



WANTED Political Activists to Work for the UFCW

In preparation for the critical 2012 election, the UFCW is looking for members interested in taking an extended paid union leave of two to 10 months to receive political activist training and participate in a variety of political activities.

Ideal candidates will live in targeted political districts and have an interest in politics, feel comfortable talking to members and the general public about politics, have reliable transportation, and the ability to work a varied schedule including some night and weekend work. The UFCW will attempt to schedule members close to their homes, but assignments may involve driving some distances.

Work assignments will include; voter registration, leafleting, door-to-door canvassing, phone banking, and attending rallies.

"This is going to be a crucial election for working families," Roger Robinson, UFCW 876's president, said. "The UFCW is looking to build a solid core of political activists in Michigan to help turn out the vote for President Obama, Senator Stabenow, and other pro-worker candidates."

For more information, or to request an interview for the program, contact the Local 876 Political Director, Chris Michalak at 1.800.321.6406 ext. 8644.



876 Horace Brown Drive
Madison Heights, MI 48071

Roger Robinson
President

Rick Blocker
Secretary/Treasurer

George Misko
Recorder

1.800.321.6406
www.ufcw876.org

UFCW 876 STEWARDS EDITION

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Member Incentive Program Launching in 2012

Members Can Turn UFCW 876 Perks Credits into Gift Cards

Beginning January 1, UFCW 876 will launch the Perks program, a member incentive program, that allows members to earn credits towards a \$25 Kroger gift card by being active in their union.

"We are looking forward to the launch of the Perks program and beginning to recognize members' support of their union in a new and meaningful way," Roger Robinson, Local 876's president, said. "We have so many members who take time out of their busy lives to support their union. The Perks program will enable Local 876 to give back to them."

Perks credits will be awarded to members in three general ways:

1. Members who belong to the UFCW Active Ballot Club (ABC) as of December 31, 2012 will receive three Perks credits.
2. Members who volunteer for political or organizing activities will receive one to three Perks credits based on the activity/event.
3. Members who attend a membership event will earn one Perks credit.

Listing of specific activities and their Perks credits will be posted at www.ufcw876.org/perks and available from the union office. Members who earn

seven Perks credits between January 1, 2012 and December 31, 2012 will be awarded a \$25 Kroger gift card. Members who earn 14 Perks credits during this time period will earn a \$50 Kroger gift card.

The UFCW 876 office will track Perks credits.

Perks credits for activities and events will be based on sign-in sheets. A union representative will be in attendance at each UFCW-sponsored event to collect members' signatures on sign-in sheets. This information will be forwarded to the union office where the official Perks records will be maintained.

Perks credits for ABC membership will be generated by the union's database of ABC participants.

Members can request a Perks Card from their union representative or the union office to keep a personal record of their Perks credits. However, members' official Perks' records are maintained at the union office.

Gift cards will be award at the program's conclusion.

UFCW 876 will issue gift cards once, following the December 31 conclusion of the 2012 Perks program.

Members in good standing at that



The following are examples of activities for which members can earn Perks credits.

- The Active Ballot Club
- Membership Events
- Hand billing
- Phone banking
- Organizing Actions
- Political Events
- Young Worker Events
- Zoo Day

time will be awarded gift cards based on their earned Perks credits.

"In addition to being a great way to reward members for their involvement in their union, the Perks program is a wonderful tool for stewards to use to generate participation in Local 876 programs," Robinson said. "By participating in the ABC and a couple of union activities, members can earn a \$25 gift card."

Union Scholarships for Members, Dependents

The labor movement is about more than paychecks and benefits. It is about workers coming together to build better lives for themselves and their families. It's about creating opportunity. That is why each year, Local 876, the UFCW International, and other labor organizations award thousands of dollars in college scholarships to union members and their dependents.

To help as many members as possible, union scholarships have broadened their eligibility requirements, making scholarships available to students

who don't fit the "traditional" recent high school graduate idea of a college student. Union scholarships are available to eligible members, retirees and their dependents who are older students, part-time students, trade school and graduate students.

"The cost of going to college is becoming an increasing burden on members and their families, winning a union scholarship can help alleviate some of that burden," Roger Robinson, Local 876's president, said. "In some cases, winning a union scholarship has

enabled a student who would otherwise not be able to attend college to do so. It is important for stewards to educate members about the various union scholarships and encourage them to apply for all of the scholarships they may be eligible to receive."

Stewards should familiarize themselves with the union scholarships listed below and then share this information with their coworkers. Members and stewards can contact the union office for more information on any of these union scholarships.

UFCW Local 876 Scholarship

Award: Five \$2,000 scholarships are awarded exclusively to Local 876 members and their dependents.

Eligibility: UFCW Local 876 members (with one year of service as of January 1, 2012) and their dependent children accepted or attending an accredited college, university (under-graduate and graduate), community college, or recognized trade school on a full-time or part-time basis.

To Apply: Call UFCW 876 at 1.800.321.6406 for an application or download one at www.ufcw876.org/scholarships.

Application Deadline: March 30, 2012.

UFCW International Union Scholarship

Award: Several scholarships of up to \$8,000 are awarded to UFCW members and their dependents in the U.S. and Canada.

Eligibility: UFCW members and their unmarried dependent children under age 20, accepted or enrolled in an accredited college or university, or institute of higher learning on a full-time or part-time basis.

To Apply: The online application process begins January 16, 2012 at www.ufcw.org/scholarship.

Application Deadline: April 16, 2012.

Union Plus Scholarship

Award: Several scholarships of between \$500 and \$4,000 are awarded to current and retired union members in the U.S., Canada and Puerto Rico and their spouses and dependent children.

Eligibility: Current or retired union members, and their spouses and dependent children (as defined by the IRS) accepted to or attending an accredited college or university, community college or recognized technical or trade school at the time the award is issued as an undergraduate or graduate student.

To Apply: Applications must be completed on line at www.unionplus.org.

Application Deadline: Completed applications must be received on or before 11:59 p.m. (Eastern Standard Time) January 31, 2012.



Help Members Protect Themselves from Unjust Discipline

Stewards at grocery stores and other retail units should be on the look out for instances where employers are imposing unrealistic work standards on members and then disciplining them for failing to complete their work.

"We have recently seen a spike in members being wrongfully disciplined for incomplete work assignments, especially at Kroger," Roger Robinson, UFCW 876's president, said. "It is the local's position that any discipline resulting from members not completing their work because they were reassigned to a different task should be challenged. It is unrealistic to think a member should be able to finish his or her work assignment for the day when management sends them to work in a different department for an extended period of time."

The local attributes the increase in this types of discipline to new technology being used by retailers in an effort to improve customer service.

New scanners and cameras are now being used to track customers through the store and trigger alerts to management when lines begin to form at the front end. To alleviate the lines and enhance the customers' shopping experience, management often pulls members from perimeter departments to the front end.

Problems arise when produce, dairy, deli and meat department members, are called up to run the register or bag groceries and are then disciplined for failing to complete their job assignments in their own departments.

"We have seen members written up, and even terminated, for lack of productivity, despite being assigned to work for up to seven hours in another department," Robinson said. "When management looks at their reports all

What to Do When Asked to Assist in Another Department

If members are asked to assist in another department – they should do so. However, to protect themselves from unjust discipline, and possible termination, stewards should encourage members take the following steps.

- 1) Keep a detailed workday journal. Record dates, times and departments, and who gave assignments. This document can be used to dispute a discipline.
- 2) File a grievance disputing any discipline for incomplete work due to being assigned to work in a different department.
- 3) Inform proper management if work is incomplete at the end of a shift due to working in another department. Let management know what is not finished, allowing them to determine how to resolve the matter. Punching out without reporting to proper management, leaves one open to criticism and/or discipline.

they see is a drop in productivity on a particular member's shift, there is no indicator the member was assigned to work in a different department."

The local is currently addressing this issue with employers and has had some success defending members who have been disciplined for unrealistic work standards. However, this process is cumbersome as records, reports and video must be combed through to support a member's grievance.

"This technology is here to stay. Employers firmly believe it is instrumental in improving customer satisfaction and boosting their bottom line," Robinson

said. "Therefore, we must develop effective procedures to protect members from being victimized by this technology."

Stewards can play a vital role in this process by encouraging members to be proactive and take steps to defend themselves if they are disciplined for failing to complete their work despite being called to work in a different area.

A list of actions members should take to protect themselves from unjust discipline accompanies this article. Stewards should familiarize themselves with these steps and encourage members to put them into practice.

Remind Members to Update their Address with the Union Office

When stewards hear of members who have moved, it is important to remind them to update their records with the union office to insure they continue to receive important mail from the union including contract information, election materials, dues adjustments, surveys, and bargaining updates.

Employers do not share change of addresses supplied by their employees with UFCW 876.

