

2010 UFCW 876 Scholarship Applications Available

This spring, Local 876 will once again award five \$2,000 scholarships to Local 876 members and their eligible dependent children

Several factors make the Local 876 scholarship unique. First of all, members of any age are eligible for the scholarship. Additionally, part-time and full-time students working on an undergraduate or graduate degrees qualify for the scholarship.

Eligibility

1. Local 876 member or his/her dependent child, as defined under IRS regulations.
2. One year of union membership in good standing as of 1/1/10 and a member in good standing at the time of the award.
3. Acceptance into an accredited college, university, community college, or technical or trade school at the time of the award. Part-time, full-time, undergraduate and graduate students are eligible for a Local 876 scholarship.
4. Applications must be postmarked by March 31, 2010.

Local 876 scholarship winners are selected by the Scholarship Selection Committee based on academic achievement, community involvement, career goals, leadership, and a demonstrated understanding of the American Labor Movement.

The Steward Edition Feature "Labor's Language: Glossary of Union Terms" was completed in May. Beginning in June, it was replaced with the new "Help Spread the Word" spotlight. This space will be devoted to issues deserving stewards time and attention. Local 876 urges stewards to share the information included in the "Help Spread the Word" feature with their coworkers.



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UFCW 876 STEWARD EDITION

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President Looks to Senate to Act Before Year End

U.S. House Passes Historic Health Care Reform

Earlier this month, the U.S. House passed historic health care reform that will expand coverage and cut costs. H.R. 3962, the Affordable Health Care for America Act, will provide health coverage for millions of uninsured, require employers who aren't providing insurance to pay into the system and create a public option as an alternative to private insurance.

"The vote of Michigan representatives on the Affordable Health Care for America Act fell along party lines, with Republicans voting against the legislation and Democrats siding with workers, voting to support health care reform," Roger Robinson, Local 876's president, said. "When working families needed their representatives to stand up for them, the Republican delegation decided to side with insurance and drug companies and engage in partisan politics. Not only do members need to remember who was on their side next time they go to the polls, they should take the time to let their representative know how they feel about their vote on H.R. 3962."

Members can go to www.healthcareforamericanow.org for information on contacting representa-

tives regarding their health care vote, or contact the Local 876 Political Director at 1-800-321-6406 ext. 8644.

Health care reform now moves to the Senate, where debate is expected to take place over the next several weeks. If the Senate passes health care reform, the two houses will need to

reconcile their measures before sending legislation to President Obama for his signature. The president would like to sign a health reform bill this year.

Michigan Senators Carl Levin (D) and Debbie Stabenow (D) are both strong supporters of real health care reform legislation.

UFCW Michigan Holiday Celebration

Featuring the Traditions of Christmas, Kwanza & Hanukkah



Thursday, December 17, 2009
4 p.m. to 8 p.m.

(Photos with Santa end at 7 p.m.)

UFCW Local 876 Union Hall
\$2 Per Person* All Ages



**donated to a food pantry*
Metro-Detroit area stewards are encouraged to promote the Local's upcoming Holiday Celebration at their workplace. This is a great opportunity for stewards to talk to members about a fun event their union is holding exclusively for members and their families. By attending the celebration, members are also helping others, as 100 percent of the admission fee will be donated to area food banks, which are experiencing critical food shortages.

Stewards interested in selling tickets at their workplace, or helping out at the party, should contact their Union Representative. For more information, call the union office at 1-800-321-6406.

Retailers Looking to Eliminate Item Pricing

Michigan's Item Pricing Law, the stiffest in the country, is once again under attack. Retailers looking to reduce overhead, specifically jobs, are leading the charge to reintroduce legislation that would dramatically change the current law which requires most items in a store to be clearly marked with a price sticker.

"The attack on item pricing is first and foremost an attack on workers," Roger Robinson, Local 876's president, said. "By eliminating the pricing requirement, retailers can eliminate jobs, thus reducing their operating costs."

If Michigan loses its item pricing law, consumers, especially the elderly, also lose.

"The UFCW in Michigan will continue to fight for workers and consumers, insisting Michigan remain the only state in the country with an item pricing law," Robinson said. "Our goal is for the current law to be strengthened, not weakened or eliminated."

The UFCW supports increasing penalties for overcharges and lack of pricing, as well as adjusting the law so county and local prosecutors can collect fines when enforcing the law.

"While their union fights for item pricing at the state capitol, members need to fight for the law and their jobs at the workplace," Robinson said. "If your job involves pricing, then price. When your employer tells you it's Okay not to price, they aren't doing you a favor; they are attacking your job. If we simply allow the hours that should be spent pricing to disappear, those hours will soon disappear from the department's weekly work schedule, never to return."

It is expected the new legislation would allow retailers to eliminate individual price tags on all non-grocery items, except over the counter drugs. Consumers could check prices on corresponding shelf tags or by using remote scanners located throughout the store.

With pricing only on a shelf tag, seniors and the disabled are especially disadvantaged as they may have difficulty reading price tags that are too high or too low on store shelves.

With only a shelf tag to change, retailers can change prices several times a day. They could legally have one set of prices on weekday mornings designed to take advantage of seniors, and another set of prices in the evening intended to overcharge workers.

"The only group that stands to benefit from weakening the current item pricing law are retailers," Robinson said.

"If we simply allow the hours that should be spent pricing to disappear, those hours will soon disappear from the department's weekly work schedule, never to return."

**Roger Robinson
Local 876 President**

"With Michigan experiencing the highest unemployment rate in the country and working families struggling to make ends meet, now is not the time to pass legislation that would increase unemployment and cost consumers to pay more at the checkout lane."

Thank You • Thank You • Thank You • Thank You • Thank You

Stewards' Hard Work Pays Off

2010 Open Enrollment Most Successful to Date

The excellent one-on-one skills of Local 876 stewards shown once again as their efforts contributed to the most successful open enrollment for health benefits to date.

Thanks to Local 876 stewards at the nine employers participating in the Michigan UFCW Unions and Employers Health and Welfare Fund more members than ever before enrolled for the health and welfare benefits!

Thank You • Thank You • Thank You • Thank You • Thank You

Setting the Record Straight: Kroger Doing Well

An accurate understanding of their employer's economic situation is critical for all members entering contract negotiations. For this reason, recent articles in the *Local 876 Advocate* and *UFCW Unity Newsletter*, featured statistics highlighting Kroger's success.

"Local 876 enters all contract negotiations with the overriding goal of bargaining a fair and just contract," Roger Robinson, Local 876's president, said. "In general, this means getting the best deal for members that their employer can afford."

Over the last year, with the economic downturn and struggling, auto industry, Local 876 has bargained with financially strapped employers, especially automobile suppliers, who simply couldn't afford to offer contract improvements.

"We are realistic, and when an employer is struggling we communicate that fact to the effected membership," Robinson said. "But Kroger isn't struggling. Local 876 members need to understand that when we sit down at the bargaining table next year, we won't be sitting across from a company experiencing hard times like GM or Chrysler. We will be negotiating with Kroger, a profitable company with an extremely bright future."

As Local 876 prepares for its 2010 Kroger contract negotiations, the union will continue to communicate evidence of the company's success to the membership. The union fully expects Kroger to send an entirely different message, focusing tough times and the downturn in the economy.

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Roger Robinson, Local 876 President

the company is struggling, but it's just not true," Robinson said. "Kroger is doing very well, both nationally, and here in Michigan, Local 876 members deserve to share in Kroger's success."

To help combat the company's inaccurate messaging, Local 876 will need stewards to continually remind their coworkers of the Kroger's solid performance.

"I fully expect our 2010 bargaining with Kroger to be extremely difficult," Robinson said. "If Local 876 members are going to share in Kroger's success, they need to be united in their understanding of Kroger's prosperity. If the company is able to convince even a vocal minority they are struggling, it will make it very tough to negotiate the gains members deserve."

It would also be useful for stewards to let their neighbors know Kroger is doing very well, despite the tough economy, and can afford to provide its workers with a fair and just contract.

"It's hard to predict the tone our Kroger negotiations will take," Robinson said. "We may end up in a situation where the local turns to the public to pressure Kroger to do the right thing by its workers. If that's the case, we will need the public to understand Kroger is doing very, very well,

and the workers who helped create the company's success now deserve to share in Kroger's wealth."

See the box below for important Kroger facts and figures to share with coworkers and neighbors.

Kroger Facts and Figures

Kroger is Making Money

- In the most recent fiscal year, Kroger's total sales were \$76 billion, 8.2 percent more than the previous fiscal year.
- In the most recent quarter, super-market sales were up 3.5 percent.
- Kroger may point to a recent decline in quarterly profits from \$276.4 to \$254.4 million, but this is due to a decline in fuel prices. Same store sales were up 2.6 percent.

Kroger is a Market Share Leader

- Kroger leads all national grocery stores in market share. At approximately 13 percent, Kroger is second in market share only to Wal-Mart.
- In the most recent fiscal year, Kroger gained market share in 36 of its 42 major markets and projects to gain in more in the near future.