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John R. Durso

President of Local 338

Pro-Union Elected Officials Get the Job Done

A little over a year ago, we watched as one of the most pro-union Presidents in history was sworn into office. Since then, our federal government has fought for working people in a way that we haven't seen in decades. President Joe Biden made a lot of promises to working people on the campaign trail in 2020, and he is intent on delivering on those promises during his time in office.

Already, we have seen job growth skyrocket—President Biden unemployment by nearly half in his first year, adding 6.6 million jobs, the biggest jump in employment numbers since Jimmy Carter was in office. More importantly, he is a President who is working to ensure every aspect of our federal government reflects America-he has appointed an incredibly diverse set of candidates to become federal judges, with 75% of appointees being women and 65% being people of color. Of the judges he's appointed already, 40 have been confirmed by the Senate.

While he's been successful in getting Americans back to work and more representation in our federal courts, he has struggled to get key legislation passed. The Senate Republican's unwillingness to cooperate or compromise with the Democrats to get legislation like the Build Back Better Act or the Protecting

the Right to Organize Act passed is disappointing, as both pieces of legislation could help thousands of Americans at a time where much of the nation is still struggling.

Even the Voting Rights Act, which passed unanimously in 2006 and would make voting easier for thousands of Americans, is unpassable in the current Senate climate. Voters elect candidates based off their policy and apparent ability to get things done—it is the responsibility of our elected officials to find a way to work together and pass legislation that supports America's working families.

This has only highlighted the importance of there being elected officials on the state level who have a proven history of delivering on their legislative promises and support for the labor movement. Local 338 and the RWDSU have endorsed Governor Kathy Hochul for re-election in this year's midterm elections. She has been supportive of Local 338 and our membership for a long time, and she is the voice working people need in State office.

Governor Hochul has been a key ally to the labor movement throughout her time in government. She has supported our farmworker unionization efforts and the recent push to reduce farmworker overtime from 60 hours to 40 hours per week. She helped establish the Office

of Cannabis Management, which will oversee New York's emerging cannabis industry, including recreational-use cannabis. Governor Hochul has also gone to bat for New Yorkers on the federal level, fighting for funding so we can make crucial improvements to our state's crumbling infrastructure.

We know she will continue to fight for working people when she is reelected, and her leadership will help New York come out of the pandemic and into a place where our local economy is one that supports working people and allows them to thrive. The Primary Election will be here before we know it—it's not too early to start making a plan to vote so you get to the polls by June 28th.

It is incredibly important that the labor movement gets out to vote this election cycle. We need the help of our membership in making sure the voices of working people are heard in New York, in every level of government, including on the County and Local level. If you have not already, I encourage you to sign up for our Political Action Committee (PAC)—it helps us fight for you and the members of your community and ensure that our elected officials do their jobs and support New York's working families. You can fill out a PAC card here: https://www.local338. org/index.php?Itemid=3545.















Coming Together to Support New York's Farmworkers

Iff Fund: Rural & Migrant Ministry X UFCW Local 338

To lead tollege

The standard tolle

Local 338 organizer Noemi Barrera has been organizing New York's farmworkers since the Farm Laborers Fair Labor Practices Act went into effect in 2020. The legislation gives farmworkers the rights and protections they were denied for over 80 years, including the right to join a union! Noemi has been in constant communication with farmworkers around the state since 2020, and later connected with a local organization on Long Island, the Rural & Migrant Ministry (RMM), to improve her relationship with the workers and better assess their needs. She also began teaching English as a Second Language classes to community members in Peconic as a way to connect with the workers and their families.

With the support of RMM and Local 338, the workers at Pindar Vineyards in Peconic joined Local 338's union family in 2021—making history as the first group of farmworkers in New York State to unionize. You can watch a video on the organizing process and the farmworkers, which was put together by the Lift Fund, by clicking above.



















We Love Our Members

This Valentine's Day, we wanted to take a moment to appreciate our members and all that you've sacrificed for your communities. As frontline heroes and staples to your communities, we want you to know your union recognizes your bravery, effort, and dedication to the health and safety of your neighbors. We love our members because our members are the greatest people in the world!

Your commitment to ensuring that your community has the necessary resources and services to survive through good times and bad, while continuing to go to work no matter what life throws at you is what makes Local 338 members different than the rest. You show up for your communities when they need you the most, and we can't thank you enough for that. We are incredibly proud to be your union and to have the chance to represent you day after day.



Diana Rodriguez | C-Town



Mariam Yusuf | Morton Williams



Juris Magararu | CuraLeaf



Juan Ayarza | PathMark



Debbie Depass | ACME Markets



Carlos de los Santos | Sunnyside



Jose De La Cruz | Gristedes



Corey Smith | MedMen



Vicente Cariño | DeCicco & Sons

From all of us at Local 338 - thank you and we hope your Valentine's Day was full of love!













Going To College?

WE CAN HELP! Local 338's Scholarship Awards Program

We are pleased to announce that this year's Local 338 Charities Inc. Scholarship Awards Program is now open to Local 338 Members and their dependents!

To be eligible, applicants must be active members or dependents of active members of the Union and have been for at least one (1) year from March 18, 2022 (which is the deadline for the short form application). Please note this scholarship program is open to students who are graduating high school seniors or are currently enrolled in college/ university or trade/vocational school.

The Scholarship Awards Committee reviews all completed applications and awards several individual scholarships, including:

• The Emanuel Laub Scholarship which awards \$2,000 a year for all four years of college in annual installments (totaling \$8,000),

 One-time Scholarship Award of \$2,000 for students attending college/university, vocational training, or other accredited institution,

• The Continuing Education Scholarship Award which is a one-time award of \$2,000 for students pursuing a continuing education program, master's degree, or doctorate degree,

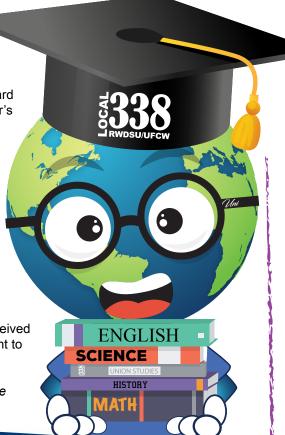
 And the Book Award Scholarship, a one-time award of \$500 to be used towards textbooks and course materials.

To receive one of the Local 338 scholarship awards, the applicant or their guardian must remain a Local 338 member in good standing until the scholarship is awarded.

> The deadline to submit the Short Form Application is March 18, 2022.

When completing the application, please supply all information accurately, including best contact information. Once the Short Form Application is received by the Scholarship Awards Committee, a Long Form Application will be sent to the applicant with additional details.

All completed Long Form Applications and supporting materials must be postmarked on April 15, 2022.





www.local338.org/scholarships

Local 338's mission is to better the lives of our members and all working people

*Elected officials of the union, staff employees, or their children are not eligible













Additional Scholarships are Available to You!

As a member of Local 338, you have access to a variety of incredible scholarship opportunities!



Two new scholarship opportunities are now available for Local 338 members and their dependents from the Suffolk County Community College Foundation. Students could be eligible for up to \$2,000 towards the cost of tuition per semester.

To apply for the scholarship for new students, visit: https://sunysuffolk.academicworks.com/opportunities/4469. The deadline to apply is March 18, 2022.

To apply for the scholarship for continuing students, visit: https://sunysuffolk.academicworks.com/opportunities/4471. The deadline to apply is May 22, 2022.



The UFCW Charity Foundation Scholarship awards scholarships of up to \$8,000 each, broken up into payments of \$2,000 for each year you are enrolled in an accredited college or university. This is an excellent opportunity, and we encourage all eligible members to apply!

The deadline to apply is May 29, 2022. You can read more and apply here: https://ufcwcharityfoundation.org/scholarship/?fbclid=lwAR1Pyd9pjCWnqu kt17pfgkmFscwxQQEkYPCbbYpUtAuvuNUWd0b9Y61I1s



Members may also be eligible to apply for the Island Federal Credit Union Scholarship! Members who are currently high school seniors, have a checking account with Island Federal, and are pursuing advanced full-time study after graduation are encouraged to apply. Awards range from \$2,500 to \$10,000!

To apply for this scholarship, visit: https://www.islandfcu.org/Island-Scholarship.aspx. The deadline to apply is April 22, 2022. Applicants must have a checking account with Island Federal Credit Union in order to be eligible for this scholarship.

For more information about scholarships and other educational opportunities available to you and your dependents, log in to your Local 338 app or My Local 338 account, or visit https://www.local338.org/already-a-member/local338-member-resources/educational-opportunities!







The Changing Tide in Worker Power

Over the last several years, we have seen a shift in worker power across the country. Working people are tired of being underpaid and underappreciated by their employers, and now they're working together to do something about it.

In 2019, our sisters and brothers at Stop & Shop in New England went on strike for 11 days to fight for a contract that gave them the pay and benefits they deserved. That was the beginning of the tide turning, and the pandemic has only further empowered workers to fight for what they hope to see in their workplaces.

Right now, working people have more power than they realize. We have seen workers across the country go on strike and exercise their right to unionize in an effort to improve working conditions and subpar wages and benefits offered by their employers. Most recently, our sisters and brothers in Colorado in UFCW Local 7 at King Soopers went on strike for over a week and ended up securing a contract that included wage increases, pension protections, and more. Last year, Kellogg's workers across the country were on strike for two months and secured a contract that boosted their pensions and wages and prevented plant shutdowns through 2026.

All of this would not have been possible without the support and solidarity from other members of the labor movement. We all have to support one another if we hope to secure strong contracts and benefits. To utilize the power workers have right now, we must come together to support working people who are currently in the fight for unionization or a new contract.

The workers at Stop & Shop in New England are at the bargaining table again this year, and because of their solidarity in 2019, they have more power to negotiate a stronger contract that provides better benefits for their families. Their engagement in their union will make it easier for these workers to secure the contract that they want.

There will always be ways to be involved in the labor movement and show solidarity with our fellow union sisters and brothers. It could be as simple as grabbing a coffee at your local unionized Starbucks to not crossing a picket line when you see workers are on strike. You can donate to strike funds or write letters of support to workers who are voting to unionize, like those in Bessemer, Alabama, who are trying to become the first unionized Amazon employees in the country. The labor movement is stronger when we show up for each other and work together.

So, the next time you're watching the news and see a story about historic unionization efforts or workers on strike, think about how you can get involved. Even the smallest contribution is a show of solidarity and form of support for workers. It shows the strength of the labor movement and that when workers come together, they can accomplish anything. If you're interested in getting involved and supporting your fellow union members, contact your union representative through your My Local 338 account.













What to Expect from New York's Cannabis Union in 2022



This year is already off to a busy start for New York's cannabis industry! The new State Office of Cannabis Management (OCM) will now oversee cannabis operations in New York, including the implementation of New York's recreational cannabis program, which was passed last year. One of the first actions taken by the new department was the expansion of the state's medicinal cannabis program.

The OCM launched a new registration and certification system, expanding access to more patients than ever. The guidelines for medicinal cannabis are not as strict, and doctors in New York can now prescribe cannabis to patients for a variety of new ailments. In addition, the state increased the amount of product that can be dispensed at a time from a 30-day supply to a 60-day supply and allowed the sale of whole flower cannabis to patients.

"The extension opens the program to a lot more people that are using it for things like anxiety and insomnia. You don't have to be terminally ill to use the plant as medicine," said Rebeca Calkins, a Patient Care Coordinator at Vireo Health in Queens. She explained that the program now permitting a 60-day supply of a prescription is also important, especially for terminally ill patients who may risk being exposed to COVID by visiting the dispensary monthly.

Local 338 is continuing our work in the cannabis industry and are currently negotiating with GTI. We would like to congratulate the workers at PharmaCann for ratifying their second contract, and offer a warm welcome to workers at Be. (Citiva), who just ratified their first contact this February!

Cassandra Reustle, a dispensary associate at Be. (Citiva) on Staten Island, is proud to be a new Local 338 member. She's worked at Be. (Citiva) for two years and says that the most important part of unionization for her is the health insurance that the workers at Be. (Citiva) will receive now that they're members of our union family. Cassandra also stressed the importance of the wage increases that are included in the new contract.



Rebeca Calkins | Vireo Health



Cassandra Reustle | Be. (Citiva)



Shaquanda Rivens, Michael Rojas & Yotam Yosef | Be. (Citiva)

"There are other dispensaries where people are doing the exact same job a half hour away from us and are getting paid up to \$5 more," she said. "That's something that this union really did, was actually give us a way to build careers in this industry." To all of the workers at Be. (Citiva): welcome to the Local 338 family!















Local 888 MININE SPOTILICATION

Francisca Aquino, 49-year Member

Francisca Aquino is a recently-retired member who joined our union family all the way back in 1972! Throughout her time in the union, Francisca worked in Gristedes supermarkets all over the city—7 in total over the course of 49 years! She began as a cashier on the opening crew for the store, with her shift starting at 6 A.M. Later, she worked as a receiver, where she was responsible for checking in vendors making deliveries to the store. Francisca also worked the front end, where she helped cashiers, did returns, and gave item voids. In 2012, she stopped working full time and came down to part time, where she went back to working as a cashier.

Francisca is extremely proud to be a Local 338 member—she regularly attended member meetings and says that having a unionized workplace was the best part of her job. Francisca told us that without the union in her workplace, there was no guarantee that she would have been given raises and appreciates that the union was there to support her.

"The union made a big difference, because the company doesn't give you a raise. If it weren't for the union [contract], we would never have gotten raises," she said. "Thanks to the union, I got my pension."

She's also very proud of her commitment to her job—she said that during her time at Gristedes, she never called out or got written up. She made sure to arrange her children's appointments around her work schedule, so she never missed a day! Francisca said "I never had a problem with the company. I never called out, I never called in sick—even my children, I would take them to the doctor early so I wouldn't miss my shift."

We hope you enjoy your hard-earned retirement, Francisca! Thank you for 49 years of dedicated membership—you may be retired from your job, but you're never retired from your union!



ARRNEWS 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 to be considered as a feature in the next issue of 338 News.

















Terry-Ann, A Caring Voice



Local 338 Member Spokesperson Terry-Ann Peters ensures the health and safety of the individuals she cares for is always a top priority. Terry-Ann arrived in the United States in 2000 from Jamaica. Her first job was working at McDonald's and later as an Assistant Manager at Dominos. She soon realized she needed a more consistent career with perks and benefits. Terry-Ann joined Local 338 in 2009 when she took the advice of her co-workers and began working at IAHD.

At IAHD, Terry-Ann serves as a Direct Support Professional and Medical Specialist, where she takes individuals to their medical appointments, makes sure medicine is taken correctly and all their medical needs are met, and prepares their meals. She is fiercely dedicated to ensuring everyone she cares for are treated equally, with the upmost respect and love. They know Terry-Ann cares for them deeply. She says, "the greatest thing about working at IAHD are learning from the individuals I care for, watching them grow and helping them along the way."

When Terry-Ann isn't working, she enjoys reading, traveling, going on dinner dates, and listening to the latest celebrity news. Her favorite foods are Jamaican oxtail and Italian seafood. She recently visited Las Vegas and Toronto and plans to travel far more often once the world opens back up for business.

Terry-Ann says working during the pandemic has proven difficult, but it has reinforced the need to be flexible and a team player while working. She believes being in a strong union like Local 338 is incredibly important in her industry. She says, "being a member of Local 338 is excellent. If there is ever an issue, I know my representative will always be on my side. I feel the support constantly." Thank you for all the work you do, Terry-Ann!















Med E. Gonzalvo

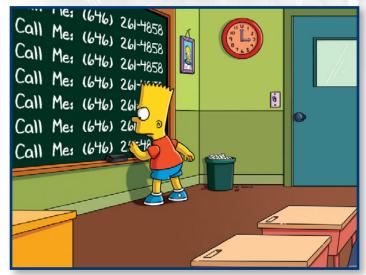
Executive Vice President

Communicating with Your Union

As your union, it is our job to represent you and to fight for the issues that matter most to you and your fellow members. That is why it is incredibly important to communicate with your Union Representative and Shop Steward. When you tell us what's going on in your workplace or what you want to see improved in our contracts it helps us negotiate better contracts. It guarantees that the next time we're at the bargaining table, we are negotiating for what's important to you and your coworkers.

If you have questions about your union contract, what it means to be in a union, or what benefits you're entitled to as a member, you can ask your Union Representative during their next store visit or your Shop Steward. One of the most important jobs of the Shop Stewards is to be there to serve as a liaison between the members and the union, and can help new members get adjusted to working in a Union shop. If there's something they aren't sure of, they'll pass the message along to your Union Representative who will be able to handle it from there.

If you missed your Union Representative's shop visit and want to get in touch with them, don't worry—it's easier than ever to contact your union! You can send your Union Representative a message through your



My Local 338 account or through the Local 338 app. Everything we do at Local 338 is to benefit working people just like you, and it's important that we have an open line of communication with our members so we know what's going on in their shops.

I would love to hear from you. You can call me on my cell phone: 646-261-4858. Let's discuss what improvements you would like to see in your next contract. The first five members to call will earn some Local 338 swag!



IT PAYS TO BE UNION

Since January 2022, Local 338, through grievances and arbitrations, collected funds and returned back wages to our members in excess of

\$119,396!















Funds Administrator

You Are Now Protected from Surprise Medical Bills





As of January 1, 2022, the No Surprises Act is in effect. Most often, patients who have private health insurance could receive surprise billing—also called balance billing when being treated at an in-network hospital or ambulatory center by a doctor who does not take their insurance. This can happen when you can't control who is involved in your care—like when you have an emergency or when you schedule a visit at an in-network facility but are unexpectedly treated by an out-of-network provider. The surprise bill is often a result of your insurance not covering the out-of-network cost for the care you received from an out-of-network provider. However, this new legislation will protect you from having to pay these bills: usually, you



will only have to pay what you'd typically pay for care received by someone who is in-network and takes your insurance.

For people who are uninsured, the No Surprises Act makes sure that patients receive a good-faith estimate on how much your care will cost before you receive it typically 3 days before the scheduled visit. If the final bill is at least \$400 more than the estimate given before the patient received treatment, they can dispute the charge. This legislation is a huge step forward for patients across New York—it makes the billing process much more transparent and understandable. Now, health care providers and facilities are required to give you an easy-to-understand notice explaining the billing protections and that you will be receiving care by an out-of-network provider.

You can read more about your protections under the No Surprises Act <u>on our website</u> and through the <u>New York State Department of Financial Services</u>.

If you believe you've been wrongly billed, you may contact federal regulators below:

Phone number for information and complaints: 1-800-985-3059. Website: https://www.cms.gov/nosurprises/consumers















Your Benefits Have Changed!



If you receive benefits through the Local 338 Health & Welfare Fund or the Local 338 Benefits Fund, you have most likely received a notice through the mail or email about a change in your benefits plan. This could include additional benefits being offered or a change in how much the Fund will pay for certain services, including optical, dental, or hearing aid services. Additionally, we now have a new vendor for our hearing aid benefit: TruHearing!

The changes to the benefits plans took effect on January 1, 2022 and will be active until the end of the year. For a full breakdown of what has changed, to view a summary of the changes and see all of the benefits offered to you, please visit your Local 338 Member Portal account or download the Local 338 app. If you don't have an account on the Local 338 Member Portal yet, registering is quick

and easy! You can sign up here: https://my.local338.org/local338mpprod.

If you have additional questions about changes to your benefits or any of the benefits being offered, please contact the Fund Office between 8:00 AM - 4:45PM at (516) 294-1338 ext. 1776.

















COVID rules and regulations seem to update with every passing season. Sometimes it appears overwhelming to stay up to date with the current safety guidelines meant to keep you and your family safe and healthy. But have no fear, Local 338 is here to make it easy to find out what you need to know.

With COVID cases declining, we've seen firsthand evidence of these new guidelines and procedures working. Some important health recommendations haven't changed much, like mask wearing. The best possible way to keep virus exposure to a minimum is by wearing a N95 or KN95 mask, however, any cloth masks covering the nose and mouth are helpful in reducing virus exposure and spread. Studies show that masks are incredibly effective at keeping us safe. You can pick up free N95 or KN95 masks at any Walgreens or CVS while supplies last, just by visiting the pharmacy--all you need to do is ask.

While science demonstrates that mask use is effective in preventing virus spread and exposure, the best possible way to reduce risk of severe infection is through vaccination. Local 338 urges all our members to get vaccinated and boosted as soon as possible. The COVID booster is a less potent version of the vaccine meant to keep your immune response strong and prepared. Short-term side effects from the COVID vaccine and booster are incredibly mild and brief while long-term side effects are nearly nonexistent.

Additionally, you should get tested before and after large gatherings for the safety of others and yourself. You can order a free set of 4 at-home COVID-19 test kits online at: https://www.covidtests.gov

For Local 338 members enrolled in the Health & Welfare Fund, Navitus will now cover up to 8 FDAapproved COVID test kits per month. No prescription is needed, and you must present your Navitus prescription insurance card at the time of purchase. If you purchase tests and wish to be reimbursed, you must fill out the Direct Member Reimbursement form and provide all required documentation to Navitus. For a full overview of limitations, guidelines, and to view the reimbursement form, please log into your My Local 338 account.















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 Domingue Alexandre! He's been a Local 338 member since 2021 and works at Vireo Health in Queens. Dominique considers himself a "microinfluencer" and runs a YouTube channel where he interviews local artists and showcases their talents. He does event photography and videography, and helps artists organize events.

We've also featured Murugan Naidu! He's been a Local 388 member for two years and works at MedMen in Lake Success. Murugan loves to play sports, especially volleyball and basketball, and has been part of a YMCA volleyball team for 2 years. We want to showcase as many members as we can—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







Dominique Alexandre

LOCAL 338 MEMBER MEETING



Join Us for Our Next Membership Meeting!

Wednesday, **June 15th, 2022**

Keep an eye on your emails and My Local 338 account for more details!













Wishing Our Members a Happy Retirement!

(Local 338's recent retirees between January 1 to February 28, 2022)

Donna Anderson Carmen Aponte

Carl Bettinger

Patricia Brosnan

Kathleen Callahan

Violet Cartagena

Angel Castro

Richard Cox

Maria Drasby

Beverly Dyer

Maureen Egan

Joan Ferraro

Naomi Gaglione

Michelle Gigliotti

Steven Grant

William Green

Thomas Hanly

Maryann Heller

Lloyd Jacobs

Maria Laboy

Arlene Lee

Elia Lopez

Luis Luna

Carlos Machicote

Jose Maldonado

Barry Margolias

Guillermo Martinez

Susan Mastroianni

Bozena Mazur

Robert Mc Cartney

Maria Montalvo

Gilroy Ottley

Saul Perez

Gaetano Pinello

Edward Polcha

Levester Ridges

Francisco Rodriguez

Denise Rulli

William Russo

Eva Sanchez

Erica Sanchez Sullivan

Francisco Santos

John Savosh

Richard Sawyer

Mamadou Seck

August Spain

Gregory Stolz

Paulino Torres

Richard Torres

Ramona Ventura

Eulalia Vizhmay

Jerry Wexelbaum

Elaine Williams

Wayne Wofford

Albert Zarif

"Retired from my job, not from my union"











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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Joseph Fontano

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