



The Workers' Rights Center 2010 AT A GLANCE

In 1999, individuals and organizations from both the faith and labor communities - with a shared concern for worker justice - came together to form the Interfaith Coalition for Worker Justice. One of the first activities of the organization was to constitute a Fact Finding Delegation for the Latino Workers' Project. What had been heard anecdotally was borne out by the statistics. "Can't Afford to Lose a Bad Job" was the name of the report released in December of 2001. The key recommendation of the report was to open a workers' rights center.

The Workers' Rights Center (WRC) opened at the Villager Mall (2300 South Park Street) in November 2002. Since then we have helped hundreds of workers save their jobs, assisted in recovering over \$200,000 in unpaid wages, overtime, and penalties and provided hundreds of workers with referrals to government agencies, legal counsel and social services agencies. The WRC has provided basic workers rights training to thousands of workers through community based training programs and has trained hundreds of volunteers in local, state, and federal labor law as workers' rights advocates. The WRC has used the information gathered to initiate campaigns to push for stronger standards, greater accountability from public officials, and a voice for workers at their jobs.

Who is using the Workers' Rights Center? The WRC has worked with thousands of people in South Central Wisconsin who have come to the WRC with workplace problems. Here is a snapshot of who is using the WRC.



Industries

- 26.6% Hospitality (Restaurant & Hotel)
- 15.5% Construction
- 13.6% Manufacturing & Warehouse
- 11.9% Retail/Service
- 11.7% Janitorial
- 3.8% Food Production/Meatpacking
- 3.8% Clerical & White Collar
- 2% Healthcare (Hospitals, nursing homes, homecare)
- 1.6% Agricultural Labor
- 1% Childcare/Education
- 1% Transportation
- 0.5% Landscaping
- 4.6% Other

Age Avg. age:37; Median age: 35

Language 69% Spanish, 33% English, 4% Bilingual; Spanish/English, 0.3% French

Gender 56.8% Male, 35.6% Women, 4.9% Not recorded

Geographic distribution

Madison: 65.5%
 Suburbs/Outlying, Dane County: 15.2%
 Outside Dane County: 13.9%
 Not Recorded: 5.4%

Race/Ethnicity

64.7% Latino
 14.1% White
 9% African
 8% African American
 1.6% Asian
 2.7% Other

Hourly Wage: Average wage: \$11.08/hr
 Median wage: \$10/hr

National Origin: Mexico:	53.26%
U.S.:	22%
South America:	5.7%
Central America:	5%
Caribbean:	1.4%
Africa:	1%
Other:	3%
Not Recorded:	9%



Types of issues reported?

- 37% Wage & hour complaints.
(unpaid/overtime wages, vacation etc.)
- 7.9% Discharged unfairly
- 15.5% Discrimination
- 10% Workers' Compensation
- 3.3% Social Security No Match Letters/Work Authorization
- 2% Health & Safety
- 24% Other (FMLA, Unemployment, disability)

What campaigns and initiatives has the Workers' Rights Center been involved in?

One of the goals of the Workers' Rights Center is to identify the underlying problems that emerge from the cases that come in and then address the root of those problems--whether it is a problem employer, an unresponsive government agency, an inadequate law, or a lack of a voice for workers on the job. Since opening, the WRC has been involved in a number of campaigns that were initiated by a worker coming into the WRC

Building Worker Power.

- Organized local participation in and support for the Immigrant Workers' Freedom Ride.
- Assisted numerous employees in using 'concerted action' in the workplace and utilizing the NLRB in protecting their rights.
- Coordinated a national campaign against Yum Brands for the unjust firing of dozens of long-term employees.

Holding Government Accountable.

- Convinced the District Attorney to take a more active role in prosecuting wage claims against employers.
- Assisted in building a national campaign to fight Wage Theft.
- Held public demonstrations to draw attention to the need to strengthen the Department of Labor.

Strengthening Workers' Rights.

- Led faith leaders, low-wage workers and volunteers in support of a successful campaign to establish a new minimum wage in Madison.
- Helped initiate the Healthy Families, Healthy City Paid Sick Leave initiative for the City of Madison.

Advocating for Immigrant Workers

- Held trainings to educate employers about immigrant worker issues and their obligations concerning Social Security No Match letters.
- Lobbied for comprehensive immigration reform and held form the Madison area Immigration Reform Coalition.

A special thanks to all the supporters and volunteers who have helped make the WRC a strong and vital voice for workers in our community. We look forward to working with everyone in the future.