



Rights NOW

The newsletter of the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee

Paychecks You Can't Live On!

Living Wage activism promotes solidarity over charity

By Johanna Chao Rittenburg

Living wages are dramatically improving the lives of thousands of working families across America — and demonstrating how ordinary citizens, turned activist-citizens, can impact poverty.

The living wage movement is gathering steam on the state and local levels. Since 1997, 18 states and the District of Columbia have raised their minimum wages. Following this trend, 15 more states are considering ballot or legislative measures to raise the minimum wage in 2006. Over 108 cities and towns have already passed a living wage law, setting new standards of \$9.46 in Los Angeles County, \$10.15 in Buffalo, \$10.81 in Miami-Dade, and \$11.29 in Lawrence, Kansas.

UUSC recognizes the importance of the living wage movement, and we're helping our members take economic justice to the streets through an array of tools and an even wider array of inspiring friends and partners.

Get Rights Now online

Would you prefer to receive *Rights Now* by e-mail instead of in your mailbox? Sign up today by sending an e-mail to uusc@uusc.org and begin receiving *Rights Now* by e-mail starting with the Fall 2006 issue.



Senator Edward Kennedy of Massachusetts speaks at the United First Parish Unitarian Church in Quincy, Mass., for the inauguration of the Let Justice Roll Coalition's Living Wage Day.

Jan Reiss/UUSC

UUSC partners with Let Justice Roll, the nation's only interfaith coalition working on living and minimum wage issues, and we're working to link UUs and interfaith constituencies into existing living wage movements and to help them start new ones.

Dan Moen, a UU from Denver and UUSC representative, tells about his involvement in Colorado's emerging minimum wage initiative:

"Getting involved in social action in our church and community has been like finding a piece of

myself that has lain dormant for most of my life. I'm excited to be connected to an organization like UUSC that is alive and concerned about taking action on things I care about."

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We Welcome Letters

Rights Now is grateful to readers for their interest and support. We invite you to share your questions and comments by submitting a letter to the editor:

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The Unitarian Universalist Service Committee advances human rights and social justice around the world, partnering with those who confront unjust power structures and mobilizing to challenge oppressive policies.

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Morality and the Living Wage

A recent cover story in *The New York Times Magazine* framed the struggle around the country for a living wage as a “moral issue.” We cannot make moral choices without being informed, and too few people understand what is meant by a living wage. Most analysts define it as the amount a wage-earner would need to bring home to be just above the poverty level for a family of four — sufficient to not qualify for Food



Audubon Dougherty/UUSC

Charlie Clements

Stamps. A living wage is *not* a handout — it is merely decent pay for work. The minimum hourly pay proposed in most grass-roots living wage campaigns does not even bring low-income workers up to the level of the 1968 minimum federal wage indexed for inflation — that would be \$8.82.

A living wage has been shown to improve a worker's credit. A living wage has been shown to allow workers to spend more time with their families. A living wage has repeatedly been shown to reduce workers' use of public support such as Food Stamps, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, and Medicaid. A living wage has been shown to put money in workers' pockets that is promptly pumped back into the local economy. Studies have found

repeatedly that workers who make a living wage feel more valued, which may in turn be linked to increased job commitment, reduced turnover, and higher productivity.

Imagine working for 40 hours a week, taking public transportation to work (extending your weekly work commitment by several hours), and making about \$10,600 a year. That's a take home salary of about \$200 a week. Imagine trying to support a family on that wage. Of course, it is impossible, so you work two jobs. If you have a partner or spouse you might each work two jobs.

And you worry every day. What happens if your son has a toothache? What if your daughter is throwing up and running a fever? Who watches your other child or children while you go to the emergency room? How do you pay for the taxi you need because you can't wait to get a transportation voucher? Suppose your son has blisters, because his sneakers no longer fit, and you don't have \$25 for another pair, because last week your glasses broke and you had to replace them. Life is a constant stress when you struggle to make ends meet.

Low-income workers and their families can have a modicum of dignity and fewer worries if they are paid a living wage.

Charlie Clements



Cesar Cárdenas Ramires (foreground) marches with 14,000 other advocates in March during the World Water Forum in Mexico City. Ramires told the Latin American Water Tribunal about a case involving water contracting giant Bechtel, in which 150 children got hepatitis. Ramires reported to the tribunal as the legal representative for Movimiento Mi Cometa, a community organization in Guayaquil, Ecuador.

Bechtel v. Bolivia “Water War” Won

Right to water affirmed by policy of new government

by Patricia Jones

Lucio Morales lives in Cochabamba, Bolivia. In February 2000, he and his family had a problem with something many of us may take for granted: paying the water bill. Lucio’s bill went up 60 percent from one month to the next, rising to 10 percent of the monthly minimum wage, according to the Democracy Center. Bolivians by the thousands took action. Organizations were formed, negotiations were tried and failed, and demonstrations were planned and carried out. The Bolivian government responded with force, leaving one 17-year-old dead and 60 protesters wounded. The first “water war” over the right to water was fought — and ultimately won.

By April 2000, the Bolivian government canceled the contract with Aguas del Tunari, the private international company that operated the water services. The company filed suit against Bolivia before an international tribunal, claiming \$25 million in damages and \$25 million

in future lost profits, even though foreign investment was only \$1 million, according to the Democracy Center. After years of protests, the company finally agreed to drop the suit for a token payment by the government of Bolivia of 32 cents.

Through subsidiaries, Bechtel has acknowledged it owned 60 percent of the shares in Aguas del Tunari; other owners included Befesa, Abengoa, and Edison. In 2004, Bechtel’s total revenue was \$17.4 billion while Bolivia’s national budget was \$2.9 billion, according to the San Francisco Chronicle. Bechtel has water contracts in Ecuador, where 150 children were infected with hepatitis from its water, according to Mi Cometa, a community organization in Guayaquil, Ecuador. Bechtel also has contracts with the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) to construct the water infrastructure in Iraq.

“The human right to water entitles everyone to sufficient, safe, acceptable, physically accessible, and affordable

water for personal and domestic use,” according to a statement by the Committee on Social, Economic, and Cultural Rights of the U.N. Commission on Human Rights.

The water war in Bolivia led to the 2005 election of President Evo Morales, an indigenous community leader. President Morales appointed Abel Mamame as minister for water, creating one of the first government posts of its kind in the world. Minister Mamame was the secretary general for Fejuve, a community organization in El Alto, Bolivia, and a partner of UUSC. The minister’s mandate is to ensure that the right to water is recognized in Bolivia. The country will convene a constituent assembly in 2006 to adopt a new constitution. On the agenda is an amendment that will enshrine the right to water, guaranteeing a minimum amount of water to each Bolivian. Hopefully for Lucio, his family and neighbors, paying the water bill won’t always be such a problem in Bolivia. ♡

Strengthening Workers' Rights Worldwide: Street Vendors & Informal Traders in Kenya

by Johanna Chao Rittenburg

Fried tilapia in Nairobi, piled nails and hinges in Mombasa, AA batteries in Yogyakarta, pretzels and roasted chestnuts in New York City, your daily news from the corner newsstand.

Street vendors and informal traders play a central role in the everyday lives of people around the world. These “informal economy” workers, who are not safeguarded by legal or social protections, have long existed as purveyors of affordable goods and services to a global public that spans class and income.

Around the world, informal economy workers like street vendors contrib-

ute enormously to national economies, rivaling agriculture and industry as the sector making the largest contribution to Gross Domestic Product. As the world's fastest-growing sector, the informal economy is often the only source of employment, providing livelihood and social and political stability among the world's most marginalized and vulnerable communities. Yet the vast contribution to the global economy by informal workers has not been fully recognized by most economists, urban planners, or policy makers.

The positive role that street vendors play in the lives of much of the world's population stands in sharp contrast to the precariousness of their own lives.

Women street vendors and their children face particular challenges, as the vending environment poses serious constraints to earning a sustainable living with dignity. The informal workforce needs to become visible to policy makers and government planners. And as a vital part of the world's labor market, informal workers also need support and protection. UUSC supports and strengthens organizations of informal workers to impact policy on issues of concern by partnering with street vendor alliances in Kenya and Indonesia.

This April, the Service Committee visited Kenyan partner KENASVIT, a national network linking street



Johanna Chao Rittenburg/UUSC

Informal economy workers like street vendors come up short along each of the dimensions of poverty and well-being:

- Human rights (social, economic, political and civic rights of the poor),
- Income and basic needs (basic household needs to live with dignity),
- Human development (health, education, longevity), and
- Social inclusion (representative access and “voice” in public institutions and processes).

Members of the national executive committee of the Kenya National Alliance of Street Vendors and Informal Traders (KENASVIT) gather with UUSC Program Director Atema Eclai (standing, third from left) for the organization's official launch.

“The informal economy is here to stay. It is not something temporary. It is not a pause on a road leading to jobs for everyone in the formal economy...street vendors are permanent players in the economy who make an important contribution to it. They are entrepreneurs with important trading skills who are able to analyze key problems in their environments in economic terms. Their economic activities also create employment for others.”

– Lund, Nicholson & Skinner, 2000, “Street Trading,” Durban, South Africa, University of Natal, p. 9, 39

vendors in seven urban alliances. This network is growing and emerging as a national voice for workers in the informal economy.

During the visit, UUSC attended KENASVIT’s official launch, which powerfully demonstrated to both national policy makers and the national media the alliance’s ability to organize workers across diverse geographic regions into a unified body capable of working in coalition with allies and prepared to voice recommendations regarding policies affecting grassroots workers.

In addition to attending KENASVIT’s launch, UUSC provided conflict resolution and negotiation training to its national executive committee and met with urban alliance members from Nairobi, Kisumu, and Migori. In those cities, we accompanied KENASVIT delegates meeting for the first time with local authorities and policy makers on issues related to informal workers. They addressed topics that included police harassment and land policy — attempts to relocate street vendors to

back alleys, dirty, dark, unpaved and dangerous places that compromise workers’ rights and safety.

Finally, we interviewed human rights activists for children at an agency called CRADLE to broaden our understanding of the implications of street vending on child laborers. Our hope is that KENASVIT will integrate this analysis into its ongoing work.

The gender divide among street vendors is visible in the type of goods being sold and services offered: women tend to work in the less lucrative trading activities, such as foodstuffs, while men dominate in the sale of higher-value, non-perishable goods such as electrical equipment and accessories.

UUSC supports grassroots partners to create self-sustaining livelihoods among the most marginalized and vulnerable workers in the world. We will continue to share updates on this work and invite you to visit our weblog and join us at GA for a workshop on the informal economy featuring Dr. Winnie Mitullah, KENASVIT founder. 📍



What You Can Do

Learn More

For more on UUSC’s Kenya trip, see www.uusc.org/blog.

Attend UUSC’s Workshop at General Assembly on “Informal Workers” and meet Dr. Winnie Mitullah, KENASVIT founder. (See page 11 for details.)

Visit Streetnet:

www.streetnet.org.za/English/Kenya06.htm

Visit Women in Informal Employment, Globalizing and Organizing:

www.wiego.org

UUSC Partner Aids Burmese Affected by Tsunami

By Martha Thompson

We all remember the televised images of European and North American tourists caught in the fury of the December 26, 2004, tsunami on the resort beaches of Khaolat in southern Thailand. The tragedy and suffering of another significant group of foreigners, the roughly 51,000 Burmese workers in the same area, were played out off-screen. Three days after the tsunami, Thai authorities swept through the emergency shelters, expelling all the Burmese who had sought help.



Approximately two-thirds of the Burmese migrants in this area of southern Thailand are undocumented visitors. Under the constant threat of harassment, extortion, and deportation by local authorities, they work in rubber plantations, on construction crews, and as fishermen, trying to scrape out a living and maintain some precarious safety outside their war-torn country.

In the months after the tsunami, Unitarian Universalist Service Committee (UUSC) partner Grassroots HRE, a human rights organization formed by Burmese in the refugee camps of Thailand, came to the province of Phang Nga to seek out and provide emergency relief to the Burmese migrants, many of whom were in hiding.

Now UUSC is providing more support to the Burmese through a legal aid program. Many Grassroots HRE employees are also undocumented and are therefore subject to harassment by the authorities. Despite this, with caution and audacity, they have opened child care and learning centers for migrant children and have organized and educated workers about their rights.

One teacher, whose two youngest children died while she was serving a five-year sentence in a Burmese jail for teachers' union activities before she moved to Thailand, talks about the difficulties of being undocumented. Her face lights up when she hears that the legal aid program will provide her with a work permit.

"It will mean so much to be to be legal and not to have to fear the authorities," she said. "I have lived here so long with fear." 🗨️

To learn more about UUSC's Rights in Humanitarian Crises Program, visit www.uusc.org/disaster.

A Grassroots HRE employee visits children at a new learning center built near a rubber plantation where many Burmese parents are employed as migrant workers.

JustWorks volunteers help Gulf Coast residents recover

By Dick Campbell

Volunteers from around the United States participated in two separate camps this winter in the hurricane-ravaged Gulf Coast region. Their humanitarian aid efforts focused on assisting groups and individuals neglected by traditional relief programs.

“I just wanted to do whatever little part I could,” said Elandria Williams of Powell, Tenn., who spent a week in New Orleans in February helping to rehabilitate churches and a school badly damaged by Hurricane Katrina. “It’s hard to understand just how huge this situation is and how far residents have to go before recovery.”

Kim McDonald, UUSC’s senior associate in charge of the JustWorks

program, said the New Orleans camp and a subsequent camp in March in Biloxi, Miss., provided volunteers with opportunities not only to work alongside those whose lives were shattered by the hurricanes, but also to witness firsthand how different groups of people are affected by major natural disasters.

“We are seeing that humanitarian crises brought about by natural disasters magnify already-existing inequalities based on race, class, or gender,” said McDonald. “These long-standing social, economic, and political inequalities mean that disempowered groups are neglected in the distribution of relief aid and in government programs to help them regain their livelihoods.”

The Gulf Coast camps were among four UUSC has organized this year. In January, volunteers traveled to Guatemala to experience how small-scale coffee farmers are struggling to make a living in the global marketplace controlled by multinational corporations. In collaboration with UUSC’s partner Equal Exchange, JustWorks participants learned how fair trade practices enable owners of small farms to receive an equitable return for their work and improve the lives of their families.

In April, teenagers gathered for the JustWorks camp in the Mohawk Valley in upstate New York where they learned firsthand about the life and culture of Native Americans from the Mohawk nation. ☑



Eliza Galaher, intern and campus minister at the UU Church of Davis, Calif., paints inside a rebuilt home during UUSC’s JustWorks Gulf Coast camp in Biloxi, Miss.

Work for justice this summer!

There is still time to sign up for two exciting JustWorks camps taking place this summer. Call 800-388-3920 or e-mail justworks@uusc.org for more information or to signup.

Freedom Summer 2006: A Civil Rights Journey

July 8-15, 2006,
Atlanta, Ga.; Birmingham, Selma, and Montgomery, Ala.

(Intergenerational, 14+)
\$500

Explore the civil rights history of the United States on this third annual civil rights journey. Ride the big bus that will take you from Atlanta, Georgia, to Montgomery, Selma, and Birmingham, Alabama to see significant sites of the Civil Rights movement. Meet and learn from some of the people who were there.

UUSC Lakota Camp

August 6-12, 2006,
St. Francis, S.D.

(Teens only, 16+)
\$400

Learn about issues of economic and racial justice, using media and working in partnership with the Lakota community on the Rosebud Reservation.

Economic justice

Paychecks You Can't Live On

continued from p. 1

In March 2006, Dan and other Denver-area UU activists like Jim Bole, Dee Ray, and Rev. Nathan Woodliff-Stanley from the Jefferson Unitarian congregation in Golden, Colo., organized a planning meeting with ACORN, the Colorado Council of Churches, and the AFL-CIO to strategize about how to build a campaign to increase Colorado's minimum wage.

The living wage strategy meeting followed a daylong Poverty Seminar, hosted by Jefferson's Social Responsibility Council, which featured a Living Wage Workshop on how faith groups are making a vital difference in building the living wage movement. The workshop included a screening

and discussion of UUSC's new living wage film, *La Marcha*, which documents the phenomenal victory of the Santa Fe Living Wage Campaign in achieving America's highest local living wage. UU activists like those in Golden and Denver, Colo., are turning out with passion and commitment to support living wage campaigns in towns and states across America.

UUSC works to support these efforts by creating living wage resources like *La Marcha* and the Resources for Living Wage Worship Services and Events Guide (available through our website) and by promoting statewide living wage ballot initiatives side-by-side with human rights and community advocates.

In addition, the Service Committee has been invited by Senator Edward M. Kennedy's Labor and Employment Council to be part of a working group charged with redefining a national minimum wage strategy as the living wage movement persists in shaping the public debate on poverty and fairness.

Here's how YOU can get involved:

- Order *La Marcha*, the new film on the Santa Fe Living Wage Campaign and host a community viewing and study group on poverty in America.
- Visit the websites listed on the following page for additional resources and information about how to get involved in living wage economic justice work in your area. ☑



UUSC and Santa Fe Living Wage Network's

La Marcha: Working for Economic Justice DVD

This 25-minute film tells the story of the extraordinary Santa Fe Living Wage Campaign, which emerged through the efforts of diverse community-based organizations to build a grassroots coalition, enlist business allies and illustrate core U.S. values of teamwork, fairness, opportunity, responsibility and respect.

The film is also an educational tool that can be used as a springboard for action on economic justice issues in your community.

Available for order at www.uusc.org/store or by calling UUSC at 617-868-6600.



Bilingual open captions. 25:00

Unitarian Universalist Service Committee

www.uusc.org/economicjustice

Download our Living Wage Resource Guide.

Santa Fe Living Wage Network

www.santafelivingwage.org

Let Justice Roll

www.letjusticeroll.org

Let Justice Roll is the nation's only community-faith coalition working specifically on living and minimum wage campaigns. See the website for useful resource materials.

Center for American Progress "Raising the Minimum Wage"

www.americanprogress.org/stateandlocal

Find fact sheets, issue briefs, state reports, and resource materials on the minimum wage.

ACORN

www.livingwagecampaign.org

ACORN runs and supports living wage campaigns. Its website contains information on existing living wage laws and campaigns across the country and other resources.

SPIN Project

www.spinproject.org/downloads/EconJusticeMessaging.pdf

"Words That Work: Messaging for Economic Justice" helps you develop your living wage campaign message.

Brennan Center at New York University

www.brennancenter.org/programs/livingwage

The Brennan Center provides legal and other support to living wage campaigns. Their website contains reports, research, legislation, litigation, and press comments on the living wage.

University of Massachusetts Amherst, Political Economy
Research Institute

www.umass.edu/peri

The Political Economy Research Institute provides economic technical support to living wage campaigns and contains information on the economic impact of living wage policies.

Economic Policy Institute

www.epinet.org

The Economic Policy Institute offers economic background on living wage policies and links to other resources.

"The Living Wage Campaign is the most interesting and underreported grassroots enterprise to emerge since the Civil Rights Movement."

*– Robert Kuttner,
The Washington Post, 1997*

Coming to terms on wages

Wage-law terminology can be confusing. A minimum wage law refers to the basic hourly salary any employee must be paid. The national minimum wage is currently \$5.15, but higher minimum wage standards have been set by states and municipalities.

The term living wage can mean different things to different people. In its most general sense, it refers to the amount a worker needs in order to support a family above the poverty level.

Amendments Prolong the Torture

By Jackie Ladd

Our hopes last December that passage of the McCain amendments prohibiting U.S.-sponsored torture would end the practice have been dashed. Two subsequent measures, the Graham-Levin amendment and a written statement by President George Bush effectively nullifying the McCain amendment, severely undermined the intended effect.

The Graham-Levin amendment implicitly allows the use of evidence obtained through coercion for the first time in American history. In his "signing statement," the president asserted that he will interpret the anti-torture law in a manner consistent with his constitutional authority as commander in chief. In other words, the president does not consider himself bound by the law, and reserves the right as commander in chief to order the torture of detainees.

These developments mean that we must redouble our efforts to stop U.S.-sponsored torture and to engage many

more U.S. voters. In November, citizens will have a chance to affect U.S. policy when they elect every representative in the U.S. House of Representatives and one-third of the members of the U.S. Senate.

To strengthen our work, the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee, a founding member of the National Religious Campaign Against Torture (NCRAT), joins in making the following recommendations.

We urge Congress and the president to remove all ambiguities about our policy on torture.

Prohibit:

- Exemptions from the human rights standards of international law for any arm of our government.
- The practice of extraordinary rendition, whereby suspects are apprehended and flown to countries that use torture as a means of interrogation.
- Any disconnection of "cruel, inhuman and degrading treatment" from the

ban against "torture" so as to permit inhumane interrogation.

- The existence of secret U.S. prisons around the world.
- Any denial of Red Cross access to detainees held by our government overseas. ☺

For more on UUSC's work to end torture, visit www.uusc.org/stoptorture.

Take action against U.S.-sponsored torture!

Denounce torture in your community! Endorse the mission statement of the National Religious Campaign Against Torture (NRCAT). www.nrcat.org

Become part of UUSC's STOP campaign by joining our Human Rights Defenders e-mail list at www.uusc.org/hrdefenders.

Corrections

Due to editorial errors, Father Michael Joseph (Vinh Nguyen) was incorrectly identified in the Winter edition of *Rights Now* as the principal of Resurrection of Our Lord School in New Orleans. He is pastor of the Church of the Resurrection of Our Lord. The principal of the affiliated school is Dr. Si Nguyen. In addition, the states of Alabama and Mississippi were transposed on a map of the U.S. Gulf Coast.

UUSC MERCHANDISE

Your purchase of UUSC merchandise contributes directly to our work advancing human rights and social justice throughout the world.

UUSC Stop Torture Permanently Campaign's

Call for Justice Weekend Mock Trial DVD Set

This 5 disc DVD set documents in its entirety the formal mock trial of Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld, Attorney General Alberto Gonzales, and former CIA Director George Tenet for aiding and abetting acts of torture.

5 discs in storage case. \$30.00 (includes shipping!)

Mock Trial DVD Set (Ask for item DVST)



Display your commitment to social justice. Each piece is crafted in pewter. \$5.00 each.

3/4" Pendant with chain (Ask for item M03P)

1/2" Post earrings (Ask for item M11P)

1/2" Lapel pin (Ask for item M26P)

"Peace is Not Vintage" T-shirts

The front says "Peace is not vintage," but this union-made, 100% cotton T-shirt is destined to be a classic. "Unitarian Universalist Service Committee" and "www.uusc.org" are printed on the back.

Adult sizes only. Kelly green and royal blue.

Any color, any size: \$10.

Visit our online store at www.uusc.org/store or call us at 617-868-6600 to make your purchase.

HUMAN RIGHTS NOW!



Unitarian Universalist Service Committee

RIGHT NOW,
UUSC is helping
the survivors of natural
disasters, from the Indian
Ocean tsunami to the
South Asia earthquake
to the Gulf Coast
hurricanes.

RIGHT NOW,
UUSC is working to
stop the genocide
in Darfur, Sudan.

RIGHT NOW,
UUSC is promoting
workers' rights to
a living wage.

At General Assembly 2006,

you can learn more about these and other ways in which the Unitarian Universalist Service Committee is working to advance human rights and social justice in the United States and around the world. Visit our booth and attend one of our workshops.

For more information, visit our website, www.uusc.org/ga, call 800-388-3920, or e-mail ga@uusc.org.

Workshops

Genocide Then/Genocide Now

Thursday, June 22, 1-2:15 p.m., America's Center, Room 220

The Rev. William F. Schulz, UUSC President Charlie Clements, and UUSC Program Director Atema Eclai will demonstrate how the legacy of two Unitarians, honored as Righteous Among the Nations for helping Jews escape the Nazi terror, inspires our faith to challenge the inhumanity we now witness in Darfur, Sudan.

Class, Caste, Race, and Gender in Disasters from Katrina to Aceh

Friday, June 23, 11 a.m.-12:15 p.m., America's Center, Room 223

Learn from UUSC program partners how disasters and the responses affect certain groups, and how people can organize to claim their rights to relief and reconstruction.

Defending Workers' Rights: Innovations by Informal Worker Movements

Saturday, June 24, 2:15-3:30 p.m., America's Center, Room 226

Join Kenyan activist Winnie Mitullah and Tim Costello of the U.S.-based Campaign on Contingent Work to learn about critical issues facing all working people.

Annual Meeting and Celebration

Join us for the Annual Meeting and Celebration on Friday, June 23, 5:00 - 6:30 p.m., in the Majestic Ballroom AB at the Renaissance Grand Hotel. Tickets are \$15 and are available by calling 800-766-5236 or e-mailing ga@uusc.org.

Action of Immediate Witness: Gulf Coast Workers Deserve Justice Now

Jobs and fair wages are essential for recovery in the wake of last year's Gulf Coast hurricanes. The aftermath of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita opened a window into the struggles that have faced the working poor in the United States for generations. In order to rebuild their lives and livelihoods, survivors in the Gulf Coast region need to recover their jobs at fair wages and with safe working conditions.

Put your thirst for justice to work during GA!

Youths attending GA are invited to participate in a one-day JustWorks camp that combines education and action. Learn more about human rights and economic justice while helping to rehabilitate the home of a St. Louis resident. Join us Saturday, June 24, 2006, from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.

For more information or to preregister, contact Nguyen Weeks at 800-388-3920, ext. 201, or e-mail justworks@uusc.org.

UUSC AT GENERAL ASSEMBLY 2006 IN ST. LOUIS
WWW.UUSC.ORG/GA



First Responders Monthly Donor Program Spurs Quick Human Rights Action

“We give to many other charities,” says Al Drutz, “but UUSC is a favorite.”

Al and Eileen Drutz started supporting UUSC shortly after they got married half a century ago and began attending First Unitarian in Los Angeles during Rev. Stephen Fritchman’s time as minister.

The congregation’s strong commitment to social justice — a commitment they value in UUSC’s work — drew them in.

Al says, “Giving to UUSC monthly means we give consistently, and that’s important to us.”

Regular giving through the Human Rights First Responders Program enables UUSC to act quickly and dependably when human rights are threatened.

Al and Eileen reflected, as they recently celebrated their 50th anniversary, that they have always been glad they could live out their commitment to social justice by supporting UUSC.

Please join Al and Eileen Drutz and the more than 1,000 UUSC members who choose to give monthly as members of the Human Rights First Responders Program. In a fast-moving, unpredictable world, your steady, monthly support assures our quick response and emboldens our human rights work.

Becoming a First Responder is easy. Go to:
<http://www.uusc.org/monthlypledge> and follow the links!



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