

# We're all in it together: Give

By **DAVID COOK**  
President



Christmas tends to move so quickly, plenty of us wake up on the 26th of December more than a little surprised that it has already come and gone, another year's worth of gifts and memories.

But before the holiday season comes to a total close, I and the entire UFCW family ask you to do something simple this year: give to a charity.

We'd be happy to recommend plenty, but you've probably already got one in mind. Our UFCW family has a long partnership with the United Way of Greater St. Louis, the Leukemia and Lymphoma Foundation, Five for the Fight, and many more. All year round, we think it's important that labor gives back to the community, and helps everyone live the best life possible.

Our fundraising efforts, along with efforts from UFCW International with the Leukemia and Lymphoma Foundation has resulted in more than \$77 million in research and cures since the mid-1980's. Our long history with the United Way is one of our proudest achievements here at UFCW Local 655.

Part of our mission is to fight for hard-working people, to get them the best deal possible and help them when they aren't treated properly at work. Through that mission we fight for better wages and benefits, helping whole families feel the profit of a better deal in the workplace.

But that alone is not enough. We also believe in fighting the bigger fights, the fights

that are won when lots of people — people from all walks of life and with different motivations — come together in unison. That's why we look to stand alongside our partners in the fights against the nation's worst scourges, whether in the form of a debilitating disease, or the crushing yoke of poverty itself.

Sometimes our dues-paying partners ask us why we choose to spend money on charitable giving. But what those partners often do not understand is that the UFCW doesn't dip into our general treasury for these partnerships. We facilitate fundraisers so that anyone can give money to these important causes. As your president, I'm sensitive to the fact that we ask for money from your paycheck to advance your interests at work. We are constantly vigilant of this mission.

But, as your president, I also believe that UFCW Local 655 can and should play a role in helping all people, not just those in our bargaining unit. We are embedded in our local communities, and we feel it's important to help those communities raise the funds they need to help themselves. Our partners come first, but that doesn't mean we can or should forget the neediest among us, especially in this time of year.

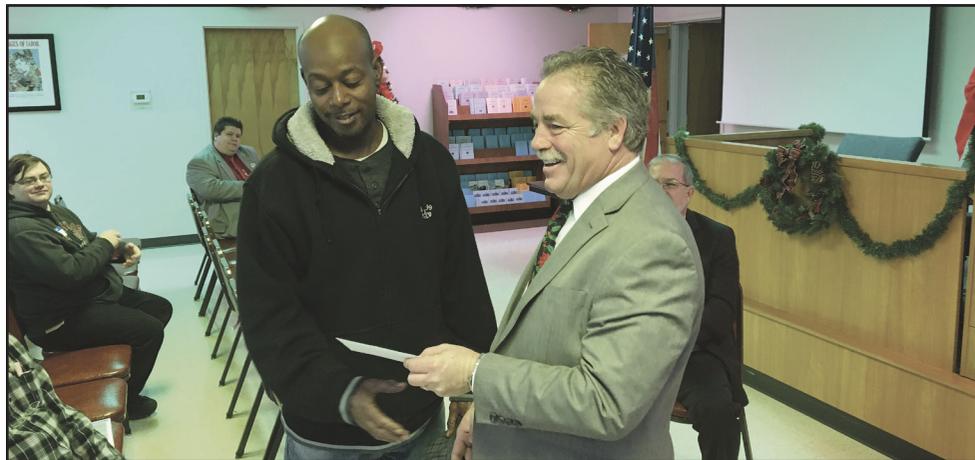
The labor movement isn't concerned with advancing the interests of a select few. The UFCW family cares about the hard-working people of this state, and many of those hard-working people aren't getting what they have rightfully earned. We must care for one another when others do not. We don't just support our partners. We support entire communities. In light of this mission, it's our duty to give back.

## UFCW Local 655 collects funds for \$5 for the Fight



At every regular monthly meeting, UFCW Local 655 collects funds for \$5 for the Fight. Those donations, combined with donations from 655 staff, allowed UFCW Local 655 to present a check at this year's St. Louis Labor Council Christmas party to Five for the Fight for \$1,400.

## Bevely sees a win-win with ABC



Vincent Bevely of Culineria was recently presented with a check for \$250 from President David Cook for his contribution to the UFCW International Union's Active Ballot Club (ABC).

Each month, the UFCW International Union draws a name from those who contribute to the Club. For the fourth time this year, a UFCW Local 655 partner was chosen in the drawing.

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TWICE MONTHLY  
REPORT FOR**

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## UFCW pension changes give more flexibility to retirees

Effective November 1, 2015, the UFCW Local 655 Food Employers Joint Pension Plan made a change to the Work After Retirement/Suspension of Benefit rule.

This change to our pension plans makes it easier for our participants to start their earned benefits faster.

In years past, a participant set to retire had to actually use all the vacation time, sick days and other paid leave they had accrued before they could retire and begin collecting their pension benefit.

Now, for active participants, you may take your vacation as in the past or work up to the last day of the month prior to your effective date of retirement and collect any and all accrued vacation, personal or sick days after your retirement date.

In addition, for retirees who are of normal retirement age and have returned to work in

the grocery industry, any non-worked hours (vacation, sick, holiday or personal time) will not count towards the allotted 80 hours per month you may work.

If you receive payment for more than the allotted 80 hours due to non-worked hours, you must provide documentation to the Pension Fund Office to avoid having your benefit suspended. This allows our long-term retirees to continue to collect benefits they've earned while also choosing to work a small amount of time at their own discretion.

"This is going to allow our participants to get the benefits they've earned in the fastest, easiest way," said UFCW Local 655 President David Cook. "This change is really about flexibility, which is so important for our retirees."

Questions should be directed to the UFCW Local 655 Pension Fund at 636.736.2777.

## Williams named new E-Board member



**EARL WILLIAMS**, a UFCW Local 655 partner for more than 30 years currently working at Schnucks in Woodsmill was sworn in as the newest member of the UFCW Local 655 Executive Board at their regular monthly meeting in December. "I'm extremely thankful to be elected to the executive board and I'm looking forward to taking an active role in my UFCW family."

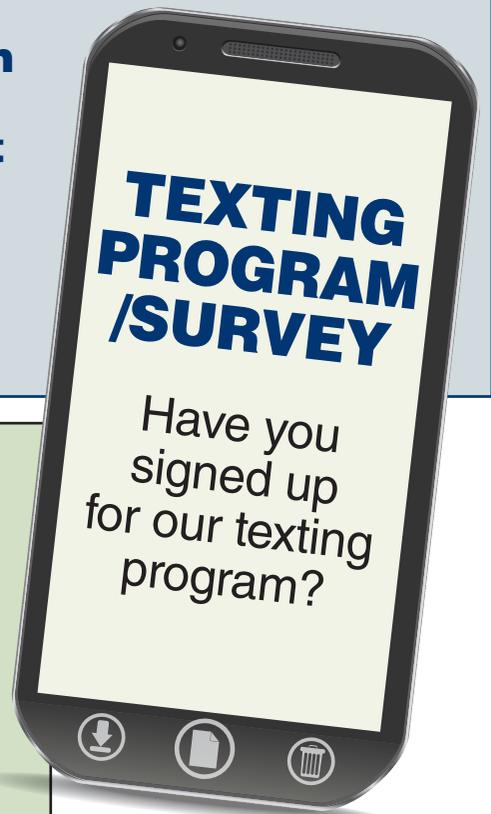
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