

# 338 News

Volume III - 2022

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# *John R. Durso*

*President of Local 338*

*Protect Yourself and Your Rights as Workers*

This year, there will be two Primary Elections in New York: the one that just passed on June 28th, and the upcoming Primary for State Senate and Congressional seats on August 23rd. This year, New York is required to have two Primary elections after a judge ruled that our state's Congressional and Senate district lines must be redrawn.

I cannot stress how important it is that Local 338 members vote in both Primary elections. There are a lot of important seats on the ballot this year on both the state and congressional level, and if the union movement doesn't have a strong showing at the ballot box, workers risk losing their voice on the state and federal level. When we elect representatives who support working people, your rights are better protected and less at risk of being changed or diminished.

The last month has been an extremely challenging one for our nation. The horrific mass shootings in Buffalo and Uvalde are a reminder that we need to be doing more to protect our workers and our children. There

is absolutely no reason people should have to worry about their safety or the safety of their children when they go to work or school. These were preventable tragedies, and through common sense gun legislation, we can work to prevent them from ever happening again.

Our thoughts are with the families of those lost in Buffalo and Uvalde. These tragedies are another reason we must get out and vote in the August Primary election—your vote determines whether we can achieve real change in our country. We need to be smart about who we vote for and consider their stance on the issues that matter, including common sense gun legislation. We have already taken steps to keep people safe on the state level, through the recent passage of legislation that raised the age to buy semiautomatic weapons to 21. However, there is still more we can do—and we need to elect officials who will fight for us on the federal level.

We are still collecting essential resources for the ongoing crisis in Ukraine. We're accepting everything from nonperishable

food, medical supplies, clothing, and more. You can check your My Local 338 account for a full list of what we are accepting as donations. Local 338 is working with local organizations to ensure that what is collected is sent directly to Ukrainians in need. If you would like to donate, you may drop it off at the Local 338 office or you can reach out to your Union Representative to schedule a pickup. Thank you once again for your continued generosity and giving back to the people who need it most.

**Finally, as some of you may know, we lost someone incredibly important to our Union and to me personally last month – Debbie Bollbach. Debbie was our union's Recorder and Funds Representative, and one of the first women to ever come on staff. It was an honor to work with her, and I know that our Union and the lives of our members are better because of her leadership, hard work and passion for her job. She was truly one of a kind and all of us at Local 338 are going to miss her terribly.**





# Remembering Debra Bollbach and Her Legacy at Local 338

It is with great sadness that we inform you of the passing of one of Local 338's officers, Debra Bollbach. Debra was a trailblazer in our union—she was the second woman to ever come on staff, working as a Funds/Service Representative, and was a longtime member of our union family, having first joined Local 338 as a bookkeeper at a Waldbaum's in Queens in the 1970's. Most notably, she was the first woman to ever serve as the Recording Secretary for Local 338's Executive Board, a duty she proudly fulfilled at every member meeting.

Debra was among the first women to join our staff, but she wasn't the last. Her hard work and dedication helped pave the way for the rest of the women working on staff as Union Representatives and Funds/Service Representatives. She was always a team player, providing support to her coworkers and helping them learn how to best support our membership. She was proud to see the representation and diversity among our staff blossom, something that was important to her from the start.

Debra was an incredibly important part of the team, someone who was always willing to help out, and a friendly face for members at Local 338's events. She took her job seriously, and always did everything she could to get the best possible outcome for our membership, no matter the situation. We are thinking of her family during this difficult time and send them our sincerest condolences. She will be missed.





# Making History at the AFL-CIO Convention!

The American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations (AFL-CIO) is the largest labor federation in the United States and plays an important part in helping working people across the country. They work as an umbrella organization for the labor movement—almost every union and local union are part of the AFL-CIO. Every four years, they hold a convention to elect the federation's leadership—much like we do in our own Presidential elections.

President Shuler first made history in 2021 when she became the first woman to serve as president of the AFL-CIO after the sudden passing of then-President Richard Trumka. Fred Redmond also made history during this time as he was the first Black man to serve as Secretary-Treasurer/Executive Vice President. They both made history again during this election, as this was the first time they were formally elected into office!

The convention focused on outreach to younger workers and harnessing the power they have at this very moment in history—working people are tired of being taken advantage of, and they're going to band together to fight for what they want to see in their workplace! We're excited to see what the newly-elected leadership at the AFL-CIO accomplishes over the next four years—congratulations to President Shuler and Secretary-Treasurer/Executive Vice President Redmond, we know you're going to work hard for America's working families!







# Joseph Fontano

Secretary - Treasurer

## Your Voice, Your Vote

Every time we have a national tragedy, a disaster, or something as unforeseen as a pandemic, the normal response is usually “our government has to act.” I was reminded of this most recently after the horrific incidents in Buffalo and Uvalde—events that could have been prevented if our government had passed common-sense gun control legislation. Regardless of where you stand on the issue, people must be safe at work, at school, and in other public places. It was yet another reminder that elections have consequences, and there’s a lot at risk when we don’t make the effort to get out and vote, including our rights as working people.

At Local 338, we always encourage our members to vote—it is one of the most important things you can do as a citizen of our country. However, some people may not understand just how much weight their vote actually has. By voting, you’re playing an important part in helping to shape the future of our country. By giving these candidates the support they need to get into elected office, you’re telling them they need to fight for you and what you believe in.

The next Primary Election will be on Tuesday, August 23rd. Do your research on the candidates running to represent where you live in each election, on a

local, state and federal level. [Ballotpedia](#) is a great tool to view a sample ballot for the upcoming election—all you have to do is enter your address. Making an informed decision before you get to the ballot box is extremely important! If you’re still unsure of who to vote for, we have a list of endorsed candidates in the [My Local 338 Member Portal](#) who we think are the best choice for working people. These candidates will support workers like you and fight to ensure that you and your rights are protected at work.

Help create change in our country—get out to vote this election season!





# Don't Forget to Vote in the August Primary!

This year, there will be a second Primary election on August 23, 2022 for Congressional and State Senate seats. New York was required to have two Primary Elections this year after a judge ruled that the newly-drawn Congressional and State Senate maps were to be thrown out and redrawn. Just like the June Primary, you will have a chance to vote early, vote by mail, or vote in-person on August 23rd.

Early voting for the August election will begin on Saturday, August 13th and run until Sunday, August 21st. You can find your early voting location [here](#). If you decide to request an absentee ballot and vote by mail, please be aware the rules for absentee voting have changed since the last election. If you request an absentee ballot and decide to vote in person instead, you are now required to fill out an affidavit ballot at your poll site—meaning you can't vote on a machine.

It is incredibly important to vote in both Primary Elections this year—there are a lot of important seats on the ballot. Our rights as working people could be at risk if we don't get out to support candidates who will fight for the union movement. You can view a full list of our endorsed Congressional and State Senate candidates at [MyLocal338.org](https://MyLocal338.org).





# Introducing Aidan Coffey, Union Representative and Organizer!



Aidan Coffey has joined the Local 338 family as a Union Representative and Organizer! Aidan, who originally worked on political campaigns, moved out to Washington state to work for a cannabis company called Have a Heart after working the 2016 election cycle. It was here that he got his first experience in union organizing--while working at Have a Heart, he noticed that he and his coworkers weren't being paid a living wage for the city they worked in (Seattle). That motivated them to unionize, and after a successful campaign, Aidan began working for our international union, the UFCW, helping them unionize cannabis workers across the country.

Aidan is now part of our organizing team and works as a Union Representative for our upstate cannabis workers! The most important part of his job as a Union Representative is ensuring that cannabis workers are getting the respect they deserve and that the contracts Local 338 has negotiated for them are being followed. As an organizer, his job is to educate other cannabis workers about the benefits of being in a union, including improving wages and working conditions, and to educate them on their rights in the industry as workers.

*Welcome to the team, Aidan!*

## Nikki Kateman Appointed to New York State's Cannabis Advisory Board

In June, Local 338's Political & Communications Director, Nikki Kateman, was appointed to New York State's Cannabis Advisory Board. The Board will support the state's Cannabis Control Board and Office of Cannabis Management in creating a social and economic equity plan.

The Cannabis Advisory Board was created to oversee the New York State Community Grants Reinvestment Fund, which will support communities that have been disproportionately impacted by cannabis prohibition. The Fund will provide several important programs to these communities, including job training and placement, reentry services for justice-involved New Yorkers, youth-serving programs, financial literacy services and much more! We are extremely proud of Nikki for being selected to serve on this board and look forward to seeing the positive change created by this Fund!





# LABOR DAY PARADE 2022

Join Your Fellow Local 338 RWDSU/UFCW Members at the

## Labor Day Parade!

Celebrating New York's Working Men & Women!

**Saturday, September 10, 2022**

Local 338 will be meeting at 10AM  
on East 45th St. between 5th Ave and Vanderbilt Ave.

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

For more information about the parade and to RSVP, please visit:

<https://bit.ly/338LaborDay>

To see pictures from previous years, please visit: [flickr.com/local338](https://www.flickr.com/photos/local338/)





# Local 338

## MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

### John Gassier



John Gassier is a newly retired member of Local 338! He's been part of our union family for 42 years, having worked in the dairy department at Waldbaums before it was taken over by Stop & Shop in 2015. John is proud to be a member of our union—he is an active member, too! In 2017, he became a Shop Steward and helped keep his fellow members in the loop with everything happening in their union.

"I thought it was very interesting, you got to see the inner workings of the union," he said.

John knew it was time to retire when his 30-mile commute—one he had been doing for 25 years—became too much to drive every day. However, he says he feels "very lucky" to have spent such a long time in one store, and misses the camaraderie among his coworkers and vendors. "Having spent that much time in my store, my coworkers really felt like a family," he said.

The first month of retirement has been a busy one—John has been hard at work fixing things around the house and will be embarking on a road trip throughout New York State with his wife. They're planning on visiting several sites across the state, including the Finger Lakes. John says this is how he wants to spend his retirement: going on road trips across the country.

"There's a lot of this country that I haven't seen, and I want to visit as much of it as I can," he said.

Congratulations on your retirement, John, and we hope you enjoy your road trips!

## 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.*







# Neil E. Gonzalvo

*Executive Vice President*

*Keeping Your Information Up to Date is Easy!*

Have you recently moved, changed your phone number, or get a new email address? If you answered “yes,” make sure you let us know! If you updated your information with your employer, there’s no guarantee that your union has your new information on file. It’s important that we have it—Local 338 sends out a lot of information through the mail or by email, and you could be missing important updates about what’s happening with your union. Having a current phone number on file is just as important—if your union representative needs to get in contact with you, this is the first number they’ll call.

Updating your information is easy, and there are a few ways to do it! You can let your union representative know the next time they’re visiting your store and they’ll work with you to enter all your updated information in our system. If you would prefer to update it yourself, you can fill out [this form](#), log into

the [Local 338 Member Portal](#), or log into the Local 338 app, which is available in the App Store or Google Play store. This is something that’s simple and takes less than a minute to complete—I encourage you to take a moment today to ensure that we have the best contact information for you!

Thank you for doing your part and telling us about change of addresses, phone numbers or emails. Keep an eye on your mailbox or inbox for important updates regarding the Labor Day Parade, member meetings, Election Day, information about your benefit packages and more! Speaking of getting in contact with our members—I’d love to hear from you! You can 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!



## 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

**\$ 132,703.73**







# MY BENEFITS

With  
**Earl Mathurin**  
Funds Administrator



## *Primary Care Providers are an Important Part of Managing Your Health*

*Earl Mathurin*

The last two years have forced a lot of us to change a lot of our routines—including the habits we keep to take care of ourselves. One of the most important things you can do to manage your health is going to your primary care provider for your yearly physical. A primary care provider is a doctor that can treat common medical issues, like the flu or other sudden ailments that require medical attention. Your primary care provider also takes a proactive approach to help you stay healthy and can catch illnesses before they get worse.

Having a relationship with a primary care provider is important because they can also provide referrals to specialists. Your primary care provider can recommend some doctors within your network, and you can book an appointment with a specialist knowing that they are likely to take your insurance and come recommended by a doctor who has a full understanding of your medical history.

If you don't have a primary care provider, don't worry—if you're a member of Local 338 enrolled in the Health & Welfare Fund, you have access to two great benefits that make it easy to see a doctor.

### Teladoc



Teladoc makes seeing a doctor more accessible than ever! By downloading the app, you can speak to an ER or urgent care doctor from your smartphone, tablet, or computer! Teladoc's physicians are available to you 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, and there's little to no wait. The doctor you meet with can diagnose your condition, and if

necessary, prescribe medication to your local pharmacy. For more information on how to download the app and book an appointment, visit [mylocal338.org](https://mylocal338.org).

### Included Health



Included Health (formerly known as Grand Rounds) offers members personal guidance and support to ensure you see the best doctors available to you! They work with you to find and book medical appointments with high quality, in-network providers, obtaining second opinions from world-leading experts, understanding a diagnosis,

conditions and/or treatment plan. For more information, visit: <https://includedhealth.com/microsite/local338/>





# FREE College

## for Local 338 Members and Families

As part of our commitment to making your life better, Local 338 RWDSU/UFCW members and their families can now earn an accredited degree online through the UFCW's Free College Program!

### Earn Your Associate Degree with Eastern Gateway Community College (EGCC)

This program is open to all UFCW members and their families! There is no cost for tuition, books, or other fees, and the program is completely online, allowing you to take classes when it is most convenient for you. EGCC credits are transferrable and students will have access to advising and tutoring throughout their program. There are several programs to choose from and include Social Work, Accounting, Data Analytics, Labor Studies, and more!

### Earn Your Bachelor's Degree Online with Central State University

Members who have earned an Associate Degree or have at least 60 credits with a minimum 2.2 GPA are eligible to pursue their Bachelor's Degree with Central State University! Members can pursue degrees in Teacher Education, Business Administration, Criminal Justice, or Interdisciplinary Studies at zero cost to them.

For more information on these programs and eligibility requirements, please visit

**[ufcw.org/college](http://ufcw.org/college)**



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# Reducing Your Student Loan Debt With This Great Benefit



We have partnered with the National Student Debt Forgiveness Center (NSDFC) to provide Local 338 members and their eligible spouses and dependents access to exclusive webinars that will teach you more about student loan forgiveness. Their certified loan counselors will examine your current student loan and help you find the right repayment program(s).

If you, your spouse, or your eligible dependents have federal student loan debt, this program is for you—learn how you can reduce your monthly student loan payments and potentially qualify to get some of your student loan debt forgiven.

We hope you'll take advantage of this benefit by attending  
the next webinar on

**Wednesday, July 20, 2022 at 7:00 PM!**

**REGISTER HERE**

Student loan debt is a burden—the National Student Debt Forgiveness Center is here to help! If you have Federal Student Loans, attend a webinar and see how they can help get you much lower payments and loan forgiveness.

For more information and for additional webinar dates, please check your My Local 338 account.

*\*Please note that this benefit is available to Local 338 members (and eligible spouses and dependents) who participate in the Local 338 Benefits Fund and is offered through the Legal Services Plan.*





# *Wishing Our Members A Happy Retirement!*

(Local 338's recent retirees between May 1 to June 30, 2022)

*James Arnold*

*Linda Barbour*

*Maria Belen*

*Maureen Belfiore*

*Patricia Boss*

*Steve Broy*

*Janise Bunton*

*George Burke*

*Gaetano Calisto*

*Ana Carcamo*

*Vita Cassanelli*

*Jose Cayetano*

*William Christodolou*

*Deborah Clusan*

*Donald Cyr*

*Jerry De Cola*

*Marisol De Los Santos*

*Iris Espinal*

*Robert Fogel*

*Eloise Gary*

*Tyrone Gerald*

*Kathleen Graziosi*

*Maritza Hernandez*

*John Kenny*

*John Katsoudas*

*Ernesto Laucella*

*Doreen Lee*

*Randall Levy*

*Maria Maida*

*James Martin*

*Zorka Mavra*

*Mirzah Mohammed*

*Jose Morales*

*Aleyda Moreno*

*Edna Norman*

*Gwendolyn Nunery Parker*

*Kenneth Ohliger*

*Theresa Phelan*

*Dalton Pinnock*

*Gerard Puglisi*

*Timothy Randolph*

*Mohammed Riaz*

*Edward Rivera*

*David Robinson*

*Sally Salvo*

*Diane Scheulen*

*Marie Seidel*

*Sinhara Silva*

*William Skelly*

*Judy Strickland*

*Regina Tondi*

*Donald Townsend*

*Jose Villalobos*

*Manuel Viruet*

## *"Retired from my job, not from my union"*



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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 David Hester, a Tier 3 grower for Curaleaf in Ravena. He's been a Local 338 member since 2020, and loves to play sports, particularly basketball and baseball—having played baseball for years as a pitcher, he now plays in a weekly league and helps kids practice! David is also very passionate about his job and the healing properties of cannabis.

We've also featured Jessica Medrano, the Bakery Manager at Stop & Shop on Staten Island and a member of our union family for 19 years! She is an avid bowler and regularly participates in a bowling league with her sister. Jessica first started decorating cakes when she was 7 and was taught by her dad, who was also a bakery manager! Along with keeping the Stop and Shop bakery well-stocked, Jessica now uses her skills to make dessert platters with her aunt for family events. 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](#).



**David Hester**



**Jessica Medoro**

## LOCAL 338 MEMBER MEETING



Join Us In-Person at the  
Local 338 Office or Virtually on  
**Wednesday,  
September 14th, 2022**

For more information, log in to your My Local 338 Account and to join the meeting by Zoom visit:  
[https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN\\_Qw0nk3WkR4Wn\\_GrKJv2yQ](https://us02web.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_Qw0nk3WkR4Wn_GrKJv2yQ)



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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!





# LOCAL 338

RWDSU/UFCW

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



338 NEWS, the official publication of Local 338 RWDSU/UFCW,  
is published at the Office of Local 338 at 1505 Kellum Place, Mineola, NY 11501

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

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