A MESSAGE FROM THE CAMPAIGN

This is the second in our series of updates from the Making Change at Walmart (MCAW) campaign. Our campaign has picked up over the past few months! New people have joined our team, we’ve been telling Walmart to #dumpTrump, we’ve stood up for workers all across the country, and we attended Walmart’s shareholders’ meeting in Arkansas. Read about our latest victories and actions, and we look forward to working with our locals and community allies to improve the lives of workers at Walmart.

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MCAW JOINS WITH LOCALS, ALLIES TO CALL ON WALMART TO DUMP TRUMP

After Donald Trump secured the number of delegates necessary to clinch the Republican nomination, major companies like Apple, UPS and Wells Fargo stepped up to say they would not be donating to the 2016 Republican National Convention. MCAW joined Color of Change, The Black Institute and the National Hispanic Leadership Institute in sending a letter to Walmart CEO Doug McMillon calling for Walmart to withdraw an earlier donation to the convention and to speak out against Trump’s long history of hateful and bigoted comments. Read the letter: http://makingchangeatwalmart.org/2016/06/23/making-change-at-walmart-demands-walmart-to-withdraw-support-of-the-2016-republican-national-convention/

When Walmart chose to stay silent, MCAW ramped up our pressure campaign, first by releasing a hard-hitting online video and then by hosting a national day of action with rallies in front of Trump properties across the country. UFCW Locals 648, 881, 1546, 540, 400, 1500, 2013, 888, 312 and RWDSU Locals 1103 and 338 helped us with the rallies, as well as allies from several other unions. Finally, we joined the AFL-CIO in sending out a petition to supporters, asking them to join our fight in getting Walmart to dump Trump. The petition, with 39,296 signatures, was sent to Walmart’s home office in Bentonville, Arkansas. Watch the online video: https://youtu.be/pT45IM0aSDs
Margaret Hooten, a Walmart worker from California, and former Walmart customer Jason Cooper Grabb, from Missouri, gave speeches during Walmart’s annual shareholders’ meeting at the Bud Walton Arena in Fayetteville, Ark., in June. Sponsored by MCAW, Hooten and Cooper Grabb wanted the company and its shareholders to hear some real stories about their experiences with Walmart.

Hooten has been a Walmart cashier for five years, yet only makes $10.69 an hour. Cooper Grabb stopped shopping at Walmart after the company unjustly fired two of his friends.

“I love my job, but I’m frustrated by the broken promises from management,” said Hooten. “Like many of you, when Walmart said it would increase wages, expand career opportunities, offer more training, and put more staff in our stores, I was excited. Then I got my paycheck. My raise was just 23 cents an hour.”

“[Since my friend Frank Swanson] was forced out of the company he loved, we have heard of more stories of workers mistreated, abused, and unjustly fired,” said Cooper Grabb. “Recently, the National Labor Relations Board ruled against Walmart for illegally firing and disciplining workers. Pregnant workers are not always treated with respect and, in some instances, get fired for an unexcused absence when, in fact, they were at their doctor caring for their unborn child.

Senior workers, people over the age of 55 who have spent ten to 15 years at Walmart, are now being demoted, dismissed or forced out. And despite what Walmart says about investing in workers, workers report that many Walmart stores have been cutting hours and staff to offset the recent wage increases.”

During the week leading up to Walmart’s shareholders’ meeting, MCAW hosted a press conference with Walmart workers who shared stories about being unable to afford rent, getting seriously injured on the job, and getting fired for unfair reasons. MCAW, along with allies and elected officials, also held rallies in St. Louis, Mo.; Grand Prairie, Texas; Washington, D.C.; and Sacramento and Oakland, Calif., to call on Walmart to pay their workers higher wages; stop mistreating pregnant, senior and ill workers; and give workers more reliable schedules and hours. Watch an interview from Bentonville with a Walmart worker: http://www.nwhomepage.com/news/protesters-find-fault-with-walmart-during-shareholders-week
RECENT VICTORIES

**Frank Swanson** was West Plains, Missouri’s, favorite Walmart cashier. Customers would wait in long lines just to see him at check-out, and he was always there for anyone who needed a hug. He worked there for almost 20 years before being fired for allegedly improperly using discounts. After he was fired, his small town rallied around him, and MCAW helped his story gain national attention in *People magazine*.

“Even though all my work absences were due to pregnancy-related health issues, and I had a doctor’s note, I lost a job that I worked hard at. I feel like I was fired just because I am pregnant.” **Arleja Stephens** found out she was pregnant right after starting at a Washington, DC, Walmart. When she had to go to the ER multiple times due to complications, she was fired. DC has a law that specifically prohibits Walmart from doing this, so the MCAW team teamed up with UFCW local 400, DC Jobs with Justice, A Better Balance, National Women’s Law Center, and Many Languages One Voice to unite around Arleja, held two rallies, and was able to get her story to the *national media*.

**Maria Umali**, a 16-year Walmart employee in the Bay Area, fell and broke her hip on the job. Walmart managers did nothing to help her for hours, and may have even made the injury worse by moving her. When she finally got to the hospital, she had to stay there for a month. She is now confined to a wheelchair. Walmart has refused to give her all of the workers’ comp she deserves, and will not pay for a home healthcare aide even though Maria is unable to care for herself. The MCAW team held a press conference for Maria that features local elected officials and clergy speaking about how she has been treated so unfairly by Walmart. Maria’s case made *international news*.

**Oscar Velasquez**, 72 years-old and from the Dallas area, worked for Walmart for 10 years before he was diagnosed with cancer. He is a husband, father of four, and a grandfather of ten. Oscar has been out of work for over a year due to his cancer treatments. During this year, Oscar’s family relied on their credit cards to avoid evictions and take care of over-due bills. Even though Oscar was a hard worker for so long, Walmart has denied his appeals for help through the fund Walmart keeps for workers who have fallen on hard times. MCAW held rallies on Oscar’s behalf and has helped him raise much-needed funds.
CALLING OUT WALMART’S ANTI-LGBT POLICIES

As the nation celebrated LGBT Pride throughout the month of June, MCAW campaigned with UFCW OUTreach to educate the public on Walmart’s continued record of allowing discrimination of LGBT workers and customers in its stores. This message was especially important during Pride month, as Walmart continues to try to “rainbow-wash” its record by sponsoring Pride events. MCAW, UFCW OUTreach, and several UFCW locals took this message to Pride parades throughout the month.
“YOU PAY TAXES, WALMART FINDS WAYS NOT TO”

In the days leading up to Tax Day 2016, we launched a national television ad campaign and coordinat-ed actions in front of post offices and Walmarts in over 75 locations. The ad’s and actions’ message was to discourage Walmart customers from spending their tax refunds at Walmart, due to the company’s use of offshore tax havens. Last year, Americans for Tax Fairness released a report detailing how the retailer has at least $76 billion in assets in places like Luxembourg, the Cayman Islands and Barbados. Watch the ad: https://youtu.be/ITHUmsovkc

MCAW IN THE NEWS

Since our last newsletter, Making Change at Walmart has been mentioned, written about, and talked about in a variety of news reports. Since February 1, 2016, there have been a total of 35 articles about MCAW. Click on some of our favorites, below, to read more:

“Walmart refuses to state its transgender bathroom policy after repeated requests,” New York Daily News

“Protesters gather as Trump meets with GOP Members of Congress,” WJLA-TV (Washington, DC, ABC affiliate)

“The real test of Wal-Mart’s $2.7 billion wage investment is about to begin,” CNBC
**MCAW MOVING FORWARD**

We were lucky to have a talented team of interns with us this summer and would like to thank Kelsey Bowman, Ayanna Ogaldez, Erin Regan, and Alicia Rodriguez for all of their hard work.

While we’ve had quite a few victories and a busy couple of months, there is still a lot of work left to be done. Our staff in the field still regularly reports that workers are dealing with discrimination, cut hours, understaffing and unsafe working conditions. We look forward to tackling these problems in the coming months, and look forward to having you at our side.

Thank you for everything you do for the campaign and for Walmart workers.

**MCAW CONTACTS**

Get in touch with us any time with questions, concerns, tips or ideas! We’d love to hear from you.

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