



Summer  
2018

# The Workers' Edge

Voice of the Tompkins County Workers' Center

## Women Speak Out for a Living Wage



**O**n Tuesday, July 25th the United Association for Labor Education: 43<sup>rd</sup> Annual Northeast Summer School for Women in Unions and Worker Organizations brought their skills and energy downtown to support the Tompkins County Workers Center campaign for a local minimum wage that is a Living Wage in Tompkins County. It was a joyful sight to see the marchers and their beautiful signs hopping off a TCAT bus and marching to the Bernie Milton Pavilion where TCWC supporters cheered and joined with them. Over 100 supporters

brought the message to traffic and passer-bys with hand-made signs and brand new chants.

A series of speakers spoke about pride of being in a union, the hardship of poverty wages, especially for caregiving work. Cornell Graduate Students United spoke about their own efforts on campus. Ithaca City School District Education Support Professionals were also represented and spoke of the challenging work and needed changes.



This rally and the Workers' Center's Ithaca Festival parade float (pg 4) both highlighted the ways that the issue of a Living Wage is particularly a feminist issue. Wages for caregiving work are some of the lowest while the work itself is some of the hardest and most important.

Toward the end of the rally a flash mob dance occurred, and by the end of it nearly everyone who attended was dancing. This was one of the most uplifting rallies in recent memory!



# Updates From the Tompkins County Immigrant Rights Coalition

By Patricia Rodriguez and Beth Harris

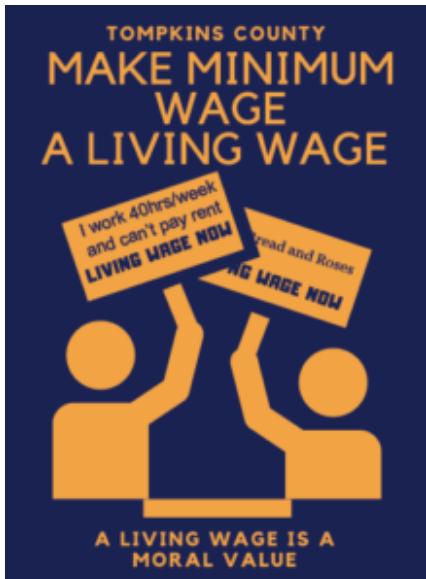
**T**hanks to Tompkins County Workers' Center (TCWC) for serving as the fiscal sponsor for the Tompkins County Immigrant Rights Coalition (TCIRC). We also appreciate the TCWC's collaboration on planning events, educational outreach and the NYS Green Light campaign. Together we convinced NYS Assemblywoman, Barbara Lifton, to co-sponsor "Green Light" legislation to issue drivers' licenses that won't require proof of US citizenship.

The TCWC and TCIRC share a common concern for the rights of all workers, including those without citizenship, to safe working conditions and to organize for fair treatment. Our first public forum focused on the conditions of immigrant dairy farmworkers in New York State, as documented in the *Milked* report. Building on the "participatory research" methods in the *Milked* report, we now plan to research the condition and needs of Tompkins County immigrant workers in the restaurant and hospitality industries and in immigrant communities more broadly. We will include immigrant workers, professors and community organizers in the development and implementation of this project.

Our Tompkins County Immigrant Rapid Response Network has trained over 88 responders who are committed to witness and document the presence of immigration agents in our county. We try to ensure that immigrant rights are respected and provide community support in case of immigrant detentions. **If you witness the presence of ICE or Border Control in our community, you can call our Rapid Response hotline: 607-358-5119.** This year we mobilized our network to respond to ICE's arrests of local workers. Our experiences with the network motivated us to work on educational outreach for immigrant workers and to develop of an Immigrant Legal Fund to support immigrants in our county who have been detained by ICE or Border Control. In April we had a fantastic benefit dinner for the fund. We also published "Guidelines for Immigrants Arrested by ICE," written by Chotiwat Luenam, based on his personal experience. [You can find these guidelines at the Truthsayers website at: [bit.ly/afraidofarrestbyice](http://bit.ly/afraidofarrestbyice)]

Members of TCIRC have helped to organize protests against US immigration policies and practices locally, regionally and nationally. For example, June 27<sup>th</sup> we participated in protests against Trump's immigrant family separation and incarceration policies outside and inside Rep. Reed's office in Corning with constituents from 5 counties. A few days later on the Ithaca Commons we spoke at the "Families Belong Together" rally (over 500 participants) and led workshops at the "Dismantling Borders" Teach-In. For more information and to get involved, email [tcimmigrants@gmail.com](mailto:tcimmigrants@gmail.com) or contact Patricia Rodriguez (607-339-1372).

## Back by Popular Demand: Workers' Center T-SHIRTS!



**T**hese snazzy navy blue T-Shirts are now available at the Tompkins County Workers' Center office on The Commons in downtown Ithaca (115 The Commons/E. Martin Luther King, Jr. Street, above Autumn Leaves Used Books). We appreciate a sliding scale donation of your choice with pick-up of your shirt. You can call our office in advance to let us know you're coming down for one (607-269-0409) or email us at [TCWRH@tcworkerscenter.org](mailto:TCWRH@tcworkerscenter.org).

The TCWC Logo is on the front of the shirt and the image to the left is on the back.



Donations help us cover the cost of the shirts and deliver our programs for workers in the community.

# Celebration Benefit for TCWC

By Barbara Regenspan

**F**ollowing retirement from full-time college teaching, I recently studied for and led a Shabbat afternoon “minchah” service at Temple Beth-El in honor of my ascent into Jewish adulthood that had never been celebrated with a Bat Mitzvah service when I was a young teenager. My motivation to connect this event with a light dinner and dance party fundraiser for the Tompkins County Workers Center was a desire to celebrate my current understanding of the “truth” best expressed by my sister educational philosopher Deborah Britzman: “The confusion of love and education begins at birth.”

[www.TCWorkersCenter.org](http://www.TCWorkersCenter.org)

## HOW TO SUPPORT A TOMPKINS COUNTY LIVING WAGE

### SPEAK UP & SPEAK OUT

Call your county legislator and express your support.  
Call us at 607-269-0409 for a yard sign.  
Sign the Living Wage for Tompkins Petition.

### SUPPORT CERTIFIED LIVING WAGE BUSINESSES

Paying a Living Wage is possible- and 114 local businesses are already doing it. Find Living Wage Employers at [TCWorkersCenter.org](http://TCWorkersCenter.org)

### JOIN US

Become a Workers Center member.  
If you are an employer, get Living Wage Certified.  
Follow us on Facebook and social media!  
Grab your new Living Wage T-shirt!

### SUPPORT US

Make a one-time or recurring donation at our website: [TCWorkerCenter.org](http://TCWorkerCenter.org)

Thank You,  
Barbara!

.....  
This type of support means the world to us.

I was educated very early in my family by both pro-socialist thinking and Jewish tradition, and on account of the positive emotional weight of the early connection-making between the two, I am always surprised when Jews defend the military occupation of the West Bank and Gaza, or when left-leaning activists express surprise that I can find joy in daily weekday participation in the patriarchal tradition of morning minyan at the Temple.

I understand that “the confusion of love and education begins at birth” can rationalize lots of horrific beliefs, but I also believe that for each of us human beings, the undertaking prompted by life cycle events of a critical examination of that confusion could increase the army of warriors for social justice our society so desperately needs at this time. The hope is that we can disentangle ourselves from the classism and racism that got mixed up with getting and keeping the early love that was a matter of life and death, and that we can reclaim a very simple morality to help direct our current life energies: everybody needs and deserves basic economic and climate security. Further, underpaid workers are making daily “donations” to the economic security of those of us who have it, (or have some of it).

I urge all families to spread the word: Life cycle events do not need to be associated with gifts we typically neither want nor need. If our highest hopes for the subject(s) of life cycle events is that they will have the capacity to develop their integrity and compassion in order to live a good life, let’s structure the events to support such development.

# Tompkins County Workers Center & the ICSD Educational Support Professionals March Together in the Ithaca Festival Parade

This year for the Ithaca Festival Parade the Tompkins County Workers Center joined with the Ithaca City School District Education Support Professionals to highlight the need for a Living Wage for \*everyone\* in our community, including the hard-working women and men who support our students and classrooms all year long.

The energy was high even though it was a very rainy day. We enjoyed getting to know each other and share our struggle before the parade. As the parade started we received very warm support from our friends and neighbors all along the parade route.

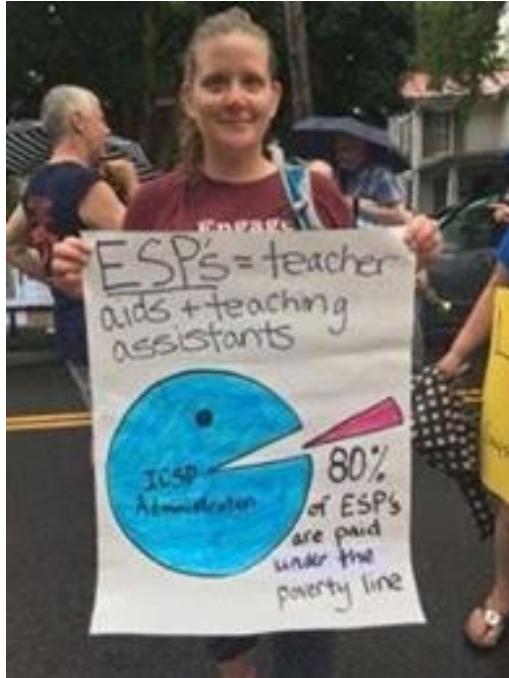
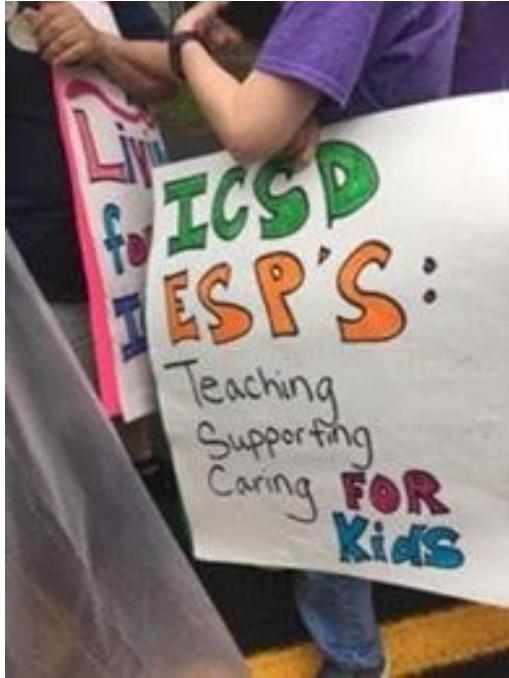
Photo Credit: Tracy S Voorheis



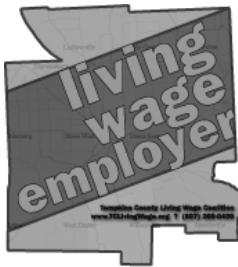
Join us! We need every voice to stand together to support workers in Tompkins County. Send in your m

# What does it take to make ends meet in Tompkins County? \$15.11

[www.TCWorkersCenter.org](http://www.TCWorkersCenter.org)



Support Living Wages and justice for all  
membership form today (page 7)!



# Support our 114 Certified Living Wage Businesses with over 3025 workers!

We are pleased to welcome four new employers: Women's Opportunity Center, Greensprings Natural Cemetery, Reach Medical and Grayhaven Motel!

- Advocacy Center  
Alcohol & Drug Council of Tompkins County  
Alternatives Federal Credit Union  
Autumn Leaves Used Books  
Ancient Wisdom Productions  
Avital's Apiaries  
Blue Spruce Painting and Decorating  
Boyce Thompson Institute  
Bridges Cornell Heights  
Brightworks Computer Consulting  
Buffalo Street Books  
Brotherton Construction  
Cancer Resource Center of Finger Lakes  
Catholic Charities of Tompkins/Tioga  
Center for Transformative Action  
Child Development Council  
Cinemapolis  
City of Ithaca  
Colonial Veterinary Hospital  
Community Dispute Resolution Center  
Community Foundation of Tompkins County  
Community Nursery School  
Community Science Institute  
Cornell Child Care Center  
Court St. Chiropractic of Ithaca  
Downtown Ithaca Alliance  
Family and Children's Service of Ithaca  
Feirman Builders, Inc.  
Finger Lakes Naturals  
Finger Lakes ReUse  
First Baptist Church of Ithaca  
First Congregational Church of Ithaca, United Church of Christ  
First Unitarian Society of Ithaca  
Friendship Donations Network, Inc.  
Foodnet Meals on Wheels  
Grayhaven Motel  
Greensprings Natural Cemetery  
Holmberg Galbraith, LLP  
Home Green Home  
Hospicare and Palliative Care  
Human Services Coalition of Tompkins County  
International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local #241  
International Food Network, Inc.  
Ironwood Builders of Ithaca  
Ithaca Carshare  
Ithaca Cayuga Optical Service  
Ithaca Health Alliance  
Ithaca Neighborhood Housing Services  
Ithaca Oral Surgery and Implants  
Ithaca Urban Renewal Agency  
IthacaMed  
Ithaca Teachers Association  
Jewel Box  
Jillian's Drawers  
Julia e Dean Inc/The Clay School  
Loaves and Fishes  
McBooks Press  
Miller Mayer Law Firm  
Multicultural Resource Center  
New Roots Charter School  
Northeast Pediatrics and Adolescent Medicine  
Nutritional Wellness Center  
OAR – Opportunities, Alternatives and Resources  
One World Market  
Ongweoweh Corporation  
Park Foundation  
Planned Parenthood of the Southern Finger Lakes  
Q2 Solutions  
Reach Medical, PLLC  
Red Feet Wine Market and Spirit Provisions  
Renovus Energy, Inc.  
Schlather, Stumbar, Parks and Salk  
Sciencenter Discovery Museum  
Segal and Sorensen  
Shade Tree Auto, Inc.  
Shaw & Murphy Law Firm  
Silk Oak/Ithacamade  
Singlebrook Technology, Inc.  
Snug Planet LLC  
Sparks Electric  
St. Catherine of Sienna Church  
St. John's Episcopal Church  
St. Luke Lutheran Church  
St. Paul's United Methodist Church and Nursery School  
Stone Quarry House  
Strawbridge and Jahn Builders  
Sunbeam Candles  
Sunny Brook Builders  
Sunny Days of Ithaca  
Sustainable Tompkins  
Sweet Land Farm CSA  
Taitem Engineering  
Temple Beth El  
The Frame Shop  
The Strebel Planning Group  
Tiny Timber LLC  
Tompkins County  
Tompkins County Public Library  
Tompkins County Recycling, LLC  
Town of Caroline  
Town of Danby  
Town of Enfield  
Town of Ithaca  
TRC Energy Services (Ithaca)  
Trumansburg Community Nursery School  
United Auto Workers Local 2300  
Upscale Remodeling Corporation  
Village of Cayuga Heights  
Viridius Property  
The Watershed  
Weaver Wind Energy  
Women's Opportunity Center  
Youth Farm Project

# Are You a Member of the Tompkins County Workers' Center?

I want to Get Involved in the Fight for Workers Rights!

\$ \_\_\_\_\_ Individual Annual Membership  
Due= One Hour's Wage or 10.40 if not working

During the next year, I'LL BE THERE at least five times for someone else's fight, as well as my own. Contact me for Rapid Response Alerts.

Signature

Name (Please Print):

Home Address

City/State/ZIP

Phone

Email

Mail to: TC Workers Center

**115 The Commons/ E MLK St. Ithaca, NY 14850**

You'll receive a laminated card in the mail. Great to have you with us!

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Is a member of the  
Tompkins County Workers' Center

During the year, I'LL BE THERE at least five times for someone else's struggle as well as my own. If enough of us are there, we'll start winning.

I'LL BE THERE...

...standing up for our rights as working people to a decent standard of living

...organizing working families to take strong action to secure better economic future for all of us

...fighting for secure family-wage jobs in the face of corporate attacks on working people and communities

...supporting the right of all workers to organize and bargain collectively in the workplace



## On the Edge

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Back at STEWART  
park!

## Labor Day Picnic

September 3rd, 2018 11-3pm  
**Stewart Park Large Pavilion**



Bring a dish to pass if you're able  
burgers and dogs included (veggie too)

Come be with us in struggle and in celebration  
for the work we have all done this year.

Annual awards celebration, food, a day at the  
park. See you there!

50/50 Raffle! Music! Great folks!



TC Workers' Center  
115 The Commons  
Ithaca, NY 14850  
[TCWorkersCenter.org](http://TCWorkersCenter.org)



Return Service Requested

