



**VIA ELECTRONIC MAIL**

March 8, 2017

TO ALL UFCW INTERNATIONAL EXECUTIVE BOARD  
AND ADVISORY COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Thank you all again for taking part in our 2017 International Executive Board and Advisory Committee meetings in San Antonio.

Throughout each meeting and presentation, our goal was to have an honest and open discussion about the challenges we face, as well as what we are doing right, and what we can and must do better.

As we all heard and saw, the challenges we face are real, and they extend beyond politics and communications. To reach the next generation of workers, to build awareness and excite our members in Work for Less “WFL” and non-WFL states, and to bargain better and organize smarter, we must prove our value to all our members and non-members alike.

Regardless of the state, or the local union, our Union family does provide a real and measurable value to our members. We do make a positive difference in the lives of 1.3 million members, and countless hard-working men and women, yet some of our members and non-members struggle to see and hear it.

The reality is that no local union can address our challenges alone, or seize the opportunities before us—we must all work together to get better and stronger.

To that end, and based on the suggestions we heard from countless local union presidents on how to strengthen our mission for 2017, we want to update you about the new developments related to our value campaign effort, as well as our overall organizing, bargaining, and outreach goals for the year.

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**A. New Value Campaign/Message Workshops:**

Based on the interest and counsel of local union presidents, the International will be organizing and scheduling **Regional One-day “Value” Workshops** for local union staff and business representatives (or others you believe should participate).

The goal of these workshops is to not only raise the collective awareness among all our staff to the shared goal we have to communicate value, but more importantly, to provide tools and action plans that will assist each local union in their efforts to communicate value.

- I. Specifically, the workshops will focus on two components:
  - i. The first section will provide an opportunity for your staff and representatives to: (1) hear the most recent value research; (2) understand the significance of these insights; and (3) highlight the language, message, and actions that can help improve our value connection with members.
  - ii. The second section will involve a dynamic and interactive training workshop to help your designated staff: (1) develop and hone the tools, language, and messages to better communicate value to our members, and non-members; (2) provide real-world examples that will help staff and representatives demonstrate value to members; and (3) to share insights and discuss best practices from WFL and non-WFL local unions.
- II. **Please note:** Workshops will be scheduled regionally throughout the coming weeks and months. To help coordinate our efforts, your Region Director will be reaching out to discuss timing and location.

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**B. 2017 Retail Conference:**

Our upcoming 2017 Retail Conference in St. Louis will build off the themes and goals outlined in our recent Board presentations.

I. Among the specific objectives of this year's Retail Conference are as follows:

i. To: (1) address key challenges and opportunities across retail; (2) share critical best practices and insights between WFL and non-WFL states; (3) share additional insights and recommendations from upcoming member and non-member research in WFL states; (4) improve bargaining and organizing coordination among local unions across specific regions; as well as (5) share our latest retail sector research on key industries and employers.

ii. To help turn knowledge into practice, this year's Retail Conference will also involve intensive workshops to provide local unions and staff, across the key areas of bargaining, organizing, and communications, the opportunity to learn from each other, as well as develop plans of action for their respective local unions and regions.

II. **Please note:** Additional details on the 2017 Retail Conference will be sent to local unions by mid-March.

**C. Strategic Goals for 2017**

Since the beginning of 2015, we have laid out annual and specific strategic goals that we must all strive to reach. Considering recent political events, including a renewed push for WFL at the national level, it is demonstrably clear that we must organize harder, bargain better, and communicate our importance to our members and the community—now more than ever.

If our goal is to get stronger, and it must be, we must be willing to push each other to seize the opportunities ahead of us. What we must not do, under any circumstances, is accept these challenges and threats as a permissible status quo.

To change the current status quo, we must get stronger across every core area of our responsibilities. While accomplishing these tasks will never be easy, laying out clear goals provides the shared focus that not only benefits every local union, but more importantly it benefits our Union family.

I. The 2017 goals for organizing, bargaining, communications, and community and member outreach are as follows:

- i. **Organizing:** As difficult and challenging as we know organizing is, every local union set a **goal of launching 2 new organizing campaigns by the second quarter of 2017.**
- ii. **Bargaining:** The importance of improving our contracts is self-evident: it not only helps us meet our members' needs, but provides a unique opportunity to gain new members. As such, every local union should (1) immediately evaluate all upcoming contracts to see how many new members can be added through bargaining; and (2) every local union should set a 2017 goal of increasing new members by **2-3 percent through bargaining.**

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- iii. **Member Outreach:** As we heard during the recent Board meeting, more must be done to reach out to, engage, and mobilize our members. In that spirit, each local union should: (1) hold **1-2 member events** (*i.e. member meeting, tele-town hall, conference call, etc.*) **every month** beginning by April 2017; and (2) improve their texting abilities by increasing the percentage of member cell phone numbers they have by 10% in 2017.
  
- iv. **Local Community Outreach:** Our Union family members represent a significant and important block of our communities. To help improve our community support, and alliances, each local union should set a goal of holding **3** community events (*i.e. Stamp Out Hunger, Leukemia fundraising*), with local partners and allies that highlight the critical role our members play in the community.
  
- v. **Communications:** To improve communications, we must also strive to improve understanding and coordination across our Union family. To help improve our overall communications efforts, our goals for the year are as follows: (1) establish a 2017 communications plan for each respective local union; (2) assign one local union staff member as the official communicator who will help lead local communications, as well as participate in bi-monthly communicator calls; and (3) revise all public messaging and language to better reflect our value messaging.

As we all well know, the demands on each local union are time-consuming and considerable. While accomplishing the above goals are by no means easy, I want to be very clear that I am here, and the International is here, to do everything possible to help you meet and exceed these goals.

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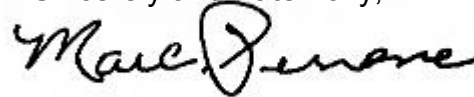
To help focus on our 2017 efforts, as well as discuss the upcoming Retail Conference and Value Workshops, we will be holding our next **quarterly region conference calls** the week of April 17, 2017. Your Region Director or Council President will notify you the time and date of your specific call.

In the meantime, if there is anything you need, or if there are suggestions or advice on what we can do to improve the Value Workshops, our 2017 Retail Conference, or to better refine our yearly goals, please email or call.

As I have said before, and I will say again and again, we are in this together. None of us have a license on good ideas, and it is when we share our knowledge, when we coordinate our actions, and when we focus ourselves on the opportunities instead of dwelling on the risks, that we can and will grow stronger.

Thank you again for everything you do for our Union family.

Sincerely and fraternally,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Marc Demare". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

International President