

Handling the Teamster Boycott

By DAVID COOK
President

Those of you that are reading this have likely already seen the front page of this paper, which brings us unfortunate news.

After a dispute lasting several months between the Teamsters Local 688 and Schnucks Markets, the Teamsters have formally called for a boycott of all Schnucks Markets. This call comes as the result of a dispute between Schnucks and Teamster leadership over the imminent termination of 204 Teamster workers and 30 others currently employed in the Schnucks warehouse.

As many of you may know, Schnucks hired a third-party to manage a new warehouse for all their locations in the area, and announced soon after that this warehouse would consist of non-union workers earning only a fraction of the pay and benefits afforded to the current Schnucks warehouse workers who are members of Teamsters Local 688.

Partners must continue work

This decision to call for a boycott greatly concerns the Teamsters, who fear it is only the first step toward ending more and more high-quality Union jobs in warehouses around the region.

As your President, I have been closely engaged on this issue since Day One, and I have repeatedly urged both sides to meet and seek an amicable agreement to this problem. Earlier this week, a letter was delivered to Todd Schnuck, in which I offered my services as a mediator in this dispute in an effort to avert a boycott because it will hurt Schnucks Markets, and, by extension, put too many of Local 655's partners at risk.

A boycott will have a negative impact on the hard-working families of Local 655. And while some of the shoppers that leave Schnucks over this issue may continue to frequent other Union grocers like Shop 'n Save, Dierbergs or Straubs, we know that many will not. They will abandon Schnucks for non-union stores, and many of them will not return when this boycott ends.



COOK

I want to remind each and every Schnucks partner that regardless of your personal feelings about this boycott, you continue to have an obligation to work as usual.

You cannot withhold your services as an employee of Schnucks to honor this boycott, and refusing to work may result in disciplinary action from management. I would also urge you not to engage any customers in discussions on this issue, but to immediately refer those conversations to management.

Watch for updates

I also want to be absolutely clear that I intend to communicate clearly to you about how we will handle this boycott, and I am deeply committed to keeping you informed.

Those of you who signed up for our texting program will receive information via text.

I will make sure you have flyers in your workplace and posted on our website detailing the appropriate way to handle this deeply unfortunate development, and will give you the best information possible about how we will seek a resolution.

In addition, we also have information on our website to address questions you may have regarding the boycott and your role as an employee of Schnucks.

Use caution

Finally, I'd like to urge you to exercise caution on social media in publicly discussing this boycott. Management can impose disciplinary action because of public comments made by Local 655 partners.

It is my duty to protect your jobs, and preserve the integrity of our Union through solidarity and strength.

I am personally deeply saddened that a dispute between our allies at the Teamsters and Schnucks has come to this. I continue to urge both sides to seek a resolution that is fair for all, and I am absolutely dedicated to minimizing the negative impact of this boycott on the more than 5,000 of Local 655 partners currently working hard every single day in Schnucks stores.

Please contact your Union representative with any questions or concerns you might have, and know that I will tirelessly seek a resolution to this problem.

Fundraiser brings support for Local 655 Rep. Karen Settlemoir-Berg

UFCW Local 655 hosted a fundraiser for Karen Settlemoir-Berg at the UFCW Local 655 Union Hall in Ballwin last week.

Karen promised to defend hard-working families against attacks like



BERG

Right-to-Work, and discussed her platform which includes improving Missouri's infrastructure, investing in high-quality education and supporting small businesses around the state.

Bill Otto, a Democratic candidate for Congress, introduced Settlemoir-Berg and thanked her for running in Jefferson County, in what remains one of the most watched swing districts in the state.

Local 655 Education Grant winners to be chosen at June meeting

As part of Local 655's continuing efforts to help our partners achieve their goals, we will award 20 Education Grants of \$150 each at our June meeting.

The grants, selected through a drawing, are open to all members of UFCW Local 655 who are enrolled in post-high school education or higher.

Contact your Union Representative to complete an application for the June drawing.



Those selected will receive a letter of congratulations and will be required to verify their school enrollment by sending a copy of their last semester's grade report or new registration receipt. Upon receipt of verification, a check will be mailed.

Don't forget to apply. New applications are required for each drawing. The next winner could be you.

AN EXCLUSIVE
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MEMBERS &
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UFCW E-Board member Harriett Weaver honored by CBTU

Harriet Weaver, one of the longest-serving Executive Board members in UFCW Local 655 history, was honored earlier this month with the Addie Wyatt Award from the Coalition of Black Trade Unionists (CBTU).

Weaver, a 46-year member of UFCW Local 655, said she was "ecstatic" to receive the award.

The Addie Wyatt Award is named for one of the most honored and influential black women in the history of labor. Addie Wyatt was a powerful force in the UFCW during the 1970s when Weaver first joined Local 655.

Wyatt was a founding member of the CBTU and served as chair of their National Women's Committee. Wyatt was known as a fierce advocate for both racial minorities and women to grow their clout within the labor movement.

Weaver received the award in because of her lengthy and diligent service to UFCW Local 655, where her resume is extensive.

In 1978, during the Right-To-Work fight of that period, Weaver was unfairly terminated by management for refusing to remove a button at work advocating for the defeat of Missouri's 1978 so-called "Right-to-Work" measure.

Her termination led to major action by UFCW Local 655 at her store, where they immediately staged a strike and walkout over Weaver's unfair termination.

The strike worked, and Harriet Weaver got her job back, along with the back pay she'd earned.

Shortly thereafter, Weaver was asked to serve on the Executive Board of Local 655. Before she accepted, she asked her father, a longtime Teamster, about the offer.

"He told me not to do it if I was just going to be doing it for me," Weaver said. "He said if you're not going to put your heart in to it, stay off. But if you're going to put your heart into it, then do it."

Weaver joined, and her involvement with UFCW Local 655 has been remarkably extensive. Weaver also serves as a delegate to the St. Louis Labor Council AFL-CIO, a founding member of the Faces of Our Children Sickle Cell Committee. She is an Executive Vice President of the UFCW Minority Coalition, International Executive Vice President of Faces of Our Children in Washington D.C.,



Local 655 partner Harriett Weaver receives recognition from CBTU President Terry Melvin.

Executive Vice President of the St. Louis County Branch NAACP, member of the UFCW Women Network, a member of the St. Louis Coalition of Labor Union Women and an assistant Secretary of the St. Louis Coalition of Black Trade Unionists.

Weaver was instrumental in connecting UFCW Local 655 with Faces of Our Children. Local 655 now hosts an annual barbecue that has raised tens of thousands of dollars to fight sickle cell anemia.

Weaver said winning an award named for Addie Wyatt was an added honor.

"I got to meet her before she passed away. I used to hear people talk about her all the time. She was a giant and incredible woman in everyone's eyes," Weaver said. "And when I finally got to meet her, I saw she was kind of small and very soft-spoken, and I was shocked. I thought she'd be 7 feet tall. She was small, but she did so, so much for so many people. It's just such a great honor to get an award named for her."

Weaver was formally announced as the award winner at the annual CBTU Conference and she now eagerly awaits receiving her engraved plaque in the mail.

"I just can't wait to see it," she said.



Join us in solidarity! Show us your PRIDE!

We will meet at the corner of Broadway and Market at 10am (Look for the UFCW sign)

Share Your Pride: Share this page in your break room.