, created four million, quality union jobs, reduced the cost of prescription drugs, and fully paid for all of the improvements to our lives by making wealthy Americans and corporations pay their fair share.

Please Vote on November 8, 2022! Our future depends on it.

For a list of Union Endorsements for the 2022 Election, visit ctaflcio.org/2022-endorsements and <https://massaflcio.org/political-issues-endorsements>



Today, Dad Could Escape “Captive” Room

By Paul Bass, August 4, 2022



Senator Martin Michael Looney



OUR COMMUNITY AT WINCHESTER

Martin Francis Looney.

“It took a while, Dad,” Martin Michael Looney said to himself after the final vote was cast, “but we’re there.”

Looney, president pro tem of the State Senate, uttered those words quietly after the chamber passed a law banning mandatory “captive audience” meetings held by employers to intimidate workers out of joining unions. That was one of the highlights of this year’s legislative session for Looney. He spoke about those highlights — and his hopes for next year if he succeeds winning a 16th two-year term in November’s general election — during an interview on WNH FM’s “Dateline New Haven.”

The captive audience law “prohibit[s] an employer from coercing employees into attending or participating in a meeting sponsored by the employer concerning the employer’s views on political or religious matters.” It was not one of the most prominent measures to pass in this year’s session. It meant a big deal to Looney.

He first introduced the measure in 2005. He first heard about the need for it as a child, from a story his late father Martin Francis Looney told him. Martin Francis drove a forklift at New Haven’s former Winchester rifle factory. He worked on a machinist union organizing drive at the plant in the 1950s.

One day, Martin Michael said on “Dateline,” Martin Francis “was told to get off the forklift and get into a room.”

“Two big beefy men shut the door and stood there with their arms folded to make sure that nobody even attempted to leave.

“The first thing that everyone was told was that the plant would probably close in two years if the union was voted in. The second thing they were told was that unions were connected to Communism and that their loyalty would be suspect.

“They were told that if they were not yet naturalized citizens — and some of them weren’t — they could be subject to deportation if they were seen as friendly to a union. They were told that even if they were naturalized citizens — my father was, having been born in Ireland — that could eventually be revoked if you associated with unions.”

Martin Francis persisted. The union drive fell short. A second one commenced. He worked on that one, too.

“The company tried to break him. They tried to either make him quit or kill him. They took him off the forklift and made him lift heavy freight.”

Martin Francis “stuck it out.” And on try two, the workers succeeded in winning union recognition. Martin Francis returned to driving the forklift — and became a union steward.

“That’s why it has been a crusade of mine for many years,” said his son Martin Michael.

Even with the advent of modern communications, giving employers many new ways of communicating with workers about union drives, some employers were “insistent” on preserving the right to hold these in-person captive meetings, Sen. Looney observed. Why? “This one is the most coercive. That’s why they want it. They want to be able to herd people in a room and threaten them.”

Under the newly passed law, employers in Connecticut may no longer require employees to attend such closed-door work-hour meetings. Beefy guards can’t legally prevent the Martin Francis of today from walking out the door.

UFCW members are eligible for a number of discount programs. Are you missing out?

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Secretary Treasurer's Corner

The Value of Working With a Union Contract



Brian P. Truini Local 371 Secretary Treasurer

As your Secretary -Treasurer, I am always thinking of what things cost and what our members get in return for it. According to research analysts, Union members earn more money and have better access to quality affordable health benefits. Union membership also closes the wage gap for women and people of color.

- Unionized workers earn on average 11.2% more in wages than non-unionized peers (workers in the same industry and occupation with similar education and experience).
- Unionized Black workers are paid 13.7% more than their non-unionized peers.
- Unionized Hispanic workers are paid 20.1% more than their non-unionized peers.
- 94% of workers covered by a union contract have access to union/employer-sponsored health benefits, compared with just 68% of non-union workers.

It's clear it pays to belong to a union, so you would think union membership would be high, and organizing the non-union work force would be easy. However, union membership continues to hover around 10% and American labor laws continue to favor employers who want to make it difficult for workers to have a voice.

However, there are bright spots on the horizon- Union approval ratings are at 71%- the highest recorded since 1965. Further, 77 % of young adults support unions, according to a September Gallup poll.

Gen Z, born between 1996 and the mid-2000s, came of age through social unrest, a pandemic, and the anti-worker Trump presidency. The oldest among them remember the 2008 global financial crisis and worry about that instability today. They worry about opportunities for their own generation, and they see that the only one doing anything to change that is labor unions. Generation Z workers are many of the ones fueling new union organizing at REI, Amazon, and Starbucks.

In CT, due to our political activism, we were able to pass a law that is only the second in the nation meant to make it easier for workers to organize. When a worker in CT wants to join a union, if their boss wants to hold an anti- union meeting, the worker has the right to refuse to attend. CT is a pro- worker state and we will fight for similar laws in Massachusetts.

As union leaders and as members, it is important that we seize this moment in history, with political leaders who support working families and with union support at an all-time high and encourage our friends and family and neighbors to organize. If someone you know works at a non-union workplace and wants to make things better, tell your union rep or call the Local 371 office! We can help, and if your union local grows, so does your collective bargaining power. A bigger union is a stronger union and a stronger union means stronger contracts.

Contract Updates

Keri Hoehne Local 371 Executive Vice President



King's Market Ratification Meeting



Apple Rehab Ratification Meeting



Stamford Plaza Ratification Meeting

2022 has been a good year for negotiating contracts. The worker shortage across our country has made it a great time for workers to negotiate for more, and Local 371 is proud of its many bargaining victories. Our members at Whitney Rehabilitation in Hamden CT negotiated pay raises of between \$3.50 and \$6.00. Our members at ProPark negotiated raises triple the amount of past contracts and added Juneteeth as a paid holiday. Our members at Apple Rehab negotiated wage increases of nearly 30%. Our Stop & Shop contract fully funded the pension, improved our health insurance with deductibles reduced to \$250 per year with zero premium increases for four years, instituted wage increases of several dollars, and doubled the pay rate increase for becoming a full time employee. These victories were only possible because our members, essential workers, have stuck together and demanded that they be compensated fairly for the services they provide. We are so proud of our union members for taking care of their communities over the past two and a half years, and for sticking with their union at the bargaining table and demanding more.



Stop and Shop Bargaining Committee members Doug Senn, Lorenzo Mancuso, Eileen Antolini, Roberta Green and Glenn Marion pictured with Local 371 Officers.



A message from our Region 1 Director Fallon Ager-Norman

UFCW Calls on Congress to Address Workplace Violence

Keeping members of Local 371 and all of our members safe in the workplace is a key priority for our union.

On May 31, UFCW International President Marc Perrone sent a letter about the issue of workplace violence and safety to Speaker of the House of Representatives Nancy Pelosi and House Minority Leader Kevin McCarthy. In the letter, which followed the tragic and senseless mass shooting at a Tops Friendly Markets store in Buffalo, N.Y., where UFCW Local One members are employed, and a second horrific mass shooting at an elementary school in Uvalde, Texas, Perrone called on Congress to do two things: take action to address workplace violence, in part by passing the STOP Violence Act, and hold a Congressional hearing on the issue that includes workers' voices.

The STOP Violence Act would make grocery stores eligible for the same federal funding provided to other workplaces that regularly experience incidents of violence in the workplace. Representative Joe Neguse (Colo.-02) introduced the bill roughly one year after UFCW Local 7 members were victims of workplace gun violence during another mass shooting at the Table Mesa King Soopers store in Boulder, Colo.

The UFCW has been a leading advocate for improving workplace safety in all forms, including actions that can help address gun violence in the workplace. In addition to our union's advocacy for legislation that seeks to directly improve efforts to address workplace gun violence, the UFCW also hosts training sessions for locals around the issue of workplace violence, and provides resources for UFCW members who have experienced violence in the workplace.

You can learn more about the UFCW's call on Congress to address workplace violence and safety at <https://www.ufcw.org/press-releases/ufcw-calls-for-congressional-hearing-to-address-workplace-threats-and-violence/>.

CONGRATS

TO OUR 2022 SCHOLARSHIP WINNERS



Carlie Siwanowicz, daughter of Zane Siwanowicz from Stop & Shop 698 in Bridgeport, has been a passionate student her whole life. She spent a lot of time shadowing and volunteering at a physical therapy clinic, where she had the opportunity to create career-long, professional relationships. She is so excited for her academic career at Springfield College and can't wait to reach her career goal with the help from this scholarship!



Hamda Barakat, daughter of Amer Barakat from Shop Rite in East Haven is the oldest in her family and graduated from Hamden High School. She will major in Early Childhood Education and minor in Psychology at Temple University in Philadelphia PA. After dealing with the pandemic for two years, coming back to school again for senior year was definitely a challenge. She challenged herself, got into her dream college with a full ride, earned many scholarships to help defray the extra college costs, and kept her grades up. She made lots of memories and made it all the way to the finish line. She graduated and owes a huge thanks to her family for being there and supporting her throughout her journey. Especially her dad- She says, "Love you Baba."



Daniel Jara, son of Raul Jara from Acme Stamford, is a Peruvian who immigrated to the US when he was six months old. He is now an 18-year-old freshman at Rochester Institute of Technology. Majoring in Software Engineering, he enjoys the puzzle-like nature of developing a program to fulfill a request or solve a problem. Soon to be a part of this union, he is very grateful for the scholarship award and is very excited to attend college this fall. He really liked being a part of Boy Scouts, and still likes eating cheese and helping others and the community. He can't wait for what the future will bring and hopes that the education he receives will someday make a positive impact on someone's life.



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Local 371 Community Charity Raises \$35,000



This year's charity golf tournament returned to its regularly scheduled date, being held on the Wednesday before Memorial Day. We had beautiful weather and an even better time with old friends raising money for a good cause. Thanks to our generous sponsors, volunteers, and members, we raised \$35,000 for the Make- a- Wish Foundation of Connecticut and for our Charity Fund to help Local 371 members in need.







Michelle Duncan
Region 1 Women's
Network Chair
Local 371 Women's
Network Chair



www.ufcwoutreach.org

The primary purpose of the UFCW Women's Network is to unify UFCW women through an international network. Women comprise more than 50% of the UFCW's members and are a powerful resource for the union. **We are always looking for members to join our Women's Network, call and let Michelle know if you are interested.**

This year, beginning in May, the Women's Network has conducted monthly mentoring/training sessions. The monthly training topics have been:

- Navigating difficult conversations
- Technology to help you succeed
- Inspiring confidence

There will be sessions thru the end of the year, all to help future women leaders in the labor movement, navigate and succeed in a male dominated field.

Locally, UFCW 371 is starting to conduct an infant/baby resource drive. We are asking all of our members to donate nonperishable infant baby items (diapers, pacifiers, blankets, baby shampoo or soap, Dreft detergent etc.) that can be made into baby baskets to be presented to our members when they welcome a new child or grandchild into their family! Our stewards will be happy to let the local know of new members to your family and deliver a small welcome package from Local 371! **Stay tuned for more info and if you or someone you work with is having a baby, let us know!**



Local 371 members Lorenzo Mancuso, Peter Carvalho, and Glenn Marion joined other members at our Springfield area meeting to send postcards of support to voters in the Alabama Amazon union election, a measure of support from the UFCW Women's Network.

UFCW OUTreach is a constituency group dedicated to building mutual support between our union's International, regions, and locals and the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBTQ+) community and their allies in order to come together to organize for social and economic justice for all, regardless of age, race, gender, creed, color, sexual orientation, or gender identity.

Together, we will ensure full equality for LGBTQ+ workers on their jobs and in their unions.

Together, we will build a labor environment that cherishes diversity, encourages openness, and ensures safety and dignity, as we move forward in the spirit of "an injury to one is an injury to all," opposing all forms of discrimination—not just against members of the LGBTQ+ community.

Equality, education, understanding, and solidarity are our mission.



Our reps Brian Simmons, Sue Warzecha and Michelle Duncan are sporting their pronoun pins. Let us know if you'd like one!

Convention News



Foxwoods Steward Allan Martell welcomed attendees to the CT AFL -CIO COPE Convention and President Petronella spoke in favor of a resolution at the meeting. The convention was headlined by UFCW Executive Vice President Stuart Applebaum. The purpose of the convention is to vote on endorsements of candidates for local, state, and national candidates who support working families.



Local 371 Officers and Staff attended the New England Council Meeting this summer, and Ron Petronella, Brian Truini, Keri Hoehne, and Jeff Horvath were sworn in as council officers. Union Rep Susan Warzecha delivered the organizing report from the meeting, and Ron Petronella gave the Local 371 President's report. This yearly meeting is an opportunity to share ideas and experiences with our union family throughout New England.



NOMINATIONS ATTENTION! TO ALL MEMBERS OF UFCW LOCAL 371

October 1, 2022

Dear Sisters and Brothers:

Please consider this letter as official notice that a Special General Membership Meeting will be held at the Local 371 UFCW Headquarters, 290 Post Road West, Westport, Connecticut on Monday, December 5, 2022. This meeting will start promptly at 5:00 p.m.

The agenda will be as follows:

NOTICE OF NOMINATION OF LOCAL 371 DELEGATES TO THE UFCW INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION (TO BE HELD APRIL 22 - 27, 2023)

To Be Nominated: Ten (10) Delegates and three (3) Alternates

Members may run for either Delegate or Alternate, but not both.

Eligibility Requirement for Delegates and Alternates: Must be an active member of Local 371 who has been an active member of the UFCW, or who had been a member of another organization merged with or chartered by the UFCW or merged into a UFCW Local Union for a continuous aggregate since September 2021.

Elections will take place on Sunday, January 8, 2023 from 9:00 a.m. – 5:00 p.m. in the following areas:

Stamford-Norwalk Area - Local 371 UFCW Headquarters, 290 Post Road West, Westport, CT

Norwich-New London Area – Hampton Inn by Hilton, 54 Salem Turnpike, Norwich, CT

Waterbury Area – Courtyard by Marriott, 63 Grand Street, Waterbury, CT

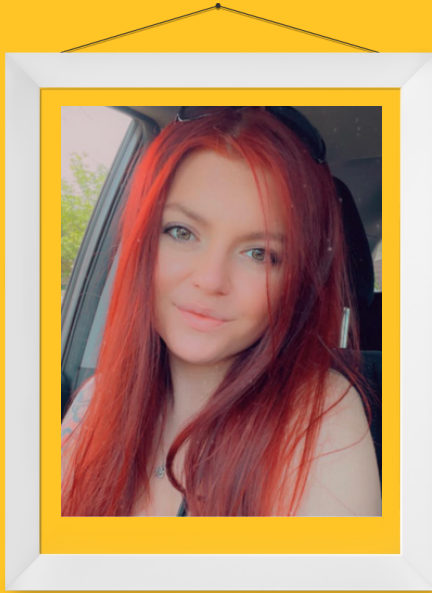
Springfield, MA Area – Clarion Hotel, 1080 Riverdale Street, West Springfield, MA

Hartford Area – Hampton Inn, 351 Pitkin Street, East Hartford, CT

New Haven Area – Courtyard by Marriott, 136 Marsh Hill Road, Orange, CT

A polling place shall be designated for each area, and the elections will take place on Sunday, January 8, 2023. The polls will be open from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. in each of the areas designated above. This Secret Ballot Election, among those so nominated will be conducted by an Election Committee in each area at the same time, place and dates defined herein.

Shop Steward Spotlight



Amanda Richardson
Apple Rehab in Watertown CT

Amanda helped form the union at her job as an LPN in 2019. After going through the union election, she helped bargain the first contract. When the staffing crisis hit her nursing home, Amanda approached the union with a proposal to demand more money from the company mid-contract for wage increases. Local 371 followed her lead and presented a proposal that was accepted by her employer that increased LPN pay by 25% or more. Amanda goes above and beyond, representing the needs not only of her LPN coworkers, but all of the employees at Apple Rehab, demanding safe staffing, timely payment of union negotiated wages and benefits, and fair treatment by management.



Jerome Wiggins
Stop & Shop #698 Bridgeport

Jerome is also a new Executive Board member for Local 371. Jerome has been in the Union for twenty-five years, working in the meat department. Jerome has been very helpful with gathering information before suspension hearings so Local 371 has all the information before going into grievance meetings. Jerome always calls his Union Rep to inform her when someone has been suspended so she is ready to represent them fully and can investigate their case.



Sacred Heart University cafeteria workers employed by Chartwells have begun their contract negotiations. Pictured here are committee members Valerie Armistead, Shanta Jordan, Carmen Feliciano (steward for the janitors employed by SSC), Karen Dwyer, and Luis Rivera, pictured with Local 371 Vice President Keri Hoehne and Secretary Treasurer Brian Truini.

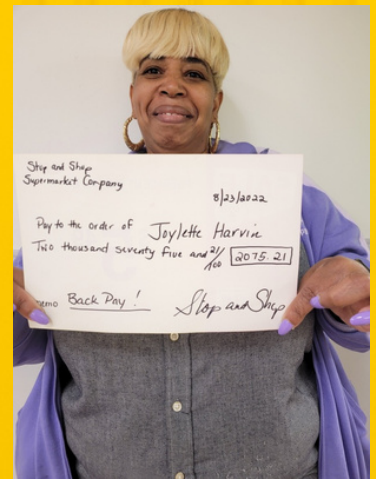


GRIEVANCE NEWS



Kathy Urbanowicz has been an employee at Stop & Shop and a member of Local 371 for nearly 5 years. She often is the closing CDH at her Unionville CT store. Kathy approached her union representative Keri Hoehne because she realized she was not receiving her time and one half for all hours worked beyond a half hour after store closing. Upon further review, the union and Kathy discovered that she had been losing this overtime for nearly a year and a half. The union filed a grievance, and Kathy received her overtime pay for the past 18 months. **With electronic pay stubs, it is important that all of our members check to make sure they are getting everything they are entitled to on a regular basis, and if they aren't, they should call their union steward or their union rep for help!**

It was discovered that Local 371 member **Joylette Harvin** was paid incorrectly since March of 2021. A grievance was filed by Union Representative Jessica Petronella and **Joy received back pay for \$2,075.21!**



Sarah Sisco approached Vice President Keri Hoehne at a Local 371 area membership meeting, with the encouragement of Executive Board Member and Steward Lucy Sciarretto (pictured here) to complain about what she thought was incorrect travel pay. Keri, along with Union Representative Jeff Horvath, investigated and found Sarah had been receiving incorrect travel pay for several months. **Sarah received \$1200 in back travel pay!**



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Scenes from our 2022 Shop Stewards Conference

