Dear friends,

As Co-Chair of our Steering Committee, I have had the privilege of working and learning alongside many courageous members in 2013. We learned how to organize a campaign of cleaning workers who demanded their labor rights through trainings in strategy, working in teams, and piecing together various components of an effective non-violent action to improve working conditions. We continued to develop leaders among low-income workers who want lasting change.

Mariana López,  
Steering Committee Co-Chair

Our Mission

We are a worker-led center organizing for economic justice and dignity for all!

Members and Volunteers

In 2013, 60 low-wage workers joined Workers’ Dignity as members, and laborers won back more than $90,000 in unpaid wages, bringing our grand total of recovered wages to $185,000. Over 600 workers participated in the Know your Rights Trainings held across the city in English classes, homeless shelters, and our workers center.

Just Hospitality Campaign

Our Just Hospitality Campaign launched in February of 2013, after several workers from a downtown hotel joined our monthly Know Your Rights Training. After a six-month campaign with several public demonstrations, hundreds of supporters rallying on the side of the housekeepers, and the dedicated support of our legal advisory board, hotel housekeepers recovered over $63,000 in wages and compensation. Additionally hotel workers are reporting that they are now earning about $9.00 per hour and break times are being respected.
In April, Workers’ Dignity member Hugo Embati was leading his own fight to recover wages owed to him and 18 co-workers for construction of the Music City Center, touted as the new hospitality hub for Nashville. After rallying his co-workers to step forward and defend their rights, Hugo Embati and team recovered $10,000 in stolen wages.

In December, María de Jesus, member and commercial cleaning worker, recovered a month’s worth of wages after a 3-month effort.

3rd Anniversary

In May Workers’ Dignity celebrated its third year anniversary and raised over $1500 with 6 supporters becoming monthly donors. Members celebrated the event with food, music, words of support from community and art for kids. Rev. Dr. Crawford from SouthMinster Presbyterian shared words of commitment and justice to Workers’ Dignity members and community. Workers’ Interfaith Network members from Memphis performed a play to empower the community.

Freedom Schools and Women, Justice & Art Group

During the summer Workers’ Dignity launched its first Freedom School. Over a 6-week period, 30 low-wage workers participated in popular education workshops addressing the history of social movements, women’s equality, the Civil Rights Movement, and effective organizing strategies.

Soon after the completing the Freedom School, several leaders of Workers’ Dignity launched the Women, Justice & Art group, who meet monthly to share experiences, skills, and activities, building community among leaders and emerging leaders who are women.

Pilgrimage for Jobs, Justice & Equity... and more

Workers’ Dignity members and allies participated in a 22-mile march across Nashville to the city's hardest hit neighborhoods. The Pilgrimage was led by the Equity Coalition- a group of African American leaders based in North Nashville.

In December, we partnered with the Southern Christian Leadership Conference chapter at American Baptist College to host monthly movie nights that address social issues that especially affect African American and Latino workers.
Labor Day Parade

On August 31, some 75 marchers joined the first Labor Day Parade in decades, chanting and walking along Nolensville Pike to Coleman Park. The parade included contingents from Workers’ Dignity, Service Employees International Union (SEIU) Local 205, Laborers’ International Union (LIUNA) Local 386, International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local 429, Communication Workers of America, Campus Workers United, Jobs with Justice, OUR Vanderbilt, and Urban EpiCenter. Carrying banners and eight-food puppets, singing, and playing music, participants marched for 2.5 miles down Nolensville Pike in the neighborhood where Workers’ Dignity was launched nearly four years ago.

Fight for $15

Members and allies stood in solidarity with the fast-food workers who walked off their jobs in a National day of Action in December. Before the action, members joined Fight for $15 organizers to reach out to and recruit workers on Nolensville Pike to the walkout.
Join Us!

Membership is open to all low-income workers who agree to our mission. We also seek allies as volunteers. They are many ways to pitch in, including becoming a Wage-theft Advocate, Outreach in the community, facilitating Know your rights trainings, grassroots fundraising, childcare, technical support, non-violent direct action support, legal references, research, social media, hosting a speaker at your place of worship or school, and more.

**Members and Volunteers who Served on the Steering Committee in 2013:**
Mariana Lopez, Miguel Cantero, Daniel Lopez, Hilda Cazares, Patronilio Garcia-Reyes, Julio Fernández, Lorenzo Lopez-Perez, Martha Gonzalez, Brenda Perez
Allies: Kate Savage, Tristan Call, Bobbilyn Negron, Jack Willey

**Workers’ Dignity Organizers:**
Mario Mercado, mario@workersdignity.org 615 601 6820
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Follow us on Facebook for ways you stand by workers, support the recovery of wages, take part in actions! visit us at 3013 Nolensville Rd, Nashville TN 37211  www.workersdignity.org