



# Warehouse News

## The Teamster Warehouse News

James P. Hoffa, General President • C. Thomas Keegel, General Secretary–Treasurer • John A. Williams, Warehouse Division Director

### FIGHTING BACK

#### Teamsters Unite to Stop the War on Workers

**T**he fallout from the November election has been nothing short of disastrous for the American middle class, but it didn't catch the Teamsters Union off guard. The moment the threats of the campaign trail became a reality, the Teamsters Union sprang into action.

"This wasn't the first time we saw a slew of anti-union legislation hit states at the same time, but the sheer number of bills taking aim at the heart of working America was daunting," said Jim Hoffa, Teamsters General President. "Luckily, we were prepared. And even more important, our members, local unions and Joint Councils have worked together to show the kind of solidarity that's a hallmark of the Teamsters Union."

The sea change followed the November 2010 elections when anti-worker politicians took the helm in a number of states. Immediately after the election, the Teamsters put into place plans to deflect as many of these attacks as possible. As we've seen in Wisconsin, Ohio, Indiana, Missouri and elsewhere, there is no shortage of proposed legislation aimed directly at working Americans. Before the onslaught, the

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### Safeway SUCCESS

#### Master Agreement Offers Workers Access to Union Representation

**F**or three years, Sharon Richardson has worked as a warehouse employee in Sacramento, Calif. Two years ago, her life and the lives of her 145 co-workers changed when the nonunion facility where she was employed was bought out by Safeway.

Because Teamsters in Southern California have a master agreement with Safeway, Richardson and her co-workers had the opportunity to go union—which they did. Through an election, the Safeway workers joined Local 630, located in Los Angeles.

The decision, Richardson said, was one of the best she's ever made.

"The medical benefits are wonderful and the fact that you have someone to back you makes me feel comfortable and secure in my job," Richardson said.

It wasn't just medical benefits that changed for the new Safeway employees. Under the master agreement, wages increased from the nonunion rate of \$13 per hour to the Teamster

rate of \$23 per hour. Workers also received a Teamster pension and, for the first time, were treated with dignity and respect while at work.

"Favoritism all but disappeared. Everything is now done by seniority and I really like that. It's fair," Richardson said. "I'm proud to be in the union and I'm proud to work for Safeway."

Ignacio Jaramillo echoes those same sentiments. A Teamster for more than 30 years, Jaramillo, along with two of his co-workers, was able to transfer to the Sacramento Safeway from a location in Los Angeles. Thanks to the Teamster's master agreement, all three workers were able to keep their seniority. For Jaramillo, the situation couldn't be better.

"It's really win-win for everyone involved," Jaramillo said. "I've been union for 31 years and it's nice to know the Teamsters always have your back. They've always been there for me and their representation is something I never take for granted."

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## A Message From John Williams

### Fighting For C & S Members



On Saturday, February 5, C & S Wholesale

Grocers closed its Woodbridge, N.J. facility where Local 863 represented nearly 900 warehouse workers. As a result of the closure, A

& P/Pathmark Stores gave its transportation contract to a nonunion trucking company, resulting in the further layoffs of 233 drivers who were employed by GHI Trucking, also represented by Local 863. The warehouse work once done by Local 863 members is now being performed by other warehouses in the northeast, none of which have union representation.

This is the most difficult facility closure I have seen in 37 years of union representation work. The local union and the warehouse division worked diligently to negotiate significant concessions with C & S Wholesale Grocers to prevent this closure; there was also public money available to keep the Woodbridge Facility open. Sadly, C & S determined to close the facility anyway, based upon their economic analysis.

We represent other workers employed by C & S Wholesale Grocers and have several labor agreements with them that are up for renegotiation this year. The Warehouse Division will be working closely with these locals to successfully negotiate labor agreements that include security provisions so that what happened at the Woodbridge facility does not happen at other locations.

As this newsletter is going to press, the fight continues to gain the best possible outcomes for Local 863 members. General President Jim Hoffa is committing resources from the International's Strategic Research and Campaigns Department to assist Local 863 and other C & S locals to bring pressure on the company.

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union held numerous conference calls with locals in targeted states, prepared and held steward seminars and worked closely with state lobbyists and other activists. The International Brotherhood of Teamsters has worked closely with Joint Councils and local unions across the country on:

**Member mobilization:** The union assisted Joint Councils and locals to put together solidarity rallies.

**Messaging:** The Teamsters assisted Joint Councils and locals on drafting public statements in solidarity with Wisconsin and other workers under attack. The union has also coordinated with more than a dozen other international unions. The Teamsters offered all pertinent polling research on many of the threats facing labor, as well as polling and information on key messaging points, in order to educate people about the real reasons behind the war on workers and where it could lead.

Utilizing Facebook, Twitter and other social media have also helped the International Union get its message out, along with the stoptheworkers.com website. The International Union also employed robocalls, "take action" e-mails, and has prepared and mailed materials to Joint Councils and locals, such as the "Stop the War on Workers" signs that have been so prevalent at rallies, letters to the editor, postcards, press statements and other materials.

**Trainings:** The Teamsters Union coordinated training programs and provided training on building one-on-one communication networks at locals and work-sites to educate members on legislation pending in their state. So far, more than 1,000 Teamsters have participated in trainings in Wisconsin and Missouri. More are scheduled.

In Wisconsin alone, the International Union has held trainings, wrote letters to the editor, sent press releases, rally signs and postcards, blogged on local news websites and been in hourly communication with the locals there. Most importantly, from the

International to the Joint Council to the local union level, Teamsters have pulled together in solidarity to beat back their common enemies.

### United

For months before this anti-union blitz, the Teamsters Union conducted massive amounts of opinion research, including polling and focus groups. That information was carefully analyzed to see what the public thought about labor unions and how the union could win their support. Message after message was tested to determine the best way to change peoples' opinions about specific anti-union proposals and to change their broader perception about unions.

But that's only a fraction of the fight. The Teamsters Union, working closely with Joint Councils and local unions, has continued to build on their foundation of solidarity with rank-and-file members. People across the country are engaged and active in this fight, but union members are truly turning the tide.

Hoffa recently took Wisconsin and Ohio by storm, marching through the streets of the capital cities and pumping up crowds with energetic speeches promising to stay in the fight for American workers until it is won.

"Destroying workers' collective bargaining rights won't balance the budget and it won't create a single job," Hoffa said. "The Teamsters Union stands with workers in Wisconsin and we stand united in this battle for all of labor, all working families, across the country."

There are currently 22 right-to-work (for less) states and up to 12 states hope to pass such legislation in 2011. Meanwhile, politicians in places like Wisconsin, who are not satisfied with worker concessions on wages, pensions or health care to help fill the state budget gap, are now trying to completely strip workers of their collective bargaining rights.

Teamsters are urged to stand together to defeat these measures. For more information on what you can do, go to [www.teamster.org](http://www.teamster.org).



## A Bright Future

Now, more changes are in store for Richardson, Jaramillo and their co-workers. The initial contract that covered the 146 employees expired and a new, five-year contract was recently negotiated. The new contract, which went into effect in September 2010, guarantees the workers receive raises and employer-paid health care.

“The best part of it is the fact that the pay we get reflects the work we put in,” Jaramillo said.

In September, the Safeway employees will receive a 50-cent per hour raise in wages and a five-cent per hour raise in pension contributions. This year, the contract ensures workers will receive a 45-cent per hour raise in wages and another five-cent per hour raise in pension contributions.

Aside from the new contract, Sacramento Safeway employees will also have new—and closer—representation. In January, representation of the Sacramento facility was transferred to Local 150, located in Sacramento. The transfer gives workers better access to their business agents and their local union.

“These workers are currently going through their first steward elections and things are running very smoothly,” said Ed Rogers, Local 150 business agent. “Local 150 is excited about going forward with newly elected stewards and working to establish a good relationship with rank-and-file members and management.”

# Division Prepares For Kroger Master Negotiations

## Meetings, Surveys Get Ball Rolling

A master agreement with Kroger that covers three distribution centers and two dairies will expire in September of this year, prompting the Warehouse Division to gear up for future negotiations.

The division has established a multi-local bargaining committee, which represents the 2,000 Teamster members employed by the nation’s largest grocery retailer.

“The bargaining committee has been engaged in preparation for the re-negotiation of this agreement and its supplements,” said Teamsters Warehouse Division Director John Williams. “We are taking these negotiations seriously and want only the best for our members employed at Kroger.”

The agreement covers three distribution centers and two dairies. The distribution centers are represented by Locals 795 in Kansas, 968 in Texas and 984 in Tennessee. The dairies are represented by Locals 135 in Indiana and 337 in Michigan.

Membership surveys and meetings will be conducted in the near future; Williams encourages Teamsters employed by Kroger to take an active part in the negotiation process.

“Obviously we will work hard to negotiate the best possible contract for our Kroger employees, but it is important we hear from our members so we can accurately represent them during these upcoming negotiations,” Williams said.

Local 337 business agent and Trustee Pat Dougherty said members’ health and welfare and pension packages will be made a top priority during the upcoming negotiations.

“The members are looking forward to maintaining their current benefits and the bargaining committee is anxious to ensure these same packages and programs are secured in a new contract,” Dougherty said.

“Now is the time for Kroger to prove how much they care about and respect their employees,” said Terry Lovan, Local 984 President.

The Teamsters Warehouse Division is expected to enter into negotiations with Kroger in May, though official dates have not yet been finalized.

# A Message from General President James P. Hoffa

## The Battle Continues

Haymarket. Homestead. Minneapolis. Detroit. These are storied names in the history of the labor movement. These are places where workers risked it all for their rights, their dignity, their future. Some gave their lives for the cause.

Now, Madison. The protests against Gov. Scott Walker's attempt to destroy workers' rights have ignited a movement that is now sweeping the country like wildfire. Throughout America, people are standing shoulder to shoulder with Wisconsin, with Ohio, with Indiana and, most important, with each other.

"We cannot let this fire go out." "We cannot let this light fade." These are the words of our Teamster brothers and sisters who are holding the line for the rights and protections of working families throughout America. We must seize this moment and understand it for what it is. It is not just a rejuvenation of the labor movement, but an awakening of the entire middle class. It's an awakening to the reality that for 30 years, workers' standard of living and their economic security have been under attack by large corporations and their political stooges.

Today, for the first time in many years, workers, students and minorities are fighting the same war—together.



I was so proud to be a Teamster when I marched into the Wisconsin Statehouse behind the blue Teamster flag with several hundred of my brothers and sisters. You could hear people say to each other, "The Teamsters are here!"

DRIVE is a political committee that furthers labor-related goals, including making contributions to support candidates for local, state and federal offices. Individuals may refuse to join or contribute without fear of reprisal.



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