

# 338 News

Volume IV - 2023

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# John R. Durso

*President of Local 338*

## *Looking Ahead to a Busy Fall*

As summer winds down, we find ourselves on the brink of back-to-school season. I know many of our members are busy getting themselves and their kids ready to return to the classroom, and I wish you all luck during the upcoming school year! Local 338 has been busy supporting local back to school drives with the John Theissen Children's Foundation and the United Way of Long Island. We are proud to support these organizations, who help students succeed by providing them with new backpacks and school supplies every school year.

Along with back to school, we are also entering election season. While this is not a midterm or presidential election year, it is just as important that Local 338 members participate in elections going on in their district. There are candidates that support working people up and down the ballot, and if you are not already registered to vote, there are resources on your [Local 338 Member Portal](#), and on our [website](#) that can help you find your local elected officials, and update your voter registration. By voting and supporting candidates who align with labor values, you are helping to safeguard your rights as union members and strengthen the communities that you live in.

We are expecting a busy fall season as the cannabis industry continues to take off. Local 338's cannabis team is hard at work signing Labor Peace Agreements with license applicants

and we look forward to seeing this industry expand and bring new union jobs to workers across the state! We also have several events coming up this fall, including two membership meetings in September and December. Local 338 members are encouraged to attend if they want the most up to date information on their union—representatives will be available to answer questions on contracts, benefits, and more!

I hope the members of Local 338 had an excellent Labor Day weekend, and I look forward to seeing all of you at the Labor Day Parade on Saturday, September 9th! There is still plenty of time to [RSVP and claim your spot](#) with us for this year's parade—it's always a great day spent with our union sisters and brothers as we show our union pride!

This year has been a banner year

for working people, and we have seen workers from across the labor movement exercising their rights as union members, and winning the strong contracts they deserve. Labor Day is a celebration of working people and all that you do to serve your communities, but it is also a reminder of the responsibility that we have to future generations to continue to fight for what is right and for what workers deserve.

At a time where union approval is at its highest in decades, we are reminded of how fortunate we are that you have chosen Local 338 to be your representatives. We are proud to represent you each and every day—your work has immeasurable value to your communities, the people you serve, and to us, your union. I hope our members enjoy the rest of their summer and I look forward to seeing all of you at events this fall!



# LABOR DAY PARADE 2023

Join Your Fellow Local 338 RWDSU/UFCW Members  
at the

## Labor Day Parade!

Celebrating New York's Working Men & Women!

**Saturday, September 9, 2023**

Local 338 will be meeting at 9:45 AM at  
West 45th St. between 5th and 6th Ave in Manhattan.

There will be a bus available to members coming from Long Island.

Space is extremely limited and RSVPs are required.

Friends and Family are welcome!  
We'll kick off the Parade with food and fun!

For more information on the Parade, visit: [69p9.short.gy/LDP2023](https://69p9.short.gy/LDP2023)  
or speak to your Union or Funds Representative.

**SCAN NOW**  
TO RESERVE YOUR SPOT







# Receive Help Applying for U.S. Citizenship on National Citizenship Day

The New York City Central Labor Council has partnered with unions across New York City to help eligible permanent residents navigate the process to becoming a permanent United States citizen! This effort is part of the New Americans Initiative, a program launched by the New York City Central Labor Council to help union members across New York City become citizens of the United States.

The naturalization process can be long and confusing, and community organizations partnering with the NYC-CLC will work with applicants to help them with the application and gathering of necessary documents. Naturalization allows people to vote, apply for federal jobs, receive full legal protections and more. This entire process will lead up to an attorney review on National Citizenship Day, which is on September 16, 2023.

Interested members can begin the process by filling out [this form](#), which will be sent to our partners at the New York City Central Labor Council and community organizations who will be providing assistance with the application. If you have any questions, please reach out to Xiomara Loarte at [xloarte@nycclc.org](mailto:xloarte@nycclc.org).



Scan Here  
to Register





## Child Care Subsidies Available for Members in New York City

Local 338 members who live in the five boroughs may be eligible for a childcare subsidy offered through the New York City Central Labor Council! As many working families already know, it can be hard to find quality, affordable childcare for their children. Parents often rely on childcare to look after their children while they're at work trying to earn the money they need to support their families—they can't be busy worrying about the safety of their child.

This new Facilitated Childcare Enrollment Project issues vouchers to union members who meet certain geographical and income requirements. It covers childcare for children up to the age of 13 and parents save up to \$15,000 per year (per child) in childcare expenses.

### Here's how to apply:

1. First, members who believe they may be eligible for a child care subsidy through the New York City Central Labor Council should read [this fact sheet](#). It gives an overview of income requirements, where members must reside to be eligible, and the number of hours applicants must work if they want to apply for the subsidy.
2. Next, applicants should fill out this [pre-screening form](#) or call (212) 558-2244 and leave their name, phone number, and local union number. They will then be placed on the waitlist and someone from the Child Care Facilitated Enrollment Project will follow up with them to further determine eligibility.

If you have any questions about the childcare subsidy and eligibility requirements, please reach out to Caroline Leddy at [cleddy@local338.org](mailto:cleddy@local338.org). For additional childcare benefits, please visit your My Local 338 Member Portal.







# Joseph Fontano

Secretary - Treasurer

*Keeping the Cannabis Industry Fair for All*

Local 338 now represents workers at all 10 medical cannabis operators in New York. Earlier this year, we welcomed the workers at Columbia Care in Riverhead to the Local 338 family, marking a milestone for our union and New York's medical cannabis industry. We have been involved in the cannabis space for over 10 years and seeing the medical industry become fully unionized has been an incredibly rewarding process!

Since 2013, Local 338 has played an important part in setting the standard for jobs in the medical cannabis industry—we have ensured that workers receive fair wages, strong benefits, and have spent years working to ensure that the cannabis industry is one that supports working people. We recently ratified our second contract with Curaleaf, bringing the members at their dispensaries and grow sites wage increases, bonuses, and additional holidays. This new contract also protects their medical coverage, which is 100% paid for by the employer and covers members and their families.

As we move into adult-use cannabis, Local 338's cannabis team is hard at work signing Labor Peace Agreements with license applicants hoping to enter the industry. All applicants must sign a Labor Peace Agreement, which allow us to come and speak to workers without interference from the employer in exchange for us waiving our right to strike.

License applicants who are looking to enter New York's cannabis industry and need a Labor Peace Agreement are encouraged to reach out to Local 338's cannabis team—they will be able to answer questions and walk you through the application process. For more information, please visit [cannabislpa.com](http://cannabislpa.com).

We are anticipating a busy fall as more dispensaries open and the opportunity for unionized cannabis jobs comes to communities statewide. While adult-use cannabis ramps up, we are now beginning to organize workers in this sector of the industry. The workers at Housing Works Cannabis Co., the first licensed adult-use cannabis dispensary in New York, are already union members, and we're looking forward to welcoming more adult-use workers to our union.

It is critical we emulate what we've accomplished for our members in the medical cannabis industry, ensuring that workers entering the adult-use industry have the same high wages, strong benefits and industry standards as the ones that have been established for New York's existing cannabis workforce.

If you know a worker in the adult-use industry who wants more information on how join our union, please reach out to Local 338's Director of Cannabis Services, Saul Guerrero, at (516) 294-1338 ext. 1775.





# Local 338

## MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

### Scaling to New Heights with Kiah Whipkey

Kiah Whipkey, a 2-year member of Local 338 who works at MedMen in Syracuse, scaled down the side of the Seneca One skyscraper in Buffalo in June! Kiah, who uses they/them pronouns, participated in the event to raise money for the Arc Erie County, an organization that provides job training and other opportunities for people with developmental disabilities in Erie County, New York.

Kiah works as a Hospitality Associate at MedMen, where they check people in and educate patients on the types of cannabis products available and how to use them. Kiah's job also includes a lot of customer service and working with the pharmacy to ensure that people are getting the right form of cannabis to suit their needs. Kiah is also the Shop Steward for the Buffalo MedMen and works as a liaison between their coworkers and the union.

Kiah became involved with the fundraiser for the Arc Erie County after the organization's event coordinator, who happens to be a close friend of Kiah's, told them about it. This was the first year that the Arc Erie County held this fundraiser, and it was a huge success! In total, 44 people descended the skyscraper. If fundraisers wanted a chance to scale down the building, they had to raise a minimum of \$2,000. Kiah raised just over that amount—\$2,010—and was set to scale down the 529-foot skyscraper on June 14th!

While there was no preparation for the event, Kiah is a frequent rock climber and says that gave them an idea as to what to expect going into it. According to Kiah, the whole experience was a breeze—they were hardly nervous the day of the fundraiser!

"The scariest part was when I got to the top and they hooked me into everything and were like, 'Okay, now stand up and lean back.' That was a little scary, but once I got over the actual edge, it was great," Kiah said.

All in all, Kiah says it was a great experience that they plan to participate in again next year! If you're looking to participate or support the work of the Arc Erie County, visit: <https://www.arceriecounty.org/>.



## 338 News is YOUR News Source

*Do you have a unique hobby, a special talent or a great accomplishment that you would like to share? Maybe you love to woodwork and have a back porch to prove it. Perhaps your coworker recently won an award but is too humble to brag about it.*

*Our unique abilities are what make us different but our togetherness as a union is what makes us strong. Contact Caroline Leddy at 516-294-1338 Ext.1300 or email her at [CLeddy@local338.org](mailto:CLeddy@local338.org) to be considered as a feature in the next issue of 338 News.*





## Triangle Shirtwaist Factory Fire Memorial Scholarship

The Triangle Shirtwaist Factory Fire Memorial offers a scholarship of \$1,000 to eligible recipients every year! The organization, which was established to memorialize the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory Fire of 1911, offers the scholarship to students who is a child or dependent of someone who receives a disability benefit from the New York State Workers' Compensation Board.

Applicants must meet the following guidelines:

- Applicants must be a resident of New York State who is enrolled in an accredited program in higher education at a New York State public or private institution;
- Is in good academic standing;
- Demonstrates financial need;
- Is a child/dependent of a parent or guardian who presently receives disability benefit payments pursuant to the New York State Workers' Compensation Law for Permanent Total Disability, Permanent Partial Disability, or Death of a Spouse. Please note: the only acceptable proof for this requirement is an official Decision of the New York State Workers' Compensation Board.

Applicants can view a full list of Triangle Scholar Institutions on the [Triangle Shirtwaist Factory Fire Memorial's website](https://trianglememorial.org/scholarship/). The application is available here and applications are being accepted on a rolling basis. For more information, please visit <https://trianglememorial.org/scholarship/>.

**DON'T WAIT  
APPLY NOW!**

Click Here To Learn More  
<https://trianglememorial.org/scholarship/>







# UNION PLUS Scholarship

Local 338 members are eligible to apply for the Union Plus scholarship! Union Plus has been awarding scholarships to union members and their families for over 30 years and has given away over \$5 million in funds to further the education of students nationwide. Scholarships range in value from \$500 to \$4,000 and are one-time awards for the Fall semester. Students can re-apply each year.

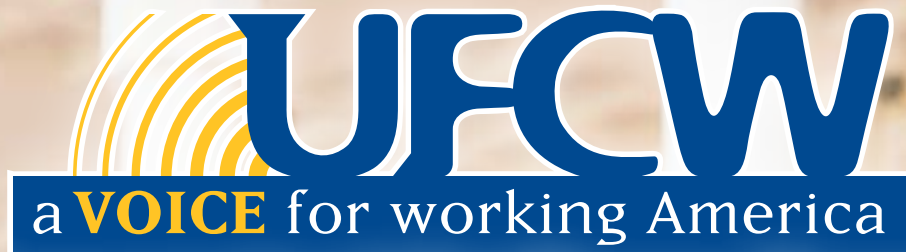
Union membership of one year or more is required to apply. The scholarship is open to both union members and their dependents, and the application deadline is January 31, 2024. To apply and view all of the scholarship guidelines, please visit: <https://www.unionplus.org/benefits/education/union-plus-scholarships>

**DEADLINE TO APPLY**  
**January 31, 2024**

Click Here To Learn More  
<https://www.unionplus.org/benefits/education/union-plus-scholarships>







# Discounted College Benefit

As a member of Local 338, you and your dependents are eligible for the UFCW's new discounted college benefit! This program replaces the previous free college program offered by the UFCW and gives members access to a wide range of programs and fields of study allowing members to pursue associate and bachelor's degrees. For the first time, members and their dependents now have the chance to pursue their master's degree, expanding your academic horizons and bringing you new opportunities to further your education.

The classes are all online, and members can pursue full time or part time studies at a discounted rate of 30 to 50% when attending colleges participating in the benefit. The new program is through [EBS Union College Benefit](#) and [EDVANCE](#), and these organizations will help match you to programs that best suit your field of interest. There are several fields of study available, including business, education, health, and more.

Here's how it works:

1. Visit the UFCW Discounted College Benefit website to learn about everything available through the program: <https://www.ufcw.org/ufcw-discount-college-program/>
2. Fill out match forms with BOTH [EBS Union College Benefit](#) and [EDVANCE](#) to see the full selection of schools and programs available to you.
3. Admissions counselors at the schools you match with will work with you to confirm you meet their admission requirements and guide with you through the paperwork.

If you have additional questions about the program, please contact Caroline Leddy at [cleddy@local338.org](mailto:cleddy@local338.org).

**Get Started  
TODAY!**

Click Here To Learn More

[www.ufcw.org/ufcw-discount-college-program/](https://www.ufcw.org/ufcw-discount-college-program/)







## Supporting Students in Need with the John Theissen Children's Foundation



On August 25th, Local 338 staff volunteered at the John Theissen Children's Foundation during their annual Back to School Drive! We spent the day sorting donated supplies and filling backpacks for the upcoming school year. The backpacks will go to students in need across Long Island, ensuring they have the tools they need to succeed in the upcoming school year! It's important to us that we give back to the communities we represent, and the John Theissen Children's Foundation has always been a great partner in that mission.

In addition to the annual "Back to School Supply Drives," the John Theissen Children's Foundation is known for their collections that take place during the holidays. We will be able to provide more information about their annual Toy, Coat and Food drives in the next issue of 338 News, so please keep an eye out for that issue in your mailbox this October!







# WALK TO END ALZHEIMER'S

ALZHEIMER'S  ASSOCIATION®

## Walk to End Alzheimer's This Fall

This Fall, join the Alzheimer's Association for their annual Walk to End Alzheimer's! The Walk to End Alzheimer's is the world's largest fundraiser for Alzheimer's care, support and research. The annual walk honors those who have suffered from the disease and helps support individuals currently living with Alzheimer's and their caregivers. Local 338 members are encouraged to attend a local walk or donate to the Alzheimer's Association, which is dedicated to finding methods of prevention, treatment, and eventually, a cure for Alzheimer's.

Members who would like to participate in one of this year's walks can register for one of the following events:

**Saturday, September 23rd, at Suffolk County Farm:** [act.alz.org/Yaphank](https://act.alz.org/Yaphank)  
**Sunday, October 1st, at Eisenhower Park Field 6/6A:** [act.alz.org/Nassau](https://act.alz.org/Nassau)  
**Sunday, October 22nd, at Belmont Lake State Park:** [act.alz.org/belmontlake](https://act.alz.org/belmontlake)

For more information, please visit: <https://act.alz.org/>







# Neil E. Gonzalvo

*Executive Vice President*

*Celebrating an Exciting Year for Working People*

It has been a year since we welcomed our members at Housing Works into our union family! The members at Housing Works provide important social services at several locations throughout New York City, and some of our members work at Housing Works Cannabis Co., the first licensed adult-use cannabis dispensary in New York. It has been a rewarding year of helping these members adjust to being in a union and educating them on their rights as members. Over the last year, we have had many Housing Works members step up to become more involved in our union, including attending Shop Steward trainings, which help prepare them for the responsibilities of a Shop Steward.

In August, after a long and challenging contract campaign, we finally ratified the inaugural contract for the workers at Pindar Vineyards, the first farm on Long Island to unionize! I am so proud of the workers at this shop for remaining united throughout the fight for a fair contract—it was not an easy fight and required demonstrations from both members and the union, including picketing and leafleting. These members stuck together with a common goal in mind: a strong contract

that brought them the rights and benefits that they are entitled to by law. In addition to union representation, these members now have paid time off, guaranteed annual wage increases, significant benefits, and a voice on the job.

I hope all of our members are having a great summer! As the season winds down and we approach September, I hope you'll join us for the Labor Day Parade on September 9th! It is always a great opportunity to show your union pride, get some Local 338 swag, and spend time with your fellow union members! There will be music, food, and a float to ride as we march up Fifth Avenue. To claim your spot, RSVP here: <https://local338.org/forms/labor-day-parade-2023>

Whether you've just joined our union or are a longtime member, I'd love to hear from you! Please call me on my cell phone: 646-261-4858 or email me at [ngonzalvo@local338.org](mailto:ngonzalvo@local338.org). We can discuss anything you want about our union, such as what improvements you'd like to see in your next contract. The first five members to call me will earn some Local 338 swag for themselves and their co-workers!



## IT PAYS TO BE UNION

Since January 2023, Local 338, through grievances and arbitrations, collected funds and returned back wages to our members in excess of

# \$ 109,409.77



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## Do you have a new phone number, email, or home address?

Let us know! It's important to keep your information updated in our systems so you're up to date on all things union.

Having the correct information in our system ensures that you get everything you're supposed to, in terms of contract negotiation updates, news about your benefit packages, scholarship opportunities, our newsletter, and more! You can update your information through the form [here](#) or by logging in to the Local 338 app!



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# HOLLYWOOD

## ON STRIKE

### Rallying to Support SAG-AFTRA and the Writers Guild of America

On July 25th, Local 338 joined the RWDSU, Teamsters, the Writers Guild of America and SAG-AFTRA to rally in support of actors and writers on strike as they fight for a fair contract. Actors have been on strike since early July, when negotiations between SAG-AFTRA and the Alliance of Motion Picture and Television Producers, which is negotiating on behalf of studios, fell apart. Writers have been on strike since early May and have held the line as they continue to fight for a fair contract with AMPTP.

The star-studded rally took over Times Square, with speeches from celebrities, including Bryan Cranston, Steve Buscemi, Christine Baranski, and SAG-AFTRA's Chief Negotiator Duncan Crabtree Ireland, who helped outline what exactly these actors are fighting for.

Actors are striking because they are fighting to modernize the payment model that was first negotiated after the actors' union struck in the 1960s. The growing popularity of streaming and the increasing number of shows that premiere directly on streaming services has made it hard for actors to make a living, because they make little to nothing on residuals for streamed shows. Studios argue that despite making millions of dollars every year, they do not have the funding to pay their actors and writers a living wage for their work.

"We are here because so much is at stake: fair pay, revenue sharing, health care, retirement funding, a fair casting process, AI protection and fair compensation," actor Steve Buscemi said, calling out the studios for not bargaining in good faith.

In addition to residuals, one of the biggest issues the union is fighting for are protections against AI using actors' likenesses in future projects without their permission. AMPTP had previously proposed scanning background actors and paying them for one day's work so they could own their likeness forever. Despite being on strike, the union is ready to get back to the bargaining table, and SAG-AFTRA's Chief Negotiator Duncan Crabtree Ireland said.

"We are ready to continue talking tomorrow and every day after until we reach a deal," he said. "The only reason we aren't there now is because those companies said that they didn't want to deal with people who were 'uncivilized.'"

Tuesday, August 22nd was a National Day of Solidarity for SAG-AFTRA and the WGA, and writers and actors picketed in solidarity from coast to coast. The show of strength sent a message to AMPTP and studios alike: unions from across the labor movement will continue to support striking workers as they continue to fight for the contract they deserve!



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# Legal Benefit

## Need a Lawyer?

*If there ever comes a time where you need legal advisement or the services of a lawyer, you may be eligible for 30 hours of free legal consultation through Local 338's Legal Benefit Plan. This plan was developed so both part-time and full-time members' legal rights and interests are protected, and is offered to both you and your spouse.*

*If eligible, you can receive a total of 30 hours of covered legal services that include:*

- Immigration and Naturalization
- Landlord-Tenant Concerns
- Counsel when buying and selling a home
- Assisting you with the drafting of a will to make sure your spouse and children are taken care of should something happen to you
- Providing guidance about your rights when facing serious financial hardship and/or bankruptcy
- Uncontested divorces
- And more!

*It's easy to inquire about your eligibility! Just log onto your "My Local 338" account ([mylocal338.org](http://mylocal338.org)) and go to the Legal Benefits page under the My Benefits tab. If eligible, you can call one of the listed participating law firms to schedule an appointment.*



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# LOCAL 338 RWDSU/UFCW **SUPER MEMBER MONDAY**

We are so proud of our members—that's why we feature so many as part of our Member Monday series! Once a month, however, we like to spotlight a member who has gone above and beyond on the job and in their union. Recently, we've featured Charlie Grolli, the Deli Manager at ACME in Yonkers. He recently celebrated his 40-year anniversary as a member of Local 338! Charlie loves baseball and has traveled the country to visit different stadiums and see the Yankees play with his nephew. When he's at a stadium where the Yankees are not playing, they cheer for both teams—his favorite stadium to visit was Minute Maid Park in Houston. Charlie met his wife, a former Local 338 member, through work and they've been married 13 years and share a dog.

We've also featured Rafael Sanchez, who works in the kitchen at Zabar's in Manhattan. He has been a member for 9 years! Rafael is the sauce chef at his location, meaning he's in charge of making all of the sauces they use, in addition to chicken soup, hollandaise and dressings. When he's not working, Rafael likes to collect Transformers and is a fan of the Boston Red Sox! He is also an avid movie goer and goes to the theater regularly. The last film he saw was The Meg 2! We'd like to feature as many members as we can, so if you think you know someone who should be our next Super member, let us know! We'd love to feature them on our social media platforms. To stay up to date on all things Local 338, follow us on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#) and [Twitter](#).



**Charlie Grolli**



**Rafael Sanchez**

## LOCAL 338 MEMBER MEETING



**Click Here to Register**

**Join Us for Our Next  
Membership Meeting on  
Wednesday,  
September 20, 2023**

**Please check your My Local 338  
account for location details and Zoom  
registration information.**



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# Congratulations

## Retiree Corner



### Larry Spinner

Larry Spinner is a 49-year member of Local 338 who works at ACME in White Plains who is retiring at the end of October! During his union career, Larry has worked at a variety of different Local 338-represented shops across New York—in addition to ACME, he's worked at Waldbaums and A&P in positions across the store. He estimates that he's worked in 15-20 different shops from Westchester all the way down to Queens.

When he first became a member in 1974, Larry worked as a grocery clerk at Waldbaums in Westchester, where he earned \$1.65 an hour! From there, he was promoted to night crew manager, a position he held until becoming third man, which is a frozen food manager with open and closing responsibilities. After working in frozen for several years, Larry's District Manager offered him the job of receiver, the job he has held for the last 40 years.

The thing Larry is looking forward to most when he retires at the end of October is getting to have some time to rest. He's still deciding on whether or not he wants to move—right now, he's considering a move to Florida or somewhere north of Westchester, but is in no rush to get out of New York just yet. One of the things keeping Larry in New York is his love for Grateful Dead cover bands. He's part of a large community of Grateful Dead fans in the Hudson Valley who will regularly go see cover bands, some of which put on performances that he says rival the original thing!

Larry loves baseball and hockey as well—he's a Rangers and Mets fan and has followed the Mets all the way to the World Series! He's in a group chat with friends he made at the first Waldbaum's he worked in, and they watch the games together. When he wasn't working, Larry volunteered as a wilderness first responder, responding to injuries and helping climbers get off mountains safely.

Best of luck in your retirement, Larry! Thank you for being a valued member for nearly 50 years!



**“Retired from my job, not from my union”**



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# Opt-In to Keep in Touch!



As your Union, it's important that we can keep you up to date on important things happening within your union. Now that we've entered the new year, it's a great time to make sure the contact information we have on file is accurate, including your mailing address, cell number and email address. To do this, you can speak to your Union or Funds/Service Representative, contact the Union Call center at 516-294-1138 ext. 1776, or by simply logging in to your [My Local 338](#) account!

Additionally, we are launching a new peer-to-peer text messaging program to make it easier than ever to get the most important information to you as quickly as possible! This information may include updates on contract negotiations, membership meeting information, or other important union news. We will be using this new program on an as-needed basis—and we will only be sharing information about upcoming events and important updates.

We are asking all members of Local 338 to fill out this form to opt-in to text communications from Local 338 RWDSU/UFCW. (Please note Standard message and data rates may apply.) You can do this in one of two ways:

- Logging in to your My Local 338 account ([mylocal338.org](https://mylocal338.org)) and selecting YES to receiving text messages in the My Profile and Settings tab under My Information
- Completing the following consent form: [https://local338.org/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=article&id=352#](https://local338.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=352#)

**We look forward to  
keeping in touch with you!**

If you have any questions, please contact your Union or Funds/Service Representative.



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**LOCAL 338**  
RWDSU/UFCW

**Stay Connected With Local 338 on**  
**😊 Social Media**

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***Our Mission: To Better The Lives Of Our Members And All Working People.***

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