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Missouri Jobs with Justice is a coalition of community, labor, student, and faith-based groups and individuals working to build transformative power for social, racial, and economic justice in our state. An organization of, by and for working people, we believe in solidarity; in showing up for each other no matter our race, where we live, or what job we have. In addition to our local and state partners, we are proud to be affiliated with national Jobs with Justice as well as with People’s Action.

Missouri Jobs with Justice Voter Action is a companion 501(c)(4) organization to Missouri Jobs with Justice. Missouri Jobs with Justice Voter Action puts powerful tools into the hands of the grassroots leaders and activists who have built Missouri’s worker justice movement through workplace campaigns, ballot initiatives, and other community fights.

Our vision is of a Missouri where:

- The economy and public infrastructure are strong and good jobs are plentiful
- The right of all workers to organize and collectively bargain is protected
- Opportunity exists for all regardless of race, identity, or immigration status
- All are assured economic security and a safe, healthy life
- White supremacy is understood, challenged, and dismantled
We work to build a Missouri where everyone has what they need to lead safe and healthy lives. We win tangible victories for working people, whether Black, brown, or white. We organize in workplaces, in places of worship, on campuses and in neighborhoods throughout Missouri. We work to build power through direct action and through strong relationships that are rooted in justice, equity, and solidarity.

Our Jobs with Justice Solidarity Pledge, affirmed both by our individual members as well as our member organizations, commits us to show up for each other’s fights at least five times a year. This means joining picket lines, attending rallies, contacting decision-makers, accompanying striking workers back to their workplaces, and joining in other actions that advance our vision of an economy, a democracy, and a Missouri that works for all of us.

In addition to showing up in solidarity with our members, Missouri Jobs with Justice directly organizes activists throughout our state, through a variety of organizing bodies:

Organizing Committees are the mobilization hubs of MO JwJ, where leaders meet and plan together. Organizing Committees are active in Springfield, Kansas City, St. Louis, and Columbia.

Faith Labor Alliances bring together labor and faith communities to deepen relationships and provide opportunities to act on shared values. Faith Labor Alliances currently meet in Kansas City, St. Louis, St. Charles County, and Springfield.

Workers’ Rights Boards are made up of community and faith leaders dedicated to offering powerful moral support to worker struggles throughout our state. Workers’ Rights Boards are currently active in Springfield, Kansas City, and St. Louis.

Regional Leadership Teams bring together representatives from the sectors in which we organize along with local Organizing Committee and Workers’ Rights Board representatives to strengthen alliances and make strategic decisions for local campaigns and actions. Leadership Teams are currently active in St. Louis, Kansas City, Springfield, and Columbia.

Statewide Executive Board provides statewide leadership and direction for Missouri Jobs with Justice. State Executive Board members represent communities across the state as well as leaders from each of the sectors in which we organize.
We are grateful for another year and opportunity to say thank you for taking action and demanding more for working families and other marginalized communities in Missouri. As we closed out 2021, we reflected on what this work means and what keeps Missouri Jobs with Justice growing and focused on building power in our communities. The clearest answer for us is relationships. The relationships we have with activists, partner organizations, elected officials, and between ourselves as staff. By centering the importance of relationships and acknowledging differences like race, class, geography, life experiences, and industries, we intentionally cross divides to be in solidarity together and not with the 1% of people holding the super majority of wealth and power in this state.

Our opposition—white supremacy, corporate greed, classism—thrive off of mistrust and division. They win when we are fighting each other over crumbs even though there is enough for us all. The boss, CEO, or those in power are not going to give anything away. We must leverage our relationships to demand happy and healthy lives and not settle for the scraps they throw us to stay quiet.

Together, we do the big and the small things needed for us to win. We stand against systemic racism, we fight hostile state and local legislative bodies, we get people access to health care, we stop attacks on ballot initiatives and access to democracy. We also make sure workers get their raises, we make sure grocery store workers have access to PPE, we make sure local predatory loan operations can’t expand their reach in small towns, and we make sure someone doesn’t get stuck paying back the state for unemployment they received in a pandemic.

As coalition organizers we strive for honest, transparent relationships rooted in shared struggles and common goals that can win. We hope as you read this annual report you see how the work you were part of made real impacts on people’s lives. We won't settle when it comes to having true economic, social, and racial justice, and we look forward to building more relationships and trust in 2022 and beyond.

Solidarity Forever,
The Missouri Jobs with Justice Team
Local Campaigns

When our member organizations call on us, we swing into action, bringing the power of Missouri Jobs with Justice to bear on unscrupulous employers, evasive politicians, and anyone who seeks to ignore the needs of Missouri’s families. We live by our core value of solidarity, because we know that we are stronger together than we can ever be by ourselves.

Mid Missouri

Fighting for a Fair Contract at the University of Missouri

The University of Missouri kicked off bargaining with its largest union by trying to eliminate the grievance process from the contract, effectively making enforcement of the pact impossible. The union, Laborers Local 955, reached out to Missouri Jobs with Justice to publicize the fight. MO JwJ leaders participated in demonstrations on campus and sent over 300 emails to MU President Mun Y. Choi and the University Board of Curators in support of workers. Ultimately, workers won a new contract with strengthened grievance language including—for the first time ever—third party mediation of intractable grievances.

Fighting for Safe Workplaces for Graduate Workers

Laborers Local 955 isn’t the only union the University of Missouri picked a fight with in 2021. The University also went after the graduate workers who teach an ever increasing share of undergraduate courses at the institution. Despite renewed concerns about COVID-19 in the wake of the Delta and Omicron variants, administrators at Mizzou let the university’s indoor mask mandate expire, in effect forcing all classroom instructors to work in a profoundly unsafe environment.

Even while forcing its graduate workers to toil under such conditions, the University was touting its commitment to advancing medical technology through the opening of the campus’s NexGen Precision Health Building. The graduate worker’s union, MO JwJ member organization Coalition of Graduate Workers, couldn’t help but point out the University’s hypocrisy and called on MO JwJ to join their protest of the building’s October 19th grand opening. Unfortunately, the University continues to ignore the realities of the ongoing pandemic and has not reinstated its mask mandate.
Securing Fair Wages at Truman State
Truman State University in Kirksville positions itself as an enlightened, if not elite institution, pledging in its strategic plan to “foster an inclusive and supportive environment where all community members feel valued and encouraged to reach their highest potential.” These lofty words proved hollow this Fall, when the University refused to bargain with workers and Laborers Local 955.

With the University dragging out bargaining for months, Local 955 reached out to Missouri Jobs with Justice for help. We sprang into action, sending over 300 emails—many from Truman Alumni—to key decision makers at the public university before staging a rally on campus in December. Eventually the university relented, eliminating its probationary wage for new hires, bumping up pay by $0.85 for all workers, and offering more vacation time for longtime university employees.

Supporting Drivers at Scheppers Distributing
Despite record profits from skyrocketing beverage sales throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, Joe Presmeyer, the president of N.H. Scheppers Distributing, refused to even meet with his hard-working delivery drivers to negotiate a new contract. The workers, members of Teamsters Local 833, had already gone without a pay increase for over five years and decided it was time to fight back.

After calling a strike, Local 833 reached out to Missouri Jobs with Justice for support; we drove calls and emails urging Scheppers to bargain with his workers and mobilized support on the picket line. Presmeyer remained intransigent, prompting the workers to ask MO JwJ to organize a community rally across the street from Scheppers’ main office in Columbia. The threat of a visible public rally finally got Presmeyer’s attention. He finally relented, and Local 833 was able to bargain a fair contract within a few days.

“If it wasn’t for Missouri Jobs with Justice and the threat of a rally, we would have never gotten anywhere...after [Scheppers] heard about the rally we got everything taken care of and got the contract.”

-Rick McKee, IBT Local 833 Shop Steward, R. H. Scheppers Distributing
Supporting Temporary Solid Waste Workers
In our continuing struggle for good jobs and healthy communities, Missouri Jobs with Justice stood in support of temporary workers at the City of Columbia as they fought for benefits and better wages. For years now Columbia’s solid waste department has relied on temporary workers who are paid substantially less than city workers and who don’t receive the benefits—paid time-off, health insurance, and retirement—city workers performing the exact same job do. MO JwJ turned out the community to stand with these workers as they called on the City to offer them permanent positions with the same pay and benefits as city workers.

Missouri Jobs with Justice was able to mobilize community members as well as representatives from four local labor unions—LiUNA Local 955, CGW, CMNEA, and UAW Local 2379—to stand at the City Council meeting to show their support. Community members also emailed their council members urging them to do right by the temporary workers. As local activist Evonnia Woods wrote, “Solid waste workers are putting themselves at high risk every day to keep the rest of us safer and we are all indebted to them. It is in everyone’s interest to always adequately compensate sanitation workers, but especially in a health pandemic heavily reliant on sanitation to prevent its spread.”

At the end of the City Council meeting, Mayor Brian Treece ordered the city manager to fix the problems temporary workers were facing. Heading into 2022, LiUNA Local 955 representative Andrew Hutchinson is optimistic the issue for the temporary workers will be resolved.

Electing a City Council that Works for Us
Columbia’s annual staggered elections for its city council afford us a rare opportunity to engage in meaningful municipal electoral work every year. Building off of our success organizing in Ward 1 in 2020, we targeted Ward 2 in this year’s election. Using the Neighborhood Pledge we developed with partners last year, we talked to 189 voters, on over 700 attempts. The vast majority of the voters we talked with indicated support for the Neighborhood Pledge.

The month prior to the election we held a candidate forum asking city council candidates to sign onto the same pledge as our neighbors. One candidate, Andrea Waner, did so, and she was subsequently elected to the council. We will continue to organize around the Neighborhood Pledge, using it to guide voter engagement in 2022 and beyond and to make sure that elected officials like Waner remain accountable to working people in Columbia.
Fighting for Union Rights at Research and Menorah Medical Centers

The essential healthcare workers at Research and Menorah Medical Centers, Hospital Corporation of America (HCA) facilities in Kansas City, opened the year with a major victory: A new contract setting starting wages at a base of $15 per hour, guaranteed annual wage increases, and a stronger safety committee at the facility. This contract took over a year for the workers’ union, SEIU Healthcare Missouri Kansas, to bargain due to HCA’s continued intransience and hostility. Unfortunately, another group of workers, faced with similar hostility from the employer, remain embroiled in an ongoing decertification battle with HCA, one that is expected to continue well into 2022.

Winning 10% Raises at Highway Trailer Sales

The owners of Highway Trailer Sales (HTS) in Kansas City were probably counting on their four mechanics to roll over this summer when they forced them out on strike, but they certainly weren’t counting on having to contend with the deep solidarity these workers were able to build with the community. In their proposal, HTS wanted to ram a raft of concessions down workers’ throats: Lower wages, inferior health care coverage, even the elimination of the union security clause. But the four Machinists Local 778 members weren’t having any of it.

During their 12-day strike, the workers reached out to Missouri Jobs with Justice, and we drove dozens of calls directly to HTS owners urging them to bargain in good faith with the workers. Buttressed by this pressure—and support for the workers from across the Kansas City labor community—HTS came back to the table with a decent offer including a 10% pay increase for the striking Machinists.

“One thing that has brought me into Missouri Jobs with Justice is the commitment to taking on fights for and with working people. As much as I can help bring more folks into this work I’ll be organizing with Missouri Jobs with Justice.”

-Phillip Jamerson, Community Activist
Organizing for Tenants Rights
Missouri Jobs with Justice continued its support of the transformative organizing work of KC Tenants as they work to secure the rights of renters in Kansas City and throughout the state. MO JwJ members and leaders took part in this year’s Tenants’ Day of Reckoning and House the People Town Hall. Late in the year, lawmakers in Kansas City succumbed to pressure from KC Tenants and their allies, including MO JwJ, and signed a Tenants’ Right to Council ordinance into law, a major victory for all renters in the city. Missouri Jobs with Justice is eager to continue following the leadership of KC Tenants in working towards ensuring housing is recognized as a human right throughout our state.

Demanding Accountable Policing
Bringing accountability to local government is long and difficult work, but it is also absolutely crucial if we are to win communities that afford each of us the opportunity to thrive. Throughout 2021, Missouri Jobs with Justice continued to work with the Urban Council, supporting its demand for local control of the Kansas City Police Department, justice in local instances of police misconduct, and the firing of Chief Rick Smith. In December, it was announced that Smith will be leaving KCPD next Spring, but the fight for justice and accountability is far from over. Missouri Jobs with Justice will continue to mobilize and offer strategic support to the Urban Council as they fight for a more just and equitable Kansas City.

Standing Up with Fast Food Workers
For nearly a decade, Stand Up KC has been organizing fast food workers in and around Kansas City, and Missouri Jobs with Justice has been standing alongside them. The pandemic has taken a toll on fast food workers and other front line workers, who have been compelled to expose themselves to the virus for over a year now. We continue to support these workers as they fight for safe workplaces, a $15 wage, and a union. Over the course of 2021, we have positioned Stand Up KC leaders to become leading voices for our work, especially around organizing rights and the fight to protect our state minimum wage.
Advancing Workers’ Rights and Social Justice through Municipal Elections
Local government should respond to the needs of its residents. In the lead up to this year’s city council elections in Springfield, Missouri Jobs with Justice brought together our member organizations, labor partners, and other community stakeholders to craft a community pledge that centers the needs of working people and communities, instead of the wealthy few.

We used this pledge to guide voter engagement ahead of the municipal election; 58% of the voters we spoke to said they supported the platform, and ultimately five city council candidates signed onto it as well. We hope to continue to use this platform to guide voter engagement and contacts with local lawmakers in the years to come.

Practicing Yoga for Justice
This October, our Springfield-Ozark Workers’ Rights Board hosted our second annual Yoga for Justice event in Springfield. Yoga instructors Kim Zimmerman, Holly Norton, and Nikki Pascoe led 31 participants in three styles of yoga. Besides offering a respite from the past two years of stress, anxiety, and isolation, the event raised over $600 for Missouri Jobs with Justice.

After yoga, participants enjoyed a happy hour sponsored by local breweries Mother’s and Tie and Timber and snacked on food from a local food truck. Leaders in Springfield are looking forward to making Yoga for Justice a permanent annual event.

“As one who practices the Way of Jesus, Missouri Jobs with Justice gives me an opportunity to put my faith in action. Jesus listened to the needs of the oppressed and then helped to mobilize to change oppressive systems. MO JwJ provides support for workers to claim their power and work together to help ensure fair and just wages, safer work environments, and accountability for employees, while putting racial dignity and justice at the core of the work. I am honored to be a part of an organization that listens and mobilizes us to take action.”

-The Rev. Jenn Simmons, National Ave Christian Church
St. Louis

Demanding $15 and a Union!
Since 2012, Show Me $15 has consistently brought the intersection of race, class, and gender in the fight for worker justice to the social justice movement in St. Louis. This year, Missouri Jobs with Justice continued to amplify the voices of St. Louis’ Black fast food workers. We also put our bodies on the line to stand in solidarity with them, joining rallies that shut down restaurants to protest persistent sexual harassment and to demand safe workplaces and union rights. The ongoing COVID-19 pandemic continues to show us that fast food companies remain willing to put their profits before the safety and health of their employees and our communities. Missouri Jobs with Justice will continue to be there, standing alongside these workers as they fight for $15 and a union.

Winning a First Union Contract at MERS Goodwill
Over a year and a half after first winning their union election, workers at the MERS Goodwill store in Festus, 30 miles South of St. Louis, won their first union contract this May. The new contract secures pay increases and ensures respect on the job for these workers, members of UFCW Local 655. Goodwill pulled out all of the standard union-avoidance tricks, including an unsuccessful attempt to decertify Local 655, but workers held together, building overwhelming community support and pressure from Missouri Jobs with Justice and the broader St. Louis Labor Movement.

“As a retired educator, I understand how critical it is for workers to earn a living wage so that they can support their family with dignity. MO JwJ’s work not only supports workers, but nurtures a collaborative, educated community prepared to dignify workers, their unions and their efforts to achieve a living wage for all.”

- Chris Guinther, Retired NEA member
Ensuring Good Jobs Now and for the Future
For nearly 60 years, St. Louis Community College (STLCC) has offered quality, affordable education for residents of St. Louis and surrounding communities, providing generations of St. Louisans access to higher education and job training. However after six decades, much of the college’s physical infrastructure is in dire need of repair and renovation.

Proposition R, which voters approved on August 3rd, addresses these needs and will create thousands of family-supporting union construction jobs while ensuring that the next generation of STLCC students are prepared for the jobs of the future. Missouri Jobs with Justice contacted over 2,500 voters in the lead up to Proposition R through direct mail and volunteer phone banks, helping to ensure the measure’s passage with over 58% of the vote.

Standing with Teamsters at Valvoline
This Spring, St. Louis Workers’ Rights Board Steering Committee member Kevin FitzGerald brought the plight of 22 Teamsters Local 618 members striking at the Valvoline oil plant just South of Downtown St. Louis to our attention. Valvoline wanted to shift the burden of healthcare coverage onto workers by raising deductibles up to $7,000, while taking away workers’ hard-earned pensions.

MO JwJ showed up to the picket line, contributed to their strike fund, and—along with MO JwJ member organization Coalition of Black Trade Unionists—provided food, supplies and solidarity to picket line rallies on March 26th and April 16th. On April 23rd, after eight weeks on strike, workers ratified a new contract and donated the remainder of their strike fund to the St. Louis Labor Council’s $5 for the Fight Fund.

“I am more into solidarity in action than words. This sums it up for me, you know the song, ‘solidarity forever’:
In our hands is places a power than their wealth in hoarded gold;
Greater than the might of atoms magnified a thousand fold;
We can bring to birth a new world from the ashes of the old;
For the Union makes us strong.”

-Jay Ozier, Coalition of Black Trade Unionists - St. Louis
Standing Up for Patient Care and Workers’ Rights at Blue Circle Nursing Home

Nursing home workers, like the ones at Blue Circle Rehab and Nursing Center in North St. Louis, have been on the front line of the COVID-19 pandemic since day one, caring for some of the most vulnerable members of our community. While recognizing these workers as ‘essential’ and ‘healthcare heroes,’ Blue Circle has been bargaining in bad faith with the workers’ union, SEIU Healthcare Missouri Kansas, refusing to accept a union security clause and proposing no raises for nursing staff until January 2022.

Workers at Blue Circle decided they had had enough, and went on an Unfair Labor Practice Strike to protest Blue Circle’s bad faith bargaining. Missouri Jobs with Justice was there, joining the picket line and organizing faith and community leaders for a rally and prayer circle. Healthcare heroes like the staff at Blue Circle deserve a good contract and respect at work, and Missouri Jobs with Justice will be there standing in solidarity with them until they do.

Standing Up for Dignity and a Fair Contract at Sunset Ford

When 25 mechanics and other service department workers at Sunset Ford in St. Louis County walked off the job this October, Missouri Jobs with Justice was there walking the picket line with striking workers and pledging to stand in solidarity for as long as it took to win a fair new contract. After four weeks on the line, the workers, members of Machinists Local 777, ratified a new contract beating back cuts to their pension and securing wage increases.

“Recently we had a strike [at Sunset Ford]. Missouri Jobs with Justice scheduled a rally to support [our workers] and educate the community on what our labor related issues were. This valuable resource, along with Missouri Jobs with Justice’s dedication and commitment to our cause provided a platform in which solidarity did prevail. I want to give a big shout out and thank you to everybody at Missouri Jobs with Justice for their continued support for all of Missouri!”

-Scott Hargis, Machinists Local 777
Fighting for Paid Family Leave for City Workers

Whether we’re Black, brown or white nearly all of us will need to take time away from work to deal with a serious personal or family health issue, or to welcome a new child into our family. The federal Family Medical Leave Act (FMLA) provides for time away from work, but for millions of workers that time is unpaid. Without paid family leave many workers are forced to either quit their jobs or not be there for their families while in need. None of us should have to choose between going into debt or taking time to care for family.

In St. Louis, the Board of Aldermen can pass paid family leave for city workers now. Missouri Jobs with Justice Voter Action is working alongside Pro-Choice Missouri, Women’s Foundation, and Generate Health STL to make sure all workers have the paid time off we need to welcome a new child or care for a family member. MO JwJ leaders and activists have knocked on doors and made phone calls to talk to St. Louis City residents about this issue and held in-district meetings with Alders to ask them to support this bill.

National Campaigns

In the same way that our local solidarity work can be undermined by the state legislature, what happens in Washington, DC can make our work very hard—or relatively easy, making national work essential to our mission.

Supporting Federal Workers at the Veterans Administration

Across the country, workers at the Veterans Administration continue to fight against discrimination and for better working conditions at the agency. During 2021, Missouri Jobs with Justice showed up for these workers at rallies outside of VA Hospitals in St. Louis and Kansas City, and we are working with AFGE Locals at the Administration to craft clear demands and amplify the voices of their members. We look forward to deepening the relationships we’ve built with AFGE members in the months and years ahead.
Securing Voting Rights for All

In Missouri, as in states across the country, the voting rights of Black and brown voters are under attack. Historically only decisive federal action has been able to secure voting rights, and throughout 2021 Missouri Jobs with Justice has proudly stood to secure the passage of the For the People Act and the John Lewis Voting Rights Act.

In June, we stood with member organization UNITE-HERE Local 74 to greet their International Union’s Black Voters Matter Freedom Ride which made a stop in St. Louis en route to Washington, DC to urge passage of the For the People Act. The following month, on the one year anniversary of civil and voting rights champion Congressman John Lewis’s death, MO JwJ joined the Missouri Voter Protection Coalition’s (MOVPC) Good Trouble Vigil in St. Louis. This vigil, part of a series around the state, called on the US Senate to pass the John Lewis Voting Right Act and For the People Act to ensure that all eligible Americans can freely participate in our elections.

On September 17th, with both bills still languishing in the Senate, we joined MOVPC’s Finish the Job rally urging Senator Blunt to support the measures. Several MO JwJ Workers’ Rights Board members spoke at this rally, including St. Louis County NAACP President John Bowman, Women’s Voices Raised for Social Justice’s Ruth Ehresman, and Denise Lieberman of the MO Voter Protection Coalition. Despite the efforts of the Missouri Voter Protection Coalition, MO JwJ, and other organizations throughout the country, Congress has not passed these bills, nor any other measure that meaningfully secures voting rights for all Americans.

“Missouri Jobs with Justice brings a level of expertise and people power that the special interests trying to dismantle our democracy are no match for. I am proud to be part of the team standing up for Missouri voters.”

- Denise Lieberman, Missouri Voter Protection Coalition
Statewide Policy Fights

Missouri Jobs with Justice has long understood that no matter how well we are organized locally, working people need to organize and build power at the state level to ensure that local progress is not thwarted by Jefferson City lawmakers and lobbyists. Throughout 2021 we worked diligently—despite the challenge of COVID-19—to amplify the power of working people at the state level.

Ensuring Our Communities are Heard in the Redistricting Process

Last year, our efforts to ensure a fair and non-partisan redistricting process was scuttled when voters, due to confusing and dishonest ballot language, removed language passed by Clean Missouri in 2018 from the state constitution. Nevertheless, Missouri Jobs with Justice has been working tirelessly to ensure grassroots voices are heard in the redistricting process. MO JwJ leaders and volunteers submitted over 200 community maps laying out their communities of interest to inform the process. We are determined to make sure that a redistricting process dominated by political consultants and backroom deals becomes a thing of the past.

Meeting with Lawmakers and Holding them Accountable to Our Communities

Every year, Missouri Jobs with Justice holds in-district meetings with lawmakers at various levels. In 2021, we held 12 in-district meetings with state and local lawmakers. These meetings offer MO JwJ and Workers’ Rights Board members opportunities to urge lawmakers to support our issues and to build relationships between our members and their elected representatives. We’re hoping that in 2022 we will be able to have more in-person in-district meetings, but whether we can meet in person or not, we look forward to talking with more elected officials in 2022.

Voters Contacted 22,000
Actions Takers 3,350
Legislative Contacts 2,150
Retaining the Earnings Tax in St. Louis and Kansas City

In 2010, billionaire and anti-tax zealot Rex Sinquefield funded a statewide ballot initiative outlawing new local earnings taxes in Missouri, forcing St. Louis and Kansas City voters to reapprove their decades-old municipal earnings taxes every five years.

These earnings taxes are crucial for both cities, providing one third of St. Louis and 45% of Kansas City’s general revenue funds. As in past years, Missouri Jobs with Justice anchored campaigns to protect the earnings tax in both cities. We knocked on over 1600 doors, and made over 800 phone calls to voters in the lead up to the April election.

Voters showed they understand how important these funds are for their cities with Proposition E in St. Louis passing with over 79% support, and Question 1 in Kansas City receiving the support of over 77% of voters.

Directing American Rescue Plan Funds to the Missourians Who Need Them Most

When the American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) passed Congress in March, federal relief was made available to states, counties, and municipalities to aid in recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic. Missouri Jobs with Justice has been working across the state to ensure that these funds go directly to the people who need them the most.

In St. Louis City, MO JwJ helped to pass an innovative program that will put over $5 million into the hands of low income residents. MO JwJ has also directed much of its voter engagement capacity towards ensuring that ARPA funds allocated to Boone County and Springfield are used similarly to benefit working families and not developers or other special interests in these communities.

“The American Rescue Plan program will bring needed relief to thousands of families and meet Mayor Jones’ call for equity in the disbursement of ARPA funds. Missouri Jobs with Justice provided key leadership in helping our community and getting this money into workers’ hands.”

-Wally Siewart, Professor of Political Philosophy and Ethics

2021 Missouri Jobs with Justice Annual Report
**Standing with Unemployed Workers**

Unemployment due to COVID-19 continues to impact many families in our state. For many of these dislocated workers, the stress of unemployment was deepened when Governor Parson callously sought to recoup funds erroneously paid to some workers due to no error on their part. Missouri Jobs with Justice connected impacted families to legal services, where they received help navigating the process. MO JwJ also supported legislation protecting families from having to repay these overpayments.

Even after backing off from the repayment demand, Governor Parson maintained a hostile posture towards Missouri’s unemployed workers. In June, he made Missouri the first state to cut off federal unemployment assistance for the unemployed, blocking an estimated $770 Million in federal money from reaching families hit hardest by COVID-19. Missouri Jobs with Justice fought this move, organizing unemployed workers and taking the Governor to court to resume these critical payments. While our lawsuit was ultimately unsuccessful we will continue to organize to support these families and to fix Missouri’s frayed social safety net.

**Defending the Right to Protest**

Following the police murder of George Floyd, thousands of Americans took to the streets in protest. These impassioned protests caused reactionary lawmakers from coast to coast to propose draconian restrictions on our basic freedom to assemble. In Missouri, lawmakers sought to ban mass marches, kneeling and prayer in streets, and tactics common to a wide array of protest movements. In partnership with the St. Louis-based Organization for Black Struggle, Missouri Jobs with Justice coordinated a legislative response which stripped the most harmful provisions from this bill, preserving the right to engage in direct action in Missouri.

**Voter Engagement**

Missouri Jobs with Justice is deeply committed to year-long voter engagement, centered not just around electoral calendars, but around the issues that matter most to multiracial communities throughout our state.

In 2021 we talked to voters about a wide range of issues, from municipal elections and local earnings taxes, to attacks on our minimum wage and Medicaid expansion in our state house, to defending the right to organize unions at the Federal level. Over the course of 2021 we talked to over 2,000 Missourians, reaching Missouri voters in 12 counties and the City of St. Louis. All of the MO JwJ supported measures that appeared before voters in 2021 passed into law.

This year we also expanded our capacity to engage in meaningful deep canvass conversations across the state. With support and guidance from People’s Action MO JwJ organizers began running deep canvases around the state. As the year came to a close organizers began to revive democracy teams around the state dedicated to organizing voter engagement and deep canvass work in 2022 and beyond.
Preserving Our Wins...
Defending our victories in the face of a hostile Missouri General Assembly is always challenging work, and 2021 proved no exception. Last year, voters approved Medicaid Expansion, extending healthcare coverage to thousands of uninsured Missourians; but in 2021, lawmakers failed to fund this program during the legislative session, prompting Governor Parson to withdraw the state’s application to expand the program. We didn’t take this setback lying down. We mobilized our members and supporters, collecting stories, driving calls to the Governor, and ultimately bringing hundreds of protesters to the Governor’s Mansion urging him to restore Medicaid Expansion. Ultimately, the Missouri Supreme Court took the matter out of Parson’s hands when it ruled that the voice of the people must be upheld.

Lawmakers also tried to take Missouri’s $11.15 minimum wage away from certain workers as they have every year since voters approved the wage increase in 2018. Fortunately, as in years past, Missouri Jobs with Justice and our allies were able to keep these proposals from making much progress in the legislature. We know that 2022 will likely see more attacks on these and other issues, and we are prepared to beat them back just as we did in 2021.

...and Ensuring the Possibility of Future Victories
Missouri’s century-old initiative petition process is absolutely crucial for achieving progressive reform in our state, but certain Jefferson City lawmakers have the initiative petition process in their crosshairs, proposing measures that would increase the number of signatures needed to get measures on the ballot, the geographic breadth from which signatures must come, and increasing the threshold for passing an initiative into law. While we were able to stop these attacks in 2021, Missouri Jobs with Justice continues to helm a broad coalition to preserve our initiative petition process from future attacks in the years to come, and we fully expect that some destructive reform of the process will appear on a statewide ballot in the not too distant future.

“We have some of the best healthcare thanks to our union, but we showed up in force for the rally to expand Medicaid because we understand the power of solidarity. When Missouri Jobs with Justice calls on the UAW, we know we’re stepping into a fight alongside other working class people.”

-Gary Thomas, UAW Local 249
Strategic Initiatives

Organizing for Power in New Communities
Since our founding in 1999, Missouri Jobs with Justice has continued to grow, strategically expanding our base and geographic impact to ensure that working people throughout our state have the power we need to impact change. From a loose group of labor activists in St. Louis, we have grown into one of the most powerful grassroots groups in the state with organizing bodies in St. Louis, Kansas City, Springfield, and Columbia.

During the course of 2021, we brought on new staff who are beginning to build organizing and voter engagement capacity in St. Charles and Clay counties. These counties are among the fastest growing in our state, have relatively high union density, and vote constantly with us on issues. Building our base and capacity in these communities is crucial for keeping pressure on lawmakers in Jefferson City to make sure that they respect our voices and our votes on issues that matter to working people. Missouri Jobs with Justice is committed to organizing for the long haul in these communities because we believe we cannot win on our issues statewide without them.

Building the Missouri that we want to live in requires building multiracial solidarity around a shared anti-racist and pro-worker agenda. We have to develop campaigns that highlight the intersection of race and class and that are capable of bringing rural, urban, and suburban communities together around a shared vision of justice and mutual thriving.

Missouri Jobs with Justice believes that for this work to be real we must invest in relationships across organizations, across geographies, and across lived experiences. We commit to this work internally, with our leaders and staff, and externally with our partners and within the communities we seek to organize. We have been engaging in anti-racist caucusing and collective anti-racist political education to equip our organization to dismantle the systems of oppression we experience and uphold. We commit to continuously deepening this work; finding ways to heal and support ourselves and each other along the way.

We will continue to incorporate racial justice analysis across our work, using the Race Class Narrative framework and including anti-racist power analysis in all of our trainings. During 2021, we have held a series of Missouri Movement Project Orientations with our leaders, members, and activists. We have worked with other MOVE and MOVE Action member organizations to examine and interrupt ways that white supremacy shows up in our work while finding moments to come together to develop and implement campaigns that center the leadership of Black people, indigenous people, and other people of color. Missouri Jobs with Justice is committed to answering the call of the Black-led organizations that we are in relationship with and accountable to organize working-class white folks to join in multiracial solidarity for economic and racial justice while continuing to build a multiracial base across the communities that we organize in.
Membership and Training

For many years, Missouri Jobs with Justice has offered an intensive three-day leadership development training program for our leaders, leaders of our member organizations, and other activists hoping to sharpen their organizing skills. Over the last two years, COVID-19 has made the kind of intensive in-person training we normally offer impossible.

Nevertheless, as we broaden our membership, we recognize that our leaders, new and old, remain hungry for these and other training opportunities. This year, working with the National Jobs with Justice training team, we adapted select modules from our leadership development training to ensure that our leaders remain fresh and their organizing skills stay sharp. We also continued to offer our Missouri Movement Project Orientation to people who are new to racial justice organizing, as well as select issue-based trainings for our leaders and activists.

“I want to congratulate Missouri Jobs with Justice on another powerful year fighting for wages, health care and protecting access to the initiative petition process. I am so grateful to represent NAACP Springfield branch as we stand with MO JwJ for economic, racial and social justice.”

-Dee Ogilvy, NAACP Community Outreach Chair

Workers’ Rights Boards

Missouri Jobs with Justice supports Workers’ Rights Boards in each of the communities we organize in. These Workers’ Rights Boards are composed of faith, civic, labor, small business, and political leaders from these communities and serve as a powerful moral voice in struggles for social, racial, and economic justice in our communities and across the state.

In 2021, Workers’ Rights Boards stood in solidarity with workers on picket lines, at rallies, at prayer vigils, at the state Capital, and even remotely in Zoom meetings. Workers’ Rights Board members have stood alongside striking healthcare, fast food, industrial, and public sector workers, helped guide voter engagement work, and organize events. MO JwJ’s Workers’ Rights Board members provide a powerful voice against attacks on our democracy and serve as powerful champions for Medicaid expansion, the minimum wage, and other core worker issues in our state.
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“MO JwJ and our partners fight ferociously to harness the power of the people to end poverty and oppression, even when the odds seem impossible, and that’s a fight I have to be a part of in any way I can.”

-Dave Derossett, Drury University
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Bronwen Zwirner
How to Join

Missouri Jobs with Justice has two kinds of members—individuals and organizations. Member Organizations are critical to MO JwJ’s ability to stand in solidarity with workers and continue organizing and mobilizing to fight for fair wages, workers’ rights, health care and a democracy that works for everyone—no exceptions. Your organization can join MO JwJ by completing the form below or go online to: www.mojwj.org/about/member-organizations

Individual members of Jobs with Justice are the backbone of our organization. Members take our ‘be there’ pledge, committing to ‘be there’ at least five times a year for someone else’s fight as well as their own. This means joining picket lines, attending rallies, phone banking, signing petitions and participating in other actions. You, as an individual, can join Missouri Jobs with Justice by sending in the form on page 31.

### Missouri Jobs with Justice Dues

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LABOR ORGANIZATIONS:</th>
<th>COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Members</strong></td>
<td><strong>Budget</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0-1,000</td>
<td>$500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1,000-2,500</td>
<td>$1,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2,500-5,000</td>
<td>$2,500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5,000-10,000</td>
<td>$5,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10,000+</td>
<td>$10,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Annual</strong></td>
<td><strong>Monthly</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$0-10K</td>
<td>$50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$10K-100K</td>
<td>$100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$100K-500K</td>
<td>$500</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$500K+</td>
<td>$1,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Labor organization rates apply to organizations that collect dues from individual members (like local unions), labor organizations that collect dues from affiliate locals (i.e. Labor Councils, District Councils) will negotiate on a case-by-case basis, not to go any lower than community group rate.

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Organization: ___________________________  Contact Name: ___________________________
Address: ___________________________  City, State, Zip: ___________________________
Phone Number: ___________________________  Email: ___________________________

- Pay dues in the amount $___________ (see table above)
- Card  □  Check  □  Cash  □
- Debit/Credit Card Number: ___________________________  Exp Date: _____/_____
- 3 digit code: __________

Billing Address (If different than above)

Return your organizational membership form via email to info@mojwj.org or by mail to 2725 Clifton, St. Louis, MO 63139.
Become a Member

Organized People

Missouri Jobs with Justice is a coalition of individual members and organizations throughout our state who are committed to building a powerful multiracial movement to achieve social, racial, and economic justice for all. We are working together to build a more just world where we can all thrive.

Real change happens from the ground up, in church basements and union halls, at community centers and on front porches. We believe that power is made up of organized people and organized money. While the richest 1% and the politicians they bankroll work to divide us along racial, geographic, and economic lines, we must build power together. To build the Missouri we want to see and the Missouri that our families need, become a member of Missouri Jobs with Justice by paying dues of no less than $5 per month and by taking the Jobs with Justice Pledge below.

Organized Money

I will support this work financially:

- By becoming a Sustaining Member through Auto Donation on my credit or debit card. Donate the following amount on my card each month:
  - $50/month
  - $20/month
  - $10/month
  - Other $_____/month

- With a one-time donation of $___________

Debit/Credit Card Number ________________________________ Exp Date ____/______ 3 digit code _________

Name __________________________ Email __________________________

Home Address ____________________________________________

Cell Phone Number ____________________________

I would like to receive text messages updates

Solidarity Pledge

I will BE THERE to fight for an economy, a democracy, and a Missouri that works for all of us, no matter the color of our skin, our zip code, or what’s in our wallets. I commit to BE THERE at least five times a year:

- Standing up for our rights as working people—Black, brown, and white—to good jobs and healthy communities;
- Supporting the right of all workers to organize and bargain collectively;
- Fighting for fair wages in the face of corporate greed;
- Fighting against white supremacy wherever I encounter it, and standing up for racial justice;
- Organizing the unorganized to take aggressive action to secure a better future for all of us;
- Mobilizing those already organized to join the fight for Jobs with Justice.

By becoming a member you will receive regular updates and invitations to take action with Missouri Jobs with Justice. Return your membership form to info@mojwj.org or 2725 Clifton, St. Louis, MO 63139. Sign up online at: mojwj.org/membership.
THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT.

It is a privilege to fight alongside you—and we’ll stand in front of you if we have to. We’ll be there every step of the way.

BE THERE PLEDGE

We will BE THERE:

✔ Standing up for our rights as working people—Black, brown, and white—to good jobs and healthy communities;

✔ Supporting the right of all workers to organize and bargain collectively;

✔ Fighting for fair wages in the face of corporate greed;

✔ Fighting against white supremacy wherever we encounter it, and standing up for racial justice;

✔ Organizing the unorganized to take aggressive action to secure a better future for all of us;

✔ Mobilizing those already organized to join the fight for Jobs with Justice.