



FAITH WORKS

Newsletter of Interfaith Worker Justice

Fall 2010

IWJ in Arizona for SB-1070 Protest *Coordinates National Weekend of Actions for Immigrant Justice*

Hundreds of people of faith in Arizona and in communities across the country stood together to oppose Arizona's anti-immigrant law SB-1070 with a nationwide weekend of coordinated prayer and action July 29–August 1. While several provisions of the draconian measure were temporarily blocked by a federal judge the day before the protests, others did go into effect on July 29.

At an interfaith prayer vigil in Phoenix, and at events in more than a dozen cities across the country, people of faith denounced punitive laws that divide families and communities, called for an end to SB-1070 and similar legislation in other states, and urged immediate action from Congress to pass sorely needed comprehensive immigration reform.

“We have come to Arizona to protest SB-1070 because we know that worker rights and immigrant rights are inter-
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(L-R) Cristina Sanidad of the Arizona Interfaith Alliance for Worker Justice, Saul Castillo of the Workers Rights Center in Madison, WI, Dianne Enriquez, IWJ's Worker Center Network Coordinator, Veronica Mendez of the Centro de Trabajadores Unidos en Lucha in the Twin Cities, Dan Moore of the Cincinnati Interfaith Workers Center, and Will Rutt also of the Arizona Interfaith Alliance during IWJ's National Weekend of Prayer and Action.

Responding to the Jobs Crisis as People of Faith

Unemployment is the central issue of our lifetimes. Families and communities are being ravaged. Millions of families have lost their homes in foreclosure, tenants have been evicted, domestic violence is up, suicide hotlines and food pantries are overwhelmed, and state and local governments face huge deficits and are cutting back services just when they are most needed. Our children are facing a much bleaker future than we did, and even college graduates are struggling to get a decent job.

While the entire society is reeling, the unemployment rate for African Americans, Latinos, youth, and people in particularly hard-hit cities and regions is disastrous. Unemployment statistics released just before Labor Day remain sobering. Overall, the official unemployment rate is 9.6 percent. While the entire society is reeling, the official unemployment rate for African Americans stands at 16.3 percent, and 12 percent for Latinos. If you include people who have stopped looking for work and those
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November

18

**Wage Theft
National Day of
Action**

**Find out how you can
participate on p. 5!**

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Faith Works is published by Interfaith Worker Justice.

Interfaith Worker Justice calls upon our religious values in order to educate, organize, and mobilize the religious community in the U.S. on issues and campaigns that will improve wages, benefits, and working conditions for workers, especially workers in low-wage jobs.

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Fall from Grace

IWJ Issues a Hard-Hitting Report on Ascension Health Care

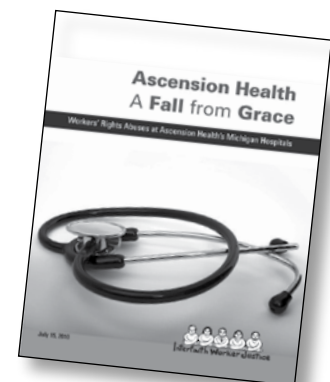
IWJ continues to work with our union partners on issues of worker justice. In May, IWJ responded to requests by the Teamsters (IBT), the Michigan Nurses Association, and the Office and Professional Employees Union (OPEIU) about bargaining issues at three Michigan hospitals run by Ascension Health Care, one of the largest Catholic health care systems in the country.

After hearing complaints from three different unions about problems with three different health facilities in three different Michigan cities, IWJ called upon Sister Monica McGloin to assist. Sr. Monica leads the Cincinnati Interfaith Committee on Worker Justice and is a recognized advocate for worker justice in the Catholic community. She convened a delegation of religious leaders from Michigan to conduct three days of visits with workers and union representatives to hear about the allegations surrounding the contract fights at Ascension's Borgese and Genesys facilities.

The delegation participants were disturbed by what they heard and agreed to issue a report on their findings. "A Fall from Grace: A Report on Ascension Health Care Michigan Facilities" was released in late June at a press event coordinated by IWJ.

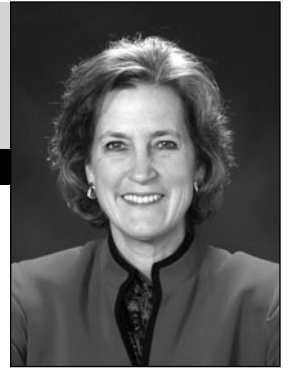
Copies of the report are available on IWJ's website. We ask you to support these workers by doing the following:

- Pray for all of those engaged around the issues of justice at Ascension
- Call the CEOs of Borgese and Genesys and ask them to resolve the issues in a fair and just manner



MAKING IT PLAIN

BY KIM BOBO



For God did not give us a spirit of timidity...

I preached at my church in August using one of my favorite passages from II Timothy 1:7: “For God did not give us a spirit of timidity, but a spirit of power, of love and of self-discipline.” Often what happens for me is that I begin by seeing what a passage means in one direction, and then another emerges. The sermon at my church was aimed at encouraging congregants who can’t find jobs or are struggling to keep jobs to use their time to strengthen their skills, devote time to family life, and volunteer. But as I’ve reflected on the economic challenges we face as a nation, I realize that the passage also speaks powerfully to that bigger picture.

As a nation, we seem to be operating out of fear, a spirit of timidity. We’re fearful that there’s nothing that can be done about jobs or the economy. This fear has triggered the anti-immigrant sentiments that are tearing apart families, communities and workplaces. But God did not give us a spirit of fear.

Rather, God has given us a spirit of power. Power is “the ability to act.” We must believe that we can do something about jobs and the economy. In the 1930s, our nation’s leader put in place a series of programs and standards that addressed the economic crisis. The solutions are different in 2010, but it is still our responsibility to act. God has given us that power.

God has given us a spirit of love. If we truly love our neighbors as ourselves, we will want to ensure that all those who want to work and are able to work have opportunities to find jobs. And of course those who work should be paid for all their work. If we truly have the spirit of love, we will want to do something about jobs and the economy.

God has given us a spirit of self-discipline. Self-discipline is doing what we say we will do. It is walking the walk and not just talking the talk. It is making concrete commitments and following through. We need that same spirit of self-discipline today. The closer we get to elections, the more talk we will hear about helping unemployed workers. But talk is not enough. We need concrete goals and we need to work toward those goals.

Over the next few months, Interfaith Worker Justice, under the leadership of Rev. Paul Sherry, Edie Russell, Ros Pelles, Ted Smukler, and Renaye Manley, will be rolling out a plan to engage the religious community in addressing the crisis of jobs. We will be calling on congregations to create committees within congregations to support unemployed workers, religious leaders to serve as spokespeople, and denominations to partner with us on focused campaigns. The problem of unemployment and the economic crisis is a mammoth one, but God did not give us a spirit of timidity, but a spirit of power, love and self-discipline.

Save the Date June 19, 2011

Attend IWJ's 15th Anniversary Conference in 2011!

2011 will mark IWJ's 15th year of fighting for workers' rights. Come celebrate the organization's past and help plan its future in Chicago June 19th-21st! More detailed information, including how to register, will be announced soon. Stay tuned by going to www.iwj.org and signing up to receive updates from IWJ via e-mail.

Arizona *cont. from p. 1*

grally linked," said IWJ executive director Kim Bobo in a national telephone press conference.

As part of the National Weekend of Prayer and Action for Immigrant Justice coordinated by IWJ, events took place in Chicago; Oakland; Cincinnati; Milwaukee; Toledo; San Francisco; New York City; Houston; Philadelphia; Charlotte, North Carolina; and Albany, New York. Actions include marches, rallies, prayer vigils, civil disobedience, educational forums, and worship services, sermons, and homilies about immigration, as hundreds voice their opposition to SB-1070 and demand a just solution to the broken immigration system that gave rise to this draconian law.

In Phoenix, people of faith gathered at Trinity Episcopal Cathedral for a 6 a.m. prayer vigil, followed by a press conference with national faith leaders and a rally at the Sandra Day O'Connor Federal Courthouse. Several members of IWJ's national staff and board of directors, and IWJ affiliate organizations around the country voyaged to Arizona to participate in these momentous protests.

"People are living in fear, afraid to go to work and church, or to leave their home at all," said Rev. Trina Zelle, executive director of the Arizona Interfaith Alliance for Worker Justice and a Presbyterian minister who helped lead the Phoenix prayer vigil. "Since April 23, I have heard from people who have been stopped and had their citizenship challenged on the basis that they're Hispanic," Rev. Zelle said. "SB-1070 is dehumanizing and violates our human rights. I believe it grieves God. All of us in Arizona are grateful for the outpouring of support and solidarity from people around the country."

One of the most heinous parts of the legislation, which was temporarily blocked by the preliminary injunction, instructs law enforcement officers to stop any individual they suspect of being undocumented, a requirement rife with potential for abuse and racial profiling.



Left to right: IWJ board member Imam Taha Hassane of the Islamic Center of San Diego, Marcos Mujica of the Interfaith Committee for Worker Justice of San Diego County, IWJ Executive Director Kim Bobo, Rabbi Laurie Coskey, Executive Director of the Interfaith Committee for Worker Justice of San Diego County, Pastor Sara Haldeman-Scarr of the First Church of the Brethren of San Diego, Elizabeth Maldonado of the Interfaith

Committee for Worker Justice of San Diego County, and Reverend Kurt Kuhwald of the Berkeley Fellowship of Unitarian Universalists and the East Bay Interfaith Committee for Worker Justice

"I join with brothers and sisters from the interfaith community to voice opposition to SB-1070," said Hussam Ayloush, executive director of the Council on American-Islamic Relations (CAIR), Greater Los Angeles Area, and an IWJ board member. "As a Muslim, I can personally attest to the destructive nature of racial profiling on my community. I refuse to see this unjust and un-American practice in the form of SB-1070. It is an ill-advised and extremely ineffective way to fix the country's broken immigration system."

The National Weekend of Prayer and Action for Immigrant Justice built on months of organizing by IWJ's national network and the Interfaith Immigration Coalition in support of immigration reform and in opposition to regressive state laws like SB-1070. In July, the Workers Interfaith Network in Memphis held a prayer vigil to stand in solidarity with immigrants in Arizona and call on elected officials in Tennessee to reject copycat legislation being considered. The Arizona Interfaith Alliance for Worker Justice has also been working around-the-clock since SB-1070 was signed into law to protect Arizonan workers and families and oppose the legislation.

See the following articles by IWJ leaders on SB-1070

(all at www.iwj.org/index.cfm/on-the-issues):

Catholic bishops, cardinals decry Arizona immigration law
Bishop Gabino Zavala, President of IWJ's Board of Directors, offers a Catholic perspective on SB-1070.

A Primer on Activism from Unitarian Universalists
Want to know how to run a successful protest? IWJ Executive Director Kim Bobo takes us to school.

'Go Ahead, Try and Make Me Pay You': Wage Theft and SB-1070
IWJ Communications Coordinator Danny Postel and Public Policy Director Ted Smukler analyze the impact of Arizona's draconian new immigration law on workers rights.

Take Action on Wage Theft November 18

IWJ is organizing the second annual National Day of Action to Stop Wage Theft on November 18, one week before Thanksgiving. At a time of year when Americans celebrate their plenty and feast with their families, millions of workers and their families cannot even afford the basics after having the wages they are owed stolen from them. The continuing unemployment crisis has exacerbated wage theft, as unscrupulous employers take advantage of workers who they think will accept sweatshop conditions and extreme violations of wage laws just to keep working.

On the Wage Theft Day of Action in 2009, 40 events were coordinated around the country on the Thursday before Thanksgiving. In the year since the last Day of Action, momentous progress has been made on many levels. Miami Dade County passed the nation's first county-wide wage theft ordinance, setting up

a streamlined administrative procedure to win wage cases for workers who have had \$50 or more dollars stolen. A wage theft bill was passed in Illinois that similarly set up an administrative court proceeding, in which judgments can be rendered quickly and the workers' word is accepted unless the employer shows up and produces evidence that his workers were paid legally for all their hours. The states of New York and Washington also passed new laws. New York's law strengthens anti-retaliation protections for workers who file wage and hour complaints, allows worker advocates (so called "third parties") to file complaints on a worker's behalf, strengthens pay stub requirements, and increases fines to businesses that steal wages,

while the Washington law requires repeat offenders to post wage bonds that can be seized to pay legal wages. Worker advocates in Massachusetts and New Mexico have been working with state agencies to implement previously passed wage theft legislation.

Other related recent victories include passage of the Domestic Workers Bill of Rights in New York City, as the result of a major grassroots campaign spearheaded by the National Domestic Workers Alliance. And over the past several years, many states have adopted legislation to make it harder for businesses to misclassify workers as independent contrac-

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Asking our Society Isaiah's Question Reflections on a Summer Internship

Paul Drake is currently in his third year at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary in Boston, where he studies ethics.

My work with IWJ this summer really impressed upon me a core dynamic of our economy: that opportunity favors those strong enough to secure its blessings. I have more or less taken this for granted, but getting to taste and see it first-hand was profoundly formative.

With Arise Chicago, I witnessed a local school district board dehumanize workers by deciding to outsource their school bus drivers to a private company in an effort to cut costs, which would come in the form of substandard wages for drivers and the loss of crucial benefits like pension and health care. The drivers had no place at the table to influence this decision.

I also got to lend a hand to Arise's efforts to reclaim several thousand dollars of unpaid wages to two construction workers. Together, they had secured a court order for their former employer to pay up. But since there is, as I learned,

little bite to our existing labor laws, we found ourselves having to step up and stand with the workers as they confronted their former employer once again. That they are still waiting for justice was a lesson to me in how ineffectual our legal system currently is at protecting workers.

And with a local labor union, I got to see frontline mental health workers come together to overcome the same power imbalance at their workplace, where management had cut worker compensation, refused to adequately staff shifts (leading to a spike in workplace injuries), and even pressed workers to falsify records to save costs! This was all justified by claims of economic hardship that were in fact false: the facility's finances were doing just fine (and it seems the executives had been giving themselves nice raises).

And when management caught wind of the union drive, they began clamping down on workers. This was all too common to the union organizers, who shared



story after story with me of other management teams who had retaliated against their workers for attempting to organize. This behavior is perfectly illegal, but again, the long delays and weak penalties of our labor law system leave the

employer with the upper hand.

From what I learned this summer, these sad continuities belie not merely a few bad apples but unholy power relationships that fail to do justice to the humanity of the economically weak. This is the underbelly of our economy that goes far too unnoticed, with workers' voices struggling to find their way to the surface. And so I find that we, as people of faith, must bear witness to their plight and plead their cause. We must stand up and ask our society Isaiah's question: "What do you mean by grinding the faces of the poor?"

Reflections on Arizona

Neil Ellingson, currently a Divinity School student at the University of Chicago, was a 2010 Beatitudes Society summer fellow with IWJ's national office.

On a sauna-hot weekend at the end of July, I had the opportunity to travel to Phoenix to join in protest and prayer on the frontlines of what some people have called the civil rights movement of our time: the movement for just immigration reform. I went as part of a National Weekend of Prayer and Action for Immigrant Justice organized by Interfaith Worker Justice, accompanying members of IWJ's national staff and several of its worker center affiliates from all over the country.

Going to Phoenix was the capstone of my summer fellowship at IWJ, made possible by the Beatitudes Society, an organization that aims to cultivate future progressive Christian leaders by placing seminary and divinity school students with nonprofits working at the intersections of religion and social justice. Having finished my first year at the University of Chicago Divinity School, I was excited by the chance to close my books on theology and ethics for a while and immerse myself in an organization that connects the great religious traditions' lofty calls to cherish the dignity of all people with the everyday struggles to improve the lives of low-wage workers. I am grateful for the spiritual and intellectual growth divinity school has afforded me, but I am also sometimes painfully aware that it is the love child of two all-too-often cloistered institutions, the academy and the church.

What I witnessed in Phoenix was in many respects a different kind of union, an inspiring marriage of the best in religion and the best in community organizing, in which the ethical vision of the former complements the brawny pragmatism of the latter. The first "action" of the weekend, at 6:00 a.m. Thursday, was held at Trinity Episcopal Cathedral, and was billed as a prayer vigil. It was closer to a worship service in style; we sang songs and heard scripture readings, and Jewish, Christian and Muslim faith leaders delivered miniature sermons and

led prayers related to the plight of immigrants in Arizona and all over the U.S. But there were also some more explicit calls to action from organizers and elected officials who spoke out against SB 1070 and discrimination against immigrants. The passion of both the religious leaders and activists was such that, by the end, who had spoken from which "side" was blurred in one's memory, and apart from external markers like attire and the program notes, many times it would have been hard to tell in the first place. One minister led us in a long chant of "Si se puede" and the Vice Mayor of Phoenix would have made an excellent preacher in another life.

After the vigil, we processed out of the church and into scorching downtown Phoenix, where the first of the weekend's many civil disobedience actions took place at the federal courthouse. Many religious leaders were eventually arrested, and a large group of Unitarian Universalists with yellow shirts proclaiming they were "Standing on the Side of Love" were not only the largest visible contingent from the religious community, they also seemed most prepared to put their bodies on the line (or across it).

I spent most of the weekend with representatives from workers centers in IWJ's national network, who had come to show solidarity with immigrants and workers in Arizona, and also to protest the threatened spread of laws like SB 1070 to their home states, places like Minnesota, Wisconsin, Michigan, Arkansas, and Ohio. All wore clever and media-attracting homemade signs in the shape of their states, with the words "Not in AZ, not in MN (etc)." Two members of the worker center network braved arrest, Fernando García of the Northwest Arkansas Workers' Justice Center, and Nicolas de la Fuente of the Arizona Interfaith Alliance for Worker Justice. In interviews I conducted with the members of the network, I learned that for each of them their commitment to immigrant justice connected seamlessly with their commitment to worker justice.

Veronica Mendez, of the Centro de Trabajadores Unidos en Lucha in Minneapolis, explained, "Most of the workers



Neil Ellingson (far left) with William Joseph Rutt, Rev. Trina Zelle and Cristina Sanidad of the Arizona Interfaith Alliance for Worker Justice

who come to our worker center are immigrants...employers use it as an excuse to further exploit workers and keep them in an underground economy essentially without rights, so if we can fight back on immigration [and] workers rights, we can win justice for everybody."

The quiet acts of self-sacrifice and commitment, when women and men wearing clerical collars were led off handcuffed alongside young dreadlocked activists and elderly women with t-shirts proclaiming their faith, were all the more powerful considering they were causing those who performed them to be sent into the uncertain custody of the notorious Sheriff Joe Arpaio of Maricopa County, who has been under investigation for civil rights violations and abuse of power, and whose ridiculous signature pink handcuffs I saw up close.

To read Neil's reflections on his decision to go to Divinity School, go to www.dissentmagazine.org/article/?article=2431

Fayetteville, Arkansas Issues Proclamation against Wage Theft, Sets National Example

The mayor of Fayetteville, Arkansas has issued a historic proclamation condemning wage theft, making theirs the first city-wide public pronouncement in the nation against the illegal practice that annually takes billions of dollars out of the pockets of millions of workers across the country. Lioneld Jordan, mayor of Fayetteville, unveiled the proclamation on Thursday, September 9, at a public forum on wage theft organized by the Northwest Arkansas Workers' Justice Center, an IWJ affiliate.

"I was excited by Mayor Jordan's proclamation," said Fernando García, Organizer and Campaign Coordinator with the Northwest Arkansas Workers' Justice Center. "Imagine if 100 other communities followed Fayetteville's lead," said IWJ Executive Director Kim Bobo, who went to Fayetteville to speak at the forum. Bobo's Wage Theft in America was the first book to name and document the problem.

The proclamation reads:

"Wage Theft, the practice of underpaying or refusing to pay for the labor of employees, denies workers and their families economic prosperity and financial security. Workers have lost homes and vehicles due to employers not paying wages and, in some extreme cases, wage theft has led to homelessness..."

Wage theft also "puts ethical busi-

nesses at a disadvantage," the proclamation states. "Unethical employers are more likely to get higher profits due to stealing wages compared to ethical employers who pay fair wages in a timely manner, causing ethical employers to be at a disadvantage in the market..."

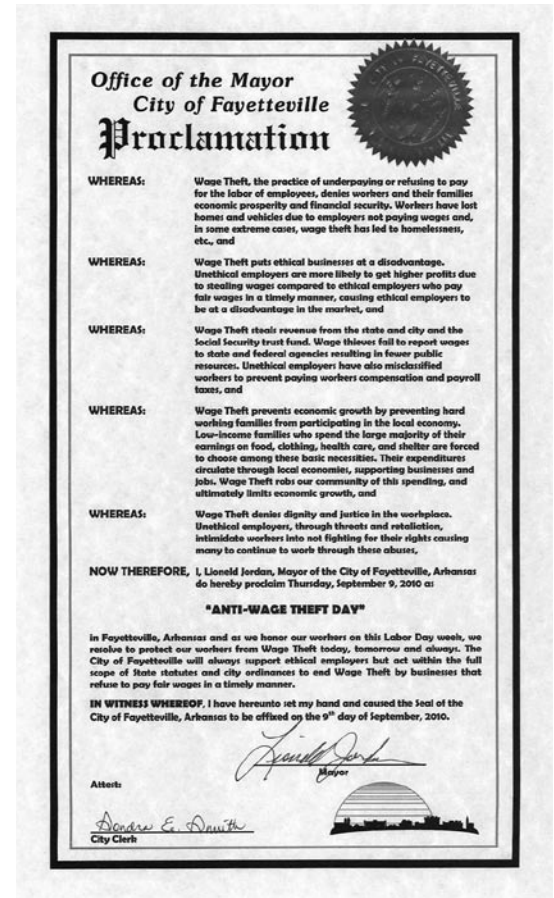
The proclamation goes on to contend that wage theft "steals revenue from the state and city and the Social Security trust fund. Wage thieves fail to report wages to state and federal agencies resulting in fewer public resources. Unethical employers have also misclassified workers to prevent paying workers compensation and payroll taxes..."

"While not binding," said Bobo, "the proclamation educates the community about the issue and publicly commits the city leadership to address it."

Indeed, after the forum, Mayor Jordan agreed to establish a Mayor's Task Force on Wage Theft, assign a police officer to investigate wage crimes, and create a hotline to report wage theft cases (and publicize the number for the hotline in the community).

And the Northwest Arkansas Workers' Justice Center will play an active role in that process,

working with the city of Fayetteville and campaigning for the passage of a wage theft ordinance and/or resolution that would give the proclamation real legislative bite by empowering the city to directly enforce labor laws.



Victory for Construction Workers

Thanks to the tireless organizing and campaigning of the Workers Defense Project/Proyecto Defensa Laboral in Austin, Texas, an IWJ affiliate, as of July 29th construction employers are no longer allowed to deny their workers rest breaks in Austin! Workers who are pushed to work for hours in the sun without a break are no longer left without recourse; they are no longer totally unprotected.

The Workers Defense Project filled City Hall with people from all different backgrounds, standing in solidarity with Austin's construction workers. "City Council could not say no," said Cristina Tzintzún, Director of the Workers Defense Project.

The new ordinance requires at least a 10-minute break per four hours of work on a construction site, and the ordinance must be posted at places of employment. Small as it may seem, this will make a real, palpable difference in the lives of countless workers.

This historic victory made headlines, from the Austin American-Statesman to FOX News and other media outlets.

Congratulations to our friends at the Workers Defense Project/Proyecto Defensa Laboral on seeing their hard work pay off with this critical victory!

Another Successful Year of Labor in the Pulpits

It was an exciting Labor Day Sunday this year for the Interfaith Worker Justice Committee of Colorado (formed in 2007) and Working America (the community affiliate of the AFL-CIO). Kevin Pape and Rev. Daniel Klawitter arranged for three unemployed activist members of Working America to share their personal stories in three different Denver-area churches on September 5.

The Working America activists gave brief testimonies from the pulpit about their struggles finding work in today's economy. All three pastors planned their services using IWJ's Labor Day liturgies and resources. At the end of the worship services, 57 congregation members signed up to join Working America in Colorado.

It helped that Pape and Rev. Klawitter are used to working together on worker justice issues. Last year, they co-hosted a forum on the Employee Free Choice Act at a United Methodist Church in Ft. Collins, Colorado, and hand-deliv-

ered "Have a Heart" Valentine postcards in February 2010 to their Colorado Senators urging them to vote to extend unemployment benefits.

Rev. Klawitter had this to say about the Labor Day Sunday partnership with Working America: "While many congregations are offering important job support services for the community (most commonly by providing assistance with writing resumes and networking), we felt it was important to bring in an organization like Working America that organizes unemployed people to directly lobby their elected officials for economic justice. And it is just so wonderful that the labor movement created this organization for non-union workers to have a voice."



Kevin Pape (left), Executive Director of Working America in Colorado. Rev. Daniel Klawitter, chairperson of IWJ-CO (right).

Kelly Wiedemer, the Working America member who provided the testimony on Labor Day Sunday at University Park United Methodist Church in Denver, said: "Labor in the Pulpits had a profound impact on the way I think about issues surrounding fair labor and social justice and their connection to the faith-based community. This was an experience that I will never forget."

Wage Theft *cont. from p. 5*

tors, which is a form of wage theft since these "contractors" are not entitled to minimum wage or overtime protections, and also are denied workers compensation, benefits other workers are provided, and must pay the employers' portion of payroll taxes. Some of the most promising legislative innovations are in Minnesota, where individual construction workers must apply to be certified as independent contractors (usually the employer does so), and in Colorado, which can now fine businesses \$5,000 for a first misclassification offense, \$25,000 for subsequent offenses, and debar companies from state contracts for up to two years.

IWJ is supporting national legislation that will strengthen the ability of workers, communities, and the U.S. Department of Labor to prevent wage theft and get back wages to workers who have been robbed. These include the Wage Theft Prevention Act, sponsored by Congressman George Miller (D-CA), which allows the DOL to pursue a case to conclusion past the current two-year

statute of limitations; the Employee Misclassification Prevention Act, sponsored by Sen. Sherrod Brown (D-OH) and Reps. Robert Andrews (D-NJ) and Lynn Woolsey (D-CA), which would ensure access to safeguards like fair labor standards, health and safety protections, and unemployment and workers' compensation benefits; and a new bill, the Wage Theft Prevention and Community Partnerships Act, which will allow the DOL to issue grants to community-based organizations for wage theft education and prevention efforts in partnership with government agencies.

IWJ's newly-updated Wage Theft Toolkit will be online soon. Go to www.iwj.org and click "Receive our Updates" to find out when this and other resources become available.

There are many different ways you can both show solidarity and advance local and national work on the Wage Theft Day of Action:

- Hold a prayer vigil in front of a business that is stealing wages with

workers willing to stand up. Send a delegation in to meet with the owner.

- Meet with your member of Congress or her senior staff to ask her to co-sponsor legislation (or thank her if she already has signed on) and discuss how she can garner support from her colleagues in congress.
- Organize an event promoting good businesses who oppose wage theft and whose owners will speak out about the issue.
- Organize a wage theft forum at your congregation or community center.
- Help union workers and organizers survey unorganized workers in their industry about wage theft.
- Contact a local worker center or religion-labor group about how you can assist their work, and think about making a donation.

For more information, contact IWJ Public Policy Director Ted Smukler, tsmukler@iwj.org or (773) 728-8400 x 39.

IWJ Opens New DC Office

IWJ's presence in the national policy arena is about to see dramatic growth. As of October, IWJ has a new DC office, which is headed up by two veterans of religion and justice work – Rev. Paul Sherry and Thom Shellabarger.

A longtime advocate for economic justice and civil rights, the Rev. Paul Sherry is a former President of the United Church of Christ and former Executive Director of the Community Renewal Society. He came out of retirement to be the Campaign Coordinator for the



Rev. Paul Sherry

Let Justice Roll Living Wage Campaign, the national anti-poverty mobilization effort sponsored by the National Council of Churches and many other faith-based and community-based organizations. He is co-author of *A Just Minimum Wage: Good for Workers, Business and Our Future* and the editor of *The Riverside Preachers*. He holds a doctorate in theology from Union Theological Seminary.

"No one in the country is more qualified to lead a faith and jobs initiative than Paul," says IWJ executive director Kim Bobo. "He has the right mix of history, relationships, and passion to drive this program." Ted Smukler, IWJ's public policy director, concurs. "Paul is a marvelous leader, a keen strategist with complete integrity. Just as important, Paul makes everybody feel like they're the most important person in the room, and it's genuine."

Thom Shellabarger is the former Policy Advisor for Urban and Economic Issues in the Department of Justice, Peace, and Human Development at the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (USCCB), the public policy and social action agency of the Roman Catholic bishops in the United States. This work entailed assisting the U.S. bishops in formulating policy on housing, community development, employment and low-wage workers, civil rights, and federal budget issues consistent with the social

teachings of the Church, and advocating on these issues with the Congress and the Administration.

"Thom brings 20 years of experience representing the faith community on Capitol Hill," says Bobo. "Like Paul, Thom was a founding board member of IWJ, and like Paul, he brings enormous wisdom and passion to the fight for economic justice."

"Thom has been a leader and a soldier for economic justice for decades in his work for the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops," says Smukler. "He's a man of deep faith and conviction. Thom's also an organizer and advocate who can move an agenda. He can get an economist to laugh, a politician to vote right, a bureaucrat to act, and a Bishop to issue a statement – tall tasks for anyone."



Thom Shellabarger

Rev. Sherry can be reached at psherry@iwj.org. Thom Shellabarger can be reached at tshellabarger@iwj.org.

Books of Note

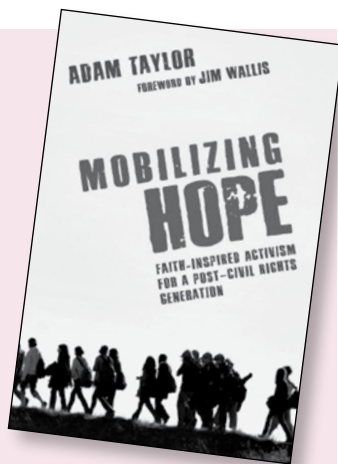
Breaks in the Chain: What Immigrant Workers Can Teach America about Democracy
by Paul Apostolidis (University of Minnesota Press)

Mobilizing Hope: Faith-Inspired Activism for a Post-Civil Rights Generation
by Adam Russell Taylor (InterVarsity Press)

Liberation Theologies in the United States: An Introduction
Edited by Stacey M. Floyd-Thomas and Anthony B. Pinn (NYU)

There is Power in a Union: The Epic Story of Labor in America
by Philip Dray (Doubleday)

Do It Anyway: The New Generation of Activists
by Courtney E. Martin (Beacon Press)



In Solidarity with
our Muslim
sisters &
brothers



With the wave of anti-Muslim vitriol currently permeating the airwaves and Internet, it is imperative that people of conscience take a stand. As people of faith, we reject this hate. Please join us in showing solidarity with our Muslim sisters and brothers.

You can do so by going to www.iwj.org and downloading the above sign – and spreading the word!

Jobs Crisis cont. from p. 1

working part time, the rates are approximately twice the official rates. National unemployment rates can also obscure large regional disparities. In cities and regions such as Detroit, Cleveland, the Central Valley of California, and the Gulf Coast, the unemployment crisis approaches a Great Depression scale.

For at least a portion of the past year, 53 percent of U.S. workers have been unemployed, underemployed, have given up looking for jobs that don't exist, or are incarcerated.

Our religious traditions teach us that work is a sacred act, that when we labor we are "God's hands" on earth. Those who work and those who cannot work must be treated fairly. "Woe to him who builds his house by unrighteousness, and his upper rooms by injustice, who makes his neighbors work for nothing, and does not give them their wages." (Jeremiah 22:13)

The issue of jobs and the economic crisis is one that faith communities are compelled to address as they face increasing distress in their pews and communities. IWJ, as the nation's leading interfaith voice for issues affecting workers, is engaging faith leaders in a dialogue on how to respond to this reality. In May, IWJ launched "Faith Advocates for Jobs," an interfaith coalition with the specific mission of coordinating the faith table on jobs and the economic crisis. We are thrilled by the addition of Rev. Paul Sherry, former President of the United Church of Christ and former Campaign Coordinator of the Let Justice Roll Living Wage Campaign, as the new director of IWJ's DC office and the lead staff of this project.

There are three principles we have adopted that provide the critical framework for a religious response to the economic crisis:

- Job creation and retention efforts must be targeted to reach the most vulnerable populations and regions.
- New jobs that are created should generate a long-term pathway to employment and provide living wages and benefits.
- The safety net must be restored for the unemployed and the poor, including extended unemployment

compensation, income support, and health care.

A committee of Faith Advocates for Jobs spent time thinking about the policy recommendations we should be advocating. While this will be refined through larger discussion and discernment, this is the current thinking:

- Reduce unemployment to 5 percent within three years. This would entail creating 11 million new jobs – only possible with massive government spending (\$100 billion in federal spending creates roughly one million jobs).
- Pass a new economic stimulus package. We need a bold plan to create and retain millions of jobs. The plan must be targeted to create and retain jobs in extremely distressed communities and demographic groups, including people of color and young workers, and must include strict accountability for job creation for any private sector company receiving tax abatements.
- Create public jobs – government jobs to rebuild infrastructure, green jobs, mass transit, jobs to fill needs that the private sector cannot create (i.e. expanded child care, cleanup of toxic dumps) jobs in education, etc.
- Support unemployed workers and families while the crisis persists. Eligibility for unemployment benefits and COBRA subsidies must be extended for long-time unemployed workers, and programs to help families access

all the benefits to which they are entitled must be expanded to maintain a safety net for the millions of unemployed, underemployed, and discouraged workers and their families.

- Provide federal assistance to state and local governments. At a time when demand for services is rising dramatically by those facing unemployment and poverty, state and local governments are cutting jobs and services as tax revenues decline and budget deficits need to be plugged. Aid must be provided to save jobs and maintain social safety net programs, education budgets, and public safety.

Rev. Paul Sherry will be scheduling a Faith Advocates for Jobs religious leaders retreat later this fall to develop a pragmatic program and plan of action. We can and must move this agenda forward, and create the urgency for our political leaders to take decisive action. We must not believe that nothing can be done or that the deficit ties our hands. The stakes are too high. IWJ will be working to create a large network of congregations that can both provide pastoral and practical care for those who are hurting as well as advocate for just and fair policies to get people back to work. IWJ will release resources for use in churches, synagogues, mosques and other places of worship. Go to www.iwj.org and click "Receive our Updates" to find out when these resources become available.

IWJ receives OSHA Susan Harwood Grant!

The U.S. Department of Labor's Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) has awarded \$220,000 to IWJ through its Susan Harwood Capacity Building Grant. This one-year grant will provide resources to IWJ and 13 of its workers centers to train low-wage workers on potential health and safety hazards in their workplace. Congratulations to our friends who also received the grant: the Workers Defense Project in Austin, Texas; CASA de Maryland; Clergy and Laity United for Economic Justice—California (CLUE-California); Make the Road New York; the National Council for Occupational Safety and Health (COSH); and the National Day Laborer Organizing Network (NDLON). IWJ would also like thank the Ford Foundation, the Public Welfare Foundation, and OSHA for providing an informative workshop in early June on how to apply for the grant.

Honor a Donor

For almost 15 years, IWJ has engaged the faith community in campaigns and programs that improve conditions and increase wages for workers. We have brought national attention to some of the most deplorable crimes against workers and have built a strong network of religion-labor groups and workers centers. Thanks to generous contributions from individuals, our work is made possible. Starting with this issue, we will honor and celebrate the individuals who put their faith into action by supporting justice for workers.

Bruce Boyens is a semi-retired labor lawyer based out of Denver. He has dedicated most of his career to labor and environmental law. His passion for worker issues grew from his experience as a community organizer, steelworker, papermaker and autoworker – jobs he took on earlier in his life in order to support his family while going through law school. Bruce has served as regional director and counsel for the United Mine Workers of America. He also worked as an underground coal miner for three years. He made his first gift to IWJ in 2008 and has been one of our strongest supporters since.

What worker issues concern you the most?

Wage theft, worker safety, immigration, union solidarity, inter-relationships between unions, and workers and the communities in which they work.

How did you first hear of IWJ?

I heard of Kim Bobo's work in Chicago in the early 1990s, and her interest in labor issues and the subsequent founding of IWJ.

“Command those who are rich to do good, to be rich in good deeds, and to be generous and willing to share. In this way they will lay up treasure for themselves as a firm foundation for the coming age.”

1 Timothy 6:18,19

What inspired you to give to Interfaith Worker Justice and invest at the level you have?

I was inspired by Kim's work and tireless energy in creating and maintaining the good works and social activism of IWJ for all these years.

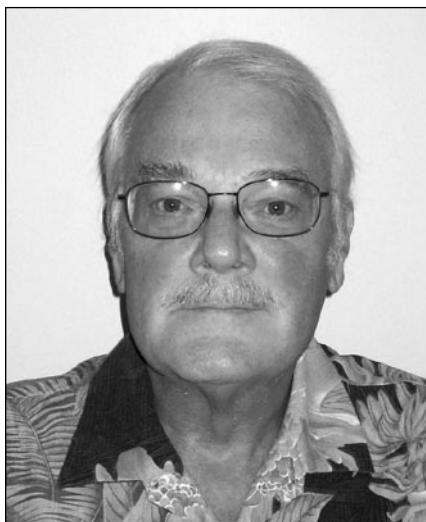
How does giving to IWJ enrich your life?

Any time you can help an organization like IWJ to be able to spread the word of workers' rights, and know that your giving has in some way allowed IWJ to help workers and communities – that's enriching.

What would you like other individuals to know about IWJ?

I want others to know that the word “interfaith” as espoused by IWJ means more than a religious organization. To me it means spreading the “social gospel” by interacting with the labor movement, workers and the community by both word and deeds.

To make a donation or to find out about other ways to give to IWJ, please contact Individual Outreach Coordinator Cathy Junia at 773-728-8400 ext. 42 or cjunia@iwj.org.



Yes, I want to support the work of Interfaith Worker Justice!

___ I would like to make a monthly pledge of:
 \$5 \$10 \$15 \$25 other _____
Please contact me to arrange for automatic deductions.

___ Enclosed is my gift of:
 \$35 \$50 \$100 \$250 other _____

If this is a tribute gift, please include:

Name of person being honored or memorialized:

Name and address of person to be notified:

___ Please mail me materials on how to include IWJ in my will.

Please make all checks payable to: Interfaith Worker Justice

Name (please print) _____

Congregation/Organization _____

Address _____

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Day Phone _____

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Denominational /Faith Body Affiliation _____

Sow the seeds of justice with a gift today!



INTERFAITH WORKER JUSTICE

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Network of Local Interfaith Groups Concerned with Labor Issues

ARIZONA Arizona Interfaith Alliance for Worker Justice, Phoenix; (602) 254-5452; Rev. Trina Zelle

ARKANSAS Interfaith Committee for Worker Justice, Little Rock; (501) 888-3270; Melba Collins

CALIFORNIA CLUE – California, Oakland; (831) 239-1254; Rev. Carol Been

Clergy and Laity United for Economic Justice, Los Angeles; (213) 481-3740 x101; Rabbi Jonathan Klein

Contra Costa Faith Works!, Martinez; (510) 232-2583; Maria Alegria

East Bay Interfaith Committee for Worker Justice, Oakland; (510) 893-7106 x314; Kristi Laughlin

Interfaith Committee for Worker Justice in San Diego, San Diego; (619) 584-5744 x22; Rabbi Laurie Coskey

Interfaith Council on Economics and Justice, San Jose; (408) 269-7872; Rev. Rebecca Kuiken

Sonoma Interfaith Committee for Worker Justice, Santa Rosa; (707) 935-1642

COLORADO IWJ-Colorado/FRESC for Good Jobs and Strong Communities, Denver; (303) 477-6111 x36; Rev. Daniel Klawitter

CONNECTICUT Connecticut Center for a New Economy, Hartford; (860) 524-9341; Renae Reese

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA Jobs with Justice – Interfaith Worker Justice of Greater Washington, Washington D.C.; (202) 974-8224; Mackenzie Baris

FLORIDA Interfaith Action of Southwest Florida, Immokalee; (239) 986-0688; Brigitte Gynther

South Florida Interfaith Worker Justice, Miami; (305) 598-1404; Jeanette Smith

GEORGIA Georgia Poultry Justice Alliance, Atlanta; (770) 313-5811; Rosalynn Gresham

ILLINOIS Arise Chicago (formerly Chicago Interfaith Committee on Worker Issues), Chicago; (773) 769-6000; Rev. C.J. Hawking

DuPage Interfaith Worker Justice, Naperville; (630) 236-8633; Tom Cordaro

INDIANA Central Indiana – St. Joseph Valley Project, South Bend; (574) 229-6536; Jim McConnell

Community, Faith, and Labor Coalition, Indianapolis; (317) 509-7453; Nancy Holle

Northwest Indiana – Calumet Project, Hammond; (219) 845-5008; Bessie Dent

LOUISIANA New Orleans Interfaith Worker Justice Center, New Orleans; (202) 285-2567; Keron Blair

MASSACHUSETTS Interfaith Committee for Worker Justice, Boston; (617) 840-5860; Anthony Zuba

MICHIGAN Interfaith Worker Justice – Metro Detroit, Oak Park; (313) 961-0800; Sandra Williams

MINNESOTA Workers Interfaith Network, Minneapolis; (612) 332-2055; Veronica Menendez

MISSOURI Interfaith Worker Justice – Greater Kansas City, Kansas City; (816) 924-1800; Rev. Spencer Barrett

NEBRASKA Interfaith Worker Justice of Nebraska, Omaha; (678) 836-3870; Rev. Fredrick J. McCollough

NEW YORK Labor Religion Coalition of the Capital District, Albany; (518) 482-5595; Marjorie A. DeVoe

New York City – Greater New York Labor-Religion Coalition, New York; (212) 406-2156 x4637; Rabbi Michael Feinberg; labrelig@aol.com

New York State – Labor-Religion Coalition, Latham; (518) 213-6000 x6294; Brian O'Shaughnessy

Central New York Labor-Religion Coalition, East Syracuse; (315) 431-4040 x 40; Tim Fay

NORTH CAROLINA Beloved Community Center, Greensboro; (336) 230-0001; Rev. Nelson Johnson

OHIO Cincinnati Interfaith Committee on Worker Justice, Cincinnati; (513) 621-4336; Sister Monica McGloin

Greater Columbus Jobs with Justice, Columbus; (614) 282-4901; Jim Tackett

Toledo Area Jobs with Justice, Toledo; (419) 475-8380; Karen Krause

OKLAHOMA Central Oklahoma Community Forum, Oklahoma City; (405) 634-4030; Tim O'Connor

Eastern Oklahoma Labor Religion Council, Tulsa; (918) 832-8128; John Gaines

OREGON Springfield Solidarity Network/JwJ, Eugene; (541) 736-9041; Bayla Ostrach

Portland JwJ – Religious Outreach Committee, Portland; (503) 236-5573; Margaret Butler

PENNSYLVANIA Philadelphia Area Jobs with Justice, Philadelphia; (908) 418-5935; Gwen Snyder

Labor-Religion Coalition of Western Pennsylvania, Pittsburgh; (412) 361-4793; Fr. Jack O'Malley

TENNESSEE Interfaith Worker Justice of East Tennessee, Knoxville; (865) 573-0655; Rev. Jim Sessions

Workers Interfaith Network, Memphis; (901) 332-3570; Rev. Rebekah Gienapp

Middle Tennessee Jobs with Justice, Nashville; (615) 545-5056; Garrett Stark

WISCONSIN Interfaith Coalition for Worker Justice of South Central Wisconsin, Madison; (608) 255-0376; Rabbi Renée Bauer

STUDENT AND FACULTY GROUPS*

Catholic Scholars for Worker Justice, Joseph Fahey, (914) 948-2993, Joseph.Fahey@manhattan.edu

San Francisco Bay Area Seminar-ians for Worker Justice, (510) 893-7106 x314, swj@workingeastbay.org

Southern California Young Leaders Project, Bridie Roberts, (515) 229-7149, bridieroberts@yahoo.com

Boston Seminar-ians for Worker Justice, Anthony Zuba, (617) 840-5860, info@massinterfaith.org

WORKER CENTERS*

Arizona Interfaith Alliance for Worker Justice, Phoenix, AZ; (602) 254-5452; Rev. Trina Zelle

Northwest Arkansas Interfaith Workers' Justice Center, Springdale, AR; (479) 750-8015; Fernando Garcia

Pilipino Workers Center, Los Angeles, CA; (213) 250-4353; Lolit Lledo

Young Workers United, San Francisco, CA; (415) 621-4155; Tiffany Crain

Northeast Georgia and Rural Worker Center for Economic Justice, Athens, GA; (706) 549-1142; Ray McNair

Arise Chicago Worker Center, Chicago, IL; (773) 769-6000; Adam Kader

St. Joseph Valley Project – Workers' Rights Center, South Bend, IN; (574) 287-3834; Gregor Koso

Food AND Medicine/Worker Center of Eastern Maine, Brewer, ME; (207) 989-5860; Martin Chartrand

Southern Maine Workers' Center, Portland, ME; (207) 699-8264; Paul Farrell

Massachusetts Coalition for Occupational Safety and Health, (617) 825-7233 x15; Marcy Goldstein-Gelb

Washtenaw County Workers' Center, Ann Arbor, MI; (734) 474-7107; Marisa Huston

Michigan Organizing Project (MOP) Community Workers Center, Kalamazoo, MI; (269) 344-2423; Adrian Vazquez

Centro de Trabajadores Unidos en Lucha, Minneapolis, MN; (612) 332-0663; Veronica Menendez

MPOWER, Morton, MS; (601) 709-9219; Maria Cazorla

New Labor, New Brunswick, NJ; (732) 246-2900; Marien Casillas Pabellon

Restaurant Opportunities Center of New York, New York, NY; (212) 343-1771 x19; Jeff Mansfield

Workers' Center of Central New York, Syracuse, NY; (315) 218-5708; Patricia Rector

Central Carolina Workers' Center, Greensboro, NC; (336) 230-0001; Rev. Nelson Johnson

Western NC Workers' Center, Morganton, NC; (336) 706-1380; Bless Burke

Cincinnati Interfaith Worker's Center, Cincinnati, OH; (513) 621-5991; Don Sherman

Memphis Workers' Center, Memphis, TN; (901) 332-3570; Alfredo Peña

Workers Defense Project/Proyecto Defensa Laboral, Austin, TX; (512) 391-2305; Emily Timm

Houston Interfaith Worker Justice Center, Houston, TX; (713) 862-8222; Laura Boston

Madison Workers' Rights Center, Madison, WI; (608) 255-0376; Patrick Hickey

Voces de la Frontera Workers' Center, Milwaukee, WI; (414) 643-1620; Jeanne Geraci

* alphabetized by state