

Free college off to roaring start

By DAVID COOK
President



COOK

A few weeks ago, Local 655 rolled out a new benefit available to our partners that is among the best deals we could possibly offer: Free two-year college to you and your family just for being a union member.

Since then, the response from our partners like you have been overwhelmingly positive. Our union representatives have heard incredible feedback from our partners at work, and many of you have already inquired about the benefits of this program through the tools provided at ufcw-freecollege.com.

I couldn't be more thrilled about this program or the potential it has to fundamentally change the lives of Local 655 partners like you.

Perhaps the best part of this program is the room for continued growth and improvement. We will continue to search for more schools willing to participate, secure partnerships with the University of Missouri System, and expand the programs and classes available to you.

We are going to continue to communicate the value of this program to you in the months to come, as enrollment periods approach we will consistently and proudly remind our partners—whether they've been with us for decades or were newly hired—about this incredible benefit.

While Local 655 provides many benefits to

AN OPPORTUNITY FOR YOU AND YOUR FAMILY

**FREE
COLLEGE
BENEFIT**

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free college benefit program.

Over the coming weeks and months, we will reach out to our partners that enroll in school through this program to get their feedback on how it can be improved. We also want to tell the stories of the people who use this remarkable benefit.

Whether it's one of you or your family members, we want to tell the world about this benefit and how it can positively impact the lives of anyone in the Local 655 family.

our partners in the form of discounts, extra services or job-related benefits unavailable to non-union workers—like our healthcare plans and our pension—a chance at free education is perhaps one of the best examples of just how much unions can lift up their partners and the communities they serve at large. If you or your loved one is able to get a free education thanks to membership in this union, a better life becomes not only a possibility, but a reality.

This program is in its infancy, but we are committed to growing it in new and exciting ways. We are committed to creating a benefit package for Local 655 partners that clearly shows the incredible value that unions provide to their partners.

Makesure you're talking about this program with your family members and co-workers. Tell them about how a free education is a real possibility, and tell them that Local 655 is responsible for this opportunity.

While we will continue to tell each and every Local 655 partner about this program, our rank-and-file partners in their workplace have opportunities that we don't, to talk about the

free college benefit program.

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For too long, billionaires, donors, lobbyists and the like have had power that belongs in the hands of the people. For too long, secret donations, lavish gifts, and self-serving agendas have dominated politics in this state. For too long, the people of Missouri had to watch as arm-twisting and check-writing moved agendas forward, instead of thoughtful debate and well-crafted policy.

The voices of nearly 300,000 Missourians are

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TWICE MONTHLY
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MEMBERS &
THEIR FAMILIES**

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History: Made

Repeal 'right-to-work' petition drive goes over the top

On August 18, 2017, those who oppose "Work-for-Less" are going to make history. For the first time ever, all eight Missouri congressional districts will submit enough signatures to send something to the ballot. And in this case, that something is the repeal of "Work-for-Less."

Hundreds of thousands of signatures, far more than the targeted number, will be delivered to the Missouri Secretary of State office in the clearest display imaginable, that Missourians won't be tricked or forced into accepting "Work-for-Less."

"This is a victory for all workers—union or otherwise—as a signal that Missouri doesn't want or need "Work-for-Less". When laws like this come along, we will always fight back."

It's a signal to people pushing for "Work-for-Less" laws in other states that opposition that is hard-working and organized can beat back any attack, even when that attack is funded by billionaire out-of-state interests just looking to line their own pockets.

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being heard this week when hundreds of thousands of petitions are submitted to the state.

Those voices are collectively louder than ever the biggest check. While Gov. Eric Greitens may continue to take dark money to build a machine to fight for "Work-for-Less," never forget that the people gave him his job, and the people can take it away.

His ambitions for higher office will always be his weakness. He and the politicians like him that rammed "Work-for-Less" through in the first weeks of the legislative session need to hear and see the voice of the people of Missouri. They need to know that they will not forgive or forget those who stood against good paying jobs, better benefits, and better workplace safety.

They need to know that history doesn't get made every day of the week, and the people don't intend on letting this opportunity sail by.



Shop Steward Appreciation Day: Working to make UFCW 655 stronger

UFCW Local 655 Shop Stewards Appreciation Day was a success earlier this month, with shop stewards, union staff and elected officials all joining together to discuss the hard work of making unions strong advocates for their partners.

As tradition dictates, two elected officials—one Democrat and one Republican—spoke before the gathered stewards about everything from their family backgrounds in the Labor Movement to the important issues

facing working families today.

President of the St. Louis Board of Aldermen Lewis Reed spoke to the crowd about his work on increasing the minimum wage and the value of jobs with good benefits like those offered by unions like Local 655. Republican Ken Waller, Jefferson County Executive, spoke about his own efforts to stand up to the majority of his party when he publicly urged them to reject so-called "right-to-work (for less)."

Local 655 President David Cook spent several minutes highlighting the hard work of the full-time volunteer partners of Local 655 who had spent the last several weeks, even months, collecting signatures to put "right-to-work (for less)" on the ballot for repeal in 2018. All of the volunteers, even those who were not shop stewards, were asked to attend the evening's festivities so President Cook could publicly thank them for their service to the union and the people of Missouri.



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