

Reflections

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Workers United Upstate New York

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Starbucks Workers United:
Fighting for Their First Union
in Starbucks History

What's Inside

Page 04 Chatman
Scholarship Update

Page 05 Updates from the
Sidney Hillman Health Center

Page 07 Staff Changes at the
Health Center



Hickey Freeman Adds 100
Jobs and Looks Towards
New Contracts



New Benefits From The
Sidney Hillman Health
Center



Starbucks

An historic organizing campaign is happening at Workers United Upstate New York. The workers at Starbucks stores in Buffalo, New York are preparing to vote for what may be the first unionized store in Starbucks history. There is no doubt that the rest of the country, especially large chain stores like Starbucks, are watching intently for the outcome of the elections. There are over 8000 corporate owned SB stores in the world and not one is unionized.

Earlier this month, Starbucks Workers United (SBWU) organizers won a notable victory when the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) ruled in favor of the workers' petitions which would allow them to vote one store at a time. This ruling was especially important at a time when Starbucks Corporate Office has been swamping the workers with anti-union rhetoric.

When the SBWU announced their organizing committee, the Buffalo stores were inundated by corporate staff including Rossann Williams, President of North America Operations. The workers said that they felt watched and intimidated. Workers were pulled in for one-on-one talks and mandatory meetings.

"Starbucks says they are not anti-union, and I'm just simply saying, prove it," Gary Bonadonna, Manager of Workers United Upstate New York, said. "You can't be on the side of workers if you're preventing them from having a seat at the table."

In fact, the coffee giant hired arguably the most notorious union-busting law firm in the world, Littler Mendelson to represent the company.

As our organizing committee went public, we asked Starbucks CEO, Kevin Johnson, to sign our Fair Election Principles. The goal of the Non-interference Principles is to enable workers to choose whether to unionize without fear of reprisal and to provide a level playing field. The company has refused to sign these.



Photos from the Starbucks Workers United press conference on Page 10.



Continued on Page 10

Hickey Freeman



In October 2022, Hickey Freeman announced that 100 jobs would be added to their roster after the company secured new work. Additionally, there will be a chance for the company to vie for new government contracts to make personal protective gear for the national stockpile.

Senator Charles Schumer made the announcement at the historic Hickey Freeman building.

"Companies like Hickey Freeman stepped up to help their communities in the darkest hour, and their contributions to beating back the tide of COVID will never be forgotten. I will work to see that the Make PPE In America Act becomes law as part of the bipartisan infrastructure bill and secures the domestic PPE supply chain by investing in American manufacturers like Hickey Freeman."

During the early days of the COVID Pandemic, Hickey Freeman distinguished itself by stepping forward to produce protective gear for health care workers. They worked in conjunction with another of our union companies, Xerox Corp.,

to produce face masks and protective coverings for Rochester General Hospital. For that work, Hickey Freeman operated at a loss. Additionally, business dropped by more than 75% since the beginning of the pandemic.

The new contracts would be a boon to not only local workers but to the national security and health workers too.

Update: On November 10, 2021, The "Make PPE in America Act" was passed and Hickey Freeman will be eligible for these federal contracts. The bill is now on its way to the President's desk to be signed into law.

■



Chatman Scholarship: How to Apply for 2022-2023

Applications for the Abraham D. Chatman Scholarship program will be available on January 1 with a deadline of June 15. The scholarship program is open to union members' eligible children. The minimum number of qualifying applications was not met for 2021-2022 and no scholarships were awarded.

The program can provide up to 3 renewable scholarships worth \$2,000 for each year of college to members' children. For example, an incoming Freshman winner would receive \$8,000 (\$2,000 per year for four years) and an incoming sophomore would receive \$6,000 (\$2,000 per year for the remaining 3 years).

The actual number of awards is based on the number of applicants, IRS regulations, and decisions of the Rochester Area Community Foundation, which administers the program.

Comptroller Joseph Conway, who serves as the Board's liaison to the Community Foundation, explains how the number of scholarships awarded is determined:

"The IRS requires the Community Foundation to adhere to a percentage test regarding how many scholarships can be given out. Only 25% of *eligible* applicants considered by the selection committee can be chosen."

"Although in many years we have had many applications, some individuals were disqualified due to incomplete applications — missing transcripts, references, Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA), and/or financial aid letters."

Conway emphasized, "The Community Foundation requires transcripts, which are needed to verify GPA eligibility. It is essential that applicants complete the applications and fulfill the *entire requirement* — the more qualified applications received, the more scholarships provided. Given the positive changes made to the scholarship in 2018 in increasing the financial support for recipients, we would be saddened to disqualify a student for missing documentation."

He notes that applicants must also provide an essay about the role of unions in the applicant's family or on the role of unions today. "Those essays are a crucial part in determining the winners," Conway said. Conway works with the Community Foundation through a blind review of the essays providing feedback that is combined with the Community Foundation scholarship committee's overall scores for determining recipients.

The Community Foundation has a full description of the Abraham D. Chatman Scholarship and an application on their website.

Both can be found at:
<https://www.racf.org/Chatman> or
<https://www.racf.org/scholarship-summary/abraham-d-chatman-scholarship>.

Union members' children may also be eligible to apply for a variety of other scholarships offered by the Community Foundation also found on their website, www.racf.org/Scholarships.

Continued on Page 10

Vaccinations Available Including COVID

We are truly lucky to live in a time with many excellent vaccines, and Sidney Hillman members are also fortunate to have such an easy and comprehensive vaccine provider at SHHC Pharmacy. While we continue to provide Covid vaccination and boosters, there are many other vaccines available to you. Please check with our pharmacy staff and your doctor to see if you are up to date. Other vaccines we offer at our Pharmacy are:

- Influenza vaccine, annual. You need a new vaccine every fall.
- Pneumonia vaccines. There are two pneumonia vaccines that all older adults and some younger adults should get. One is called the pneumonia polysaccharide vaccine or Pneumovax. There is a newer one called the pneumonia conjugate vaccine, or Prevnar. Check with your doctor to see whether you need one or both vaccines.
- Shingles vaccine- In the past few years a much-improved shingles vaccine became available, called Shingrix. Even if you received the older vaccine (Zostavax) years ago, you should get this new one as well.

It's easy and convenient to get vaccinated at the SHHC Pharmacy. Please talk with our pharmacy team to see what you are eligible for and when you can get them.



Dr. Joseph Nicholas
Medical Director,
Sidney Hillman Health Center

From the Medical Director

I'm quite sure everyone reading this is tired of hearing about Covid - I am too! While we have made great progress, this pandemic is not over yet and there are several things I want everyone to know to continue to stay safe.

1. The vaccinations available to us are safe and effective. Vaccinated people are much less likely to get infected, and in the case that they do, they are much less likely to get seriously ill. Please make sure to consider a booster dose if you are eligible and encourage your loved ones to get vaccinated to help protect you and your family.
2. While the vaccine is amazing, it doesn't work for everyone. Older people, people with health conditions, or people who take medication that affects their immune system may not develop good protection from the vaccine. The best protection for this population means continuing to mask and have others mask around them, especially when cases are high in the community.

Continued on Page 10



Sarah Costanza Retires After 33 Years of Service

The SHHC said a very bittersweet goodbye to Health Services manager Sarah Costanza this summer. Sarah was a wonderful manager, and a long time SHHC employee for over 33 years!

Sarah worked tirelessly in many capacities at SHHC, including bookkeeper and manager. She even delayed her retirement to help shepherd the department through the uncertainty of Covid. Her warmth, judgement and generosity will be greatly missed, but she can finally give her dogs the attention they deserve!

Upcoming Union Hall Closures

- Friday, December 31
- Monday, January 17
- Friday, April 15
- Friday, May 27
- Monday, May 30
- Monday, June 20
- Friday, July 1
- Monday, July 4

Exciting Improvements in the SHHC Optical Department

The Sidney Hillman Optical and Medical Services Departments continue to push forward to provide members with the best eye-care possible. Several new improvements have been put in place:

- 1. The optical department has completed a beautiful renovation, allowing for more member comfort and easier displays, all while maximizing pandemic safety.
- 2. Expanded inventory of designer frames including Tom Ford and Maui Jim
- 3. New annual lens benefit for all members with a prescription change. You can get new lenses annually if your prescription has changed.
- 4. Progressive No-Line lenses now part of the standard lens benefit.
- 5. Full medical coverage for all medical eye care, not just the annual eye exam.

We know how important expert eye care and optical services are to your quality of life, and we are really excited to continue to deliver great choice along with additional eye care coverage.



Newly rennovated optical department.



Tiffany Rodriquez, Our New Health Sevrices Manager

Please welcome Tiffany Rodriquez, who joined Sidney Hillman Health Center to lead the health services department after Sarah Costanza retired this summer. Health Services manager is such an important position in the Health Center, as Tiffany oversees and coordinates the complicated world of medical billing and payments, among many other things. Tiffany came to SHHC after successfully managing several dental offices in Western NY.

In order for us to get to know here better, we asked Tiffany to introduce herself and to share some personal information.

Prior to working at SHHC, I was an office manager for a dental practice in Canandaigua for over 10 years. I was involved in the daily operations to ensure the practice ran smoothly, patients were happy, and overall the practice was profitable. It was not uncommon for you to encounter upset patients on daily basis (no one ever wants a root canal or extraction!) so it quite different coming into work and interacting with positive people!

I have been married to my husband Jose for 9 years. We live out in Walworth, and love to be outdoors, hiking, biking, boating, trying new restaurants and spending time with our families. We enjoy doing projects, and sometimes have more than one going on at a time.

Her intelligence, vision and positive energy has already had a wonderful impact on our members and our staff, and we are excited for the future.

Get Boosted Now!

All Americans adults are now recommended to get a booster dose of Covid- vaccine, just like in many other countries fighting Covid surges. Both the antibody levels and the protection against Covid infection decrease several months after the initial vaccine series (2 doses. of Pfizer, 2 doses of Moderna, or 1 dose of Johnson and Johnson), and the booster “reminds” your immune system to stay ready. This is really important in the winter, when we gather indoors more often. Well vaccinated people are much less likely to get infected or spread Covid to others.

If you had a Pfizer or Moderna vaccine, you should get a booster:

- If you second vaccine dose was > 6 months ago
- You are 18+ years of age

If you had a Johnson & Johnson (Janssen) vaccine you should get a booster

- If your first vaccine dose was > 2 months ago
- You are 18+ years of age

No matter what your initial vaccine was, your booster can be either Pfizer, Moderna or Johnson & Johnson.

While we are still learning how long the vaccine protection lasts, we know for sure that vaccination is the best way to help keep yourself healthy. It protects you from severe Covid illness, as well as reduces your risk of transmission to others. Get a booster to protect yourself and your loved ones.

Please check with your doctor if you have any questions about when and where to go and with your state and local health departments to keep up to date with the latest recommendations.



WRO Profile: John Heckle

John Heckle has been the Treasurer of the WRO since 1999. After 22 years of continuous service, Heckle stepped down this year. During those years, Heckle has been handling the financial affairs of the organization including social events and trips far and wide. He remembers trips to places such as Las Vegas and Cape Cod. Some trips were so popular that they required two buses. “We miss those trips,” say John and his wife Catherine.

The current President of the WRO, Ed Laughlin, has high praise for Heckle:

“John Heckle has been my mentor during my time as the President of the WRO. His knowledge has helped all past presidents with events such as the Christmas party and other social events. John has approximately 60 years of service with Workers United, RRJB. He recently celebrated his 90th birthday in October. On behalf of all the members of the WRO we thank you for your service. For your hard work and dedication, we consider you an honorary President of the WRO! Thank you for your leadership, John!”

Heckle joined the union as a machinist for the Xerox Corporation and retired as an electrician. Heckle believes that the union has been a hugely positive presence in his life. “I think that the union supports all people – anyone who is a member. I would like to tell young people today that they should join a union and find out for themselves how it can help and protect them.”

Heckle and his wife, Catherine, are proud to live in the same house that they built 50 years ago and where they raised five children. They say they do everything together. They have five children, eight grandchildren, and five great-grandchildren with one on the way.

A bonus profile can be found on our website. Please visit:

<https://workersunitedupstate.org/wro>

Ed Laughlin, WRO President, has written a wonderful article profiling Bill Marshall, current WRO Vice President.



Throughout the campaign, multiple stores were closed for what the company claimed to be for remodeling and for training staff. Workers see it as another tactic in derailing their organizing efforts. On November 6, all Buffalo stores were shut down for a “Special Event” for their partners. It turned out to be their former Starbucks CEO and US Presidential candidate, Howard Shultz.

SBWU reported that, “Earlier tonight, Howard Schultz came to Buffalo days before our union election. Gianna Reeve, a Buffalo barista, wanted to ask why Starbucks hasn’t signed the fair election principles. Schultz fled the room as she started to speak.”

At the mandatory meetings, Williams referred to the union as a third-party, although some might argue that Littler Mendelson might better earn that title. In a statement from SBWU, workers clarified the role of the union, “We are Starbucks partners and we are the union! Starbucks has repeatedly referred to the union as a “third party.” Yet, this couldn’t be further from the truth. We are worker run and worker led, and we are the backbone of Starbucks. We want to make Starbucks both a better company and a better place to work by forming a union together!”

At the time of this article’s writing, three more Starbucks locations in Buffalo have joined the organizing movement and petitioned the NLRB for elections at their stores.

From the Medical Director
Continued from page 5

3. Be careful indoors this winter, particularly in large gatherings. There is still significant Covid in our community and many people who are not vaccinated. Wear masks, especially in high-risk areas where you are in close contact with other unmasked people.
4. If you are sick, stay home. It’s impossible to tell the difference between a cold, sinus infection, or allergies without doing Covid testing. The tests aren’t perfect, particularly early on in the disease. If you are sick with a new cold, fever, or cough- be sure to mask up and stay home from work or other gatherings.

If all goes well, I think we are in for a much better winter than last year. We hope that the improved vaccination rates and the increased numbers of eligible children getting vaccinated will result in falling levels of Covid. As a country we controlled smallpox, polio and measles through vaccination and good personal decisions. We can do the same with Covid.

PLEASE NOTE: Applications must be filed *no later than June 15*. The Community Foundation must verify who is eligible, process blind essays for review.

The Chatman program is open to Rochester Regional Joint Board, Workers United members’ children who:

- Are graduating from high school and continuing on to college or who are currently enrolled as a freshman, sophomore, or Junior in a 2- or 4-year institution
- Are seeking a degree at a 2 or 4-year institution during the 2022-2023 school year
- Have a 2.5 college grade point average or a C+ or higher average if still in high school
- Financial need will also be taken into consideration

Chatman served as Joint Board manager for 55 years. During that long tenure, he organized thousands of Rochester area workers, including those at Hickey-Freeman and Xerox, and created the Sidney Hillman Health Center.

Local Meetings

Business Agent Notes and Local Meeting Information

Ross Clark Local 14A

Executive Board meetings start at 6PM. Regular meetings start at 7PM. January, 11, March 8, May 10, July 12, September 13*, November 8 (*2022 Nominations – Local Officers & Board Members)

Kris Mulvaney

All meetings held at the Plant@ 4:30 PM

Local 4, Tuesdays
September 6, 2022

Local 49, CP Flexible Packaging, Mondays
September 12, 2022, November 7, 2022

Local 1067T, Habasit, Saturdays
September 17, 2022, November 19, 2022

Local 1095T, FIBRIX LLC., Saturdays
June 4, 2022, October 8, 2022, December 10, 2022

Local 1126T, Energy King, Tuesdays
June 7, 2022, October 18, 2022, December 6, 2022

Vanessa Patterson

Meetings at **976t** Ultre Pet to be announced during this time as well as **1714T** Sealy to be announced and posted at plant.

Emily Vick

Locals 471, 1712, 2468, and **368** the meetings will be posted in the shops.

Rob Vitello

All local meetings will be determined by committees and posted at the facilities. They are for the following: **Local 191, Local 2541, Local 2607, Local 168-39, Local 231**, and **Local 51**.

Erin Young

Notifications will be posted at the shops and via social media for **Locals 195, 194** and **234**.

Local 701T: membership meetings held the 2nd Wednesday every other month beginning on January 12th 2022. Local 1827: Gen. Meetings will be posted in June and December

Local 221: Meetings posted on the board for the 1st. Wednesday every other month.

POLICY ON THE FEE OBJECTIONS

The Rochester Regional Joint Board, in conformance with the requirements of law, has adopted a policy and procedure with respect to dues and fees paid by non-members covered by collective bargaining agreements containing a union security clause. Under this policy, an employee who is subject to a union security clause and who, therefore, as a condition of employment, must pay regular and periodic dues or fees to our Union may perfect an objection with regard to the amount of dues or fees which he or she is being required to pay. An existing Rochester Regional Joint Board member who chooses to object to the payment of full periodic dues uniformly required as a condition of acquiring or retaining membership in our Union must resign from membership. A newly-represented employee who chooses to object to the full payment of dues may refuse to join the Union and will be treated as a fee payer. To the extent permitted by law, non-members cannot participate in Union elections as a voter or a candidate, attend Union meetings, serve as delegates to the Joint Board or as a delegate to an affiliated international union convention, or participate in the process by which collective bargaining agreements are reached and ratified.

A non-member may file an objection with regard to the amount of dues or fees he or she is required to pay in writing during the first thirty (30) days following the employee becoming subject to the union security clause and/or during the month of July of any year with the Secretary-Treasurer of the Rochester Regional Joint Board, 750 East Ave., Rochester, N.Y., 14607. If you file a timely notice, your Joint Board dues will be reduced by a percentage equal to the percentage of Joint Board expenditures for political activities and other expenses not related to the Joint Board carrying out its collective bargaining duties. For purposes of this calculation, the Joint Board assumes that its percentage of non-collective bargaining expenses is the same as the percentage of non-collective bargaining expenses of the Service Employees International Association.

The Rochester Regional Joint Board expects very few employees it represents will avail themselves of this option since it firmly believes that those it represents recognize the importance of all expenditures which the Union incurs and the many ways in which these expenditures benefit our members. ■

Reflections

Rochester Regional Joint Board
750 East Avenue
Rochester, NY 14607

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State Zip Code

Contact Information

Union Office Rochester:

750 East Ave
Rochester, NY 14607
9 a.m.-5p.m.
(585) 473-3280
1-800-383-3797 (This number can
be used to reach all union offices)

Financial, 8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m.
(585) 473-3280

Hillman Center:

Health Services
8 a.m.-4:30 p.m.
(585) 473-2000
(585) 473-3309 (Fax)

Optical
Weekdays, 9 a.m.-5 p.m.
by appointment (noontime appointments accepted)
Saturdays, by appointment only,
8 a.m.-noon
(585) 271-1911
(585) 442-7216 (Fax)

Pharmacy
Weekdays, 9 a.m.-5 p.m.
Saturdays, 8 a.m.-noon
(585) 473-2555
(585) 242-7580 (Fax)

Albany District:

2124 Doubleday Avenue
Ballston Spa 12020
8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m.
(Except Friday to 4 p.m.)
(518) 363-0800
(800) 383-3797
(518) 363-0804 (Fax)

AliCare/Amalgamated & 24hrs nurses
helpline. Members regarding ALL health
insurance inquiries:
#1-888-771-9075
(or number on the back of their ID card)

Customer Center Hours:
M-TH: 8am – 8pm
F: 8am – 6pm & Saturday: 9am-2pm

AliCare member portal for members to
register: <https://connect.alicare.com>

Delta Dental member portal for members to
register: www.deltadentalins.com

CVS member portal for members to
register: <https://caremark.com>

Anthem Blue Cross Blue Shield (BCBS)
member portal for members to register:
www.bcbs.com OR 1-800-810 BLUE (2583)

National Retirement Fund:
M-F: 7am – 4:30pm
PENSION/RETIREMENT BENEFITS:
1-914-367-5800

Buffalo District:

Buffalo District Office
4429 Union Road,
Cheektowaga, 14225
(Note: The space is in the office building
located at the rear of 4427 Union Road.)
8 a.m.-4 p.m.
(716) 932-7701
(800) 383-3797
(716) 932-7702 (Fax)

Local 4 – BUFFALO
Local 4 business rep, servicing,
negotiations, union membership
and dues:
(716) 932-7701
(800) 383-3797
(716) 932-7702 (Fax)

Local 4 Insurance
Monday–Friday, 8 a.m.–9 p.m.;
Saturday, 9 a.m.–2 p.m.
(800) 383-3797
(914) 367-4108 (Fax)

Local 4 Pension Funds
Monday–Friday, 8:30 a.m. - 4:45 p.m.
(800) 383-3797



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<https://www.facebook.com/workersunitedupstate>