



THE INTAKE

Your Contributions to Justice at Work
Issue 14, Volume 1 (Fall 2023)

Got Conflict?

Your support allowed our movement to practice being strategic under pressure

JUSTICE AT
WORK

This summer we held our 6th annual Summer Institute for Organizers “Making the Most of Conflict: Dispute Resolution for Workplace Justice.” Staff and worker leaders from nine organizations came together to train with Justice at Work staff along with special guests Antonio Castro of Metropolitan Mediation Services and Gail Packer of the Community Dispute Resolution Center. Through role-play, worker center staff and leaders were able to practice mediation and negotiation skills tied to internal organization issues in addition to workplace disputes.

“ I enjoyed seeing people from other organizations excited and dedicated to developing conflict resolution skills. Everyone has a story to tell and consideration and respect for others is crucial in a work environment. ”

-Rosária Pina,
Brockton Workers
Alliance Member

Roofers' Demands Provide Immigration Relief

You provided a pathway to citizenship

Renato left the Brazilian countryside for the United States at the age of 18 when he realized that without money to pay for an education he had no future in his home country. Since then, for the past fifteen years, he has worked in roofing. Along with a group of his former co-workers referred to us by the Brazilian Worker Center, Renato spoke up and asserted his rights. The details of their case are subject to a confidentiality agreement, but suffice it to say that thanks to your support, Renato and others were able to apply for U visas, which is a type of immigration relief available for the victims of crime who are willing to speak out. Renato now has a work permit and is on his way to becoming a citizen.



“What happened to us shouldn't ever happen. We all need to fight for our rights, and I hope others in my situation will seek support to demand justice. Getting my work permit is a life changer. I finally feel safe. I can start planning long-term: improving my job, entering the union, hopefully buying a house. I can't wait to see my mother. I'm the youngest, and it's been over 15 years.”

-Renato Nonato, Brazilian Worker Center Member (above alongside BWC Executive Director Lenita Reason)

Temp Workers Continue Their Demands

You ensure advocates find opportunities to better support them

In July, Justice at Work and our private firm allies Fair Work, PC, filed a class action lawsuit on behalf of temp workers supported by the Massachusetts Coalition for Occupational Safety and Health against a Billerica-based fulfillment center that abruptly fired over 100 workers over the holidays. The complaint states that the company illegally failed to warn the workers and then paid their wages late when it suddenly ended the contract with its temp agency, leaving the jointly employed workers out in the cold.

Lucia, one of the worker leaders, describes how “the months following the firings were full of anxiety, sadness, and stress as we did not know how we would provide for our families, pay rent, and pay bills. MassCOSH listened to us and taught us about our rights; and because of their support, we have stood up for ourselves.”

As we represent Lucia and her coworkers moving forward in Boston, on the Southcoast we recently won final approval of the class action settlement described in our last newsletter (see photo outside court to the right). This summer, you allowed us to host outreach meetings in Providence that enabled over 130 workers to sign up to access their stolen wages in the case. These temp industry cases provide insight into the key issues that a coalition of MA-based organizations plan to tackle as we look to reform the law to keep up with other states. For example, Illinois recently passed a law that requires temp agencies to pay their employees the same as direct hires after 90 days of employment.



“The use of temp staffing has exploded, mostly as a way of suppressing wages and denying rights. We look forward to Massachusetts following other states to be a leader in providing protections for this most exploited group of workers.”

*Sheila Maddali,
Executive Director of NLAN*

Workers Win Nearly \$1 Million

In October 2021 a group of 20+ workers from a tire recycling company in New Bedford decided to confront their employer. They were fed up from years of discriminatory abuse, including the company's refusal to bargain in good faith with the union they had chosen. Specifically, they wanted the employer to take action against a supervisor who humiliated and inappropriately touched them. Rather than listen to the workers, the employer grabbed his crotch, swore at them, fired them on the spot and even called the police, resulting in several worker leaders being handcuffed. Supported by the Centro Comunitario de Trabajadores (CCT) and Justice at Work, the workers participated in an NLRB investigation prompted by a charge filed by the union. Thanks to you, Justice at Work represented the workers before the NLRB and filed discrimination complaints with the appropriate authorities, ensuring their full story was told. Earlier this year, the NLRB settled the matter for nearly 1 million dollars, including back-pay and preferential hiring through the recycling company's staffing agency. Additionally, the NLRB issued a statement of interest that has allowed the workers to apply for deferred action. With your support, the workers are getting paid and accessing important relief, while the employer has been held accountable and still faces pending discrimination investigations.



“We will never forget this victory. We suffered while we worked, but we stood together and together we received justice. We learned that when workers stand together they can achieve lasting change”

CCT Member Selvin Lopez (back row, 3rd to left)

Welcome Maudeline and Alex!

Your support builds our team

Join us in welcoming Community and Legal Partnerships Coordinator Maudeline Auguste and Director of Strategic Partnerships Alex Galimberti. Maudeline came to the United States in 2019 with her family from Haiti.

She loves doing community based work, and, since arriving to Brockton, she has worked for the Brockton Workers Alliance and the Plymouth Family Resource Center. Originally from Brazil, Alex has served for seven years as Senior Advocacy & Collaborations Advisor at Oxfam America. Prior to that he was the founder of the Boston chapter for the Restaurant Opportunities Center – United, after working for years in food service. With their addition, you are helping us follow through on our commitment to better support organizing by workers who identify as Black and to deepen the impact we achieve through partnering with organizations of workers in low-paying jobs.



NEW
UPDATE





DANCE FOR JUSTICE XII WITH TAMBO!

Friday November 10th

6pm-11pm

Dante's

41 Hampshire St

Cambridge, MA 02139

Featuring live music,
dance classes, and performances!

Purchase your ticket at
[https://jatwork.org/12th-annual-dance-
for-justice/](https://jatwork.org/12th-annual-dance-for-justice/)

or use the enclosed RSVP card.

Contact info@jatwork.org or
(857) 242-1165 for more info

JUSTICE AT
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