

LOCAL 79 NEWS



MAY 2010

MAY DAY RALLIES DEMAND IMMIGRATION REFORM

By John Delgado, Business Manager



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LOCAL 79 joined more than 10,000 union workers and immigration advocates May 1st in lower Manhattan, just blocks away from City Hall. We came to celebrate May Day and demand that Congress pass comprehensive immigration reform for the roughly 11 million undocumented immigrants now working in the U.S.

The time is now. Our May Day rally was just one of dozens held in cities across the country for immigration reform. We had been planning our May Day rally for months, but the theme of immi-

gration became even more urgent after the state of Arizona passed a law in late April that would require police to stop and question people they think may be in the country illegally.

It was exciting and uplifting to hear the thousands of demonstrators join together, shouting "Shame on Arizona!" and "No human being is illegal!"

Congressional Democrats now plan to make comprehensive immigration reform their next legislative priority, according to Senate majority leader

Harry Reid. However, Congress has attempted immigration reform before and union advocates worry the change they call for may be brushed aside again to address other priorities.

Immigration is especially important to unions like ours: Local 79, like many locals in the Laborers' International Union of North America (LIUNA) actively recruits new members from communities of recent immigrants.

Our brother Raymond Pocino, Vice-President of LIUNA made it crystal clear. "Immigrants continue

to be the labor force and if we don't organize them we are going to be left behind."

Fighting for immigration reform is also part of an important principal for Local 79—when the rights of workers are protected all workers benefit. Giving illegal immigrants legal status and the protections of U.S. labor law won't cost any union workers their jobs. Immigrant workers are already living here and they are already working here. Protecting the rights of these immigrant workers to earn at least a minimum wage and with paid overtime will lessen the financial temptation employers feel to hire non-union workers.

We need to end the enforcement-only focus that the federal government has had in the past towards illegal immigration. Too often the heaviest enforcement of immigration law has fallen on workers, while many employers have been allowed to break labor laws with near-impunity.

If the millions of undocumented workers in the U.S. were put on a path



Brother David Rodriguez and Brother Antonio Peralta join Sister Kris Kohler of MTDC PAC at immigration rally.

to citizenship, that would remove a huge temptation for employers to hire undocumented workers and pay them less than the law requires. Putting undocumented workers on the books would also help fill massive holes in state and federal budgets.

IN THIS ISSUE:

- ATLANTIC YARDS CELEBRATION PAGE 2
- RETIRES HONORED AT LUNCHEON PAGE 4
- LOCAL 79 MAKES A DIFFERENCE PAGE 5

LOCAL 79 CELEBRATES VICTORY AT THE ATLANTIC YARDS GROUNDBREAKING

THIS MARCH, Local 79, along with the Building Trades, joined their brother and sisters unions, top government officials and celebrities to celebrate thousands of new union jobs at the groundbreaking for Atlantic Yards, a 6.5-million-square-foot development now under construction in downtown Brooklyn.

John Delgado, Business Manager heralded the incredible accomplishment of Local 79 in helping clear the way for the Atlantic Yard development to get the green light. "This is the culmination of years of effort!" he said.

Delgado, Shawn "Jay-Z" Carter, Barclay Bank president Robert Diamond, and more than a dozen local and state politicians and community leaders all took the stage to praise the project and the hard work that went



Gary LaBarbara, President of the Building and Construction Trades Council

into making this victory happen. New York Gov. David Patterson promised "job creation the likes of which Brooklyn has never seen!"

Close to a decade after it was first announced, the first phase of Atlantic Yards, including an arena and five high-rise buildings, is finally getting underway.

Jobs, jobs, jobs

For union activists, the project comes down to jobs for its members. Atlantic Yards will continuously employ well over a thousand building trades workers for a period of construction that will last 10 to 15 years. At its peak, the project may employ 2,500 construction workers at once, a welcome change from the now almost 40% unemployment rate among union building trades workers.

"But Atlantic Yards will not only benefit the unions," said Delgado. "It will also benefit the community with permanent jobs."

Atlantic Yards will also create several thousand permanent jobs at its arena (which will be almost as big as Madison Square Gardens), along with its 16 planned residential and office towers – the exact number of permanent jobs will largely depend on the amount of the amount of office space that gets built. Estimate range from more than 4,000 to up to 8,000 permanent jobs. Forest City Ratner also signed a Community Benefits Agreement promising that 30 percent of contracts and 45

percent of all construction jobs at Atlantic Yards will be held by women or minorities.

"A lot of our members live in this neighborhood," says Anthony Williamson, an auditor for Local 79.

Union Action

It took a lot of support from union activists to move Atlantic Yards forward, including the negotiation of an innovative "project labor agreement," (PLA) between several unions and the developer.

"We did whatever it took," says Local 79's Williamson. Many Local 79 members attended hundreds of demonstrations over the last five years, including several town hall meetings where project supporters and opponents faced off. Williamson remembered one particular meeting at Pratt University, near the Atlantic Yards site, where construction laborers in the audience who lived in the neighborhood stood to show their support for Atlantic Yards to local politicians opposed to the project.

"It's about putting people to work," Williamson said.

THANK YOU!

Thanks to all the workers of Local 79 for all that you do and all that we've accomplished.

Since our last newsletter, we've focused most of our volunteer efforts on getting comprehensive immigration reform passed in Congress. In addition to the giant May Day rally in New York City (story on Page 1), over 1,000 members of Local 79 also traveled all the way to Washington D.C., March 21st for a rally on the National Mall. Local 79 members filled a dozen buses on the way to the rally, where we joined hands with more than 100,000 union workers and immigrant rights advocates from across the country.

Local 79 has joined this fight because when we defend the right of immigrant workers, I believe we help all workers in their fight for dignity, fair treatment, and fair pay.



Local 79 Members at Immigrant Rights March in Washington, DC

MONTHLY DUES are \$28 as per the LIUNA Constitution. Retirees dues are \$8 per month. Dues payments must not go over two months without being paid or the member will be suspended. The readmission fee is \$56 for every month that the dues payments are behind, plus \$28 for the current month. Members' Union Book numbers must be written on their check or money order when paying dues by mail. You can pay by card with the following restrictions: All debit cards are accepted. MasterCard, Visa, and Discover are accepted. **NO AMERICAN EXPRESS CARDS!** All telephone transactions must be completed by 4:00 PM. Members must speak to the Dues Department directly. No transactions can be completed by voice mail. The bank will charge the member a 2% fee for each transaction.



Local 79 Cleans Up!

The Executive Board would like to thank all the brothers and sisters from Local 79 who joined us for the Annual Beach Cleaning at South Beach, at Father Capodanno Boulevard in Staten Island, and at the Flushing Meadows Clean-up in Queens.

Thanks for supporting your union brothers and sisters in these hard economic times. I know that many of you are still struggling to pay the bills and put food on the table. There are now close to 1,200 names on Local 79's out-of-work list. That's more than twice the usual number of people out of work.

Now more than ever, when times are tough, we need to stand together for workers rights, for fair pay, and for jobs for all.

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An affiliate of the Mason Tenders District Council of Greater New York and Long Island, LIUNA; the New York City Central Labor Council, the Building and Construction Trades Council of Greater New York, and the New York State AFL-CIO.

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From left to right MTDC Business Manager Bobby Bonanza, along with 50-year retired members Mario Malandrucolo, Amerigo Ciardiello, Anthony Demarinis, Peter Panza, John Daniels, Joseph Piccinich and National Retiree Coordinator Terence J. O'Sullivan



President Kenny Brancaccio & Retiree Council President Danny Ellicona share in a laugh!



Retired members enjoy the day together!

RETIREE LUNCH AT VILLA BARONE



A retiree member takes his "best girl" to the Luncheon!



Couples dance the afternoon away under Villa Barone's skylight.



National Retiree Coordinator Mr. O'Sullivan addresses retirees alongside John Modica, Retiree Committee Chairman



Margaret Melanophy wins prize alongside Noe Duran

* LOCAL 79 SUPPORTS

Members traveled to Haiti to help in construction and repairs!



Heart 9/11, including Chaz Rynkiewicz, John Wund, Timmy Warrington, & Jose Chicas all members of Local 79.



Local 79's John Wund speaks with community after arriving.



Heart 9/11 and community workers take a break from hard work.

LOCAL 79 MAKES A DIFFERENCE

BY CHAZ RYNKIEWICZ

With less work to go around, it's more important than ever to make sure construction jobs are done by union contractors. So when union organizers discovered non-union workers doing construction and demolition for a new store in Manhattan, Local 79 swung into action. To get those jobs for union workers, Local 79 drew on resources like its organizing and research staff and five inflatable rats.

Both the owner of the new store, American Eagle Outfitters, and the owners of the SoHo building where the store will be located pointed their fingers at landlord Jeff Sutton. He has control of the first three floors of the high-rise at 599 Broadway and had sub-leased the space to American Eagle. Although the build-out was still not confirmed as union or non-union, Sutton had hired non-union contractors to do the demolition at the store.

Sutton's didn't return phone calls from union officials. But researchers for Local 79 found out that Sutton is a giant owner of local retail real estate, with many other

stores located in some of Manhattan's priciest shopping districts, like Madison Avenue, Times Square, and 34th Street.

We put up rats at five of these stores simultaneously. Within half an hour Local 79 leadership got a phone call. Demolition and construction stopped immediately at the American Eagle store and the landlord agreed the work would be done by union workers. The job will approximately employ 24 workers for eight to nine months.

It's a happy ending that couldn't have happened without the help of eight organizers and a researcher supplied to Local 79 from the Laborer's Eastern Region, in addition to cooperation from the management of American Eagle. Because of that we were able to turn the job.



Local 79 members on the line!

AND SERVES *



Local 79 Asst. Director of Organizing, Chaz Rynkiewicz gives classroom a brief overview before demolition project begins.



Members came out to support immigration rights in Washington, DC

¡ESTE ES EL MOMENTO!

Por John Delgado, Gerente Comercial



John Delgado, Gerente Comercial

La sección Local 79 de nuestro sindicato reunió a más de 10,000 trabajadores sindicalizados y defensores de los inmigrantes el 1° de mayo en el bajo Manhattan, apenas a unas cuadras del City Hall. Llegamos para celebrar el Día del Trabajo y exigirle al Congreso que apruebe una reforma migratoria integral para los aproximadamente 11 millones de inmigrantes indocumentados que trabajan actualmente en los Estados Unidos.

Este es el momento. Nuestra concentración del Día del Trabajo fue solo una de las tantas realizadas en muchas ciudades de todo el país a favor de la reforma migratoria. Planificamos nuestra concentración del Día del Trabajo durante meses, pero la cuestión migratoria se volvió más urgente después que el estado de Arizona aprobara a fines de abril una ley que exigiría la detención y el interrogatorio de las personas que la policía crea han ingresado ilegalmente al país.

Fue emocionante y muy positivo escuchar a los miles de manifestantes reunidos gritar “¡Avergüenzate Arizo-

na!” y “Ningún ser humano es ilegal!”

Los demócratas del Congreso tienen previsto ahora hacer de la reforma migratoria integral su próxima prioridad legislativa, según lo ha manifestado el líder de la mayoría del Senado Harry Reid. Sin embargo, el Congreso ha intentado anteriormente la reforma migratoria y los partidarios del sindicato están preocupados debido a que el cambio que piden puede ser ignorado nuevamente para consid-

erar otras prioridades

La cuestión migratoria es particularmente importante para los sindicatos como el nuestro. La sección Local 79, como muchas secciones del Sindi-



cato Internacional de Trabajadores Estadounidenses (LIUNA), inscribe activamente a nuevos miembros que pertenecen a comunidades de inmigrantes recientes.

Nuestro hermano Raymond Poccino, Vicepresidente de LIUNA lo expresó con claridad. “Los inmigrantes continúan siendo la mano de obra y si no los organizamos nos vamos a quedar rezagados”.

La lucha por la reforma migratoria es también parte de un principio importante para Local 79 — cuando los derechos de los trabajadores están protegidos, todos los trabajadores se benefician. Darles a los inmigrantes ilegales estatus legal y las protecciones de la legislación laboral estadounidense no les costarán ningún puesto de trabajo a los trabajadores del sindicato. Esto se debe a que los trabajadores inmigrantes ya están aquí y ya están trabajando. Proteger los derechos de estos trabajadores inmigrantes para que ganen al menos el salario mínimo y tengan horas extras pagas, reducirá la tentación financiera que sienten los empleadores de contratar a trabajadores no sindicalizados.

Necesitamos terminar con el enfoque de la mera aplicación de la ley que el gobierno federal ha tenido en el pasado respecto de la inmigración ilegal. Muy a menudo la aplicación más dura de la ley de inmigración ha caído sobre los trabajadores, mientras a muchos empleadores se les ha permitido violar las leyes laborales casi impunemente.

Si a los millones de trabajadores indocumentados de los Estados Unidos se les encaminara hacia la obtención de su ciudadanía, se elimi-

El Hermano David Rodríguez y el Hermano Antonio Peralta se unen a la Hermana Kris Kohler de MTDC PAC en la manifestación por la inmigración.

naría la gran tentación que tienen los empleadores de contratar trabajadores indocumentados pagándoles menos que lo exigido por la ley. Legalizar a los trabajadores indocumentados también ayudará a llenar los enormes agujeros de los presupuestos estatales y federales.

LOCAL 79 CELEBRA SU VICTORIA EN LA CEREMONIA INAUGURAL DE ATLANTIC YARDS



En marzo, la sección Local 79 de nuestro Sindicato, junto con los Gremios de la Construcción, se unieron con sindicatos hermanos y hermanas, altos funcionarios gubernamentales y diversas celebridades para celebrar la creación de miles de nuevos trabajos sindicalizados en la ceremonia inaugural de Atlantic Yards, un desarrollo urbanístico de 6.5 millones de pies cuadrados ya en construcción en el centro de Brooklyn.

John Delgado, Gerente Comercial, señaló el logro increíble de Local 79 al contribuir a allanar el camino para que la urbanización Atlantic Yard fuera aprobada. “¡Esta es la culminación de años de esfuerzos!” dijo.

Delgado, Shawn “Jay-Z” Carter, el presidente del Barclay Bank, Robert Diamond, y muchos políticos locales y estatales y líderes de la comunidad subieron al escenario para elogiar el proyecto y el arduo trabajo que llevó obtener esta victoria. El gobernador de Nueva York, David Patterson, prometió “¡la creación de trabajos como nunca se han visto en Brooklyn!”

Casi una década después de haber sido anunciada, la primera etapa de Atlantic Yards, que incluye



Gary LaBarbara, Presidente del Consejo de la Industria y Gremios de la Construcción

un estadio y cinco rascacielos, finalmente comenzó.

Trabajos, trabajos, trabajos

Para los activistas del sindicato, el proyecto representa básicamente trabajos para sus miembros. Atlantic Yards empleará en forma permanente a más de mil trabajadores de los gremios de la construcción durante un período que se extenderá de 10 a 15 años. En su punto culminante, el proyecto puede llegar a emplear simultáneamente 2,500 trabajadores de la construcción, lo cual constituye un cambio bien recibido dada la tasa de desempleo actual de casi el 40% entre los trabajadores sindicalizados de los gremios de la construcción.

“Pero Atlantic Yards no sólo beneficiará a los sindicatos”, dijo Delgado. “También beneficiará a toda la comunidad con trabajos permanentes”.

Atlantic Yards también creará

varios miles de trabajos permanentes en su estadio (que será casi tan grande como el Madison Square Gardens), y en las 16 torres residenciales y comerciales previstas — el número exacto de trabajos permanentes dependerá en gran medida de la cantidad de espacio para oficinas que se construya. La estimación varía entre 4,000 y 8,000 trabajos permanentes. Forest City Ratner también firmó un Acuerdo de Beneficios para la Comunidad con el compromiso de que el 30% de los contratos y el 45% de todos los trabajos de construcción de Atlantic Yards corresponderán a mujeres y minorías.

“Muchos de nuestros miembros viven en esta vecindad”, dice Anthony Williamson, un auditor de Local 79.

Acción Sindical

Fue gracias al gran apoyo de muchos activistas sindicales que se logró avanzar con Atlantic Yards, incluida la negociación de un innovador “convenio laboral de proyecto” (PLA), entre varios sindicatos y el promotor.

“Hicimos todo lo que fue necesario”, dice Williamson del Local 79. Muchos miembros del Local 79 asistieron a centenares de demostraciones durante los últimos cinco años, incluidas varias reuniones con la comunidad en las que se enfrentaron los que apoyaban al proyecto y los que se oponían. Williamson recordó en particular una reunión realizada en Pratt University, cerca del sitio de Atlantic Yards, donde los trabajadores de la construcción que formaban parte del público y que vivían en el vecindario se pusieron de pie para demostrar su apoyo de Atlantic Yards a los políticos locales que se oponían al proyecto.

“Se trata de darle trabajo a la gente”, dijo Williamson.



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Upcoming Events



2010 Health Fair and Picnic

Saturday July 17th
11am to 5pm
Coleman Country Day Camp
Merrick, New York

Cost: \$5 per person.

Free for children under 4

Swimming, Basketball, Volleyball, Climbing Walls, Soccer, Playgrounds, Miniature Golf, Softball, Inflatable Rides, Raffles, Petting Zoo, Dancing, All Day Bar-B-Que, Health Screenings and Information

WRIST BANDS MUST BE PURCHASED PRIOR TO THE EVENT. YOU WILL NOT BE ADMITTED TO THE FAIR WITHOUT A WRIST BAND. EVERYONE, EXCEPT CHILDREN UNDER THE AGE OF 4 MUST HAVE THEIR OWN WRIST BAND. WRIST BANDS WILL BE SOLD AT THE JUNE GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING, AS WELL AS AT THE OFFICES OF LOCAL 79. WRIST BANDS WILL NOT BE SOLD THE DAY OF THE EVENT.

This year's event at the 13 acre Coleman Country Day Camp has limited parking. If you drive, you will be parking at the Merrick Station of the LIRR. Shuttle buses will be running all day for the 2 minute ride to the camp. You can also travel by train to the Merrick Station and catch the shuttle bus to the camp. The train schedule for the Babylon Line can be found on the website: <http://www.mta.info/lirr/>

**FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT
MELISSA OR LORI AT 212-465-7907.**



Membership Meeting

630 2nd Ave. @ 34th St.
New York City

July 21st, 5pm