

We are MAKING CHANGE @WALMART

Monthly Update for Allies

August 2012

OUR Walmart Members Won't Be Silenced

Over the last year, OUR Walmart has grown from a group of 100 Walmart workers to an army of thousands of members in hundreds of stores across 42 states. The worker-led group has elevated the voices of Walmart Associates speaking out for change—and after months of continuous collective action with allies in stores, communities, city halls, and even taking over the mic at the company's recent shareholder meeting, Walmart and the Walton heirs are paying attention.

Walmart is stepping up its efforts to silence OUR Walmart members with unjust firings, cutbacks in hours, tougher work assignments, and other disciplinary actions. But with the support of allies around the country, OUR Walmart members are standing up and fighting back.

To support workers as they fight back against retaliation visit www.corporateactionnetwork.org/Walmart

Meet one OUR Walmart member who will not be silenced by Walmart:



Girshriela Green

Earlier this year, Girshriela was one of four Associate-Shareholders who introduced a resolution calling for transparency in executive pay. For months, she has been meeting with allies in the African American and faith communities, sharing the stories of Walmart Associates and how the largest retailer needs to change how it treats its employees. Six days after she spoke before

thousands at a rally in Los Angeles, Walmart terminated Girshriela's employment in July. But it's not stopping her.

In This Edition

OUR Walmart Members Won't Be Silenced

1

Jobs With Justice Hosts National Workers' Rights Event

2

Members of OUR Walmart Defend Greeter's Rights

2

Food, Processing and Warehouse Workers File an Ethics Complaint

3

OUR Walmart Deepens Ties with Womens' Labor Groups

3

New Yorkers Rally for Low Wage Workers

4

In Philadelphia, Workers Stand for America

4

Corporate Action Network

5

Upcoming Delegations

5

In the News

5

Jobs With Justice Hosts National Workers' Rights Event

Three OUR Walmart members were among the main presenters at "Organizing as a Civil Right: The Struggle for Dignity and Respect at Walmart," hosted by the Jobs with Justice National Workers' Rights Board in Washington, D.C. Terry O'Neill, President of the National Organization of Women (NOW), and Barbara Ehrenreich, author of *Nickel and Dimed*, both emceed the online live-streamed event. Workers from both retail and the supply side of Walmart shared their stories of the pressures and demands of working for the world's largest retailer. Both groups of workers discussed how they had been collaborating their efforts—in the stores, warehouses, and throughout the distribution and supply chain.

Wessa Milien and Angela Williamson, OUR Walmart members from Florida, were fired earlier this summer for speaking up for themselves and their co-workers. Since then, both Milien and Williamson are traveling around the country meeting other Walmart Associates to join OUR Walmart. Ernestine Bassett from Laurel, MD also presented that in the recent storm and power outage that put millions in the dark in the D.C.-metro area, store managers threatened to take the losses of food gone bad out of workers' quarterly payouts. Ana Diaz, a Mexican guestworker and member of the National Guestworkers' Alliance, shared how she and her co-workers exposed forced labor in Walmart's U.S. supply chain and the extent of abuse and violent threats made by the Walmart supplier. Both groups of workers are determined to keep fighting for their basic human rights throughout Walmart's retail and supply chain.

Likewise, all allies in attendance agreed to support the efforts of workers in Walmart's stores and supply chain as they fight for improved work conditions and against unjust retaliation by Walmart.



Members from OUR Walmart Come Together to Fight for Walmart Greeter's Rights

Members of OUR Walmart recently came together and held an action in the Walmart Gulf Breeze store in Pensacola, Florida. The action was held to support Walmart greeter Richard Vincent. Despite a doctor's note, management denied Richard a chair to assist him in his job as a greeter. Walmart's policy leaves it to the discretion of the individual store manager whether to provide a chair or not.

OUR Walmart member Angela Williamson held a sit-in to get Vincent his chair. With the support of OUR Walmart members, Vincent was granted a chair and Walmart promised not to retaliate against Vincent for taking action.

Food, Processing, and Warehouse Workers File a Formal Ethics Complaint with Walmart

On Thursday, workers representing three links in Walmart's global supply chain – food production, processing, and warehousing– announced the filing of a formal ethics complaint with Walmart's corporate executives in Los Angeles. The complaint outlines systemic violations of Walmart's own Statement of Ethics and Standards for Suppliers.

Standing in front of the proposed site of a Walmart store in Los Angeles' Chinatown, workers and supporters described working conditions that include enslavement, high injury risk, hazardous equipment, retaliatory firings and discipline, and chemical exposure in the production, transport and sale of Walmart merchandise.



"This is a pattern. No matter the country, no matter the workplace, no matter the worker, we see that Walmart and its contractors deny responsibility of these working conditions. They ignore serious problems and fire workers who stand up for change," said Guadalupe Palma, the Deputy Campaign Director of the Warehouse Workers United, an organization committed to improving warehouse jobs in Southern California. "This behavior should not be rewarded with more stores opening." Walmart has been trying to expand into urban areas—often facing community protest and opposition.

In the U.S., Walmart suppliers continue to retaliate against workers who speak out about safety concerns, low pay, and lack of benefits. In Riverside, CA, after warehouse workers filed a comprehensive complaint with the state of California detailing broken equipment, limited access to water, extreme heat, and other violations of state law, two warehouse workers were suspended indefinitely. Both Carlos Martinez and David Garcia won their return to work after filing charges with the state.

Members of the Chinatown community also joined the rally. Chance Martorelli of the Thai Community Development Center and King Cheung of the Chinatown Community for Equitable Development spoke, saying residents are not interested in the expansion of low wage jobs, retaliation, injury and dangerous working conditions and the destruction of the local community.

OUR Walmart Deepens Ties with Womens' Labor Groups

While in Washington, D.C. two OUR Walmart members, Angela Williamson and Wessa Milien, met with members of the Coalition of Labor Union Women. Also present were representatives from the Communications Workers of America, Family Values @ Work, the National Partnership for Women and Families, the National Women's Law Center, and members of the AFL-CIO's Civil, Human, and Women's Rights Department. The group discussed areas of collaboration, including providing support for workers that have experienced retaliation from Walmart, how their local union affiliates could get involved with the Making Change at Walmart campaign locally and the possibility of joint legislation to address workers' challenges.



New Yorkers Rally for Low Wage Workers



This week, OUR Walmart members joined UFCW Locals, RWDSU, Region 1 Staff and Walmart Free NYC along with taxi drivers, security guards, dishwashers, car washers, other low wage employees and elected officials at the New York Workers Rising Day of Action. The group called for an increase in minimum wage and a stronger safety net for working families.

OUR Walmart leader Cindy Murray spoke about Walmart driving down standards for all workers by paying low wages and showing a lack of respect for its employees. The crowd responded by saying those were exactly the reasons they did not want to see a Walmart in New York City.

In Philadelphia, 40k Workers Stand for America Rally

Last weekend the AFL-CIO held a 40,000 person "Workers Stand for America Rally" in Philadelphia. UFCW Local 1776 attended the event and did outreach on OUR Walmart's organizing efforts.

The rally sought to remind both political parties that a strong and prosperous America cannot be measured by the stock market or gross domestic product, but by economic opportunity and hope -- hope that our children and grandchildren will have the same shot at the American dream that we did.

The group introduced America's Second Bill of Rights, which include the Right to Full Employment and a Living Wage as well as Right to a Secure, Healthy Future and

Right to a Voice at Work. All of these values are similar to Making Change at Walmart's United Demands. These similarities demonstrate the growing importance of working together to address common problems workers are seeing across the board. As the world's largest private employer, Walmart has driven down standards in nearly every industry, due to the fact that other employers are forced to compete with Walmart's cost-cutting practices.



Join Us and the Join Corporate Action Network!

Interested in getting more involved with the campaign? If so, please visit Corporate Action Network at www.corporateactionnetwork.org/Walmart

Corporate Action Network is an exciting new online tool that provides the opportunity to become more active in the Making Change at Walmart campaign. It allows us to easily share our events, messaging and materials. You can download instructions on how to get started in your community, fliers and toolkits. Plus, you can interact with other activists working on similar issues.

The Making Change at Walmart campaign has started posting information about taking action and how you can get involved with the campaign. Below are just a few of our existing projects. More coming soon!

- **Walmart and Women's Issues Toolkit**
- **Stand Up to Walmart in Your Community**
- **Taking a Stance Against Retaliation - Walmart Workers Will Not Be Silenced**

Join a Campaign Briefing Near You

The Making Change at Walmart campaign, in partnership with OUR Walmart and Warehouse Workers United, will be doing a series of campaign briefings throughout the month of September. You can see the calendar outlined below and if you haven't already set up a briefing for you and your partners, please be in touch with sfabela@ucfw.org to figure out how you, too, can learn more about how you can be a part of standing with OUR Walmart leaders and make change at Walmart this fall.

September 5 – Chicago
September 6 and 7 – DC
September 11 and 12 - San Francisco
September 13 and 14 – Boston
September 17 and 18- Portland
September 19 , 20 and 21 –NYC
September 25 and 26 – Miami
September 27 and 28 – Seattle

In the News: Weak Earnings Haunt Walmart as New Allegations of Money Laundering and Tax Evasion Emerge

Last week, Walmart released its second quarter results which fell well short of expectations. The company is still in negative same store sales on a three year stacked basis, far behind Target, its closest big box competitor. Its pace of growth has slowed as well, both domestically and internationally. After posting a 2.6 percent U.S. growth rate in the first quarter, Walmart came in at 2.1 percent for the second.

This should come as no surprise as Walmart continues to deal with the fallout of the bribery and cover-up scandal. Walmart's list of woes now includes Congressional allegations of tax evasion and money laundering in addition to buying off officials. Walmart plans to scale back its expansion overseas. Instead of the 30 to 33 million square feet of international floor space Walmart had said it would add this year, it now plans to add 21 to 23 million.

Growing evidence that Walmart's reliance on a growth-at-any-cost business model is starting to take its toll on Walmart's profitability.