

The mission of the NORTHWEST WORKERS' JUSTICE PROJECT is to defend and strengthen the workplace and organizing rights of low-wage contingent and immigrant workers in the Pacific Northwest.

New policies to stop wage theft in sight

NWJP launches Tenth Anniversary campaign

This October, NWJP will celebrate ten years of standing for dignity in the workplace!

In honor of our tenth anniversary, we're raising a special fund to add a third attorney to our legal team. Increasing our lawyer ranks by 50% will help grow the organization to a sustainable size – allowing us not only to intensify our efforts for worker justice, but also to prepare others to carry forward this cause.

The campaign launched in Feb. with a 65th birthday bash for Exec. Director, Michael Dale. Although we are preparing a new generation of advocates, this was no retirement party. In Michael's speech, he spoke about his passion for the many challenges that lie ahead and the need to confront those challenges in community with experienced and newer leaders and advocates. (To read Michael's speech, see www.nwjp.org/support-us/tenth-anniversary/.)

Thanks to strong community support, we are already three-quarters of the way to our fundraising goal!

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NWJP staff, clients, and volunteers join our Coalition partners on the steps of the state Capitol Building after giving public testimony on several bills to combat wage theft.

The 2013 legislative session in Oregon is in full swing, and NWJP has been hard at work leading our partners in the Oregon Coalition to Stop Wage Theft to address weaknesses in the law that allow some employers to get away with stealing wages.

As of early May, our current focus is on better regulation of wage thieves in the construction industry. Wage theft is rampant in construction, due in large part to the use of exploitive labor brokers who lack the integrity, financial stability or sound business practices to be responsible for workers' hard-earned wages.

HB 2977 seeks to eliminate such abusive employers from the subcontracting chain by requiring construction labor brokers to get a license and post a bond. The bill extends to construction an established regulatory system that has already proven effective in reducing abuse of Oregon's

farm and forestry workers.

Two other bills are also still under consideration, including legislation to ensure that employers provide legally-required breaks (HB 3307) and to strengthen definitions of employment to combat misclassification and help workers hold employers accountable for unpaid wages (HB 3142).

A fourth bill to create a wage lien to help collect unpaid wages (SB 573) will not advance further, but a bipartisan work group is exploring ways to solve the problem of uncollectible wage judgments.

The Coalition appreciates the strong support for anti-wage theft efforts shown by members of the legislature already this session, particularly leadership from Senators Shields and Prozanski and Representatives Barton, Dembrow, Doherty, Fagan, Holvey, Matthews, Reardon, and Witt. ☺

See PAGE 3 for more about the campaign



Photo by Doug Yarrow

Left: Executive Director Michael Dale (far left) plays with musical group Bajo Salario at an NWJP celebration for his 65th birthday. ¡Gracias, Bajo Salario!

Northwest Workers' Justice Project

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* The Northwest Employment Education and Defense Fund (NEED Fund), our partner organization, was founded alongside NWJP to support our 501(c)(3)-eligible program work.



A warm welcome to new team members

We're thrilled that the talented Leslie Lambert (second to left) has joined NWJP's staff to support our fundraising efforts and volunteer program. Leslie brings a wealth of knowledge gained through years of community work, parenting, and, most recently, building and managing a small business for five years in Todos Santos, Mexico. A Washington native, Leslie returned to the Pacific Northwest several years ago and has become very involved in immigrant rights efforts in Portland. Leslie is pictured above

with the "Students for Worker Justice," a group of undergraduate student volunteers from Portland State University's Community Development Program who are making big contributions to our fundraising work. Thanks as well to spring law clerks Bonnie Sailer (below, right) and Diana Winther (below, left). Both are completing their second year at Lewis and Clark Law. We're also grateful to Jackie Swanson, a volunteer who is about to finish her final year at Lewis and Clark Law. Special mention to Emilie Slater, a graduating senior at Bennington College in Vermont, who interned with us earlier this year. ✪

New attorney stands for workers' rights



Violet Nazari

One of the ways that NWJP strengthens enforcement of workers' rights is to enlist cooperating attorneys and provide these attorneys with training and support.

Banafsheh Violet Nazari, a solo practitioner serving working people and immi-

grant communities, is one of the attorneys with whom we've recently joined forces.

Violet started on the path of workers' rights soon after she and her mother immigrated from Iran. "At work, my mom got the short end of the stick," she explains. "She didn't understand the language and she didn't understand the corporate policy and procedure. I often had to negotiate on my mom's behalf. It irked me that non-native speakers didn't have advocates in the workplace."

At CUNY Law in New York, Violet was inspired by her labor law class. After law school, Violet clerked with Multnomah Co. Circuit Court Judge Janice Wilson and then hung out her own shingle, focusing on plaintiff-side employment cases. Violet is currently co-counseling a misclassified "independent contractor" case with NWJP.

When asked why workers' rights, Violet says, "What our clients really want is their dignity and humanity restored. I want to go through that process with them, as a team, so that they can grow and heal."

We are delighted to be working with Violet and other new attorneys like her. ✪



Clients advocate for stronger protections

With Oregon's state legislature in session, many of the workers that NWJP has represented in legal actions are now speaking out for laws to prevent the kinds of wage violations they suffered.



Above: José Luis (left) and María Rosa (right) visited the Oregon State Capitol in April to testify to the widespread problem of breaks violations in the workplace.

Below: Low-wage workers, labor, faith, small business, and tax fairness advocates came together at the Oregon State Capitol in February for our 2013 Stop Wage Theft Advocacy Day. Here, groups prepare to attend visits with state legislators.



Photo by Doug Yarrow

Debbie (pictured to right) and former co-worker Jennifer are both single mothers who were misclassified as independent contractors. They were paid far less than the minimum wage for hours of work taking photos of foreclosed homes for banks.

In addition to pursuing their own wages, the two women are raising awareness by participating in NWJP's "Stories to Stop Wage Theft" project—a series of short videos featuring low-wage Oregon workers who have had their wages stolen. You can view the videos as we roll them out, online at www.nwjp.org.

Selso (pictured below, second to left) has been fighting for more than three years to get paid for two weeks of landscaping work. Despite a decision in his favor from the state Bureau of Labor, he has been unable to collect his wages from his employer, a notorious wage thief.

In February, Selso made his first trip to the Oregon State Capitol for a Stop Wage Theft lobby day organized by NWJP and our partners. There, he joined dozens of other contingent workers and allies in advocacy training and visits to lawmakers. He returned to the Capitol a few weeks later to give testimony at a committee hearing on the need for more effective tools for wage recovery.

María Rosa and José Luis (pictured left) also have a history of standing up for their workplace rights, with NWJP's support. Both raised their voices again last month at a hearing on a bill to give workers who don't receive legally-required rest and meal breaks an effective way to hold their employers accountable to the law. ✪



Debbie is featured in one of a series of videos documenting stories of wage theft in Oregon. Watch online at www.nwjp.org.

Thou shalt not steal:

Oregon faith communities unite to help workers get paid



Rex Hagans of EMO (right) and Hank Kaplan of the Jewish Federation of Greater Portland (left) testified in April in support of bills to stop wage theft.

At the legislature and in places of worship, Oregonians of faith are coming together to help rid the state of wage theft. Over 100 leaders and members of faith communities signed a letter in Feb. urging Oregon's legislature to take action against wage theft in 2013. Oregon faith leaders have spoken this year at numerous events and public hearings to move forward solutions. Since Labor Day 2012, many congregations have held events to educate their members about wage theft.

Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon, IMIRJ, Oregon Center for Christian Voices, Jewish Federation of Greater Portland, Jobs with Justice, and the Archdiocese of Portland's Office of Life, Justice & Peace have been working closely with NWJP and other partners in the Oregon Coalition to Stop Wage Theft to organize faith communities against stolen wages. ✪

Progress in fight to disentangle local police & immigration



After years of advocacy by local residents, Multnomah County Sheriff Dan Staton has taken an important step toward restoring family unity and community trust by limiting compliance in county jails with immigration hold requests from Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE).

Under the Sheriff's new immigration hold policy, the Multnomah County Sheriff's Office will no longer hold individuals

Left: NWJP staff interprets for Roberto Santiago (center) at a Multnomah County hearing on deportations. Roberto testified about raising his two young daughters on his own when his wife was deported after being arrested on false charges.

charged with some low-level misdemeanors for ICE after they would otherwise be released. Neither will it comply with ICE hold requests based solely on immigration charges or convictions.

This change was achieved through years of advocacy by immigrant families and member organizations of the ACT Network, of which NWJP is part. We are heartened that Sheriff Staton and the Multnomah County Commissioners have finally taken action to start breaking the links between local law enforcement and deportation, and we look forward to working together to further strengthen the county's immigration hold policy. ☘

A call for stronger worker protections in comprehensive immigration reform

NWJP applauds U.S. Senate bill on immigration reform, S. 744, for the possibility of immigration relief for millions of hard-working immigrants. This relief includes a registered provisional immigrant (RPI) status that will allow many to start working legally and to work toward permanent residence and, eventually, citizenship.

However, we do have serious concerns. Among them is the potentially dramatic increase in the number of temporary foreign workers that will be allowed under the bill, especially given the lack of adequate worker protections.

As we have seen over and over again, temporary worker programs put foreign workers, whose immigration status is tied to their employer, at risk for exploitation.

In addition, good wages and even good jobs for current U.S. workers, including those who will be seeking permanent status under immigration reform, will be at risk. Some employers will undoubtedly seek to obtain a cheaper, foreign labor force through these expanded programs.

Those with RPI status will particularly be at risk as their continued presence in the U.S., as well as the possibility of permanent status, will be linked to whether they can stay continuously employed.

This bill does not go far enough to protect foreign temporary workers or U.S. workers. We are working with our allies to find ways to improve protections and not to let proposed protections be amended out of the bill. ☘

Oregon celebrates legislative advances for immigrant rights

This May Day, thousands gathered on the steps of the Oregon State Capitol to watch Governor Kitzhaber sign into law a new policy that creates an Oregon Driver Card so that all Oregonians, regardless of immigration status, can get licensed to drive and get car insurance.

This historic step comes on the heels of the passage of tuition equity legislation that enables Oregon's undocumented students to pay in-state tuition rates at Oregon state schools.

NWJP extends our congratulations to all those who have fought so hard for many years to achieve these critical advances toward respect, family unity, and opportunity for all Oregonians. ☘

Battle continues to strengthen H-2B visa regulations

NWJP continues to work with our allies nationwide to improve protections for H-2B workers and U.S. workers affected by this temporary worker program.

In recent months, the U.S. District Court in Philadelphia granted a permanent injunction to prevent the Department of Labor (DOL) from continuing to use a method to calculate wages for temporary workers that the Court and DOL had already found was illegally depressing U.S. wages. The Court's injunction required DOL to promulgate new rules within 30 days.

However, while we were waiting for new regulations to be issued, the 11th Circuit decided in a Florida case that only the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), and not DOL, has authority to make rules in the H-2B program.

In response to this apparent conflict, DOL and DHS, together, promulgated new interim final rules on how the wages for H-2B workers will be calculated.

The new formula has the potential to raise wages by as much as \$2.12 an hour for H-2B workers and similarly employed

U.S. workers recruited during the H-2B application process. Such a wage increase is likely to also make these jobs more attractive to workers in the U.S. Comments on this new rule are due June 10, 2013. After that point, DOL and DHS will promulgate the final rule.

The Senate proposal for immigration reform could change the way that wages are calculated once again. As the bill advances, NWJP and allies are working to enhance protections in the bill for foreign and U.S. workers. ☘

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1:

We'll be working hard over the next several months to raise the remaining \$21,000 and bring more allies into the struggle. Together, we're building NWJP's power to stand with low-wage workers in future decades. ☸

Donations to our Tenth Anniversary Campaign are currently being matched 1:1 by support from Meyer Memorial Trust!

Special thanks as well to Tenth Anniversary contributors:

The Initiative for Public Interest Law at Yale

Kaiser Permanente Community Fund at Northwest Health Foundation

And more than one hundred individual community supporters!

Tenth anniversary donor spotlight:

We are deeply grateful to all of our Tenth Anniversary campaign supporters and honored to highlight a few:

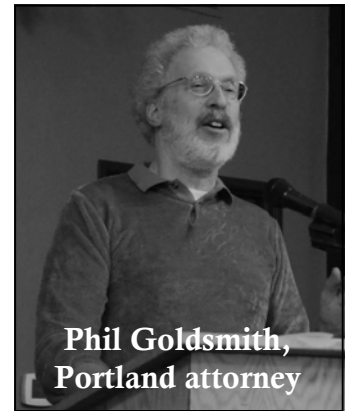
United Food and Commercial Workers Union Local 555, Oregon School Employees Association, and the Coon Family Foundation have each contributed \$5,000 to support Oregon's most vulnerable workers.

Long-time Portland attorney and NWJP ally, **Phil Goldsmith**, devised an innovative strategy to contribute to the campaign. He first helped hold an educational event about wage theft at his synagogue, and then offered to match donations made by other members of his congregation to NWJP to help solve the prob-

A Member's Union
OSEA
AFT Local 6732

UFCW
a VOICE for working America 555

Coon Family Foundation



Phil Goldsmith,
Portland attorney

lem. His creative efforts have already brought a number of new allies into NWJP's work. ☸

As part of our campaign against wage theft, we have resources available to support congregations and other groups in hosting wage theft workshops. You can find them online at www.nwjp.org or feel free to contact us directly.

Scenes of celebration

SEIU Local 49's union hall was packed on February 23rd as 150 people gathered to celebrate NWJP and the 65th birthday of Executive Director, Michael Dale. The party brought in \$12,000, and every dollar of that was doubled by matching funds from the Meyer Memorial Trust. The powerful sense of community at the party was inspirational, and we are deeply grateful to everyone who helped make the celebration a success!





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Please note that
WE'VE MOVED
(only a few blocks away
from our old offices).

The **Oregon Coalition to Stop Wage Theft** is pushing hard for stronger state laws to get all workers paid.

NWJP is honored to work alongside this diverse group of partners, which includes 35 worker, immigrant, faith, community, and small business organizations across the state.

Join NWJP's Tenth Anniversary campaign!

Your gift will help intensify our efforts for worker justice for years to come.

And, every cent you give now will be doubled, thanks to the support of the Meyer Memorial Trust!

Please use the enclosed envelope or donate online at www.nwjpp.org. Learn more about the campaign inside.

Thank you for your support.



Oregon Coalition to Stop Wage Theft members are (in alphabetical order): Adelante Mujeres, American Friends Service Committee, Beyond Toxics, Causa Oregon, Centro Latino-Americano, Common Cause, Community Alliance of Lane County, Economic Fairness Oregon, Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon, Family Forward Oregon, Human Dignity Coalition of Crook County, Interfaith Movement for Immigrant Justice, Jewish Federation of Greater Portland, Main Street Alliance of Oregon, Northwest Workers' Justice Project, Office of Life, Justice & Peace of the Archdiocese of Portland in Oregon, Oregon Action, Oregon AFL-CIO, Oregon Center for Christian Voices, Oregon Center for Public Policy, Oregon School Employees Association, Oregon Strong Voice - Southern Oregon Chapter, Oregon Thrives, PCUN Oregon's Farmworker Union, Portland Jobs With Justice, Project REconomy, Rural Organizing Project, SEIU Local 49, SEIU Local 503, Tax Fairness Oregon, Teamsters Local 206, United Food and Commercial Workers Union Local 555, VOZ Workers' Rights Education Project, We Are Oregon, Oregon Working Families, and growing!