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# WAREHOUSE WORKERS FOR JUSTICE 2020

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## 2020 ANNUAL REPORT

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## OUR WORK

# WORKPLACE ORGANIZING

WWJ builds worker power and solidarity in the warehouse industry. We support workers in organizing for fair hiring practices, decent working conditions, and jobs that support their families and communities. During COVID-19, we've dramatically expanded our health and safety outreach through distributing hand sanitizer and PPE, as well as making sure workers know their rights and are empowered to resist unsafe warehouse conditions.



**Racial Justice at Walmart** - This year, WWJ continued to fight for workers at a Walmart warehouse in Elwood after changes to the staffing structure disproportionately forced Black workers to lose their jobs or accept lower pay for the same work through a temp agency due to past criminal convictions. In September, WWJ led a protest at a Walmart store in Chicago to draw attention to these workers' continuing struggle for justice.

**No Pay Cuts at Cushioneer** - in April, workers at Cushioneer were fired after collectively refusing to sign wage reduction forms. With support from WWJ, workers gathered at the warehouse in DeKalb to demand reinstatement and decent working conditions. WWJ is currently supporting Cushioneer workers in their NLRB case.

## OUR WORK

# WORKPLACE ORGANIZING

**Amazon and E-Commerce Organizing** - In the lead up to Cyber Monday, WWJ organizers moved a hazard pay and safety petition in Amazon's sprawling Chicagoland network. Some of these same workers would speak out as part of WWJ's Cyber Monday action. Workers continue to fight for hazard pay, safety and dignity.

**Worker Safety at Mars** - in July, WWJ supported workers at the Mars warehouse in Joliet in petitioning for appropriate PPE, hazard pay, quarantine pay, and elimination of a point system that had no flexibility for workers with dependents. Management refused to respond and began retaliating against workers who had signed the petition. In response WWJ hosted a press conference and Halloween-themed protest action at the Mars Wrigley headquarters in Chicago, and will continue to stand with Mars workers demanding justice and safety on the job.



## OUR WORK

# LABOR, ENVIRONMENTAL, AND COMMUNITY MOBILIZATION

In many communities southwest of Chicago, warehouses are the largest employers, giving them enormous leverage. Warehouse employers like Amazon and Walmart have spent years extracting labor and natural resources from the region in exchange for air pollution, poverty wages, and infrastructure destroyed by constant truck traffic. Corporations and developers demand massive tax subsidies that starve local governments of funding, and then whisk away profits to corporate headquarters while workers and communities struggle.

As the industry continues to expand, WWJ is mobilizing with other local groups to advocate for workers, communities, and environmental justice. This year, WWJ worked with Just Say No to Northpoint, a group in Will County opposing another massive warehousing and logistics development in the area. In October, the No to Northpoint campaign won a critical victory when a legal ruling delayed the first annexation of the land for the proposed development. In November, the city of Joliet had to re-start public hearings on the annexation process, further delaying the process.



WWJ has also begun building a coalition of faith, environmental, and labor groups in Will County in support of transportation electrification and a just transition to a clean warehousing industry. Over the coming years, our work will hold these companies accountable and demand better for warehousing communities.

## OUR WORK

# LEGAL ADVOCACY WITH A FRAMEWORK OF RACIAL AND GENDER JUSTICE

WWJ stands in solidarity with groups working to end racist policing, criminalization of poverty, mass incarceration, and other forms of racism in the criminal justice system. Labor practices in the warehouse industry amplify these structural injustices, reinforcing the racial pay gap while keeping workers divided and suppressing wages for everyone. For instance, at a Walmart warehouse in Elwood, workers with criminal records were shunted into lower-paid, less-stable temp work or out of the workforce altogether, a change that disproportionately hurt Black workers. WWJ helps workers organize to resist racial discrimination while building stability and solidarity in communities to advocate for a different vision of justice.

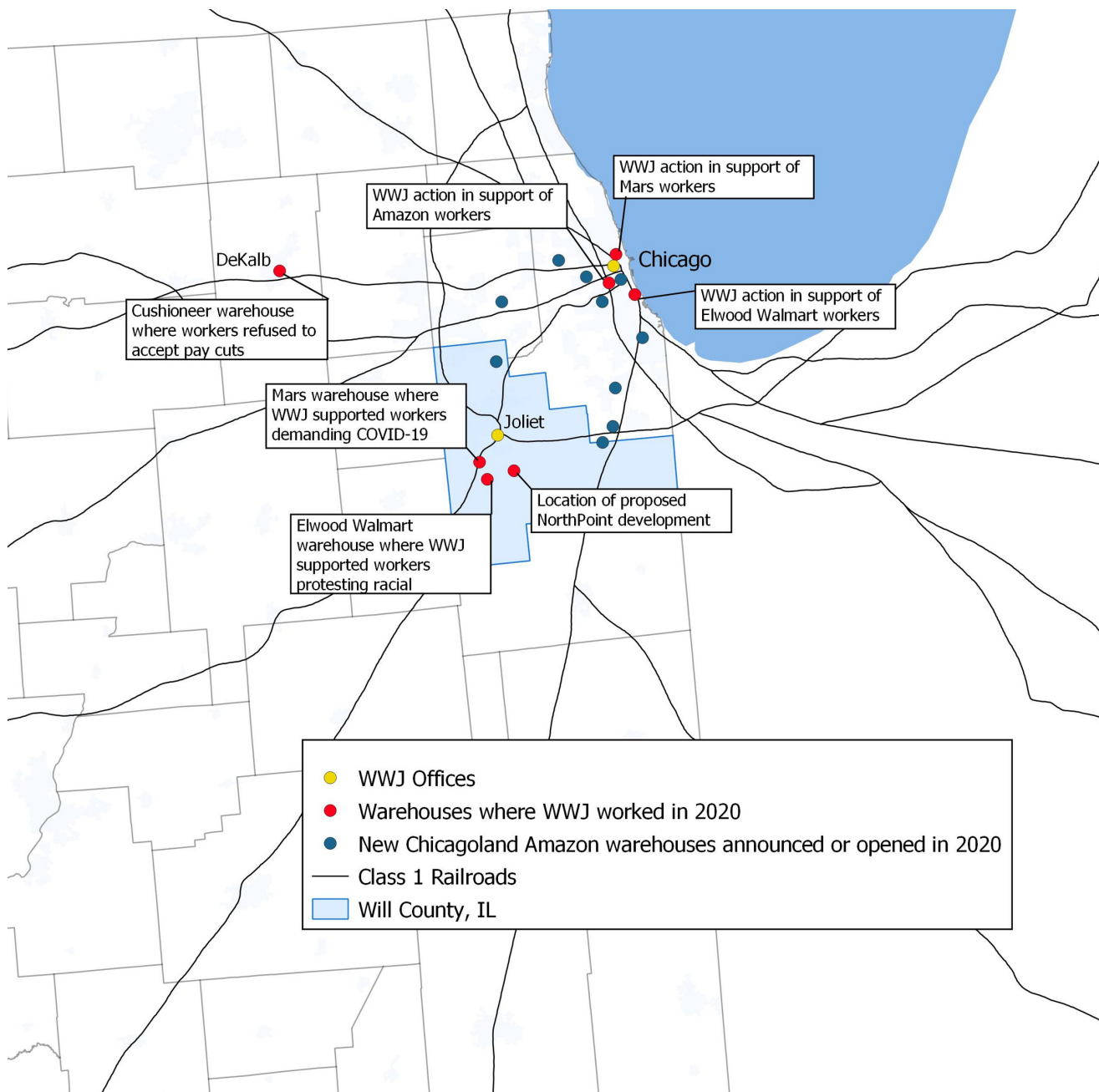
WWJ is also proud to be part of Illinois Access to Justice, a coalition of groups providing legal outreach and education to marginalized communities in Illinois. To reach out to workers affected by the criminal justice system, we offer Know Your Rights legal workshops in English and Spanish on topics including:

- Sealing and expungement of criminal records
- Finding employment after sealing or expungement
- Finding stable employment if criminal records cannot be sealed or expunged
- Drivers license reinstatement
- Sexual harassment and gender discrimination in the workplace
- Wage theft, minimum wage, and sick and vacation days protections
- Accessing unemployment, workers' compensation, and health and safety in the workplace

OUR WORK

# WHERE WE WORK

In a year of massive Amazon expansion, WWJ kept up the fight for warehouse workers in Chicagoland.



IN SOLIDARITY

# PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS

We couldn't do it alone! WWJ is grateful to all our partner organizations, Community Navigators, board members, and supporters.

- AFSCME Council 31
- Athena Labor and Climate Tables
- Chicago Federation of Labor
- Chicago Food Policy Action Network
- Chicago Jobs With Justice
- Chicago Workers Collaborative
- Earth Day to May Day Coalition
- Green New Deal Network Illinois
- Heal Food Alliance
- Illinois Access to Justice
- Illinois Clean Jobs Coalition
- Illinois Environmental Council
- Food Chain Workers Alliance
- Laudato Si Ministries
- Little Village Environmental Justice Organization
- National Legal Advocacy Network
- Prairie State Legal Services
- Que4 Radio
- Raise the Floor Alliance
- Spanish Community Center
- SEIU Local 1
- SEIU Healthcare Illinois Indiana
- Sunrise Movement Chicago Hub
- Teamsters
- Temp Worker Justice
- Temp Workers Union Alliance
- United Working Families
- United Electrical Workers (UE)
- UFCW 881
- West Side Justice Center
- Will County Earth Day Coalition





IN SOLIDARITY

# WWJ COMMUNITY NAVIGATORS

Mark Balentine  
Barry Haywood  
Denise Ibarra  
George Keske

Charles Lovett  
Latasha Simmons  
Star Baker  
Cesar Escutia



IN SOLIDARITY

# WWJ BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Jose Oliva, President, Food Chain Workers Alliance, Co-Director

Carl Rosen, Treasurer, UE Western Region Council, President

Bernadette Quasie, Board Member, WWJ Leadership Committee member

Alex Han, Board Member, SEIU Healthcare Illinois, Organizing Director

Lorraine Edwards, Board Member, WWJ Leadership Committee Member

Brandin McDonald, Board Member, WWJ Leadership Committee member

Armando Robles, Board Member, New Era Cooperative President

Trina Tocco, Board Member, Change to Win, Organizing Coordinator

Special thanks to Aaron Hughes from the Justseeds Collective for the amazing artwork he produced for our Earth Day to May Day campaign!

Thank you to Al Scorch, Hideout Chicago Mystery Street Recording, and Que4 Radio for your love and support through music.

Thanks to Latinta Prints and Bassline Graphics for doing our printing this year!

IN SOLIDARITY

# WWJ FOUNDATION SUPPORTERS

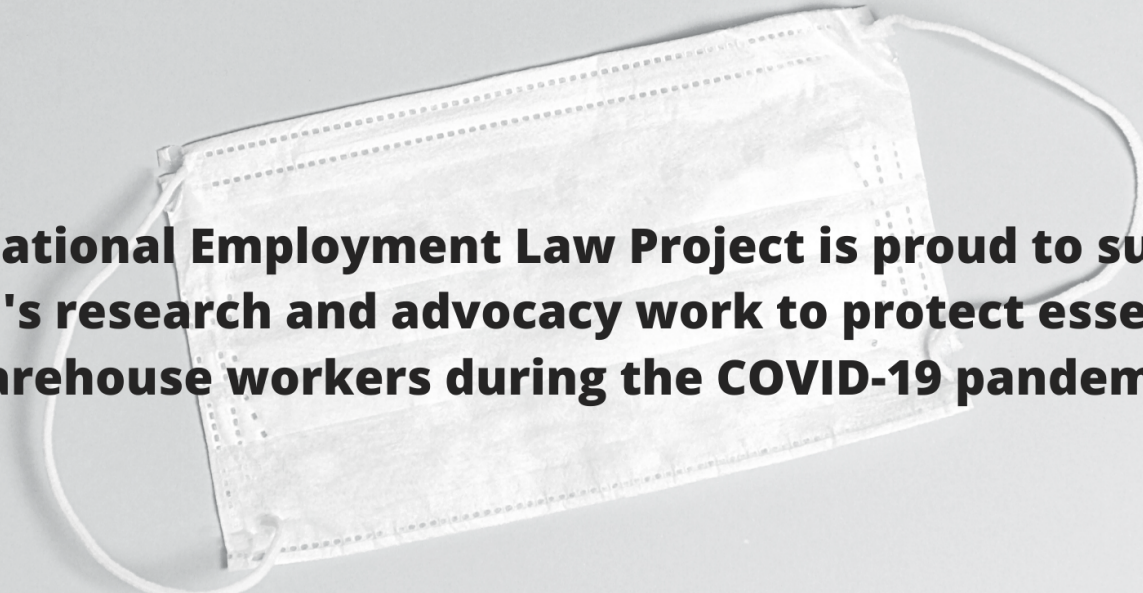
- Ben & Jerry's Foundation
- Chicago Foundation for Women
- Chicago Regional Food Systems Fund
- Cook County Department of Public Health
- Energy Foundation
- Field Foundation
- Ford Foundation
- Kellogg Foundation
- Illinois Department of Human Services
- Norman Foundation
- Open Society Foundation
- Public Welfare Foundation
- Resource Generation
- Solidaire Foundation
- Woods Fund



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IN SOLIDARITY

## **SUPPORTER ADS**



**The National Employment Law Project is proud to support WWJ's research and advocacy work to protect essential warehouse workers during the COVID-19 pandemic.**



NATIONAL  
EMPLOYMENT  
LAW  
PROJECT

1.5 million temp workers in Illinois  
70% suffer violations of their rights



The Chicago Workers'  
Collaborative is proud to work  
with WWJ to demand priority  
COVID-19 vaccine access for  
essential temp workers

*The Chicago Workers' Collaborative*



La Colaborativa de Trabajadores

We are proud to stand with and support the good work of

# WAREHOUSE WORKERS FOR JUSTICE

Best wishes for a successful event from the Officers, Executive Board,  
Members, and Staff of Local 881 UFCW.



Steven M. Powell, President and UFCW Intl. Vice President  
Paul D. Schaefer, Secretary-Treasurer  
Patrick D. Statter, Recorder



## UNITED FOOD and COMMERCIAL WORKERS INTERNATIONAL UNION

1350 E. TOUHY AVENUE, SUITE 300E / DES PLAINES, ILLINOIS 60018 / (847) 294-5064

FIVE LAWRENCE SQUARE, SUITE 110 / SPRINGFIELD, ILLINOIS 62704 / (217) 544-0555

#1 SUNSET HILLS EXECUTIVE DRIVE, STE. 102 / EDWARDSVILLE, ILLINOIS 62025 / (618) 692-6400

1616 W. MAIN STREET, SUITE 104 / MARION, ILLINOIS 62959 / (618) 997-3828

[www.local881ufcw.org](http://www.local881ufcw.org)



**SCHOOL OF  
PUBLIC HEALTH  
ENVIRONMENTAL  
AND  
OCCUPATIONAL  
HEALTH SCIENCES**

**Thank you Warehouse Workers for Justice  
for supporting Chicago's workers!**

**Great Lakes Center for  
Occupational Health  
and Safety**

<https://glcohs.uic.edu/>

**Center for  
Healthy Work**

<https://healthywork.uic.edu/>

**Food Chain Workers Alliance  
is proud to stand with WWJ to  
demand dignity and safety for  
all workers.**



**STANDS IN  
SOLIDARITY  
WITH WAREHOUSE  
WORKERS**



# Jackie

Jackie Traynere is a proud lifelong Bolingbrook resident who has dedicated herself to making her community a great place to live and raise a family. This commitment is rooted in her own experience growing up in Bolingbrook and attending local schools. That is why Jackie raised her children right here in her hometown, in the same house that she grew up in.



## Vietnam Veterans Against the War

VVAW stands in solidarity with the important work of the Warehouse Workers for Justice.



Fighting for Veterans, Peace, and Justice since 1967.  
Visit us online at: [www.vvaw.org](http://www.vvaw.org)



**Raise the Floor Alliance congratulates WWJ on another year of fighting for warehouse workers**

**HEAL FOOD ALLIANCE SUPPORTS WWJ'S OUTREACH AND ORGANIZING.**

