

Metro Justice News

WORKING FOR SOCIAL, ECONOMIC, AND RACIAL JUSTICE SINCE 1965

FALL 2017

Caring for Each Other: Campaign for NY Health Update

By Cadejo Jones

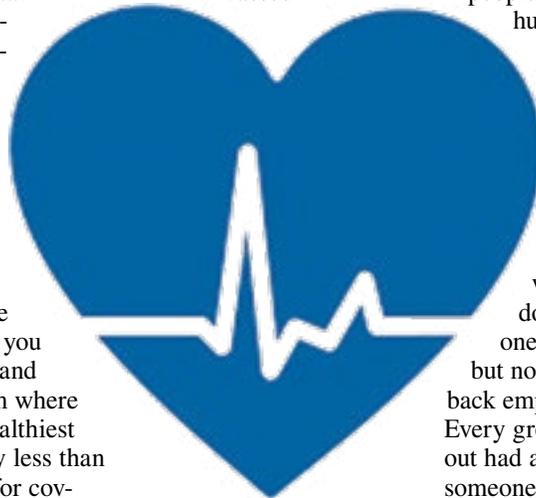
Attempted repeal of the Affordable Care Act is like the villain in a B-movie slasher film: no matter how many times it seems like it's finally vanquished it keeps coming back, it pretty clearly wants all of us dead, and it won't hesitate to pick us off, one by one. Health care has become such a central issue because it's a central fear. Health care is a matter of survival, and now that it could disappear overnight, panic creeps into each waking day. There's a phrase I've heard repeated over the past year at protests, actions, and even in regular conversation: *The Feds have abandoned us*. Hard to argue against it—over the past year the feeling that none of us has a say at the national level has grown unbounded.

Enter the **Campaign for New York Health** (CNYH) and the **NY Health Act**. As Rohith Palli laid out so well in the Summer 2017

issue of this newsletter, the NY Health Act (NYHA) is our chance to make sure everyone in our state is covered. No copays or deductibles, everything from dental to mental health to long-term care covered under the same system, no more worrying about whether a doctor or hospital network will take the insurance you have or not—and all in a system where all but the wealthiest 2% would pay less than they do now for coverage. The last time it came up in the state senate, NYHA had 31 cosponsors. One more, and it has majority support. Coverage in a single-payer system at the national level seems millennia away, but in New York it could very well be a reality before the end of the decade.

I went to my first round of canvass-

ing in September. By that time, CNYH had already run some canvassing sessions in neighborhoods and a table at the Public Market. I hadn't really canvassed



before and was nervous. I expected people to be hostile, to get doors slammed in my face, and to come back empty-handed. I've no doubt that some of the other first-time canvassers felt the same way, even though no one said it aloud. Yet despite the doubts we were still there, and by the end of the training

some of the unspoken anxiety had dissipated. We were out to get people informed about the NYHA, sure, but we were also out there to hear the stories of people who had been hurt and excluded by the current system and offer up an alternative along with some hope.

There were a lot of doors where no one answered, but none of us came back empty-handed. Every group that went out had a story about someone they connected with, often more than one. For each canvassing session in the past 3 months, a different group of canvassers have shown up, yet two constants appeared. Everyone received much more response than they expected, and in the neighborhoods we went through, people were on board with the idea of the NY

Health Act.

I left an important detail out at the beginning of this report. I told you I'd heard *The Feds have abandoned us*, but that wasn't the whole phrase. Sure, at the national level, the forces at work loom over us like eldritch titans, monolithic and hard to provoke into action, but *the national level isn't the only way to create change*. We have the power to change our world at the local and state level. Canvassing is only a stepping stone. From here, CNYH is reaching out to those who responded and working to get them involved in the campaign, as well, to bring more voices and ideas into the movement. At the core of the Campaign for New York Health is the same message I've heard again and again for the past year:

The Feds have abandoned us, they'd say, so we've got to take care of each other.

Metro Justice, Inc.

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Founded in 1965, Metro Justice, an affiliate of Citizen Action of New York, is Rochester's leading grassroots, member-driven, progressive organization working for social and economic justice, and racial change. When we join together to demand a more fair and just society, our individual voices are louder, our efforts more effective, our power greater.

Metro Justice Council

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Vice-President.....Aaron Michaeu
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Racial Justice Chair.....Windsor Wade

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Task Forces & Campaign Committees

AQE/Metro Justice Education Committee, Campaign for New York Health, Ciudad Hermana (Sister City), Dignified Retirement, Education, Elder Justice, Housing, *Fight for 15*, Peace Action & Education (PA&E), Racial Justice Initiative, Rochester Committee on Latin America (ROCLA)

Task Force Liaisons

Michael Argaman, Ciudad Hermana
Doug Noble, Peace Action and Education
Grania Marcus, ROCLA

Metro Justice Council meets on the third Monday of the month at 7pm. Meetings are open to the public. If you would like to speak, please phone Andrew Thomas, andrew@metrojustice.org, 585-397-3535 or info@metrojustice.org.

Meaningful Action for Elder Justice

By Pat Krause

Metro Justice Elder Justice Committee member Laurie Kash was a featured guest once again on WXXI's Connections with Evan Dawson on Monday, October 2.

Ms. Kash's intense first-hand experiences and long-time advocacy on behalf of elders makes her eminently qualified to speak on many nursing home issues. On this show she addressed the appalling fact that the Trump Administration is forcing the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) to backtrack on their prior prohibition of mandatory nursing home pre-arbitration agreements, which would prohibit suing a nursing home when residents have been harmed by them. Ms. Kash urged listeners to contact CMS to protest this planned action.

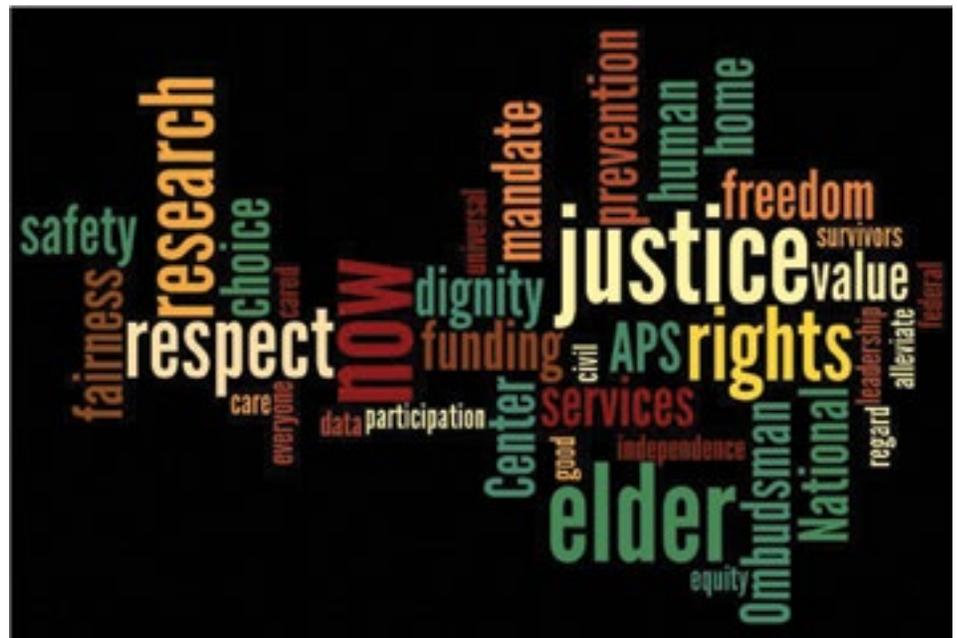
The public was also reminded of the need for meaningful action as a follow-up to the 2016 audit of the NYS Department of Health by Comptroller Thomas DiNapoli. Instigated by Ms. Kash herself, the Comptroller's scathing press release and its link to the report (<http://www.osc.state.ny.us/press/releases/feb16/022216.htm>) reveal how woefully inadequate the Department of Health is in enforcing State

and Federal nursing home regulations to assure decent elder care. This past summer the Elder Justice Committee succeeded in convincing the Comptroller's office to do a follow-up review, which his office told us will be released this fall.

Additionally, Ms. Kash focused on another ongoing, crucial effort of our committee: to have the NYS Legislature finally pass the "Safe Staffing Act for Quality Care," which would finally mandate minimum levels of nursing staff in long-term care facilities and hospitals.

The Elder Justice Committee received recognition as part of Ms. Kash's excellent contributions to this WXXI program. She and many listeners who responded to her contributions to this program called on Evan Dawson to have more shows such as this one to address Elder issues. Stream the program at wxxinews.org/post/connections-navigating-elder-care-system-and-elder-rights.

More information on the Elder Justice Committee's accomplishments and other helpful elder care resources, including the latest federal government ratings of Monroe County's 34 nursing homes, may be found at our website, www.metrojustice.org/elder_justice.



This Is What Evil Legislation Looks Like

By Arnie Matlin

The NICA Act [H.R. 1918] passed the U.S. House of Representatives “unanimously” on October 3, 2017. (Unanimously in this context means that the bill was of so little interest or importance that the House majority and minority leaders just accepted it without debate.)

The NICA Act (Nicaragua Investment Conditionality Act of 2017), if passed by the Senate, would require U.S. representatives in multilateral lending institutions to vote against loans to Nicaragua until the Government of Nicaragua is taking effective steps to: (1) hold free, fair, and transparent elections overseen by credible domestic and international electoral observers; (2) promote democracy, as well as an independent judicial system and electoral council. Chuck Kaufman is National Co-Coordinator of NicaNet/Alliance for Global Justice. (He is also a winner of ROCLA’s International White Dove Award.) Chuck paraphrases the NICA Act in this way: No loans “until the Sandinista government overthrows itself and turns over power to the U.S.-approved opposition whose support among voters is in the single digits.”

Michael Argaman and I met with Rep. Louise Slaughter to ask her to oppose the NICA act. Rep. Slaughter was opposed to the bill, but she told us that it would surely pass in the House of Representatives, because Rep. Ros-Lehtinen, who is retiring, was the sponsor. Rep. Ros-Lehtinen is a far-right Republican, so the fact that she is retiring is actually good news. The bad news is that, as Rep. Slaughter predicted, the House wanted to give her this bill as a going-away present.

Chuck Kaufman writes: “Very little shocks me anymore when it comes to the U.S. political system, but I have to say that my jaw dropped when I heard this. Can you imagine a more cynical, corrupt, immoral, dare I say, imperial act than to ruin a country’s economy as a retirement gift? In lieu of a gold watch,

dear Ileana, we give you the suffering of six million people!”

This bill makes no sense other than the punishment that Rep. Ros-Lehtinen thinks Nicaragua deserves, for whatever reason. There is simply nothing true about it. The Sandinistas win because they are popular. A CID Gallup poll, published Sept. 21st, found that President Daniel Ortega has an 89% favorability rating among the Nicaraguan people. Seventy-two percent of respondents said President Ortega always does what’s best for the country, and 74% expressed a positive opinion about his leadership. (The survey, carried out between September 8th and 14th, is based on interviews with 1,200 individuals nationwide.)

Also, Nicaragua *has* invited observers to the November 5th municipal elections. The OAS has signed an agreement with the Nicaraguan government to send an observers’ mission. Also, the President of the National Council of Universities, Telemaco Talavera, announced that 5,000 students and teachers will be observers at these elections. He added that electoral observers will be present at all polling stations nationwide, offering assistance to citizens and protecting their right to vote.

The only Member of Congress that I know spoke publicly against the NICA Act was Texas Rep. Vicente Gonzalez. He

objected because he knew that passage of the bill would strain relations with Nicaragua. It would lead to instability in Nicaragua and increase migration to the United States through his Texas district. Gonzalez added that Nicaragua has its economic and political challenges, but it has advanced toward the resolution of poverty, climate change, and economic growth.

Very little direct U.S. foreign aid goes to Nicaragua. However, the U.S. has virtual veto power for any loans given to any country by the IMF and the World Bank. (The so-called Washington Consensus.) Nicaragua counts on receiving funds from these sources, and if the funds were blocked, Nicaraguans would suffer. Why would any Representative or Senator want to make Nicaragua so poor that undocumented immigrants would join the people from Guatemala, Honduras, and El Salvador making their way to our borders? There’s no rational explanation other than pure evil.

We hope that the Senate won’t even consider the NICA Act [S.972], although it was introduced by Ted Cruz. The Senate may have more important evil matters to accomplish. Even so, I believe it would be important to call or write to Senators Gillibrand and Schumer telling them to oppose the NICA Act. The Act is bad for Nicaragua and bad for the US.

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with
prices
fit for
the
entire
family.**

Metro Justice Alternative Fair

FRIDAY, DEC. 1
5pm - 9pm

SATURDAY, DEC. 2
10am - 4pm

First Unitarian Church
220 Winton Road, Rochester

- Free child care
- \$5 Suggested donation



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From the Peace Action & Education Task Force

The PA&E task force continues its antiwar efforts despite the discouraging apathy of citizens in Rochester and throughout America toward the horrific wars being waged across the globe by their country, in their name. All US antiwar groups are facing the same dilemma, as we know from our affiliations with state and national groups, and we struggle, some more optimistic than others, to find ways to move forward.

Andrew Bacevich, an influential historian who has written many books on American militarism, recently attempted in a widely disseminated article to explain the reasons behind this dilemma. What follows is my summarized version of his article.

Why do Americans today show so little interest in the wars waged in their name and at least nominally on their behalf? Why, as our wars drag on and on, doesn't the disparity between effort expended and benefits accrued arouse more than passing curiosity or mild expressions of dismay? Why, in short, don't we give a @#\$\$%&!/? Here are eight distinctive but mutually reinforcing explanations:

1. US casualty rates are low. By using proxies and contractors and relying heavily on drones and airpower, America's war managers have been able to keep a tight lid on the number of US troops being killed and wounded. True, plenty of people who are not Americans are being killed and maimed. But those casualties have next to no political salience as far as the United States and its citizens are concerned; they literally don't count (and generally aren't counted).

2. The true costs of Washington's wars go untabulated. The dollars expend-

ed pursuant to our post-9/11 conflicts will ultimately number in the multi-trillions. Imagine the benefits of investing such sums in upgrading the nation's aging infrastructure, its schools, health care, etc. But many actually see our bloated military expenditures as a boon, a source of corporate profits and jobs. As such, they avert their eyes from the opportunity costs of our never-ending wars.

3. On matters related to war, American citizens have opted out. The American people have defined their obligation to "support the troops" in the narrowest imaginable terms, ensuring above all that such support requires absolutely no sacrifice on their part. In effect, citizens and their elected representatives in Washington agree: supporting the troops means deferring to the commander-in-chief.

4. Terrorism gets limitless hype. International terrorism comes nowhere close to posing an existential threat to the United States, compared to other threats such as climate change or even the opioid epidemic. Yet having been sold a bill of goods about a "war on terror" that is essential for "keeping America safe," we are easily persuaded to scatter US troops across the globe.

5. Blather crowds out substance. When it comes to foreign policy, American public discourse is ahistorical, uninformed, and mindlessly repetitive, subscribing still to the grand illusion that the US is the indispensable moral leader of the free world. Along with warnings about the dangers of isolationism and appeasement, such grandiose posturing makes it unnecessary to probe too deeply into the actual origins and purposes of American wars, past or present. Cheerleading displaces serious thought.

6. Besides, we're too busy. Responding to the demands of the Information Age is not, it turns out, conducive to deep reflection. We live in an era (so we are told) when frantic multitasking has become a sort of duty and when being overscheduled is almost obligatory. As a result, a dwindling number of Americans have the time or inclination to ponder questions like: Why has the Afghanistan War lasted 16 years? Why doesn't the finest fighting force in history actually win?

7. Anyway, the next president will save us. At regular intervals, Americans indulge in the fantasy that, if we just install the right person in the White House, all will be well. Ambitious politicians are quick to exploit this expectation. The irony of Trump perpetuating wars that he once roundly criticized -- and his handing the conduct of those wars to generals devoid of ideas for ending them -- almost entirely escapes notice.

8. Our culturally progressive military has largely immunized itself from criticism. As recently as the 1990s, the U.S. military establishment aligned itself with the retrograde side of the culture wars. But now, culturally, the armed forces have moved left. Today, the services go out of their way to project an image of tolerance and a commitment to equality on all matters related to race, gender, and sexuality. When President Trump announced his opposition to transgendered persons serving in the armed forces, senior officers pushed back. Having women graduate from Ranger School or command Marines in combat more than compensates for mindless, unwinnable wars.

A collective indifference to war has become an emblem of contemporary America. No one cares. *Deal with it.*

Metro Justice Archive Project Update

You Are Not Alone, Our History Says

By Cadejo Jones

You probably know that Metro Justice has been around since 1965. I have a box of Kraft Dinner that expired before my older sister was born. These bits of information have, in my estimation, about the same amount of usefulness.

By which I mean they are barely useful. Like, at all.

What sets the difference between a 52-year old organization and a 35-year old box of now-fossilized spaghetti is the context of that information. Both of these things have existed significantly longer than I've been alive, but the way they've affected the world around them is radically different.

Fortunately, unlike the box, quite a bit of explanation exists as to why exactly Metro Justice exists, and how it ended up in its present location. Despite countless moves over half a century, quite a lot of documents, newsletters, recordings, research files, court cases, and other pieces of history have survived the shuffles. In a few bins and three filing cabinets, there exists an exhaustive history of not only the fights the organization undertook, but also the why and the how. Not only did the various forms of Metro Justice take action on a hundred fronts, it also did extensive and at times exhaustive research into the issues they were taking action on.

A brief history might be in order. In 1965, a group formed under the name **Friends of FIGHT**, established to aid the black-led group FIGHT in their efforts to address the causes of the 1964 Rochester rebellion (aka "race riots"). As the two organizations began to drift apart, Friends of Fight found itself with an existential crisis, which it resolved by restructuring itself and taking on the name **Metro-Act** in 1968. Over the next 25 years, Metro-Act set its sights on everything from housing inequality (which led to a Supreme Court case in 1975, *Warth v. Seldin*) to anti-war efforts, to fair media coverage (which spurred notable action by the FCC), to anti-nucle-



A kid in a candy store: Cadejo stumbles across the documents for the 2nd Circuit Court of Appeals, a case brought by some Metro Justice members among others.

ar war efforts, to just about every major issue Rochester faced during the back half of the 20th century. In 1996, Metro-Act merged with the Rochester Peace and Justice Education Center to become **Metro Justice**, which it continues to be today. In 2017, Metro Justice realized the importance of the files and folders it had stored in its office and began an endeavor to organize and preserve these materials.

This history is something I've been piecing together in the past three to four months of work on the archives. Piecing it together is the only way to go, since while, yes, all of this history is there, and far more than could ever be squeezed into just one newsletter, next to none of it is in a coherent order whatsoever. At present, there are only two of us working through the archives, and we haven't even finished

taking stock of everything in the archives yet, much less begun to organize them and focus on preservation.

The past year has been terrifying. Everything seems to be collapsing at once, and a lingering dread creeps like a fog into every conversation, every glance at social media, and every waking moment. Still, I'm not afraid. In fact, I'm the most motivated I've been in years. I can't think of the last time I felt a fire like this. Why?

The Archives.

Sifting through page after page of old members writing back and forth, reading passionate newsletters spanning decades, reading clipping after clipping about protests, actions, changes, debates—I'm hearing voices. History, in its own way, is speaking. It whispers to me, **You are not alone**. It's telling me that these issues aren't new, that the fight has been going on for decades, and that while there are failures or opportunities that were lost, there were successes, too, and victories, and that there have been so many people in this city that truly care and want to make this world a better place. Unlike the strange little green and white cardboard container that sits on my family's piano and may bring about the ending of all things if it is opened, I do truly believe that Metro Justice has made the world better, and will continue to do so long after any of us are gone.

As to where we go from here, there's plenty of work to be done. I've begun interviewing long-time members to get an oral, first-hand account of the history of Metro Justice, and as mentioned before, there are plenty of documents that haven't yet been accounted for or described. If you have interest in helping us out, or if you are a member who might be in possession of documents relevant to the history of Metro Justice please contact Fundraising and Membership Director, Andrew Thomas (andrew@metrojustice.org) and he can put you in contact with me.

Communications Committee Update

Be part of a MJ Video Revolution!

By David Cota-Buckout

Since the election of President Trump in November 2016 and his inauguration in January 2017, Metro Justice has been working tirelessly on a strategic plan that encompasses all areas of racial, social and economic justice not just for its members but also for the communities that Metro Justice serves. The creation of a Communications Committee, led by Abby Comstock-Gay Güner, has established an evolutionary shift for the organization in how Metro Justice communicates to members, volunteers, and the community at large. One such change has been the developing implementation of videos as a primary media tool.

While marches and rallies may have seen videos in the past, this year the use of this technology (through a smartphone and tripod) can be viewed from multiple other angles: the Mayoral Candidate Forum, City Council Candidate videos, Board of Education Candidate Forum, and the Deeper than Dissent video series, just to name a few! The Communications Committee isn't stopping there, either; the group is constantly trying to find other ideas to fuel the video-media fire that it has created, and is training people to assist with videotaping and editing so that more people can be involved in the process.

Videos are a huge source of attention on social media, as well; a majority of the videos posted on Facebook, for instance, are receiving between 500 to over 2,000 views. And that doesn't even count sharing

from others to their friends! Thus it just makes so much sense that Metro Justice is making this area a priority.

Thus, the Communications Committee needs your help to expand their efforts in this media circle (as well as other projects) so that Metro Justice continues to be on the cutting edge and a leader in the community. If you are interested in helping out with the committee, please contact andrew@metrojustice.org and he'll connect us. You can be part of a revolution!



Abby Comstock-Gay Güner, Communications Committee Co-chair, interviews Ravi Mangla, Metro Justice member and Citizen Action of New York Communications Manager about the New York State Constitutional Convention.

Welcome New Metro Justice Staff



Mercedes Phelan, Lead Education Organizer

I'm a native of Rochester, NY. I studied Education at Keuka College and proceeded to work with children in the Rochester area. In 2016 I became the Community Outreach Chair for the Rochester Chapter of NOW (National Organization for Woman). Through encouragement of friends and family I am excited to be the new Community Organizer for Metro Justice/AQE. In my spare time I enjoy spending time with my daughter Allison and our dog (Percy P Jones). I also enjoy Football (go Steelers!), Camping and reading. I look forward to getting to know everyone and becoming a part of the family.

Mayor's Report

Low Wages Cause Poverty in Rochester - Effect Concentrated in Black and Latino Community

By Colin O'Malley, Organizing Director

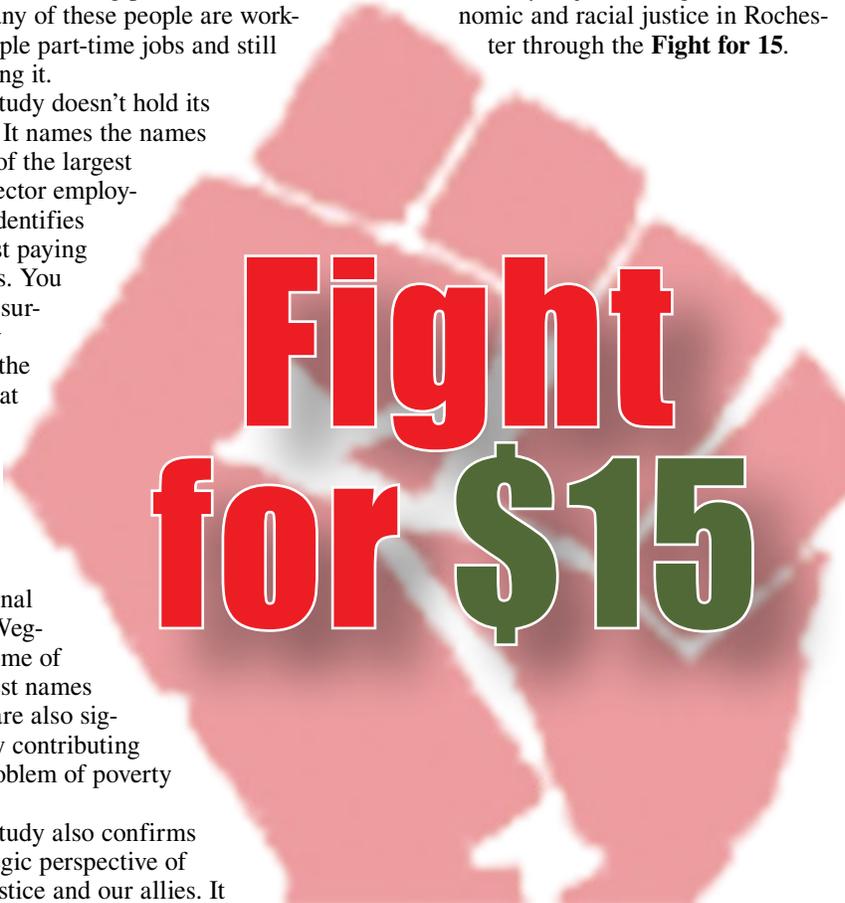
The Rochester Mayor's Office of Innovation and Strategic Initiatives released a report this past July. The report confirms what low-wage and fast-food workers have been saying for years: poverty in Rochester is primarily caused by low wages. It says that 61% of people working part-time jobs are living below the self-sustainability line, meaning they need public assistance to meet their basic needs. The most infuriating part is that we know many of these people are working multiple part-time jobs and still not making it.

The study doesn't hold its punches. It names the names of some of the largest private sector employers and identifies the lowest paying industries. You won't be surprised by many of the names that appear: University of Rochester, Rochester Regional Health, Wegmans. Some of the biggest names in town are also significantly contributing to the problem of poverty wages.

The study also confirms the strategic perspective of Metro Justice and our allies. It

shows that the industries with the highest number of low-wage jobs and the most over-representation of Black and Latino communities are "health and human services" and "food service and accommodation."

The **Fight for \$15** through Metro Justice continues to organize in food service, and our close allies at SEIU1199 and the Rochester Worker Center are organizing in health and human services. Connect with us today to join the fight for economic and racial justice in Rochester through the **Fight for 15**.



**Fight
for \$15**

Welcome New Metro Justice Staff



Ashley Gantt, Fight for 15 Organizer

Hi Metro Justice family. I'm Ashley, the new Fight for 15 Lead Organizer. I'm so excited to join your team as well as get into the grit of this work for workers' equity. For the last 5 years I have worked in the heart of the social justice movement as an organizer with B.L.A.C.K. Currently I serve as chair of the Advisory Board for the YWCA of Rochester where we work with families directly affected by homelessness, addiction, and domestic abuse. Most recently, I became Co-leader and Diversity Chair for Action Together Rochester where we fight for progressive causes through collaboration, education, equity and advocacy in our community. Joining Metro Justice team is an honor and I'm excited to run alongside of each of you.

The Point of the Spear: Organizing with Low-wage Workers in the Age of Trump

Mohini Sharma - Restaurant Worker Organizer



Restaurant workers organizing with Metro Justice hold a demonstration and press conference outside Village Gate to launch anti-sexual harassment campaign on Labor Day.

This time last year, more than 150 people gathered at Metro Justice and made the commitment to fight back against the newly elected President of the United States, Donald Trump. Since then, Trump, his administration, and the ruling class elite have launched attack after attack on every aspect of people's lives: public education, health care, reproductive rights, environmental regulations and disaster relief, and workers' rights. Metro Justice, however, has continued to fight back fiercely and accomplished major victories in the past year!

A lynchpin of Metro Justice's resistance has been the Fight for \$15 and a Union. While all of us have a variety of identities that shape our lived experience, one experience nearly all of us have in common is working.

Whether it's inside or outside of our homes, all of us play a part in maintaining the fabric of society. Working is the foundation of our lives; it gives us the goods and services we need and want. Exploiting workers is also the foundation of capitalism: keeping wages, benefits, and the number of employees low, as well as keeping workers out of decision-making, are among the key ways in which business owners maximize profit. That's why worker-based movements like the Fight for \$15 and a Union are so crucial to combatting

the assaults so many of us are experiencing on our livelihoods; the wages we make, the job security we have, and the decision-making power we wield at work has very direct impacts on our ability to live and live prosperously.

Even before Trump, working in the United States has been abysmal.

According to the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, workers in the United States consistently clock in some of the longest work weeks in the world, while also consistently ranking poorer than workers in other developed countries in living standards, work-life balance, poverty, debt, and access to benefits like health care and paid time off.

Now with Trump as President, the unrestricted capitalism his administration unabashedly believe in and embolden corporations to facilitate, is on par for making working life in the United States even more exploitative and unsustainable. Expanding right-to-work laws and giving employers ownership of their workers' tips are but a couple of the various bills on the table to chip away at our working rights. Unless, that is, workers across the United States come together and resist.

The Fight for \$15 and a Union is an integral part of that necessary resistance. More than 12 million workers work in food service, which makes them one of the largest workforces in the country. Food service workers are also among the most exploited workforces in the country: they get paid poverty wages, experience wage theft, sexual harassment, and hazardous work conditions regularly, and have little to no job security. Being both among the largest and the most exploited workforces in the United States, food service workers have the

power to influence labor standards in every profession in the country if they improve standards of their own industry.

Food service workers in Rochester, with the support of Metro Justice, have made noteworthy strides in doing just that over the last year. Fast food workers have joined full service restaurant workers in Rochester's Fight for \$15 and a Union. On Labor Day, restaurant workers launched their campaign against sexual harassment, which received more media coverage than any other event that Labor Day. The owner of Lento, Arthur Rogers, and the owner of the Red Fern, Andrea Parros, are the first restaurant owners in Rochester to sign a letter in which they make a public commitment to collaborating with their workers to combat sexual harassment in restaurants!

While restaurant workers in Rochester will continue to develop and fight for effective policies to eradicate sexual harassment from their workplaces, they will also be taking on another crucial fight: the right to their tips. Currently, the National Restaurant Association (which includes the CEO's off chain restaurants like Olive Garden, Applebees, and Chilis) is working with Trump to pass a law that would allow restaurant owners to keep their workers' tips as long as they paid their workers the minimum wage, which is a poverty wage to begin with. If made federal law, such a policy would throw restaurant workers even further into poverty and make them even more vulnerable to sexual harassment from their bosses.

Restaurant workers in Rochester have every intention of not tolerating this blow. On November 27 at 6 PM, Metro Justice will be hosting a public meeting for restaurant workers to gather and plan action to win a living wage, a union, an end to sexual harassment at work, and the right to keep their hard-earned tips. In doing so, the Fight for \$15 and a Union will continue to not only fight for food service workers, but for all workers to have power at work and therefore the agency to make their livelihoods prosper.

Racial Justice Initiative Update

Continuing the Fight Against Racism and Injustice

By Pat Mannix and Judy Prevratil

Race

is not a crime. Poverty is not a crime. And yet, in our white-supremacy society both are being used to target those victimized by police brutality and justice-system inequities. Too often white people are innocent until proven guilty while people of color are guilty until proven innocent.

In Rochester, an in-depth study of police behavior, the “Police Accountability Report,” has been prepared by Enough Is Enough members Barbara Lacker-Ware and Ted Forsyth. Metro Justice/Racial Justice Initiative have endorsed this report, which is now in the hands of City Council for approval and implementation.

The RJI Bail Subcommittee has been studying racial injustice in the justice system. A simple parking ticket and car seizure can lead to a dramatically negative life change. A person who is unable to pay the ticket then gets a much bigger fine, gets arrested, cannot afford bail, and subsequently is jailed. Family and work life take a downward spiral. Cities around the U.S. are grappling with this problem, some by discontinuing the bail process and others by setting up a charitable bail fund.

Monroe County Public Defender Timothy Donaher spoke to our subcommittee, and he may use us to help with statistics-gathering for a study his office is conducting. It is believed that Governor Cuomo will be including some form of bail reform in his 2018 budget.

We are looking forward to again holding our Introducing Racism workshops. We are also available to do programs for other groups you may belong to.

Windsor Asamoah-Wade’s term on the MJ Council ends in January. Robert Hoggard will be our new Council representative. Individual RJI members have also been busy with many other community organizations, including: Rochester Alliance of Communities Transforming



A simple parking ticket and car seizure can lead to a dramatically negative life change.

Society (RocACTS), Enough is Enough (EIC), Police Accountability Board (PAC), Showing Up for Racial Justice (SURJ), Facing Race-Embracing Equity (FR-EE), Secure and Just Communities Alliance (SJCA), Sierra Club, Moving Beyond Rac-

ism (MBR), Shades of Sisterhood (SOS), Movement for Anti-Racist Ministry and Action (MAMA), Ciudad Hermana, and League of Women Voters (LWV).

We always welcome new members in our ongoing fight for racial justice.

Your commitment to social justice can continue beyond your own lifetime. Consider making Metro Justice a bequest in your will or as a beneficiary on a life insurance policy.

Contact
Andrew Thomas
585-397-3535

MJ
Planned Giving
Justice Forever

JAM FOR JUSTICE

A BENEFIT CONCERT & ART AUCTION FOR METRO JUSTICE



Her Dad's Banjo

8:00 pm



Vanishing Sun

9:00 pm



DJ Dorian Leander

10:00 pm

Metro Justice

November 17th 2017
\$10 Suggested Donation
@Butapub



http://www.metrojustice.org/jam_for_justice

Metro Justice Campaign Priorities

Fight for 15: Thousands of fast-food workers in over 100 cities across the United States are doing whatever it takes to win a living wage of \$15 per hour and a union. Metro Justice is helping to bring this fight to Rochester! We believe in quality jobs not poverty jobs. We believe the best way to get there is developing worker power and fighting for unions in all workplaces! Join us as fast-food workers help to inspire a new wave of low-wage worker movements!

Health Care: Because we believe that every person should have access to quality, affordable health care, we are working with our partners across the state to get a single payer system of health care adopted in New York State.

Education: Because all students have the right to quality public education that serves them and their communities, we are rebuilding our campaign to fight for meaningful progressive reform of the Rochester City School District.

Elder Justice: Because we believe in eliminating elder abuse, neglect and exploitation. We are dedicated to enabling elders to live purposeful, self-directed, meaningful and dignified lives in their homes and communities.

Racial Justice: Because we believe that poverty and structural racism are interwoven in our society, combating institutional racism is a central part of our fight for economic justice.



If not us, who? If not now, when?

Yes, I want to support the work of Metro Justice!

Name _____

Street address _____

City _____

State/Zip _____

Phone _____

Email _____

Levels of support

Annual:

\$30 \$50 \$75 \$100 Other \$ _____

Monthly:

\$10 \$15 \$25 \$75 Other \$ _____

Charge my credit card

Visa MasterCard

Credit card no. _____

Expiration date _____ 3-digit security code _____

Name on credit card _____

Signature _____

Enclosed is my check

If you would like your contribution to support our campaigns and lobbying work, make checks payable to "Metro Justice." If you would like your contribution to be tax-deductible, please make check payable to "Metro Justice Education Fund".

Mail to: Metro Justice Membership 1115 East Main Street, Rochester, New York 14609

