

# Local 655 wins; pass it on

By **DAVID A. COOK**  
President



COOK

Hopefully, by now many of you have heard about our historic organizing victory at a Dollar General store in Auxvasse, Missouri. The successful organizing campaign there is the first ever in the history of Dollar General and a sign of just how much room there is for the Labor Movement to continue to grow.

There's a common narrative about the Labor Movement that is false but easy to buy into. This narrative says that unions are in a state of perpetual decline, that fewer and fewer American workers want or need a union at their workplace, and that big companies are simply too powerful for unions to be successful. Simply put: this is not true.

It is true that local and federal laws and regulations are stacked in favor of employers, not employees, when it comes to union organizing. It is true that organizing is an uphill climb and it is true that the Labor Movement doesn't have the same clout that it once did.

But none of this means decline. It means opportunity for new growth, new thinking and a new generation of proud union brothers and sisters.

In the last year alone, UFCW Local 655 has welcomed more than 325 new hard-working Missourians into our union family. We don't plan on stopping our growth or backing away from expanding our partnerships. Big companies and the greediest CEO's and politicians have overplayed their hand and now they are reaping the backlash.

Every organizing campaign we run has a

common theme. While things like wages or benefits or workplace safety vary from job to job, every organizing campaign encounters hard-working Missourians who have the same concern: respect at work.

Too many Americans feel like replaceable cogs in a machine that does not care about them.

Too many Americans are working jobs that dismiss their concerns, minimize their ability to rise up and provide them with the lowest pay and benefits possible.

But there are consequences to this kind of thinking. As we saw at Dollar General, and as we saw earlier this year at Washington University's food service, Bon Appétit, more and more American men and women are saying that they deserve a voice at work, and that they've worked hard enough to earn a better life.

For a long time, we were told to simply be thankful that we even have jobs in the first place. Finally, we are beginning to demand that those jobs reflect the hard work that we do.

Too many hard-working men and women haven't even considered whether a union in their workplace is the right thing for them, because the narrative of a weakened Labor Movement and all-powerful CEO's dominate their mind.

It's time for us to find out just how we can change that. The answer is simple: we win.

If you have a friend or a family member who complains too often about poor treatment, abysmal pay, non-existent benefits or dangerous working conditions, remind them that it doesn't have to be that way. There are men and women in Labor willing to fight for them.

Remind them that they can change things, even when it seems impossible. Remind them that the Labor Movement isn't planning on going anywhere.

## Invest in fight to stop RTW (for less)

Most Local 655 partners should have received the first in a series of communications about President David Cook's request to raise money to fight so-called "right-to-work" (for less) during 2018.

Part of that process is a request that partners approve a temporary, one-year increase in membership costs by \$0.50 per week, specifically to defeat the anti-union measure on the November 2018 ballot.

If approved by a vote, each of the more than 10,000 partners of Local 655 would contribute a total of \$26 over the course of the year to ensure the future of your own job and Missouri's Middle Class.

"The stakes could not be higher in 2018," Cook said. "That's why I'm imploring our partners to get involved and vote to throw your hat in the ring with a donation to show

just how committed we all are to this moment in our political life."

Cook said if members vote to approve the contribution, it would produce an additional \$250,000-plus for the fight against so-called "right-to-work" (for less).

This fight is crucial, and every single dollar will count. Work-for-less backers are poised to spend tens of millions of dollars to lower wages and keep Middle-Class Missourians from having a voice at work. Each and every dollar that can be raised to defend that Middle Class is essential to the 2018 vote.

Over the coming weeks, Local 655 will be providing information about when and where partners can vote on this important issue, as well as explaining in more detail the importance in investing in the 2018 fight against so-called "right-to-work" (for less).

**AN EXCLUSIVE TWICE MONTHLY REPORT FOR**

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[www.ufcw655.org](http://www.ufcw655.org)

## Retirees celebrate holidays, elect new president

Local 655 staff were proud to host the annual 2017 retiree Christmas party for our union's many retirees who continue to be valuable participants in the Labor Movement and the Local itself. At the party the Retirees Club welcomed a new president, Bob Lindsley, who previously served both on the local's Executive Board and on the union staff.



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