IMPACT REPORT

2023
OUR STORY

Illinois Workers in Action was founded in January 2021 by co-founders Giselle Rodriguez and Michael Whitley.

Illinois Workers in Action (IWA) is a 501C3 nonprofit organization and covers the state of Illinois.

The organization was formed to create change in the workplace for all workers regardless of their type of employment. IWA wants to make sure that everyone has the necessary tools to succeed in their workplace.

There are a lot of employers/companies that take advantage of employees and are left in vulnerable situations as they have not had the opportunity to learn their rights and how to organize.

The organization’s impact goes beyond educating and supporting workers.

IWA is committed to solidifying and uniting the Latinx and Black community. With the work the organization does, it demonstrates both groups that it is imperative to work together as both face injustices in their workplace. Having training and conversations around racial justice and how both groups are affected in the workplace has helped workers understand that they must work together for a common goal.

OUR MISSION

Illinois Workers in Action’s (IWA) mission is to empower workers through education, organizing, policy, solidarity, worker power, and rights. IWA strives to build worker power in immigrant, Latinx, and black communities by working to advance systemic change that promotes racial and social justice and stabilizes low-income immigrants and communities of color.

IWA provides these services free of charge and without regard to immigration status.
OUR TEAM

We thank our team for their amazing work and dedication for continuing the work!

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**Labor Rights Education**

The organization is committed to empowering workers by providing them with the knowledge and tools they need to advocate for themselves in the workplace. IWA understands that many workers face difficult and often unfair situations on the job, and they believe that education and awareness are key to creating lasting change.

In addition to their virtual trainings, IWA also offers one-on-one support to workers who need help navigating complex workplace issues. This personalized approach allows workers to get the individualized attention they need to address their specific concerns and challenges.

Labor cases include:
- Wage theft/Non-payment of wages
- Break and Meal violations
- Gender-Based discrimination
- Race and color discrimination
- Sexual Harassment
- Work Injury

**Immigration**

IWA offers Know Your Rights trainings and referrals to immigration attorneys to support immigrant communities. They also provide ongoing support to undocumented students by helping them navigate the complex higher education landscape. IWA believes in treating everyone with dignity and respect, regardless of their immigration status, and is committed to advocating for immigrant rights and well-being.

**Public Health**

Our public health program consists of educating our community in various topics for their quality of life such as food desserts, healthy eating, food insecurity, inequities, the prevention of disease, prolonging life and promoting health through the organized efforts and informed decisions through education. In addition to education and awareness, we have taken concrete steps to help our community members take control of their own food supply. Through our "Grow Your Own Food" program, we provide resources and support to help individuals start their own gardens and cultivate their own fresh produce. This not only helps to improve access to healthy foods, but also creates a sense of community and empowerment.

**Environmental Justice**

Our new program will revolve around using popular educational materials to provide education to our workers on Just Transitions, equity and sustainability justice in jobs. This includes how this affects them, affects their community, their jobs and how they can fight to be involved in new solutions. This curriculum will include monthly workshops on topics such as: Wind Energy, Solar Energy, Hyperlocal Energy, Community Driven Energy Hubs and the spread of Misinformation.
HIGHLIGHTS

SOMOS SALUD

This year our organization participated in the SOMOS SALUD program by Alianza Americas. With support and guidance from the CDC, Alianza Americas is leading an effort to address health disparities in the response to the COVID-19 pandemic. This program works to improve health promotion and response activities with limited English proficiency (LEP) Latinx essential workers, their families and communities. We are developing culturally and linguistically tailored programs and practices for information sharing, testing, contact tracing, vaccination and healthcare strategies in response to health emergencies such as the COVID-19 pandemic. We keep each other safe!

ARP COHORT

Our executive director, Giselle Rodriguez was selected to be part of this years AMPT - Antiracist Restorative Practice (ARP) cohort. The cohort is a healing centered, liberatory framework used by practitioners, communities, and organizations to address inequities and structural harm, affirm the dignity and cultural wealth of communities, and to develop policies, practices, and institutions that affirm the fullness of our humanity and build toward our collective well-being.

#PROJECTELEVATE

Illinois Workers in Action was among a selected cohort of nonprofits that partook in a series of skills-based workshops led by Chicago Bulls and PepsiCo experts designed to empower nonprofits with essential tools for success. This couldn’t have been possible without the invaluable support of PepsiCo x AMPT x Bulls x for creating a program to support Black and Latiné non-profit leaders doing incredible work across the city of Chicago.
INTERNATIONAL WORKERS DAY HEALTH FAIR

For #MAYDAY we commemorated International Workers Day by hosting a health fair for WORKERS!

We were able to serve over 200 community members including newly immigrant arrivals with resources that included COVID-19 vaccinations, healthcare coverage for immigrants, $500 Chicago relief fund for immigrant/domestic workers, HIV testing, workers rights training, legal aid from Attorneys and more!

LABOR RIGHTS WEEK #2023 - MEXICAN CONSULATE

#LaborRightsWeek2023
This year, we joined the Mexican Consulate Labor Rights Week, where our team was able to provide information to Mexican nationals. More than 400 individuals were present each day and were able to take away very important information about their rights as workers, immigrants, health and environmental justice.

TVDL CAMPAIGN

We celebrated the passing of bill HB3882 along with our allies, community and with the Secretary of State!

HB3882 changes many things, drivers license will now also act as an identification, something that couldn’t be done with the TVDL. Individuals from foreign countries that aren’t allowed to renew their passport due status ineligibility may present an expired passport and this bill also prohibits the Secretary of State from entering into or maintaining any agreement regarding the sharing of such information or documents.

The bill will go into effect on July 1st, 2024.
FIESTA DEL SOL

This year, Illinois Workers in Action was invited to participate in Fiesta Del Sol as part of their #Citizenship&Immigration Expo. Fiesta Del Sol is a free four-day family friendly Latino festival, located in the heart of one of Chicago’s most attractive communities - Pilsen. This festival attracts over 1.5 million people and our organization is thankful for the support we received to showcase our work in the Labor Rights movement with our immigrant community.
Environmental Justice

Climate and Environmental Justice have always intersected with worker rights. We are excited to launch our new project on Just Transitions. Our work is expanding to educate workers on Just Transitions to advance social justice as it relates to workers rights and our environment.

Our new program will revolve around using popular educational materials to provide education to our workers on Just Transitions, equity and sustainability justice in jobs.

This includes how this affects them, affects their community, their jobs and how they can fight to be involved in new solutions. This curriculum will include monthly workshops on topics such as: Wind Energy, Solar Energy, Hyperlocal Energy, Community Driven Energy Hubs and the spread of Misinformation.

Parent Program!

Illinois Workers in Action has been selected to pilot a new program using the “Chicago Parent Program”. The purpose of the Chicago Parent Program is to help parents be the best parents they can be, in the process, promote healthy development in their children. The program will do the following:

- Helping parents clarify what they truly value as a parent
- Helping parents identify the behaviors they want to reinforce in their children
- Providing a range of strategies parents can use to reinforce those behaviors and advance their children goals
Illinois Workers in Action thanks all of our funders, for their continued support!
PHOTO GALLERY
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

1,450
Anual Calls

OVER 17,154
Workers reached through community education

545
Walk-ins

25
Community Trainings

12
Health Fairs

OVER $396,125
Recovered in wage theft cases
LABOR CASES SUBMITTED

32 Department of Labor

26 Work Accident/Injuries

24 Department of Human Rights

22 National Labor Relations Board (NLRB)
WE THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONTINUED SUPPORT IN OUR PROGRAMS

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