



# The Workers' Edge

Voice of the Tompkins County Workers' Center

## Women Speak Out for a Living Wage



On 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!



IN TOMPKINS COUNTY

# 1 IN 5

WORKERS MAKE LESS THAN \$15.11/HR



THAT'S ABOUT

# 10,000

WORKERS



# 60%

OF LOW WAGE WORKERS ARE WOMEN



# Updates From the Tompkins County Immigrant Rights Coalition

By Patricia Rodriguez and Beth Harris

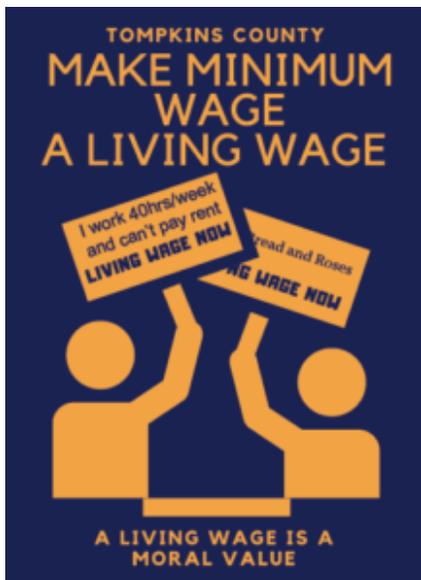
**T**hanks to Tompkins County Workers' Center (TCWC) for serving as the fiscal sponsor for the Tompkins County Immigrant Rights Coalition (TCIRC). We also appreciate the TCWC's collaboration on planning events, educational outreach and the NYS Green Light campaign. Together we convinced NYS Assemblywoman, 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 re-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 Chotiawat 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)

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

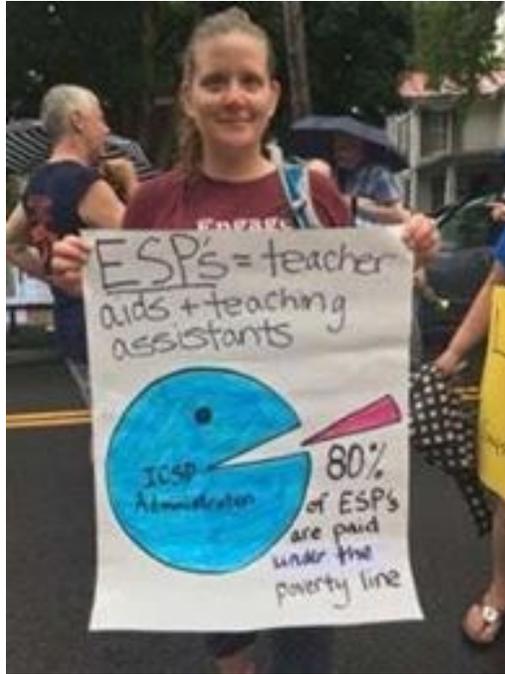
This year for the Ithaca Festival Parade the Tompkins County Workers Center joined with the Ithaca City School District Education Support Professionals to highlight the need for a Living Wage for \*everyone\* in our community, including the hard-working women and men who support our students and classrooms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



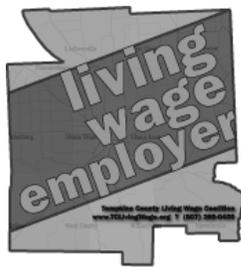
Join us! We need every voice to stand together to support workers in Tompkins County. Send in your m



# 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

The History Center of Tompkins County

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 Medi-  
cine

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/Ithacamide

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 Strelbel 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!

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**

- Women Speak Up for Living Wage 1
- Updates from Immigrant Rights Coalition 2
- Celebration Benefit for TCWC 3
- Workers Center at the Ithaca Parade 4-5
- Living Wage Certified Businesses 6
- Become a Member 7
- Labor Day Picnic 8

# 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!

**Back at STEWART  
park!**





**Tompkins County  
WORKERS' CENTER**  
TC Workers' Center  
115 The Commons  
Ithaca, NY 14850  
TCWorkersCenter.org



**Return Service Requested**

