

PEACE NEWSLETTER



CNY VOICES FOR PEACE & SOCIAL JUSTICE • #854 JANUARY/FEBRUARY 2017 • PEACECOUNCIL.NET • FREE

**“THE NEXT 1,459
DAYS OF THE TRUMP
ADMINISTRATION
WILL BE 1,459 DAYS
OF RESISTANCE:
RESISTANCE ON THE
GROUND, RESISTANCE
IN THE CLASSROOMS,
RESISTANCE ON THE
JOB, RESISTANCE
IN OUR ART AND IN
OUR MUSIC.”**

**ANGELA DAVIS,
JANUARY 21, 2017,
WOMEN'S MARCH,
WASHINGTON D.C.**

**SPECIAL ISSUE:
BUILDING RESISTANCE**

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About This Issue

This Peace Newsletter was a joint project of the Syracuse Peace Council, The Workers' Center of CNY and the CNY Solidarity Coalition. SPC and The Workers' Center were the initiating organizations for the Coalition; it was a powerful experience to work together on this PNL.

This PNL is greatly enhanced by a special eight page section created by The Workers' Center. Low wage workers and immigrants have always been at risk, are even more so now, and need everyone's support. The section is in both Spanish and English. The English half is upside down for the PNL reader since The Workers' Center will use the section as a stand alone in their organizing—depending on one's language of choice, it can be flipped so that either Spanish or English will be the first page.

Many people worked hard on this PNL. *Special thanks to:*

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SPC Statement of purpose

The Syracuse Peace Council (SPC), founded in 1936, is an antiwar/social justice organization. We are community-based, autonomous and funded by the contributions of our supporters.

SPC educates, agitates and organizes for a world where war, violence and exploitation in any form will no longer exist. We challenge the existing unjust power relationships among nations, among people and between ourselves and the environment. As members, we work to replace inequality, hierarchy, domination and powerlessness with mutual respect, personal empowerment, cooperation and a sense of community.

Present social injustices cannot be understood in isolation from each other nor can they be overcome without recognizing their economic and militaristic roots. SPC stresses a strategy that makes these connections clear. We initiate and support activities that help build this sense of community and help tear down the walls of oppression. A fundamental basis for peace and justice is an economic system that places human need above monetary profit. We establish relationships among people based on cooperation rather than competition or the threat of destruction.

Our political values and personal lives shape and reflect each other. In both we are committed to nonviolent means of conflict resolution and to a process of decision-making that responds to the needs of us all.

OUR COMMUNITY SPEAKS

This special issue of the *Peace Newsletter* is devoted to the concerns, fears, anger and confusion of our community in the wake of Trump's election. It is also devoted to the creativity, courage, hope, energy and action that have burst forth in resistance to the Trump/Pence/Ryan agenda.

The Peace Council offered this issue of the *PNL* to The CNY Solidarity Coalition to use. Many people participated in its visioning, writing and production. And yet, it was hard to finish—many of the writers and editors are also organizers, and at this moment, being in the streets and building relationships took precedence over putting words on paper.

A community is composed of many communities, interrelated but distinct. And within those communities are beautifully complex individuals who cannot be defined by a single attribute or put into a box. Some have shared their thoughts and feelings in these pages, and we are all stirred to action. **This is our Coalition's pledge:**

We, the people of Syracuse and Central New York, are proud inheritors of the local struggle for abolition and suffrage and survivors of decades of economic deprivation.

We hereby pledge:

To tear down the walls that divide and impoverish us;

To oppose any effort to register, detain, deport, or attack our neighbors;

To provide refuge for those in danger or need;

To protect our water, air, and land as our kin.

Please join us (see back cover).

BEING A MUSLIM IN THE US TODAY

When I originally came to the US, people were so friendly and no one really segregated people based on their religion or where they chose to worship. Then 9/11 happened and everything changed.

Close friends and colleagues started aggressively and negatively asking questions about Islam, and what kind of Muslim I was. I found out that our government tried to entrap young Muslim men, and being a mother of three Muslim boys, that made me very uncomfortable. The fact is, after 9/11, Muslims didn't change. We are still the same Americans, trying to make this country

Native nations are standing strong in the face of new challenges.
Photo: Kimberley McCoy



Over 1,000 people gathered at the Syracuse airport on January 19th to support immigrants and refugees after the new travel ban was signed. Photo: Jason Randall

a better place, one we can proudly raise our children in, and one we can proudly call home.

Last year we started to see a rise in fear, and fueling that flame almost single-handedly pushed our current president into office. Now instead of being able to freely help our American society, we are the ones who live in fear.

We live in fear because our President, one of the most powerful people in the world, also happens to be one of the most vocal people against Muslims. Some women don't want to go out alone. Others take their head scarves off in fear of being abused on the street.

For me, I remember when an old man once told me that God put us on this earth to do a job. So let us do it to the best of our ability, and God will take care of the rest.

Magda Bayoumi is a member of SPC and is also on the boards of the Rabma Clinic and InterFaith Works.

A PERILOUS OUTLOOK FOR 2017

We, indigenous peoples, already have a tenuous relationship with the federal government. We Haudenosaunee do not participate in it, rather stand steadfast to treaties negotiated by those who came before us. We know our teachings differ from the rhetoric we've witnessed. We

continued on next page

continue our relationship with the world around us in spirit and song. We know about the other ship—and we've traveled the path with many, many presidents before this one. But, we've never known of one so blatantly rude and egotistical. The new President's agenda is alarming and insulting for minority cultures. He has directed the Army Corps of Engineers to restart the building of the Dakota Access Pipeline, without the promised environmental study and without dialogue with Native people. The Lakota people of Standing Rock who have spiritual bonds to the land and water are put once again in harm's way with a narrowing path toward a peaceful resolution. The land grab era of the United States hasn't ended. Native nations, primarily on western "reservations", are likely to face additional challenges as the new administration sets its sights on fossil fuels on reservation lands.

Ever since first contact, the struggle has been about our places to live and grow, to harvest and restore. Our vision hasn't changed. We will keep our fires burning. We will keep our way of life intact as best we can during these tumultuous times. We must protect our inherent right to live as was intended all across this land. And, we will continue to give thanksgivings for the daily gifts that help us all to live.

Wendy Gonyea is a member of the Onondaga Nation (parts of this piece were originally printed in Onondageh Ongwawenna, the newsletter of the Onondaga Nation).

HR 676: NY HEALTH ACT IS ANTIDOTE TO PRICE'S FOR-PROFIT INSURANCE PLAN

The Republican Congressional majority has healthcare in its crosshairs and has begun to try to dismantle the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act (the "ACA" or "Obamacare"). If they succeed, an estimated 2.7 million New Yorkers would lose healthcare coverage and about 124,000 New Yorkers would lose help in paying for their health coverage (my health insurance premiums would increase from \$195 to almost \$500 monthly!).

It's critical to both resist any attempts to repeal the ACA and to insist that the only acceptable replacement is a system that guarantees healthcare for all, such as Representative John Conyers' Expanded and Improved Medicare for All Bill, HR 676. In New York, we can pass the New York Health Act to guarantee healthcare to all New Yorkers regardless of income, wealth, place of employment or immigration status. No more copays, premiums, or deductibles. Rather, New York Health would be paid for by progressive taxes on income and would

provide all medically necessary care, including vision, dental, and mental health.

According to a 2009 Harvard study, for every one million people without health insurance, there will be 1000 unnecessary deaths each year. If the ACA is repealed, over four million New Yorkers will be without health insurance, meaning 4,000 preventable deaths each year. The NYS legislature can take action to protect New Yorkers and guarantee healthcare for all. New York Health has passed the NYS Assembly in 2015 and 2016. Please contact your State Senator and urge them to sponsor New York Health this session. Learn more at nyhcampaign.org.

Ursula Rozum is an organizer with The Campaign for NY Health.

DEFENDING ACADEMIC DISSENT

As a higher education worker, I'm very concerned about the threat the Trump administration poses to academic freedom. The recent gag order placed on EPA and USDA scientists is indicative of how the administration intends to handle empirical knowledge that undercuts their right-wing, capitalist ideology. In this climate, it's especially important to defend the rights of higher education workers who teach anti-racist, anti-imperialist, feminist, trans-positive, and pro-worker curriculum.

At the same time, we have to be vigilant in recognizing and calling out the way phrases like "academic freedom" and "free speech" are mobilized to conceal actual power relations. This is apparent in the repression—under the false pretense that they undermine academic freedom—of faculty who support the BDS movement and Palestinian liberation. The smear campaign against Drexel University Professor George Ciccarello-Maher for his satirical tweet mocking white supremacists highlights the contradiction in the ruling class's mobilization of "free speech"—which gets invoked to justify speech that reinforces oppression while speech that challenges the status quo is silenced.

Racist, misogynist, ableist, and anti-immigrant speech should not be permitted to circulate "freely," as it continuously has through Trump's Twitter feed and media outlets.

Speech—in whatever form it takes—has material effects. Defending the academic freedom of education workers and students who name and fight oppression and exploitation is critical for building resistance to the Trump administration and the right-wing, ruling class interests they serve.

Laura Jaffe is a Graduate Worker, Educator, and Activist.



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MEET THE SWAMP

By Thomas M. Keck

President Donald Trump's Cabinet has garnered significant attention for being the richest in US history. Wilbur Ross (Secretary of Commerce nominee), Steven Mnuchin (Treasury), and Betsy DeVos (Education) are actual billionaires, and Rex Tillerson (State), Tom Price (Health & Human Services), and Andrew Puzder (Labor) are also members of the super-rich 1%. What is perhaps even more striking, however, is how many members of the Cabinet have built their careers on hostility toward the central missions of the federal agencies they have now been appointed to lead.

Indeed, the human imagination can scarcely conjure a clearer collection of foxes guarding henhouses.

Department of Justice (DOJ)

Mission: Ensuring "the fair and impartial administration of justice to all Americans" (from DOJ website).

Confirmed: **Jeff Sessions** is a senator from Alabama deemed by the Senate to be too racist to be a federal judge in 1986. He has consistently voted against the rights of LGBTQ people and women.

History: Sessions has a long-standing record of hostility to racial equality and the voting rights of African Americans. President Ronald Reagan nominated Sessions to be a federal District Judge in Alabama. The Republican-controlled Senate Judiciary Committee refused to confirm this appointment because Sessions had repeatedly made racist comments while serving as a federal prosecutor and had initiated groundless investigations of "voter fraud" to discourage the

registration and mobilization of African American voters. If he was too racist to be a federal judge in 1986, he is too racist to be Attorney General today. In the US Senate, Sessions has voted in favor of a federal constitutional amendment to ban same-sex marriage and supported proposed legislation that would have cracked down on Sanctuary Cities for undocumented immigrants. He also voted against the Matthew Shepard and James Byrd, Jr. Hate Crimes Prevention Act, the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act, and the 2013 reauthorization of the Violence Against Women Act; he has also opposed efforts to restore and update the 1965 Voting Rights Act. No credible case can be made that Sessions will ensure the fair and impartial administration of justice to all Americans.

Department of Health & Human Services (HHS)

Mission: Protecting the "health, safety, and wellbeing of America," with significant regulatory responsibility over health insurance, medical research, food and drug regulation, and nutrition and education support.

Confirmed: **Tom Price**, an Alabama Representative, has consistently fought the Affordable Care Act (ACA), sought to defund

Planned Parenthood, and supported the privatization of Medicare.

Conflicts of Interest: Price has substantial investments in pharmaceutical and medical-device companies, as revealed in his financial disclosure forms filed with the Senate. In Congress, he has supported the legislative changes these companies have lobbied for.

History: Price has repeatedly voted in favor of repealing the ACA, which would strip 20 million Americans of their health insurance. He has also repeatedly introduced legislation to ban federal funding for Planned Parenthood, which would restrict women's access to affordable birth control, increase health care costs for women, and jeopardize programs that have successfully decreased rates of STDs, HIV and teen pregnancies. Price has supported the privatization of Medicare, a top priority of Republican Speaker of the House Paul Ryan, which would force seniors to purchase health insurance from private providers.

Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)

Mission: "To protect human health and the environment."

Nominee: **Scott Pruitt**, Oklahoma Attorney General, is a climate change denier who built his career on suing the EPA! He is more concerned with the profits of coal, oil, and gas companies than our nation's environment or the health of its people.

Conflicts of Interest: Scott Pruitt has extensive financial ties to the fossil fuel industry.

History: Pruitt is a leading climate change denier, rejecting the overwhelming scientific consensus that current trends will produce massive sea level rises, increased flooding, super-storms, severe droughts, wildfires, crop failures and mass extinctions. He even rejects the view of US national security experts that climate disruption will force millions of people to migrate from low-lying coastal

Trump's nominee for Attorney General, Jeff Sessions, was deemed by the Senate to be too racist to serve as a federal judge in 1986. Image: Jessica Maxwell

Tom teaches political science at Syracuse University's Maxwell School.

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Meet the Swamp, from previous page

areas, with the potential to destabilize democratic governments worldwide.

As Oklahoma Attorney General, Pruitt repeatedly sued the EPA to block enforcement of regulations regarding power plant emissions, protection of wilderness areas and preservation of clean water. Most importantly, he has repeatedly challenged and will now seek to eliminate President Obama's Clean Power Plan, which is the largest US effort to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in history. These lawsuits demonstrate that Pruitt is more concerned with protecting the profits of coal, oil, and gas companies than he is with safeguarding our nation's environment or people's health. His refusal to accept the reality of climate change threatens the well-being of everyone on the planet. No credible case can be made that he will use his authority to protect human health and the environment.

Department of Education



Mission: "To promote student achievement and preparation for global competitiveness by fostering educational excellence and ensuring equal access."

Confirmed: **Betsy DeVos** is a billionaire anti-public school and anti-union activist who has devoted her wealth to dismantling public education in Michigan. She does not support enforcement of federal law protecting children with disabilities.

History: DeVos has proposed transferring billions of dollars in federal funding from public to for-profit,

forward since President Carter created a Cabinet-level Department of Education. In nominating DeVos, Trump makes it loud and clear that his education policy will focus on privatizing, defunding, and destroying public education in America." DeVos has no meaningful experience working in or with public schools, which educate 90% of students nationwide.

At her confirmation hearings in January, she confessed ignorance of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), the most important federal law protecting the rights of students with disabilities. She also said that it should be up to states to decide whether guns are allowed in schools, citing potential grizzly bear attacks in support of this position. The Department has the third largest budget (after Defense and Health and Human Services), and its leader has the power to affect the lives of millions of children, families, and teachers across the country. No credible case can be made that DeVos is qualified to promote student achievement and ensure equal access to a quality education.

Department of Energy



Mission: "Ensure America's security and prosperity by addressing its energy, environmental and nuclear challenges through transformative science and technology solutions."

Nominee: **Rick Perry** couldn't remember the existence of this department, said he wants to abolish it, and didn't know its primary function.

When he ran for president in 2011-12, Rick Perry proposed to abolish the Departments of Commerce, Education, and Energy, though he was famously unable to remember the name of the third agency... now he has been appointed to run it.

private, and religious schools. She has long pursued an anti-union agenda, blaming hard-working teachers for the shortcomings of our educational system. Randi Weingarten, President of the American Federation of Teachers, describes DeVos as "the most ideological, anti-public education nominee put

History: When he ran for president in 2011-12, Rick Perry proposed to abolish the Departments of Commerce, Education, and Energy, though he was famously unable to remember the name of the third agency in a November 2011 televised debate. No matter, now he has been appointed to run it rather than

abolish it. When Trump offered him the job in December, Perry happily accepted, reportedly because he was eager to serve as a global ambassador for US oil and gas interests. Only after accepting the nomination did he discover that the agency's principal function is maintaining and safeguarding the country's nuclear weapons stockpile.

The last two Secretaries of Energy, Ernest J. Moniz and Steven Chu, were award-winning scholars with PhDs in physics. Presumably, Perry will figure things out as he goes. Like Pruitt, Perry is a well-known climate change denier. No credible case can be made that Perry is qualified to safeguard the country's nuclear weapons.

Secretary of the Treasury



Confirmed: "Foreclosure King" **Steven Mnuchin** got rich at Goldman Sachs by foreclosing on homes after the 2008 financial crisis, including the infamous case of a 90-year-old woman whose mortgage payments were short by 27 cents. In his financial disclosure forms filed with the Senate, he failed to disclose nearly \$100 million in assets and omitted mention of his role as director of an investment fund located in the Cayman Islands.

Secretary of the State

Confirmed: **Rex Tillerson** is chairperson and CEO of ExxonMobil and yet another climate change denier. Like Trump himself, he has had extensive business dealings in Vladimir Putin's Russia.

Secretary of Commerce

Nominee: **Wilbur Ross** built his wealth as chairperson of a private equity firm that regularly buys, dismantles and re-sells failing businesses, consequences for the workers and creditors be damned.

Editors Note: confirmation information is as of February 20. Due to space constraints the PNL was able to profile only some denizens of "The Swamp." 🐊

A RADICAL EXPANSION OF SANCTUARY: STEPS IN DEFIANCE OF TRUMP'S EXECUTIVE ORDER

By Marisa Franco

A moment of stinging clarity is now upon us. President Donald Trump signed an executive order to set in motion the process of building a wall along the US-Mexico border, stripping federal funding from sanctuary cities, increasing the size of US Border Patrol forces and increasing deportations. In response, we must plunge even more urgently into the hard local work of building sanctuary.

A year ago, my team at #Not1More Deportation and I drafted this reflection on the nature of sanctuary:

We are from a lineage of our community who made a way when there was no way, who provided political and spiritual cover so the rest of us could come ahead.... When we seek to enter movement, and we converge, these spaces, they are sacred, because they are a form of sanctuary. Sanctuary is a spiritual stance. Sanctuary says: oppression is trying to fill our lives with fear and blood and daily numbing horror. But not in here. Not in my home. Not in my bed. Not in my movement. Sanctuary makes a ring of fire around our people. Sanctuary grants us a taste of reprieve and protection so they can gather strength to go out there again and fight. Sanctuary is our duty. A movement space must hold sanctuary.

These words have new meaning to me today. And in a political moment when pillars of justice appear to be falling all around us, sanctuary also has new meaning for millions of other people throughout the US. Those of us who cannot vote, those of us who have been marginalized—we were not asked if we wanted to live in such times as this, in a place such as this in which we now find ourselves. But we must decide what to do with the moment now upon us.

As we move into Trump's first 100 days, the attacks on our advances, on our bodies and on our values come from all angles. This moment can be disorienting and overwhelming. I know it is hard to get up and fight. I know many of us are not sure what comes next, or how. But, deep down, we know what is happening.

We can find clarity because there are not many messages in the actions of Trump: there is only one, core to his character, from which all other messages flow. That message is that in order to "make America great again," some of us will have to die; some of us will have to be pushed out; and some of us will have to be silent, malleable and complacent.

Marisa is an organizer and co-founder of Mijente, a new political home for Latinx & Chicax organizing. This article was originally published on truth-out.org.



Activists outside the July 2016 Republican National Convention.
Photo: Marisa Franco

I demand of myself, as I implore all of us, to see how this moment requires something different from us. Though we are creatures of habit, we must question our conditioned tendencies of alliance, of political line and of tactics.

If Trump seeks to strip us of sanctuary, then we must defy him. And our defiance must not simply recreate what existed, but instead expand, reimagine and breathe life into its possibilities.

Creating sanctuary in our local communities will require focusing on places and people many of us tend not to notice. There is no silver-bullet plan. There is no national government or national movement leader who will come save us. To jumpstart

THE LOCAL RESISTANCE

Mayor Miner has bravely declared Syracuse a sanctuary city in defiance of President Trump's Executive Orders. But there are still many practical steps to make that vision a reality. We anticipate that the numerous immigration raids that have occurred recently will not stop any time soon, so we must be prepared to vigorously defend the rights of immigrants in Syracuse and in CNY. The newly formed CNY Solidarity Coalition has a group dedicated to such an effort. On February 20, led by the Workers' Center of CNY, we held our first sanctuary training.

If you would like to join our effort, please contact Aly Wane at aly@peacecouncil.net or the CNY Solidarity Coalition at facebook.com/cnysolidarity.

Let's live up to CNY's proud abolitionist history!

continued on next page

A Radical Expansion of Sanctuary, from previous page

ourselves, we have to start where we are, where we live, and we have to get out of our bubbles.

We are fighting for the widest idea of sanctuary, and that vision is under profound attack. Through collective action, however, we can create our own walls—walls of protection—that Trump cannot conquer.

Here are some first steps I see:

1. Sanctuary is now about shared political fate.

Where once we may have seen “them” as coming for “others,” now we see that the destiny of our planet, our towns and our lives is caught up in each other’s fates.

2. Sanctuary is not single-issue.

There is no time for our ideas of sanctuaries to be exclusive. Sanctuaries must include not only undocumented people, but also non-immigrant Muslims, LGBTQ people, Black and Indigenous folks and political dissidents. Trump cares nothing for our survival, and he is willing to persecute us. He has put people in power who are obsessed with our torture, subjugation and oppression. What else do we need to know? Not one of our movements or organizations is strong enough alone: Without shared force we will be decimated.

3. Sanctuary can be created through policy and community.

Trumpism is seeping into all of the branches of the federal government, but we still *can* and *should* demand that local elected officials stand with us in defiance. We *can* still engage our mayors and city council representatives. And if they don’t respond, we *should* run for office and replace them. However, we can’t stop there. We can build zones of sanctuary that engage hospitals, schools, business owners, faith communities and neighborhoods.

4. Sanctuary cannot be based in paternalism or a white savior mentality.

This will be very hard work, and it will require everyone involved to realize that we are not in this to “save” anyone. This work requires us to deeply listen, build relationships and confront power. Charity models will not make it structurally possible to win.

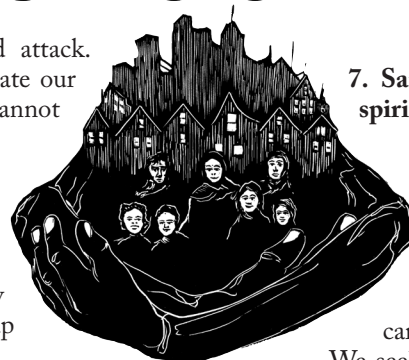
5. Sanctuary is no longer about four walls.

The Trump administration will not respect spaces designated for sanctuary. That is why we must contest for power and fight like hell in open water: we must not relinquish public space as not ours. We must fight to re-align our counties and towns with our needs.

6. Sanctuary will require local organizing to converge nationally.

If Trump spreads a dangerous poison at the federal level, let’s spread the antidote person-to-person. We can get ourselves in motion on the local level. To do so, we have to break our isolation by remembering that we are not a small minority opposing this agenda—we are the majority. It’s time to go out and find our people locally. Go out and move an organizing strategy to

SANCTUARY



CITIES

NOW

change the local conversation. Spend less time on social media and more time in our neighborhoods. In moments of opportunity, we can converge nationally to show power.

7. Sanctuary will require clarity, courage and spiritual fortitude.

We must prepare ourselves for the times ahead. We will be under attack. The more clarity we have about what we are doing and why, the more we can build our numbers and build our courage. Part of that involves resisting isolation and taking care of each other and ourselves in community.

We seek the wisdom and skills of cultural workers and healers to provide us with tools and guidance.

As this new president seeks to take us apart piece by piece, we must resist. We must remember that even though threats to immigrants have already escalated just in the first few days of the Trump regime, our communities also faced similar problems

just one month ago. Those of us who already have practice in creating sanctuary and protection for community can make available the very practical tools we’ve already created on how others may do so as well.

As we resist, and as we build sanctuary anew, we must resolve to expand it to more people in more places and in new ways. ♻️



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Centro de Trabajadores de Nueva York Central



LUCHANDO POR TODOS LOS TRABAJADORES

Por Minnie Bruce Pratt

En el centro de la ciudad de Syracuse, un bulloso y apasionado grupo se reunió el 19 de Noviembre en Columbus Circle, tocando cencerros mientras gritaban “¡No! al robo de salario.” Eran un grupo de miembros y voluntarios del Centro de Trabajadores de Nueva York Central, quienes durante el horario de almuerzo presentaron una obra educativa en la que le demostraban a trabajadores como parar a jefes que tratan de robarles el salario.

Entre las presentadoras estaba Andrea, una Latinx que testificó como ella y su esposa, Lourdes, trabajaron por horas haciendo pesados trabajos manuales para un subcontratista de la cadena nacional de restaurantes Cheesecake Factory. Cuando este se desapareció sin pagarles su sueldo, los miembros y aliados del Centro de Trabajadores iniciaron una protesta y enfrentaron a los gerentes de la compañía, la cual les pagó sus salarios al día siguiente. El dinero que les debían era una pequeña pero significativa porción de los \$50 billones en sueldos que les roban a los trabajadores anualmente.

Yo estuve presente en esa enérgica demostración en Noviembre y quiero que otras personas aprendan sobre y apoyen los esfuerzos del Centro de Trabajadores. Con el Centro yo he protestado lecherías con pobres condiciones de trabajos, he enfrentado dueños de restaurantes que le han robado el sueldo a sus trabajadores y he participado en intercambios de lenguaje. Se que el Centro es un lugar donde trabajadores pueden recibir asistencia con problemas de salud y seguridad en el trabajo, compensación laboral, y pueden obtener ayuda contra injusticias basadas en el sexismo, homofobia y racismo.

Las Metas del Centro

El Centro de Trabajadores de Nueva York Central es una organización de base y sin fines de lucro enfocada en la justicia laboral y económica. Sus herramientas incluyen organización comunitaria, el desarrollo de liderazgo, educación popular, y apoyo legal. Sus metas incluyen empoderar a trabajadores de bajos ingresos que están al margen de la sociedad para combatir abusos en el trabajo. Y también tienen como meta incrementar salarios y mejorar las condiciones de trabajo. El Centro ayuda a

Minnie Bruce vive en Syracuse y apoya al Centro de Trabajadores de Nueva York Central. Traducido por Yanira Rodriguez.

una amplia gama de trabajadores, desde trabajadores del campo hasta trabajadores de limpieza, construcción, restaurantes y más.

Este año el Centro celebra su décimo aniversario—abrió sus puertas en el 2006, patrocinado inicialmente por el CNY Labor-Religion Coalition. Empezando con solo una organizadora que trabajaba a tiempo medio, el Centro ha alcanzado varios éxitos importantes. El Centro condujo el primer evento de “Igualdad en el Trabajo” en Syracuse para ayudar a trabajadores de nivel de entrada a entender sus derechos laborales y los beneficios de ser miembros de un sindicato. Cuando ICE incrementó sus redadas contra trabajadores inmigrantes, el Centro desarrolló un grupo para asistir a trabajadores, familias y menores que eran el enfoque de odio y actividades anti-inmigrantes.

Los esfuerzos del Centro llevaron al descubrimiento de la primera víctima de tráfico humano en el condado de Onondaga. Y en el 2010 el Centro expuso a una red de tráfico humano en la Gran Feria del Estado de Nueva York, donde 19 personas trabajaban en condiciones de esclavitud. Hubieron protestas nacionales en respuesta a la noticia de que trabajadores huéspedes provenientes de México fueron forzados a trabajar de 16 a 18 horas al día con solo 15 minutos de descanso, y malnutridos, recibiendo solo una comida al día. Fueron pagados solo \$1 la hora. Debido a su estatus legal y su tipo de Visa, ellos hubieran sido deportados si renunciaban al trabajo y su jefe se aprovechó de los hechos para explotarlos en el trabajo. El Centro de Trabajadores puso un paro al abuso y explotación!

Organización de Trabajadores Lecheros: “Ordeña a las Vacas, No a los trabajadores!”

Adicionalmente, El Centro se ha enfocado en las condiciones extremas de los trabajadores de lechería. La organizadora, Rebecca Fuentes, ha viajado innumerables días y millas para conocer a trabajadores en áreas aisladas. Ella les provee entrenamientos de “Conoce tus Derechos” en español e inglés, enfocados en leyes laborales, y Salud y Seguridad en el trabajo. Estos trabajadores tienen horarios oprimientes. En una de las fincas más grandes 4 trabajadores son responsables por ordeñar a 4 mil vacas en un turno de 12 horas. Trabajando bajo cámaras, los trabajadores son despedidos si el jefe cree que trabajan muy “lento”.

Cuando trabajadores de Marks Farms en Lowville le pidieron a Fuentes que les hablara de sus derechos, el dueño de la finca

llamó a la policía local y estatal. Crispin Hernandez, uno de los trabajadores, fue posteriormente despedido por querer organizarse. Él ha dicho de los dueños: “Ellos nos tratan como esclavos y peor que a las vacas.”

El Centro tomó el caso de Hernández y lo llevó al Sindicato de Derechos Civiles de Nueva York, para iniciar una demanda contra la ley vigente en el estado de New York que no provee protección a trabajadores que quieren organizarse en el trabajo. La ley desampara a estimadamente 60,000 trabajadores del campo. El Centro está luchando por el derecho de trabajadores del campo a formar sindicatos, y por igualdad de protección y al debido proceso por la Constitución estatal. Para más información acerca de esa lucha escuchen a Crispin: <https://workerscny.org/en/crispin/>.

Las Campañas Incansables del Centro

Otra campaña del Centro se enfoca en la reforma migratoria. La página de red del Centro dice: Nuestras raíces vienen del Movimiento de Derechos de los inmigrantes y creemos que ningún ser humano es ilegal. Somos parte de la Coalición para Reforma Migratoria Integral y somos miembros de la Coalición de Inmigración de Nueva York.”

El Centro recientemente se unió a la campaña de "Luz Verde NY: Manejando Juntos", para expandir acceso a licencias de conducir para todos los residentes de Nueva York, a pesar de sus estatus migratorios. Una parada de tráfico rutinaria, muchas veces resulta en la encarcelación y deportación de trabajadores por no tener licencia. Usted puede apoyar al Centro de Trabajadores de Nueva York Central en varias formas desde comprando tamales como parte de la “Gran Tamalada,” una recaudación de fondos que hacen anualmente, o participando en su evento anual “Día de Los Muertos” en el que conmemoran trabajadores caídos, que murieron en su trabajo.

También pueden apoyar al Centro firmando peticiones y participando en sus acciones contra el robo de salario.

Hay recaudaciones de fondos anuales para apoyar estos esfuerzos y muchos otros programas como el “Teatro de los Trabajadores” y el Comité de Mujeres. Para hacer una donación visite: workerscny.org/en/home/.

Los líderes-trabajadores-organizadores del Centro de Trabajadores de Nueva York Central están creando audaces y creativas acciones para obtener justicia para trabajadores de bajos sueldos de campo y ciudad, documentados e indocumentados, de todas las nacionalidades. ¡Apóyenlos! ¡Únanse a ellos! ☮

AHORA—MÁS QUE NUNCA—TENEMOS QUE UNIRNOS

Por Héctor Figueroa

El nuevo presidente y su administración incluye varios billonarios. Por ejemplo Andrew Puzder, nominado para secretaria del departamento de Labor. Él es el presidente ejecutivo (CEO) de una empresa de comida rápida. Su empresa tiene una historia larga de cometer violaciones laborales y hostigar a sus empleados. Por eso mismo, es más importante que nunca que organizara los obreros, abogar localmente por ellos, y formar coaliciones.

Por esa razón, nuestro sindicato está apoyando por igual a los trabajadores de bajo ingreso que están organizando en la parte norte de Nueva York y a través del Centro de Trabajadores de CNY para que todos nosotros podamos luchar juntos y ganar los derechos y la justicia para las comunidades inmigrantes.

Actualmente, estas luchas pueden parecer imposibles de ganar. Pero no nos podemos rendir. Si miramos la historia, vemos que la solidaridad entre nosotros puede ser la solución cuando parece que no hay esperanza.

El día 29 de noviembre de 2012, los empleados de comida rápida en la ciudad de Nueva York hicieron huelga. Fue la primera huelga de los que trabajan en comida rápida en la historia entera de los estados unidos. Esa huelga fue el comienzo de la campaña para subir el salario mínimo a \$15 por hora, y ha influenciado la conversación nacional acerca del salario mínimo en todo el país. En solo cuatro años, estos trabajadores de Nueva York han logrado victorias extraordinarias. Respondiendo a esta campaña, el Gobernador Cuomo convocó una Junta Salarial estatal para la industria de comida rápida y en Julio del 2015, el comité endosó el aumento a \$15. Nueve meses después, el senado y la asamblea de Nueva York aprobaron el aumento para muchos trabajadores en el estado. Hace cuatro años, pocas personas pensaban que pudiéramos tener éxito, pero lo logramos.

A pesar de estos beneficios, los que trabajan en el sector de comida rápida todavía tienen que luchar para poder beneficiarse de los cambios, para asegurar que sus dueños cumplan con las nuevas leyes de salario mínimo y otros derechos laborales. Ellos siguen organizando a sus compañeros de trabajo para educarlos acerca de sus derechos laborales para que puedan defenderse con una voz unida contra las represalias de los dueños y para luchar contra la injusticia en sus comunidades.

El sindicato 32BJ está apoyando a los que trabajan en el área de la comida rápida porque ellos son miembros de nuestras familias, y son nuestros vecinos y nuestros amigos. Nosotros sabemos que todos los trabajadores merecen trabajos buenos y que nuestras comunidades, al igual que nuestro estado y nuestro país, tienen más fuerza cuando todos los trabajadores se unen para luchar para buenos trabajos y la dignidad.

Es por esa razón nuestro sindicato también está apoyando a los choferes de taxi y a la Alianza de Trabajadores de Taxi (Taxi Workers' Alliance) en su lucha por buenos trabajos para todos los trabajadores mientras la empresa Uber está presionando al gobernador Cuomo para que cambie las leyes laborales que protegen a los taxistas. Si Uber tiene el derecho de operar en Nueva York, entonces pueden ofrecer transportes baratos y los taxistas no pueden competir.

La defensa de los derechos de los inmigrantes también es una parte importante de lo que hace nuestro sindicato. Muchos miembros de 32BJ son inmigrantes y nosotros hemos movilizado y luchado consistentemente para defender los derechos de los inmigrantes. Somos un país de inmigrantes y millones de hombres, mujeres y familias trabajadoras han venido a este país porque comparten el mismo sueño americano que tiene todo el mundo: si trabajas duro, puedes proveer un futuro mejor para tus hijos y nietos y vivir una vida con dignidad y respeto. ☮

Héctor es el presidente del sindicato 32BJ de la Unión Internacional de Empleados de Servicios. Traducido por Barbara Schloss.

LAS VOCES DE LOS TRABAJADORES

Dolores

Estoy preocupada por todo lo que está pasando ahora. Desafortunadamente, las cosas no van bien con Trump, y hay mucha incertidumbre entre nosotros los que estamos aquí trabajando.

No somos solo 10 o 20, somos muchos. Necesitamos unirnos y trabajar juntos, necesitamos tener más comunicación, y estar más informados.

[Empecé a venir al centro porque] me invitaron. Yo había visto desde hace tiempo como el Centro de Trabajadores pelea por la comunidad y por los derechos de los trabajadores.

Somos más fuertes juntos, la union hace la fuerza. Las personas no pueden hacer mucho por si mismos, somos más fuertes en grupo.

He trabajado con el Centro de Trabajadores para que la policía dejara de trabajar con agentes de inmigración, le llamamos "polimigra". Peleamos para que dejaran de colaborar con inmigración, y ganamos.

Las personas deberían hacerse miembros porque muchas veces no sabemos de los derechos de trabajadores, de esa manera estamos informados y podemos informar a otros, y esos otros informan a otra gente. También podemos ir a acciones, y apoyar económicamente a la organización.

Joel, Miembro del WCCNY

Nos sentimos desanimados y no contentos porque este presidente está promoviendo el racismo y la explotación. Es como si se despertó el racismo y la explotación [nuevamente].

[En estos momentos] lo que tenemos que hacer es organizarnos, capacitarnos para saber nuestros derechos. No queremos problemas con nadie solo que se respeten los derechos de los inmigrantes.

Estoy orgulloso de que a través de las mismas leyes que existen se han logrado éxitos para otros compañeros, tal vez no fue mi victoria, [pero] me siento orgulloso de eso.

Aunque el problema no fue de uno, pero fue de la organización, se logró, se ganó [y eso] nos motiva. Sabemos que hay problemas que se han ganados, tenemos una confianza. [Por ejemplo está] lo que se ha hecho con la lucha de Marks Farms, cuando se ha recuperado los salarios, se ha podido, y se va a poder.



iHola! Mi nombre es Kevin Jimenez. Tengo 7 años y el nombre de mi papá es Luis Jimenez. Yo nací en Nueva York pero mi papá es mexicano y trabaja duro. Sufrimos mucho porque el no puede tener una licencia para manejar un auto y llevarnos por todas partes. Tengo eventos escolares a los que no puede llevarme y tengo que pedirles a mis amigos que me lleven, pero no siempre me pueden traer. Por eso quiero que mi padre tenga licencia de manejar, para que me lleve a la escuela, al parque, al cine y también a los viajes. Photo: Worker's Center

Yo creo que para mi, es bueno pertenecer a una organización. Uno desconoce sus derechos y necesita afiliarse a la organización, para que le puedan enseñar los derechos. Es por eso que nosotros nos debemos afiliar a una organización para recibir apoyo y apoyarla.

Y ellos pueden contar con nuestro apoyo. A veces los llevamos a las tiendas a comprar o le damos raites. Y otros pueden apoyar también afiliándose a la organización, dando raites y participando en las manifestaciones.

Alianza Agrícola (Agricultural Coalition)

Somos un grupo de trabajadores inmigrantes agrícolas ubicados en el Valle de Genesee, una región del estado de Nueva York. Nuestra meta es apoyar la campaña "Luz Verde, Manejando Juntos" y organizar para obtener licencias para que todos los que vivimos en el estado de Nueva York podamos manejar legalmente. Nuestro grupo se formó en la primavera del año 2016, y siempre estamos aceptando nuevos miembros. Nos reunimos mensualmente, el segundo lunes de cada mes, en la universidad de SUNY Genesee de 7-9 pm.

Desde que se formó nuestro grupo, hemos llevado a cabo dos competencias comunitarias de fútbol; hemos visitado muchas fincas para platicar con los trabajadores; hemos participado en talleres y hemos ido a Albany para cabildear. Siempre estamos buscando aliados quienes puedan conectarnos con otras organizaciones, iglesias, y otros grupos interesados en apoyar nuestra campaña. También se ha formado un grupo de estudiantes de SUNY Genesee para ayudarnos con la campaña, y muchas iglesias cercanas están aprendiendo acerca de nuestro esfuerzo y están metiendo la mano. Si usted tiene interés en ayudarnos, favor de llamar a Luis Jiménez, nuestro co-presidente, al (585) 642-3651.

Es importante que ganemos esta campaña por muchas razones. Nueva York es un estado rico en cuanto a la producción lechera. Sin embargo, los trabajadores contribuyentes a este éxito económico sufren de aislamiento y el temor a la "migra." Nueva York debe de reconocer la existencia de estas dificultades y tomar medidas para apoyarnos con este sencillo cambio de ley—un cambio que mejorara no solamente nuestra calidad de vida, sino puede servir para estimular la economía local y asegurar que nuestras calles y comunidades sean más seguras. 🇺🇸

Traducido por Fabiola Ortiz y Barbara Schloss.

WORKERS TOOLKIT



CONCERNED ACTIVITY

What is protected concerted activity?

According to National Labor Relations Board Act Section 7, when two or more workers work together to improve wages or working conditions or one worker raises issues and concerns on behalf of other workers, with or without a union, he/she cannot be retaliated against by an employer for those activities.

What is considered retaliation?

Your employer cannot discharge, discipline, or threaten you for, or coercively question you about, this "protected concerted" activity.

WAGES & PAY STUB

*****New Minimum Wage Rates*****

As of December 31st, 2016, all workers must be paid at least \$9.70/hour. Fast food workers throughout upstate areas must be paid at least \$10.75/hour.

Notice Violations

Employers are required by law to give wage notices to employees of their wage rate at the time of hire, both in English and their primary language. The notice must include: how the employee is paid, regularly payday, the name of the employer, the employer's address and phone numbers, and any deductions for tips, meals and lodging. Employers who do not give a wage notice to an employee may have to pay damages of up to \$50 per day, per employee. This stops at \$5,000 per employee in civil lawsuits filed by workers.

If your boss has not paid you the minimum wage increase or if you are missing wages from your paycheck, your boss has committed wage theft.

WHAT IS WAGE THEFT?

- * Refusing to pay workers overtime
- * Forcing workers to work off the clock
- * Holding back final paychecks
- * Misclassifying workers as independent contractors
- * Stealing tips



When an employer fails to pay workers their wages, workers can pursue not only their unpaid wages but also "liquidated damages" in civil lawsuits against their employers. The New York State Labor Law provides for damages on 100% of unpaid wages and Federal labor law provides for another 100% of unpaid wages. For example, if you weren't paid \$300 for work in December then you are entitled to an additional \$300 in liquidated damages under Federal law and an additional \$300 under New York State law state, for a total of \$900

How Can You Protect Yourself Against Wage Theft?

1. Demand a pay stub
 2. Always check your pay stub. By law, your pay stub should include:
 - Worker's name
 - Employer's name, address and phone number
 - Dates covered by payment
- If you don't receive a pay stub with the above information, employers must pay damages up to \$250 per day, per worker, up to a maximum of \$5,000.

Keep records of your hours. Speak up if something is wrong. **Call or email the Workers' Center of CNY at 315-218-5708 or wccny@workerscentercny.org** if you are having problems with pay or any other problems at your workplace! We have successfully supported workers to reclaim tens of thousands of dollars in stolen wages!



IMMIGRANT RIGHTS

What to do if ICE Comes To Your Door

Do Not Open Doors

ICE cannot come in without a signed warrant unless you let them in. Tell them to pass the warrant under the door before you open it.

Remain Silent

ICE can use anything you say against you in your immigration case, so claim your right to remain silent: say, "I plead the fifth amendment and choose to remain silent."

Do Not Sign

Don't sign anything ICE gives you without talking to an attorney.

Report the Raid Immediately

Take pictures, video, and notes: badge numbers of agents; record exactly what happened!

Fight Back!

Get a trustworthy attorney and explore all options to fight your case. If detained, you may be able to get bail—don't give up hope!

Who is Covered?

- Workers employed by for-profit businesses
 - Domestic workers who work over 40 hours/week with the same employer
 - Most state/local government workers
- These benefits are available to workers regardless of immigration status.*

What to do?

1. Seek medical care immediately if necessary as soon as possible or as soon as possible after you experience or notice injury.
2. Report the injury or illness to your manager or boss as soon as it occurs or once you notice the injury.
3. Keep notes, record what happened and who saw the injury occur.

WORKERS' VOICES

Dolores

I feel worried because we don't know exactly what's going to happen. I'm worried about everything that is happening now. Unfortunately things are not going to be good with Trump, and there is a lot of uncertainty among all of us who are here working. There are not just 10 or 20, there are a lot of us. We need to unite and work together; we need to have more communication; and we need to be more informed.

I started working with the Workers' Center so that police would stop working as immigration officers. We called it *polimigra*, we fought for them to stop collaborating with immigration, and we won. I've seen how the Workers' Center fights for the community and for workers' rights. We are stronger in collective—*la union hace la fuerza*. People can't do much by themselves, but we are stronger in a group. People should become members because a lot of people don't know about workers' rights; you will be informed and you can inform others; and those others will inform more people. Other people can support the Workers' Center of CNY by going to actions and supporting the organization financially.

Joel, WCCNY member

We feel discouraged and not happy because this president is promoting racism and exploitation; it's like racism and exploitation just woke up again. What we have to do is organize—train ourselves to know our rights. We do not want problems with anyone; we just want that the rights of the immigrants are respected. I need to know what my rights are, and I support the Center and the Center supports me. When you fight collectively you are stronger, and we can achieve what we want, what you wish for—you can achieve changes together.

I am proud that through the laws that already exist we have achieved things, things achieved with other partners who have won. Maybe they were not my victories, but I am proud of them. Although the problem was not just mine, but it was the organizations, we achieved it; we won; it motivated us. If there are problems, we know that we can win—we have confidence. With the fight against Marks Farms, we've been able to recuperate wages. I think it is good to belong to organizations. We don't really know our own rights; we need to be members of organizations so we can learn our rights. We should get support from the organization, and we need to support the organization as well. People can support us by joining the organization, giving rides, going to protests.

Agricultural Coalition (Alianza Agrícola)

We are a group of immigrant dairy workers in the Genesee Valley region of New York State. Our goal is to support the "Green Light, Driving Together" campaign and organize to get driver's licenses so that all people in New York State can legally drive. Our group started in Spring of 2016, and we are always looking for new members. We meet the second Monday of the month at SUNY Genesee from 7-9pm.



Since we launched our group, we have held two community soccer tournaments, visited dozens of farms to talk with workers, met with elected officials, attended statewide conferences, participated in workshops and gone to lobby in Albany. We are always looking to gain support from allies who can help us bridge to organizations, churches and groups that can support our campaign. A group of students at SUNY Genesee has formed to help us with the campaign, and many churches in the area are learning about our work and getting involved. If you'd like to help us, please contact Luis Jimenez, our co-president, at 585-642-3651.

It is important that we win this campaign for many reasons. NYS is rich in dairy production, yet the workers who are contributing to this economic success suffer from isolation and fear of "la migra." NYS should recognize these hardships and act to support us with this simple policy change, one that will improve not only our quality of life, but will stimulate the local economy and make the streets, and our communities, safer. One of our projects is to educate the public through shared personal stories about why the right to drive is so important to us. ☺

**Occupational Health
Clinical Centers**

**We're not just a
medical clinic!**

Our goal is to prevent you getting sick or hurt because of work

Yes, our health care providers can diagnose job-related disease treat occupational illness advocate for workers' compensation



Other staff also can work with you to:

- ✓ inspect workplaces, identify and fix hazards
- ✓ have workshops about body and workplace mapping, job-related violence/harassment/bullying, ergonomics, standing hazards, & more
- ✓ screen for asbestos, lead, hearing loss, etc., and do respirator fit tests

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E-mail us: cnyohccc@upstate.edu -- Call us: 800-432-9590

Workers' Center of Central New York



FIGHTING FOR ALL WORKERS

By Minnie Bruce Pratt

In downtown Syracuse, a crowd of loud and passionate people gathered last Nov. 19 at Columbus Circle, banging on cowbells and chanting “*No robo del salario*.” It was the Workers’ Center of Central New York, holding a dramatic lunch hour “educational” to let people know they can stop bosses from stealing workers’ wages.

Speakers included Andrea, a Latina who testified how she and her wife, Lourdes, did hours of hard physical labor for a subcontractor of the national restaurant chain Chesapeake Factory. When he disappeared without paying them, a militant confrontation by WC-CNY workers and allies made the company cough up their checks overnight. The money owed them was just a small amount of the \$50 billion in wages stolen annually from workers.

I was at that spirited demonstration in November, and I want others to know about the WC-CNY and join in its efforts. With the Workers’ Center, I’ve picketed dairy farms that have dangerous conditions for workers, confronted restaurant owners who’ve appropriated employees’ wages, and taken part in spirited *encuentros* of Spanish conversation. I know that at the Center workers can find assistance for health care and workers’ comp issues, and can get help with injustices based on sexism, homophobia and racism.

Workers’ Center Goals

The Workers’ Center-CNY is a grassroots organization focused on workplace and economic justice. Its tools are community organizing, leadership development, popular education and policy advocacy. Its goals are to empower marginalized, low-wage workers to combat workplace abuses, and to improve wages and working conditions community-wide. The Center aids a wide range of workers, from those at dairy farms and fruit orchards

Minnie Bruce lives in Syracuse and is a supporter and ally of the Workers’ Center of CNY.

to hotel housekeepers and workers in construction, food service, janitorial services, and more.

Last year, the Center celebrated its 10th anniversary—it opened its doors in 2006, sponsored initially by the CNY Labor-Religion Coalition. Beginning with only a half-time organizer, the Workers’ Center has achieved many notable successes. It held the first “Job Fairness” event in New York to help entry-level workers understand workplace rights and the benefits of having a union. When ICE ramped up raids on immigrant workers, the Center set up a Detention Task Force to aid workers, families and children targeted by anti-immigrant activity or hate.

The Center’s efforts led to certification of the first victim of human trafficking in Onondaga County. And in 2010 the Center uncovered a human trafficking ring at the Great New York State Fair, where 19 people were working in conditions close to slavery. Nationwide protests erupted at news of these legal Mexican guest workers laboring 16 to 18 hours a day with only a 15-minute break, and malnourished at one meal a day. They were being paid \$1 an hour. Their visa status meant they’d be deported if they quit, and their boss exploited their labor accordingly. The Workers’ Center put a stop to that!

Dairy Farmworker Organizing: “Milk cows, not workers!”

In addition to campaigning against human trafficking and wage theft, the WC-CNY has focused more recently on dire conditions facing dairy farmworkers.

Center organizer Rebecca Fuentes has travelled countless days and miles to meet with isolated workers across the region. She provides “Know Your Rights” trainings in both Spanish and English, focused on employment law and occupational health and safety. These workers have crushing workloads. At one mega-farm, four workers must machine-milk 4,000 cows during a 12-hour shift. Monitored by camera, they are summarily fired if the boss thinks they are “too slow.”

AFRAID AND RESISTING

One of the more popular slogans of the migrants' rights movement is "Undocumented and Unafraid." But the reality is that to be undocumented in this country means having to manage an ever constant fear. And to be truthful, I am no more afraid of a Trump presidency than I have been the past eight years under President Obama.

The cold reality is that despite the flowery rhetoric, President Obama amply earned the moniker "deporter-in-chief" by deporting an estimated 2.5 million immigrants during his tenure, more than any other president in the history of this country. He is now handing down that very efficient deportation machinery to a man who was partly elected by using openly xenophobic and racist messaging.

One of Trump's close immigration advisers is Kris Kobach, the intellectual architect of the most brutal anti-immigrant pieces of legislation proposed in the past few years, and a man described by the Southern Poverty Law Center as one of the most dangerous White Nativists in the country. So I am afraid.

But paradoxically, I was less devastated by Trump's election than a lot of my friends because I have long been in a precarious situation. The tragedy of course is that many more of us will be in such a precarious space. I pledge to fight not just for my undocumented kinfolk, but also to keep fighting for my Black, women, queer, Muslim and refugee friends who will also be at risk. Our resistance must be intersectional or it will be ineffective.

Aly Wane is an undocumented activist.

SANCTUARY FOR ALL

A few days after our nation celebrated the life of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., Donald Trump, a man who threatens the same rights King fought for, became President of the United States. In one of his very first acts as president Donald Trump removed President Obama's webpage on civil rights and replaced it with a page entitled, "Standing Up for Our Law Enforcement Community." His message to the Black community: your lives mean nothing to me. Many of us cried that morning. Yet, the opposition has arisen. People who had never participated in protests have flooded the streets and begun to discuss concepts like intersectionality. Syracuse declared itself a sanctuary city. As bleak as the world has become, it seems as though we might finally find each other in the dark. It is our sincerest hope that these moments of solidarity aren't a temporary flare of conscience—a burst of white guilt—but something permanent. When the 10,000 new federal immigration agents, and 5,000 new border control agents Trump plans to hire come for our neighbors, we must again take to the streets, and put our bodies between those agents and the most vulnerable. We also hope that our shared fear of fascism leads this city to declare itself a sanctuary for all of us on the margins, a sanctuary from police violence and rape culture. Let our anger at Trump force us to turn our eyes to those like him in our city.

Herve Comeau is a Black Lives Matter organizer in Syracuse, NY.



An estimated 2,000 came to the Syracuse demonstration on January 21 in solidarity with the Women's March on Washington. Photo: Sam Rose

A REFUGEE SPEAKS

Amar Mahmoud arrived in the US as a refugee from Iraq. He is a student at Onondaga Community College and works with individuals with developmental disabilities. He also volunteers many hours helping the refugee community in Syracuse.

I asked Amar how refugee families he knows have been feeling since the election.

The concern of many refugee families is to get their paperwork done quickly because they are afraid of being kicked out of the US. They also fear that if they were forced to leave, they could not go back to their countries because they will be killed. Most people, when I ask them why they are here, they say they want to live in peace and have a better life for their children. They will work at any job for a better education for their children.

Have you personally noticed changes in people's behavior towards you since the election?

I noticed a difference even before the election. People in public places hear my accent and react differently. They look up when my name is called at the DMV or doctor's office. I tell my friends to be careful and to avoid trouble with people who may be suspicious of us. I tell them not to grow a long beard, or use the "call to prayer" app, because if it goes off in the grocery store, people nearby might say something and start trouble.

How can people who would like to be allies of the refugee community be helpful?

Spend time and get to know people. It takes time to build trust and bonds between people if we don't know who you are.

—Interview by Caroline Kim Tihanyi

TRUMP AND THE MILITARY

I am a US Navy Veteran, active duty 1975-1981, with one year in the Naval Reserves, 1983-1984. I did two overseas deployments to the Pacific and Indian Oceans on aircraft carriers. I am a combat Veteran of the Cold War and participated in armed conflicts. These experiences shaped my opinion of the military and war.

The next commander in chief's military experience was the making of a wealthy man's son. Donald Trump avoided the military and war by getting deferments, four for college and one for bad feet. He played the system and saved himself from the fate of over 58,000 young men and women who died in Viet Nam and the countless numbers who came back broken human beings. He went to an expensive private military academy, comparing his experience there to actually being in the military. I think he lacks understanding of what the military is and does. A person who enlists in the US military is forced to stay in for the amount of time stipulated in their contract and is severely punished for failing to follow direct orders. Failure to do one's duty can result in death, especially while deployed to a war zone. Donald Trump could have quit his military school at any time if it became too difficult for him.

Trump has chosen to surround himself with retired generals. I think the military people surrounding him will call the shots. He might just sign off on these decisions without a thought. If you want to know what actions Donald Trump might take with the military, look to the powerful people advising him and in his cabinet.

Dave Kashmer is a Veteran for Peace.

MR. TRUMP AND MILITARISM: THE MENACING CLOUDS, THEIR SILVER LINING

Trump calls for massive military buildup.

– Sept. 7, 2016 *Washington Times* headline

Trump's call[s] for a nuclear "arms race..."

– Jan. 4, 2017 *Business Insider* headline

Along with hubris and corporate greed, the makings of militarism are patriarchy, racism, classism, nationalism, nuclearism, imperialism, and xenophobia/ Islamophobia. No US national leader within memory so perfectly embodies each of these strands as does Mr. Donald Trump. Nor has any US president sought to appoint cabinet members who collectively so embody such strands. No US president has entered upon office with so little self-knowledge, with so much delusion. No US president has



The US is actively bombing five of the countries from which Trump's executive order temporarily bans immigrants. Photo: Jason Randall

had such a distant relationship to the truth. In this, Mr. Trump has a deep affinity with war—whose first casualty, we know, is truth. No US president has less prior experience in government. None may have been more of a “deal maker,” but none has been less disposed to diplomacy. None has been so outspoken in his disregard for people and nations beyond these United States—or indeed for the very fate of the earth. The man's bellicosity normalizes hostility and enemy-making—whether beyond, or within, our borders. But here's the silver lining: perhaps never before in US history have the grassroots so quickly pushed back. Despite the opportunism Trump attracts, as never before we are already finding solidarity burgeoning and backbones stiffening. No US president has ever before awakened so many from our slumber.

Ed Kinane is a local anti-militarism activist. Reach him at edkinane340@gmail.com.



A February 2 protest called on Senator Schumer to stand against Trump's agenda. Photo: Kimberley McCoy

NUCLEAR FREE WORLD: WIN BEYOND WASHINGTON

The ignorant, cavalier comments from the White House about using nuclear weapons raise terrifying prospects. In resistance, the Nuclear Free World committee of SPC (NFW) is coordinating with national and international groups. Nationally we are pressing Congress to support the Markey/Lieu Restricting First Use of Nuclear Weapons Act of 2017; oppose the most egregious cabinet appointments; and cut

funding for “modernizing” the entire weapons infrastructure. Because this is an uphill battle in the current climate, we are strategizing to act beyond legislative channels, to “Win Beyond Washington.”

NFW is joining an international divestment campaign called “Don’t Bank on the Bomb,” through which we will withdraw money from banks that support nuclear weapons and educate institutions about the ways that their investments, pension funds, etc., can create pressure to stop the accelerating arms race. Individuals can pressure our banks, changing accounts if the bank is unresponsive. (For 10 steps to break up with your mega-bank see www.breakupwithyourmegabank.org/!) Congregations, colleges and city councils are potential allies and targets. For example, the city council of Cambridge, Massachusetts, voted unanimously in March 2016 to divest their \$1B pension fund from companies that produce nuclear weapons. Read more at www.dontbankonthebomb.com.

Locally, NFW is collaborating with Syracuse Cooperative Federal Credit Union and Hansen’s Advisory Services, Inc. on strategies to “Win Beyond Washington” through socially responsible banking and investment. Our campaign kicked off January 17, 2017. For next steps and to participate, see www.peacecouncil.net/programs/nuclear-free-world-committee.

Diane Swords facilitates dialogues and agitates and organizes with SPC’s Nuclear Free World Committee.

TO ATTACK ONE IS TO ATTACK ALL

I’ve always had an interest in politics. Latte-fueled conversations about intersections of politics and social justice gave me life. When I moved to Syracuse, I became a public affairs organizer for Planned Parenthood in the midst of last year’s contentious election.

Part of being an organizer is getting a feel for what a community needs. None of us could have known that so many issues would come under attack. We all need to count on each other. The Women’s March in Washington, among numerous local activities proved to me that reproductive health has no lack of support. Planned Parenthood of Central and Western New York serves over 30,000 patients of all backgrounds. Those patients stood for us, and it’s our turn to stand for them.



Solidarity with Planned Parenthood was a primary theme at Syracuse’s protest on the day of the national Women’s March. Photo: Sam Rose

Post-election, the outpouring of support drove us into planning mode. One after another, people came to us. People wore their pink hats, shirts and scarves. However, as a woman of color who is a single parent, who has immigrant family members, I understood that this was not only about reproductive health. It is also about reproductive justice. Our experiences are more than our biology. Healthcare is and should be a right, and is integral to healthy communities.

Planned Parenthood will stand with immigrants, Black Lives Matter, the Muslim community, and the poor. We are this community. Coalitions are more than standing shoulder-to-shoulder on one day, then going back to daily life. To attack one is to attack all. We are providing a platform for communities to speak for themselves and to tell their own stories, so change can happen.

Gina Iliev is a Public Affairs Organizer for Planned Parenthood of Central & Western New York.

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STRENGTH FROM EACH OTHER

As I look to the future and try to understand what is ahead for our country and the world, I am reminded of something a fellow soldier used to say when we were cold, wet, and exhausted, “Don’t ever say it can’t get any worse, because it will.” With each new appointment, each new tweet, each refusal to acknowledge facts, the President and his staff seem to drag us farther and farther backward rather than moving us forward. For my children and grandchildren, it is difficult to present a positive outlook, but it is my role to do just that.

I talk to students about Onondaga Lake frequently. The most common question is “Why would somebody do what they did to a lake?” These are people (like my children and grandchildren) who were born since there was a Clean Water Act and an Environmental Protection Agency. Any positive point of view we bring to our current situation has to be based on how much we have accomplished and how dedicated we are to not letting anybody tear it apart. There will be setbacks. We will need to get strength from each other just like we did a few years ago.

Remember when we never thought we’d get a fracking ban in New York? But we talked to our neighbors, we showed up, we spoke out, and we didn’t give up. We need to find the energy to do all of that and more. Just don’t say “it can’t get any worse.”

Jack Ramsden, a veteran of both the Army and the National Park Service, is an environmentalist.

EMPOWERING VOTERS TO RESIST TRUMP

The election of Donald Trump as President showed the extreme impacts of voter suppression. The GOP suppressed votes by making it harder for People Of Color, elderly and students to vote in key states and Trump suppressed the vote by convincing voters to feel discouraged about the election process. Then Trump turned out his base. Trump continues to encourage state legislators to suppress the vote by falsely claiming that millions of people fraudulently voted in the 2016 election. The truth is that voter fraud of this type is virtually non-existent.

A powerful way for us to counter the Trump agenda is to pass local and state laws that make it easier, rather than harder to vote. New York is in particular in need of this reform. In defending North Carolina’s voter suppression laws that were found to be specifically tailored to exclude Blacks from voting, North Carolina’s attorney cited New York’s laws which have “no early voting...no same-day registration...no out-of-precinct voting... and no preregistration.”



Donald Trump was inaugurated on January 20 despite losing the popular vote by almost 3 million votes, one of many controversies surrounding this election that highlight flaws in US democracy. Photo: Sam Rose

We are working with other organizations in NYS to pass early voting and automatic voter registration. There is also an ongoing effort to pass small-donor matching funds to empower voters to participate in elections and counter the force of wealthy donors. Please reach out to your Assembly-member, state senator and Governor Cuomo and encourage them to support these reforms. There is also an opportunity for us to pass small-donor matching funds here in Syracuse. Please reach out to Mayor Miner and your Syracuse Common Council members to support these reforms.

Jonah Minkoff-Zern is Public Citizen’s Democracy Is For People Campaign Coordinator

DON’T DISMANTLE OUR SOCIAL SECURITY, MEDICARE AND MEDICAID

The large majority of Republicans in Congress are chomping at the bit to destroy Social Security, Medicare and Medicaid. Given the opportunity, Republican legislators will cut and privatize Social Security, substituting 401k plans or similar retirement schemes for the benefits earned by working Americans. Raise the Medicare eligibility age, cut and turn Medicare into a form of private insurance...and repeal Obamacare. Eviscerate Medicaid. They advocate sending a smaller, fixed amount of money each year to the states in the form of block grants—a move that would unquestionably cripple protections provided to nearly 70 million people, including children, people with disabilities and seniors. We know that the Congressional leaders of the richest nation in the world should be talking about expanding, not cutting, these institutions!

A good place to start is with our Representative John Katko who went on record before the Central New York Chapter of the Alliance for Retired Americans, saying he supported eliminating Social Security for those under forty, which would undermine their economic security and decimate the program without the contributions of those individuals. He opposes “anything that raises taxes,” including scrapping the cap so that the very rich are subject to the same payroll contribution rate as persons earning less than \$127,200. Will Rep. Katko fall in line with slashing Medicaid, dismantling Medicare?

Eric R. Kingson, Ph.D., is a Professor, School of Social Work at SU and **Jerry Lotierzo** works with the Alliance for Retired Citizens.

BILLIONAIRES TO END ACCESS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

To say that parents, teachers and disability rights advocates are worried about how the Trump Administration will negatively impact the education of students with disabilities would be a vast understatement. Trump’s disrespect and lack of compassion was obvious in the way he mocked Serge Kovalski. His nomination of Betsy DeVos for Secretary of Education would institutionalize that disrespect.

Both Trump and DeVos have proclaimed that they are advocates for “school choice” and see education as the last great frontier for privatization. DeVos in particular has spent her career working to increase funding for charter and religious private schools, as well as advocating for online education programs. While school choice sounds as though it will put power back into the hands of parents, it is nothing more than coded language for dismantling and undermining public schools and working to further segregate schools by race, class and ability through the use of a voucher and admissions lottery system.

None of these alternative education options requires the same oversight and regulation that public schools do. Not surprisingly, they do little to protect the educational rights of children with disabilities. For example, private schools are not required to provide a free and appropriate education for students with disabilities. Nor are they required to follow any sort of individualized education program (IEP) that a student may need.

Parents, teachers, and disability rights advocates are understandably afraid that under the Trump administration profits from privatized school systems will be prioritized over quality public schools that work to meet the needs of all children.

Kelly Prucker substitutes in the Syracuse City School District while completing her Master’s in special education at SUNY-Oswego. She was diagnosed with dyscalculia in elementary school.



Khadijo Abdulkadir captures the crowd's attention at Syracuse's federal building. Photo: Sam Rose

REFUGEE SELF-EMPOWERMENT

I am a former refugee from the largest refugee camp in Dhadhaab, Kenya. I have spent the last four years helping resettlement agencies, such as Interfaith Works, as well as refugees and immigrants, with self-empowerment. Recently, we have created a support group empowering women refugees in Central New York. The program has taught our women the skills needed to acquire and retain jobs, earn promotions, assume leadership positions in community organizations, and advocate on behalf of other refugees like ourselves. Many of the women in the Women’s Empowerment Group have been motivated to finish high school and college degrees and aspire to professional careers previously unavailable to them, like those in the fields of science and technology. Educating these women, who in my experience are the hardest working of our community, will eliminate many of the struggles we face.

We have decided to take this initiative to the next level and form an official 501(c)3 non-profit organization so that we’ll be able to raise funds, obtain grants and continue to build our programs for women refugees in the community. I would appreciate your support in helping me raise funds needed to start this organization and expand it throughout our community. I will continue to be a voice for refugees in the United States who don’t have one. Taking this next step will help us gain more visibility.

Khadijo Abdulkadir works with the Women’s Empowerment Group and is on the Coordinating Committee of the CNY Solidarity Coalition.

LABOR AND THE TRUMP ADMINISTRATION

After being asked for my input on how the Trump presidency might affect labor unions and what we might do about it, I had to think about it for days to come up with a comprehensible answer. I am not sure there is one. In fact, this is the first time an election has ever frightened me. Given Donald Trump's practice of union busting, and not paying contractors that have worked for him, labor will be in its biggest battle in my lifetime. Trump's cabinet selections will be horrendous not just for labor, but for all who are concerned with economic and social justice. Andrew Pudzer, Trump's nomination for Secretary of Labor and critic of government regulation, is opposed not just to a \$15 dollar minimum wage, but also to Obama's recent expansion of overtime to lower paid salary workers. Pudzer doesn't agree that fast food workers whom he has employed should even receive breaks. He is also opposed to the Affordable Care Act that benefits many lower wage earners. The war on labor has been going on forever, but this now has hit a peak. How can we respond to this? The progressive community needs to keep their arms open to all, while labor goes back to its roots and helps organize itself. Labor leaders need to hit the streets and show active support for their members and others. Community alliances will be a key factor in the most significant battle of our time.

Ray Trudell is the Vice President and Chief Steward of UWS Local 0143.

NY STATE CAN LEAD THE WAY ON CLEAN ENERGY AND CLIMATE ACTION

From the myriad of cabinet appointees in cahoots with the fossil fuel industry to the scrubbing of "climate change" from the White House website to executive orders in support of the Dakota Access and Keystone pipelines, Trump's war on the environment is off to a stunning start.

We must organize resistance and take the renewable energy revolution into our hands. Here in New York, we have an opportunity to lead the nation in renewable energy and strong climate action. And we have the responsibility to do so in a way that empowers our communities and makes them more resilient, equitable, independent and sustainable.

There are several initiatives across the state working to make sure there is a swift and just transition to local and renewable power. To get involved, check out our organizations: New Yorkers for Clean Power, and Alliance for a Green Economy. We can help you connect with other local groups and find your place in this movement. Stay tuned for a clean energy and climate action forum we'll be hosting in Syracuse this March.

If you don't have the time to join a local organization, but are willing to take an action, please mark your calendar for April 29, when CNY will be mobilizing buses to the next installation of the Peoples Climate March in Washington DC.

Renee Vogelsang is Campaign Coordinator at New Yorkers for Clean Power, a statewide campaign working to transition New York to renewable energy, electric vehicles and energy efficiency. Jessica Azulay is Program Director of Alliance for a Green Economy (AGREE), a coalition working for a carbon-free, nuclear-free New York.



On February 2, activist demands focused on protecting the environment from Trump's pro-corporate and anti-earth agenda. Photos: Kimberley McCoy

STONEWALL UNDER TRUMP

February 5, thousands of demonstrators crammed Christopher Street, in NYC's Greenwich Village, before the iconic Stonewall Inn to protest the Trump presidency, Trump's cabinet appointments and his executive orders. Queer politics, though conceived within the more staid activism of the Daughters of Bilitis and the Mattachine Society, was ultimately born of the Stonewall rebellion—an uprising that exploded around issues of sexuality, gender identity and expression,

race, ethnicity and class. The patrons of the Stonewall were the poorest and most marginalized of the queer community. What better site to protest an administration bent on turning “us” against “them.”

Log Cabin, a national Republican organization representing gay conservatives, denounced the demonstration, claiming that Trump will be a gay-friendly president. They cite Trump’s praise of Elton John’s wedding and welcoming gay members to his Mar-a-Lago club as evidence, but queer politics embrace more than celebrity weddings and admission to country clubs. We are everywhere—a part of all neighborhoods, mosques, temples, churches, and families. We are immigrants and refugees. The demonstrators and speakers at the protest reflected this. We are concerned about health care, and we especially worry about the culture of bullying, given that our youth are too often the primary victims. Numerous organizations show that hate crimes have



A rally was held outside the Stonewall Inn in NYC on February 5 to stand against Trump’s agenda. Photo: Vince Sgambati

been on a rise since Trump won the election.

Selecting Vice President Mike Pence, alt-right hand man Steve Bannon, and Attorney General Sessions prove that Trump’s support for queers goes no deeper than cocktail parties. Pence is an advocate for conversion therapy. Bannon’s politics is based on exclusion. Under Sessions, the Department of Justice has backed away from the Obama administration’s support for transgender students.

Vince Sgambati’s fiction has appeared in literary journals, and his creative nonfiction has appeared in numerous online and hardcopy queer publications. ♪

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CNY SOLIDARITY COALITION

Who We Are

CNY Solidarity Coalition is a grassroots coalition of organizations and individuals committed to protecting the larger community from the agenda of the Trump-Pence-Ryan administration.

How We Formed

One of the seeds of what became the Coalition was a Syracuse Peace Council vigil the day after Trump's election. Another was the Workers Center's ongoing organizing of low-wage workers and immigrants, and need for more help. A third was the many individuals who were horrified by the prospect of a Trump presidency. Meetings outgrew their spaces; committees formed and set to work; a pledge was written; thousands of people have been activated.

Our Pledge

We, the people of Syracuse and Central New York, are proud inheritors of the local struggle for abolition and suffrage and survivors of decades of economic deprivation.

We hereby pledge:

To tear down the walls that divide and impoverish us;

To oppose any effort to register, detain, deport, or attack our neighbors;

To provide refuge for those in danger or need;

To protect our water, air, and land as our kin.

Join Us!

Ongoing Teams

Communications: Plans and coordinates external communications including: press relations, social media, website, photo/video archive. Dana (dana.balter@gmail.com) and Annabel (annabelhine@gmail.com)

Legislative Action: Plans and coordinates campaigns directed at our elected officials at the federal, state, and local levels. Andy (andy.mager@gmail.com) and Tom (tmkeck@syr.edu). State level: Paul Weichselbaum (canela8800@gmail.com)

Community Outreach and Defense: Plans and coordinates activities and events that grow people power, strengthen our community, and support grassroots organizations. Developing training opportunities to strengthen skills for activists within the Coalition. Maureen (maureen.curtin@oswego.edu)

Door Knocking: Works to organize a massive door-knocking effort in Syracuse—to talk with people, hear their concerns, connect them through neighborhood meetings. Brian (brian@peacecouncil.net) and Jonah (jonah.zern@gmail.com)

Sanctuary Campaign: Works to support and protect the undocumented in our communities through advocacy, and tracking and supporting local/state efforts. Nikeeta (nslade@workerscentercny.org) and Aly (aly@peacecouncil.net)

Coordinating Committee: Helps to organize the Coalition. Its members are already fixed through June. Carol (carol@peacecouncil.net)

Newcomers: Helps newcomers to the Coalition find a place for themselves. Jennifer (jblusk1@gmail.com)



KEEP IN TOUCH

MEETINGS: we have both general and task force meetings, discussion groups and skill building.

FACEBOOK: facebook.com/cnysolidarity **Katko Watch:** facebook.com/groups/IndivisibleNY24

TWITTER: @CNYSolidarity, @IndivisibleNY24 **INSTAGRAM:** @cnysolidarity

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