

***Building community relationships***

Getting local unions to pool their strengths is also a part of growing the union, UFCW Canada National President Wayne Hanley told the International Convention in Montreal. The recent successes of multi-local union collaborative organizing efforts, with support from the National Office, have won new members and bargaining units in unexpected locations. Community-based organizing is another facet of future growth, he added.

“That is why local unions, as a growth strategy, have created programs to build community relationships. Ontario Locals 175 & 633 have a diversity initiative called the *Community Action Network*, or CAN for short. CAN creates opportunities for rank-and-file activists and union representatives to build relationships with dozens of multi-ethnic community groups. It is a proven program. Our goal is to spread the template across Canada for local unions to use and adjust to suit what is going on in their own neighbourhoods,” President Hanley says.

A growing union must be built on a solid foundation.

“In order to maintain our current density, we must provide our members new services that are better than those offered by any other union, and more than what we offer today. That means giving members added value and skills they can access anytime and anyplace,” President Hanley said in announcing UFCW Canada’s *WebCampus* program.

“*UFCW Canada WebCampus* is a state-of-the-art, college-accredited, online education and training program that will enable UFCW Canada members and their families to empower themselves with new skills,” National President Hanley announced. “It will be made available at no cost to our members or their families.”

The new initiatives, along with the proven programs, along with the good news that kicked off the convention, made it a proud and exciting week for UFCW Canada.

“Canada is a country full of promise and membership in UFCW Canada can help deliver it,” says President Hanley.

“We have done it in the past, we are doing it today, and I know we will continue to do it in the future – based on the UFCW unity program led by President Hansen and the fundamental commitment to workers’ rights that all our local unions share.”