

Starbucks Union Cont.

was working 32 hours a week, and shortly after our second store manager came into the picture, I was only being scheduled 4 per week. My store had around 65% of cards signed, but we were waiting to file because we wanted to talk to our coworkers more. Because we hadn't filed, and I needed to make rent, I ended up quitting without taking legal action for what was obviously union busting.

How does that compare to the illegal union busting tactics we are seeing from Starbucks?

The store I worked at in Seattle is still standing, but five stores were and still are closed after their successful union votes. Recently a federal judge has ordered Starbucks to reopen the five shuttered stores in Seattle and reinstate the workers. But Starbucks continues to intimidate baristas by pushing aggressive union-busting messaging, even going as far to create their own website urging workers to vote "no" in their union elections. When stores do unionize, Starbucks will refuse to come to the bargaining table and has time and time again promised to bargain only to not show up to the bargaining meeting they have arranged. And when workers are unionizing their stores, they single out the main organizers and fire them on one-time offenses for things like being five minutes late to work.

Is the labor movement gaining ground in the service industry?

Yes! Labor support is at it's highest since 1965. We would not be here now talking about Starbucks worker organizing if movements like the Fight for \$15, which also started in New York, had not been so successful. Since 2012 FF15 has been taking to the streets, organizing low-wage workers in the service industry to create networks and demand living wages. Fight for \$15's hard work in Seattle is what pressured Ed Murray to sign the Seattle wage ordinance in 2014 to increase the minimum wage to \$15, the first city in the nation to do so. The result of these emerging networks has reignited a fighting labor movement that is led by minimum-wage workers.

Most of the burden of interacting with the public during the pandemic has been on service workers- while execs and suits stay at home in their office to quarantine, they get to doordash a latte and hot meal from Starbucks. And \$1 extra an hour isn't worth risking my life for your bacon gouda sandwich.

Workers are pissed. They should be. Record profits over the past three years is record wage theft. Workers are stepping up and forming networks with each other to take back what they've earned.

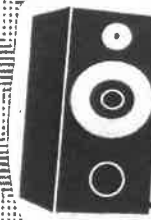
How can folks support to the fight?

Starbucks workers need our help. Baristas are being intimidated by one of the richest companies in America. And to Starbucks, the cost of hiring union-busting firms like Littler-Mendelson and paying off federal labor law violations is the cost of business. But, Starbucks is a publicly traded company, and to the general public, unions are very "in".

One of the highlights of the campaign this past holiday season has been mobilizing our networks to call in to the Starbucks customer complaint line to express your opinion on union busting (1-800-611-7792). There is also a call to boycott Starbucks gift cards- Washington State tax code states that businesses can report "lost" gift cards (so after three years of inactivity) as gross profit, rather than paying their fair share of taxes. This creates a loophole that big businesses exploit and gives them incentive to practice business here, where the tax code is already completely upside-down.

Just these two actions over the past three months has tanked Starbucks stock by 12%, bringing it to the lowest it's been since they went public in 1992. They're coming for workers rights? We're coming for their fucking bag!

I want to conclude by saying that the best thing you can do to help Starbucks workers organize is by going to your local Starbucks, and asking the workers what they think of the union, if they think they should have one in their store. These conversations can seem like drops in the pond. But the worker you asked is more likely to think twice about what a union could mean for them and their community, and what kind of community support they can count on if their store chooses to unionize.



SABOTAGE! NOISE!



#7
Jan
'24

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From All 'Round the Sound

A Short Q+A on Unionizing Starbucks

Sabotage Noise presents a short Q&A a former Starbucks barista and union organizer.

So I know you are doing a lot of solidarity work in support of Starbucks Workers United, but let's go back to the start. How did you get involved in labor organizing, and what motivated you?

Starbucks was my first job, in 2017. I worked at a busy drive-thru in Bellevue and genuinely loved the job and my coworkers. I liked working at Starbucks so much that I went as far as applying to work at the Starbucks Roastery on Capitol Hill. After a long interview process, I was hired and started there in 2019. At the time I was just coming out as trans, and asked my coworkers to use he/him pronouns for me. This was not received well by any of my coworkers, who only ever misgendered me. What I thought was going to be a really incredible experience to hone my coffee knowledge and share my genuine affection for coffee and ritual with others quickly turned into a job that I dreaded going to.

Starbucks prides itself on being very inclusive and a great place for trans people to work, and instead of feeling that support, I felt like the joke was on me. I brought this up to my manager, who told me there was nothing that could be done. I left after my shift and never came back to work there. I got a job as a barista at a different coffee chain in the city, where being misgendered was never a problem. The problem wasn't me or how I presented my gender. It was the culture at Starbucks that outwardly is very inclusive, but had never done that work internally to change company culture that was amiss.

After working for some years away from Starbucks, in late 2021 I was struggling to make rent in Seattle working 7 days a week at multiple jobs. I had flirted with the idea of returning to Starbucks, to eat all that sweet Starbucks food for free and have a shot at getting a free college education. And I heard that Starbucks workers had started unionizing. So I thought, hey, if I'm going to work at Starbucks again, my store is going to be unionized.

What was the response to your organizing effort at Starbucks?

In April of 2022 there were only a handful of unionized Starbucks stores in Seattle, but the movement was gaining traction quickly. Around this time, Starbucks was ramping up their union busting efforts, having managers come in from recently union busted stores in other states to thwart our efforts here. Within a week after being featured as a soundbit in a morning NPR report about Starbucks worker organizing, my store had an extra store manager, which meant constant surveillance and less hours for the workers. I was

Cont. on back



RAD SHOWS + BENEFITS

ABERDEEN

Parkway Tavern
(417 N Park St)

Jan 13 - Benefit Show for Blackflower Collective ft. Takeover Music Collective: Seven da Pantha, Mojo Barnes, Soul the Interrogator, Monster Elicit, Angie Staxx, Ready Ron Beats **

BREMERTON

The Charleston
@thecharleston333
(333 N Callow Ave)

Feb 2 8pm - Conjuring Up Monster / Baptationn/Void Preacher

OLYMPIA

The Mortuary
@olymortuary

Jan 11 - All You Need is Kill

Feb 4 - Sunday Wire Spine/Ringfinger/Static Ghost

Feb 9 - Friday Storm Boy / Dead Streets / TBA

Feb 10 - Catastrophic Cabaret: A Lovely Variety Show

TACOMA

The Gravel Pit

@gravelpittacoma

Feb 25 - Chloe Defector + Stink Animal and the Bad Smells**

SEATTLE

Left Bank Books @leftbankbookscollective
(92 Pike St)

Every 1st Thursday 7:30-11pm - Open Mic (Jan 4, Feb 1)~~

Jan 19 7:30-9:30 - "Practical Anarchism" author talk w/ Scott Branson and Dean Spade ~~

Pipsqueak

(173 16th Ave)

@pipsqueak.seattle

EVERY 1st Sunday 3-5pm - Prisoner Letter Writing ~~

Jan 9 6:30pm - Block Cop City Reportback~~

Jan 21st 2-5pm - Gun Shot Wound Treatment Training~~

Casa del Xolo

@casadelxolo

(3418 Fremont Ave N, in Lazy Cow Bakery)

Feb 24 7pm - Benefit show for Casa del Xolo ft. Medejin, Sonora Enjambre, Skyler Ford and the Legion of Peace

Solidarity Center
(1220 S 23rd St)

Bi-weekly - Feed the People w/ Black Panther Party~~

To host radical events at this new community space, check out patreon.com/HilltopSolidarityCenter or email hilltopsolidarity@proton.me



WANT TO LIST YOUR COOL SHOW OR BENEFIT EVENT FOR MUTUAL AID - LABOR SOLIDARITY - PRISONER SUPPORT - GENERAL ANARCHY?

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Kitapo County-Based Mutual Aid Benefit Show Booking

KEY

!! = SNP Hosted

** = NOTAFLOF

~~ = Free Entry