NORTHEAST OHIO WORKER CENTER 2023
In reflecting on 2023, our overwhelming feelings were those of pride and gratitude. Pride in our achievements and gratitude for the support of our dedicated partners, the tireless efforts of our volunteers, and the generous contributions of our supporters, without whom, so much of our success wouldn’t have been possible. Our hearts are especially full for the working people who trust us with their stories, who risk their own well-being to report unfair labor practices and organize their own workplaces and communities to build a more just economy that benefits us all. We are in endless awe of the strength, beauty, and power of working people.

Solidarity Forever

NORTHEAST OHIO WORKER CENTER
BOARD OF DIRECTORS
The Northeast Ohio Worker Center (NEOWC) is a nonprofit organization built by workers, for workers, to organize and fight back against the systems that have workers isolated, overworked, underpaid, and exploited. The NEOWC was founded in 2019 when labor leaders, community based organizations, and faith based organizations came together for a gathering called the Work and Wages conference. A working group was formed as a result of that convening and NEOWC has been building power for working people and a movement that values dignity, justice, and equity ever since.

**NEOWC MISSION: BUILDING POWER WITH WORKERS THROUGH EDUCATION, ORGANIZING, AND ADVOCACY.**
This year, the Northeast Ohio Worker Center was delighted to hire Andy Schumann as our Community Outreach Manager and our first staff person. Andy came to NEOWC by way of the Guardians for Fair Work campaign with a passion for organizing, fighting back against bad bosses, and building collective power in all of the spaces he inhabits. He’s co-created the Cleveland Art Workers Collective, coordinates the Archwood Fresh Foods produce distribution program, and is now helping us become the organization we want to see in the world.

Andy hit the ground running with NEOWC and much of our ability to connect more deeply with workers, meet people where they are, and show-up in a regular, consistent way for our community is because of Andy’s efforts.
From church gymnasiums and basements, to meeting rooms in public libraries, to the backyard of a neighborhood art gallery, the Northeast Ohio Worker Center has provided worker relief services throughout Northeast Ohio with partners who are deeply committed to fighting for working people. Here’s a look at our wage theft services by the numbers:

11 COMMUNITY WAGE THEFT CLINICS HOSTED IN 2023

55+ OVER 55 WORKERS CONNECTED TO NEOWC FOR WAGE THEFT ISSUES

34 VOLUNTEERS TRAINED AND PARTICIPATING IN CLINICS
While providing material relief for working people is at the heart of the work of the Northeast Ohio Worker Center, we are committed to combatting root causes of worker exploitation and unfair labor practices. Building on the momentum of the anti-wage theft legislation passed by Cleveland City Council in December 2022, NEOWC and the Guardians for Fair Work coalition campaigned and won the following in 2023:

- **Anti-Wage Theft Legislation**
- **$15 Minimum Wage Pegged to Inflation for City Employees + Contractors**
- **Anti-Wage Theft Legislation**
Understanding that wage theft disproportionately affects the most vulnerable in our communities, especially Black workers, Latinx workers, young workers, and women workers, underscores the urgent need for our work. These workers often find themselves at the precarious edges of our economy, making them more susceptible to unfair labor practices. In our commitment to addressing wage theft, we dedicated the past year to reaching out and engaging with our community directly. Recognizing that the fight against such injustices extends beyond traditional workplaces, our community outreach efforts aimed to bridge the gap between advocacy and the daily lives of workers. Some of that work included:

ORGANIZING A CANVASS OF THE FAIRFAX NEIGHBORHOOD AHEAD OF OUR MONTHLY WAGE THEFT CLINIC

HOSTING A “MEET YOUR AGENCY” SERIES WITH THE USDOL, OHIO DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE, AND EEOC

PARTNERING WITH ORGANIZATIONS LIKE TOWARDS EMPLOYMENT AND CWRU LABOR AND LAW SOCIETY TO PROVIDE KNOW YOUR RIGHTS TRAININGS
Workers are not a monolith; they are a mosaic of unique individuals with varied backgrounds, experiences, and needs that extend beyond the confines of the workplace. Understanding and acknowledging the multifaceted lives of workers is pivotal to building the community and mutual support we want to see in the world. By standing in solidarity with other movements, whether they address racial justice, gender equality, or housing equity, we reinforce the understanding that workers exist as complete individuals beyond their workplaces.

Here are some of the ways we showed up in solidarity for movements, struggles, and organizations outside our own:

- ORGANIZING A MAY DAY RALLY AND SOCIAL
- AMPLIFYING THE WORKPLACE ORGANIZING CAMPAIGN OF SEIU 1199 WORKERS AT CLEVELAND CLINIC
- COORDINATING A MEETING WITH CLEVELAND MAYOR JUSTIN BIBB, STARBUCKS WORKERS UNITED + OTHER WORKER GROUPS
Thank you to our generous funders + supporters:
THANK YOU

Since NEOWC’s founding, we have been nearly wholly volunteer-led. We know that without the unwavering commitment of our volunteers, none of our work would be possible. Their selfless contributions have been the heart of our organization, propelling us forward with determination, compassion, and creativity.

In particular, we’d like to recognize the contributions and leadership of the 2023 NEOWC Board of Directors.

MARC ALVARADO          CORINNE HUNTLEY
COLLEEN DAMERELL       AISIA JONES
ANDRE DAILEY           PAM MASON
KATE HEFFERNAN         JERRY PENA
GRACE HEFFERNAN        ALEENA STARKS