



Solidarity Actions Inspired by Courage: A New Thanksgiving Tradition

Over the last few years, Walmart workers, through their courageous struggle for dignity and respect on the job, have inspired a new Thanksgiving Weekend tradition of solidarity actions on Black Friday.

In 2013, thousands of people of faith and good conscience spent the biggest shopping day of the year at their local Walmart store, singing, praying, and delivering petitions that echoed Walmart workers' call for just wages, dignity and respect on the job.

Overall, more than 1,500 solidarity actions were held last year, including more than 150 prayer vigils, clergy delegations, and letter deliveries by people of faith.

With support from friends, allies and neighbors, Walmart workers broke through the usual holiday noise about Black Friday sales and door-buster deals, and instead brought attention to the poverty

wages, unsafe working conditions and oppression on the job.

THE POWER OF FAITH

The powerful presence of people of faith, particularly of clergy walking workers back to their shifts after a strike, cannot be overstated.

At a recent gathering of worker-led Organization United for Respect at Walmart (OUR Walmart) and its community allies, a worker talked about the layer of protection the faith community provided when she walked back to work and faced her manager for the first time after the 2013 Black Friday strike. "Managers are less likely to retaliate against us when they know and see that we have the community's support," the worker said.

When workers and community members come together, change is possible even at the nation's largest retail employer.

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Photo by Carlos Miranda

In June, more than 500 attendees of IWJ and Seminary Consortium for Urban Pastoral Education's (SCUPE) joint conference delivered letters to managers and rallied outside Walmart stores in Chicago, amplifying workers' call for fair schedules and a living wage.

Codas & Crescendos

An evening of retrospection and celebration

Tuesday, Dec. 9th
6:30 – 8:30 pm
St. Francis Hall
1340 Quincy St. NE
Washington, DC

Join us for drinks and heavy appetizers as we celebrate the work and legacy of IWJ Executive Director Kim Bobo and her outstanding contribution to the worker justice movement. The event also officially launches IWJ's \$1 million **LEAP of Faith** fund, which will strengthen the organization's efforts to cultivate *Lasting Engagement* and *Active Participation of Faith* communities in worker struggles.

Event tickets are \$180. Go to <http://bit.ly/codasandcrescendos> to register. For sponsorship opportunities and other questions, contact Nikki Howell at nhowell@iwj.org.

Save the Date!

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Transitions and New Beginnings



(Excerpts from Kim's letter to IWJ supporters, July 2014)

After 18 years as the founder and executive director of Interfaith Worker Justice, I have decided to transition out of leadership in the next six to eight months. Eighteen years seems a fitting time. As a parent, which founders feel like, you know how important it is to allow your kids to grow and flourish without you.

I also know the importance of 18 years in the Jewish Tradition. The word "chai" means life, and its letters add up to the number 18. When I first started Interfaith Worker Justice, I didn't understand the donations we received in multiples of 18 – \$18, \$36, \$180. I quickly figured it out. And thus, I think there is also religious significance to my transition after 18 years – new life for me and new life for the organization!

Sign up at www.iwj.org to receive updates on the transition process and the exciting projects and campaigns IWJ has planned. Along with Kim, IWJ is taking a huge LEAP of Faith – we'd like you to join us. Visit www.iwj.org to learn more.

Got Kim-stories to share? If you have a short message for Kim or a story that you'd like to share, consider making a contribution and adding your message to the tribute book: <http://bit.ly/kimbobotribute>.

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Faith Works is produced by IWJ's Communications Department. For questions, corrections and story suggestions contact Communications Director, Cathy Junia, at cjunia@iwj.org or call 773-728-8400 x40.

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Solidarity cont. from p. 1

Earlier this year, Walmart workers, with support from the faith community and other allies, managed to get the retail giant to issue a policy granting accommodations to workers with pregnancy-related complications and institute a more transparent scheduling process and system.

Walmart workers and OUR Walmart members have made great strides since the first round of Black Friday strikes and solidarity actions in 2012. But the struggle continues.

BLACK FRIDAY 2014

As poverty wages and poor working conditions persist, more and more Walmart workers are willing to risk their jobs and livelihoods, stand up to the retail giant, and demand their due: \$15 an hour and consistent full-time hours.

This Black Friday, Nov. 28, let us again remind Walmart's leadership of their moral responsibility to treat workers – the backbone of their business – with dignity and respect.

As people of faith who believe in the intrinsic dignity of all workers, we have an opportunity – and responsibility – to act on our values by amplifying Walmart workers' call for an end to poverty wages, discriminatory practices and oppressive work environments.

Walmart workers are asking us to join them for a bigger, louder and more impactful Black Friday. Are you ready to make history with Walmart workers? Join or organize a prayer vigil, letter delivery or any creative action at your local Walmart store on Black Friday.

Visit www.iwj.org for more information about Black Friday actions and to download resources.

Raise the Minimum Wage: How you can help!

All workers deserve a fair and just wage with which they can provide for themselves, their children and their loved ones. Millions of minimum wage earners are often forced to rely on government subsidies and charity simply to survive. That's just not right. But together we're turning the tide for working people.

In June, Seattle lawmakers voted to raise the minimum wage to \$15.00 per hour. San Diego became the largest city to increase its minimum wage raise to \$11.50 per hour in August. In early September, Las Cruces, N.M. City Council voted to raise the minimum wage to \$10.10. This year, Connecticut, Delaware, Hawaii, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Minnesota, Rhode Island, Vermont

and West Virginia have all enacted modest minimum wage increases.

This November, five states – Alaska, Arkansas, Illinois, Nebraska and South Dakota – are bringing the issue of minimum wage to a public vote. IWJ is working with a number of faith leaders in those areas, providing resources to help them organize the faith community's support for a long overdue minimum wage increase.

Our friends in Oakland, California are going the extra mile with the Lift Up Oakland campaign, asking voters to say YES to Measure FF, which calls for a citywide minimum wage increase to \$12.25 and sets a standard of five to nine earned sick days for all workers.

Exciting things are happening locally, and it's only a matter of time

JUST Saying

A Message from IWJ Executive Director Kim Bobo

In August, my sons and I went on a two-day mountain trek. I knew we were in trouble when the guide asked me about the mountains in Chicago.

Day one was fine, a modest climb from about 11,000 feet to 12,500 feet.

Day two was awful for this sea-level city dweller. The pass, at 16,000 feet, appeared impossible to reach and the rocky path best suited to donkeys (not me). So instead of going straight up the mountain, we zigged and zagged for hours up hundreds of switchbacks. Between gasping for air, I was struck by the similarities between climbing the mountain and our work.

Changing this economy and raising core standards for workers is a terribly high mountain. We have neither the power nor the breath to go straight up, but we can tackle the problems if we stay focused on moving forward through the zigs and the zags.

This year, we are making great strides in raising core standards through the intersection of three important and visible struggles: state and local minimum wage fights, Walmart workers' call for \$15 and Full Time, and the fast food workers' Fight for Fifteen. These three efforts are the critical switchbacks up the hill. And faith communities, often led by the Interfaith Worker Justice affiliates around the nation, are key anchors and partners in the struggles as we push ourselves up the hill. This *Faith Works* shares some of the good work being done in all three efforts. Seattle's passage of a \$15 an hour minimum wage was a big zig up the hill.

Decisive victories in all the upcoming state and city minimum wage ballot initiatives this November will serve as another zag. The clear message from Walmart workers demanding that the nation's largest employer pay \$15 an hour and ensure full time hours has added another zig. We'll zag again on Black Friday when we lift up the need for better wages on the biggest shopping day of the year. Fast food workers' call for \$15 per hour has taken us up another zig on the mountain.

The path to challenging the inequities in our economy and raising wages and standards for workers is neither straight, nor easy. And yet by working together, pushing forward up the hill, using multiple campaigns and approaches through the zigs and the zags, we can reach the pass.

I can't remember a time in which I've been more encouraged about our progress and possibilities. If you haven't already, I invite you to join us on this exciting journey to workplace justice. Now's the time to start zigging and zagging.



President Obama issued an Executive Order that raised the minimum wage for federal contract workers. Now if only all workers could get the raise they deserve.

– and increased public pressure – before Washington officials follow suit.

At the end of the day, raising the minimum wage is a moral and ethical issue – one that we must not let our elected officials deny. Grassroots advocacy from churches, synagogues and mosques, are critical in passing campaigns to raise core standards for workers. For more information visit: <http://bit.ly/IWJMW>

What's With Paystubs?

Did you know that as many as 20 million workers do not know how their pay is calculated or what deductions are taken from their check? That's right, the absence of federal regulations around paystubs has kept millions of workers in the dark about their own wage information.

Without paystubs, workers become more vulnerable to wage theft, pay discrimination and other wage violations. In many cases, unscrupulous employers intentionally withhold wage information, knowing that without paystubs, it becomes more difficult for workers to prove wage violations.

IWJ and its affiliates are leading a campaign to push the Department of Labor to issue a *Paystubs for All* regulation that would make it mandatory for employers to issue wage documentation to all workers covered by the Fair Labor Standards Act. In July we asked members of the faith community to echo our call, and within just a few days, you flooded the DOL's inbox with more than 4,000 e-mails to Labor Sec. Tom Perez, asking him to make *Paystubs for All* a



Worker Center leaders and IWJ staff are fired up and ready to talk to members of Congress about paystubs and why employers should be required to issue them.

regulatory priority. No doubt, your messages are being heard.

On July 31, President Obama signed an executive order that includes paystub transparency requirements that would give more than 28 million government contract workers access to their pay information. We thank President Obama for that, but we think all workers covered by the Fair Labor Standards Act should be afforded the same access to pay information.

Stay tuned for exciting Paystub actions planned this Fall. Visit www.iwj.org for more information.

New Toolkit Supports Living Wage Certification Programs

Tompkins County Workers Center (Ithaca, NY), Just Economics (Asheville, NC) and Northampton Living Wage Coalition (Northampton, MA) have led the nation in developing local Living Wage Certification programs that recognize and support ethical employers that pay living wages (or at least significantly above the minimum wages) plus health care and treat workers fairly.

Pete Meyers (Tompkins County) and Vicki Mead (Just Economics) worked with Interfaith Worker Justice staff in creating a toolkit to promote the expansion of similar programs. Currently, the Interfaith Coalition for Worker Justice of South Central

Wisconsin (Madison, WI), the Binghamton Labor Religion Coalition (Binghamton, NY), the Coalition for Economic Justice (Buffalo, NY), and Rochester Minnesota IWJ are working on building Living Wage Certification programs in their communities. The program has really taken off in Madison, WI, where the Interfaith Coalition has partnered with the Workers' Rights Center to release the *Just Dining Guide*. The *Just Dining Guide* maps local restaurants and indexes their employment standards, making it easy to locate and support businesses with good food and good ethics! The *Just Dining Guide* is available both in print and a convenient app.

Fast Food: Long Struggle for Better Pay

It's simple: workers cannot survive on the wages fast food giants like McDonalds and Burger King pay. Underpaid cooks and cashiers are standing up across the country to demand \$15 and the right to form a union, and people of faith are proudly standing by them. After Labor Day, fast food workers announced they'd strike in more than 150 cities. Hundreds of workers, allies and faith leaders faced arrest as they stood up for a living wage. IWJ supporters and affiliate groups were on the ground beside these brave workers calling for justice.



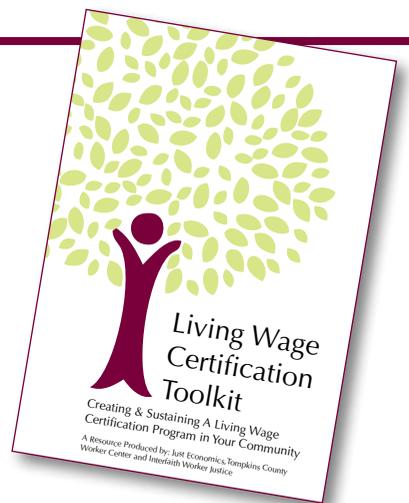
Photo courtesy of ICWJ

Above: Interfaith Center for Worker Justice of San Diego County President The Rev. Beth Johnson joined fast food workers in an act of civil disobedience and nonviolent protest.

Left: On September 4th, members of Fe y Justicia Worker Center showed massive support for Houston's fast food workers – many of whom members of the center as well – who joined a nationwide strike to protest low pay across the fast food industry.



Photo courtesy of Fe y Justicia



For a free copy of the toolkit, visit www.iwj.org/network/ethical-business-leaders. Please contact Janel Bailey (jbailey@iwj.org) for more information.

Bonding and Building Power

Strengthening our affiliate network is an important piece of our work. In September, nearly 20 worker center leaders gathered in D.C. for IWJ's Organizing and Capacity Building Training. Here's what two of the leaders had to say about their time together:

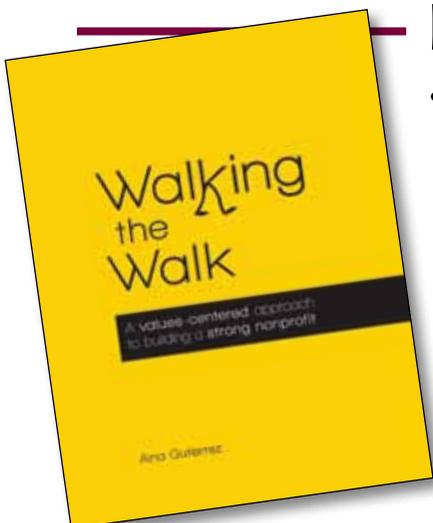
"The most important thing I learned was that no matter what, when you work together, you win." – Edith Faustino, *Pilipino Worker Center*

"I got a lot out of interacting with (other leaders) in the network, and talking about our experiences. It was very eye-opening." – Jeshua Schuster, *Workers Interfaith Network*



Bits of Exciting News

- Find out why nonprofit leaders and consultants are raving about IWJ Deputy Director Aina Gutierrez's new book, *Walking the Walk: A Values Centered Approach to Building a Strong Non-Profit*. Order your copy at <http://bit.ly/wtwbookorder> or email info@iwj.org for more information.
- A new IWJ comic book is coming this Thanksgiving!! Interested in receiving an advance copy? Email info@iwj.org your name, mailing address, and tell us how you plan to use your copy to help spread the word about worker issues.
- Attention CHICAGO friends, we've got a couple shows on CAN-TV just for you. Tune in on Tuesdays, from 4:00 – 5:00 p.m. Once a month, IWJ Legal Director, Julian Medrano will kick off the hour with *Jobs Hotline* – a 30-minute discussion about wage theft issues and resources available to workers. Every week from 4:30-5:00, IWJ Executive Director Kim Bobo will introduce us to some of the city's best employers and leading worker advocates. Catch them on *Good Works Chicago*.





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For Everything there is a Season

Turn, Turn, Turn
the page for more...

A Summer to Remember

More than 500 workers, advocates, students, faith and labor leaders gathered in Chicago last June for the first-ever IWJ and Seminary Consortium for Urban Pastoral Education (SCUPE) joint conference. At the conference, attendees learned about current worker campaigns, shared victories and challenges and strategized ways to reclaim justice for working people. Together, they marched outside Walmart stores in support of the campaign for change at the nation's largest retail employer.



Photos by Carlos Miranda

Want to support Walmart workers' call for \$15/hour wages and consistent full-time hours? Visit www.iwj.org for more on Black Friday actions.

IWJ Affiliate Network

For detailed contact information, please visit www.iwj.org.

Interfaith Groups

Arkansas Interfaith Committee for Worker Justice – Little Rock, AR
Clergy and Laity United for Economic Justice (CLUE)—California – Los Angeles, CA
CLUE—LA – Los Angeles, CA
East Bay Faith Alliance for a Moral Economy – Oakland, CA
Interfaith Committee for Worker Justice in San Diego – San Diego, CA
Interfaith Council on Economics and Justice – San Jose, CA
IWJ-Colorado/FRESC for Good Jobs and Strong Communities – Denver, CO
Connecticut Center for a New Economy – New Haven – New Haven, CT
Connecticut Center for a New Economy – Hartford – Hartford, CT
D.C. Jobs with Justice—Interfaith Worker Justice of Greater Washington – Washington, DC
Interfaith Action of Southwest Florida – Immokalee, FL
South Florida Interfaith Worker Justice – Miami, FL
DuPage Interfaith Worker Justice – Naperville, IL
Community, Faith and Labor Coalition – Indianapolis, IN

Interfaith Worker Justice of Kansas – Wichita, KS
Interfaith Worker Justice—NOLA – New Orleans, LA
Interfaith Worker Justice Southern Maine – Portland, ME
IWJ of Maryland – Baltimore, MD
Massachusetts Interfaith Committee for Worker Justice – Boston, MA
The Micah Center – Grand Rapids, MI
Interfaith Worker Justice—New Mexico – Santa Fe, NM
Greater New York Labor-Religion Coalition – New York, NY
Labor-Religion Coalition – Latham, NY
Greater Binghamton Labor-Religion Coalition – Vestal, NY
Beloved Community Center – Greensboro, NC
Cincinnati Interfaith Committee on Worker Justice – Cincinnati, OH
Greater Columbus Jobs with Justice – Columbus, OH
Central Oklahoma Community Forum – Oklahoma City, OK
Religious Outreach Committee/Portland Jobs with Justice – Portland, OR
Springfield Solidarity Network/Jobs with Justice – Eugene, OR

Labor-Religion Coalition of Western Pennsylvania – Pittsburgh, PA
Philadelphia Area Jobs with Justice – Philadelphia, PA
Interfaith Worker Justice of East Tennessee – Knoxville, TN
O.U.R. Vanderbilt – Nashville, TN
Interfaith Coalition for Worker Justice of South Central Wisconsin – Madison, WI

Worker Centers

Winning our Wages Worker Center – Birmingham, AL
Arizona Worker Rights Center – Phoenix, AZ
Southside Workers Center – Tucson, AZ
Northwest Arkansas Workers' Justice Center – Springdale, AR
Pilipino Workers Center – Los Angeles, CA
Young Workers United – San Francisco, CA
Economic Justice Coalition – Athens, GA
Workers Center for Racial Justice – Chicago, IL
Center for Worker Justice of Eastern Iowa – Iowa City, IA
Food AND Medicine/Eastern Maine Worker Center – Brewer, ME
Southern Maine Workers' Center – Portland, ME
MassCOSH – Dorchester, MA
Centro de Trabajadores Unidos en la Lucha – Minneapolis, MN
New Labor – New Brunswick, NJ

Damayan Migrant Workers Center – New York, NY
Restaurant Opportunity Center (ROC) of New York – New York, NY
Tompkins County Workers' Center – Ithaca, NY
Workers' Center of Central New York – Syracuse, NY
Western North Carolina Workers' Center – Marion, NC
Cincinnati Interfaith Workers Center – Cincinnati, OH
Workers' Interfaith Network – Memphis, TN
Workers' Dignity Project – Nashville, TN
Workers' Defense Project/Proyecto Defensa Laboral – Austin, TX
Fe Y Justicia Worker Center (formerly Houston Interfaith Worker Justice Center) – Houston, TX
Community to Community Development – Bellingham, WA
Madison Workers' Rights Center – Madison, WI
Voces de la Frontera – Milwaukee, WI

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