

DEMOCRATIC LEFT

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COVER PHOTO BY SAVANNAH KUANG



FROM THE
NATIONAL DIRECTOR

WHAT IS LABOR?

BY MARIA SVART



Labor produces marvels for the rich, but it produces deprivation for the worker.

—Karl Marx

People think power is a limited resource, but using power builds power. Once workers get a taste of our power, we will not settle for a bad deal. And we won't stand by while someone else gets screwed, either.

—Sara Nelson, President of the Association of Flight Attendants-CWA

Labor Day is the time of year for union picnics and friendly parades. It was originally declared a federal holiday by President Grover Cleveland to placate labor even as he was smashing the Pullman railway worker strike. The ploy didn't work, and he lost the working-class vote in his unsuccessful bid for reelection. Socialists still enjoy our time off with labor siblings in September, but we didn't fall for this attempt to distance the official labor movement from the Left and have taken to the streets instead on May Day, International Workers' Day.

In the name of Eugene V. Debs, jailed during the Pullman strike and subsequently inspired to become an early organizer for socialism in the United States, let us remember Labor Day's

MORE TO READ AT [DSAUSA.ORG/DEMOCRATIC-LEFT](https://www.dsausa.org/democratic-left):

Alyssa Alfaro interviews a Starbucks worker

Furqan Bahadur explores the history of Taiwan

Jason Ruiz goes inside baseball for the labor organizing story

Douglas Cueva illustrates the book Henry Kissinger should have written

more radical roots. For example, on September 5, 1882, twelve years before it became a national holiday, socialists and early unions organized 10,000 people to march in New York City for safer working conditions, shorter hours, higher pay, and a labor holiday.

We are part of that long tradition. From Warrior Met Coal miners to Amazon warehouse workers, Kaiser nurses to Trader Joe's workers, we keep the economy humming and take care of our communities.

Schools are back in session, and we face a severe teacher shortage because charter school profiteers and the politicians they pay for have systematically defunded public schools and busted teachers unions. From Ohio to California teachers are showing renewed militancy. Over the summer, UPS drivers delivered packages in sweltering conditions brought on by climate change. Their trucks don't have air conditioning, and many workers were sickened by heat illness. Two died. Meanwhile, UPS profits last year were \$3.9 billion, and their CEO made \$27 million. UPS workers are building a strike-ready campaign in preparation for next summer's Teamsters contract expiration.

Starbucks is retaliating against workers forming unions, with deepening repression at their stores,

so DSA members and chapters are talking to co-workers and hitting the picket line, including in our nationwide Solidarity Is Brewing work as well as more local, worksite specific organizing at other employers (see p. 2 for how your chapter can get involved).

Everywhere, workers are organizing. After all, what is our labor? It is our bargaining power. Without it, the world grinds to a halt. Instead of working ourselves to the bone so the rich may play, we can work together to create marvels for ourselves—from renewable energy to universal healthcare and public education—once we recognize we don't need the owning class. 🌹



LABORSOLIDARITY.COM

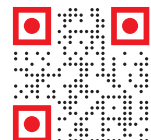
Can you become a monthly sustaining donor to power the labor work of DSA chapters across the country?



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DSA members are supporting striking workers, organizing their workplaces, fighting for a Green New Deal, and electing socialists to office all over the country. Join us!

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STARBUCKS, SOCIALISTS, & SOLIDARITY

From Buffalo and Boston to San Francisco and San Antonio, Starbucks workers are organizing and DSA members are supporting them. At this writing, more than 200 stores have voted to unionize, and hundreds more have started campaigns. Still, only 3% of stores have voted to join with Starbucks Workers United, and the coffee behemoth has retaliated by closing down many stores. For the first time in years, though, workers have a sympathetic National

Labor Relations Board in Washington, one that will enforce existing labor laws, thus making the union's work more likely to succeed. DSA's Labor Commission has prepared a Chapter Toolkit (bit.ly/sbuckstoolkit) to help you brew some solidarity. But solidarity doesn't stop once the vote is held. "It can take up to 400 days from the time of the election for us to get a contract," says one DSA organizer. "We need a wall of support that will be there for the long haul." 🌹

QUICK GUIDE

HOW YOUR CHAPTER CAN HELP STARBUCKS WORKERS

- 1 Always, always coordinate with the workers. Their livelihoods are on the line. Ask what they need.
- 2 Print flyers. If you are not using a union printer and print them out yourself, write 'Labor Donated' at the bottom.
- 3 Start a relief fund to help workers with extra expenses. Seattle DSA raised \$50,000!
- 4 Stage a sip-in at a store that is actively engaged in organizing.
- 5 Put Starbucks organizers in touch with your chapter's contacts in local unions, progressive groups, and with politicians.
- 6 Adopt a store that has a campaign at tinyurl.com/AdoptStore
- 7 Talk to your friends and neighbors about the campaign.
- 8 Join a picket line.
- 9 Buy supplies.
- 10 Stay committed. Voting for a union is only the first step. Getting a contract is the goal.

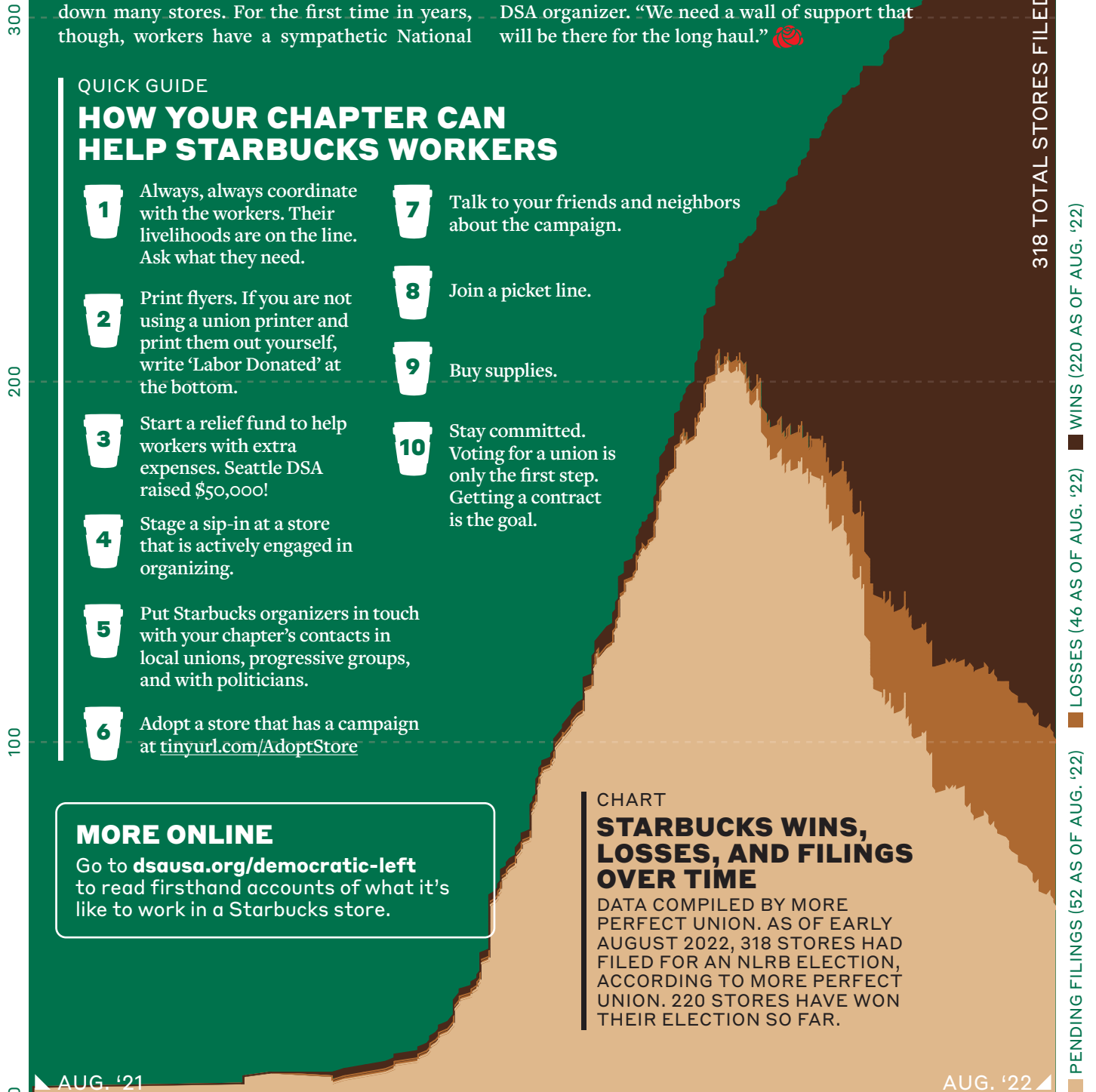
MORE ONLINE

Go to dsausa.org/democratic-left to read firsthand accounts of what it's like to work in a Starbucks store.

CHART

STARBUCKS WINS, LOSSES, AND FILINGS OVER TIME

DATA COMPILED BY MORE PERFECT UNION. AS OF EARLY AUGUST 2022, 318 STORES HAD FILED FOR AN NLRB ELECTION, ACCORDING TO MORE PERFECT UNION. 220 STORES HAVE WON THEIR ELECTION SO FAR.



THE BOOK HENRY KISSINGER SHOULD HAVE WRITTEN

This summer, former Secretary of State Henry Kissinger published a book called *Leadership, Six Studies in World Strategy*, which the *Wall Street Journal* said showed “how nations use the tools of statecraft to bend an often-resistant world to their will.” Indeed,

Inhabitants of some of those “often-resistant” places might have been interested in another book. We present one possibility: *Six Studies in Political Repression*. To read more, go to [DL Online](#) and download as a ‘zine. 🌹

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ART & CONTENT BY DOUGLAS CUEVA JR.



FROM THE NATIONAL POLITICAL COMMITTEE

NPC UPDATE

BY KRISTIAN HERNANDEZ

Here are highlights from the National Political Committee since the last *Democratic Left* update. Check out the DSA website for more details

Chapters across the country are winning on various terrains of struggle. Our New York City chapter secured primary victories for the New York state senate races of Jabari Brisport and Kristen González. Our Kansas chapters helped beat a statewide anti-abortion ballot measure!

We had our first in-person NPC meeting in New York City in mid-August. We discussed the need for a decades-long strategy that soberly assesses the challenges ahead (climate

change, the crisis of liberal democracy, the rise of authoritarianism and right-wing violence, escalating geopolitical conflict, and economic downturn), but also the possibilities within the next ten years that will allow us to go on the offensive.

The Recommitment Drive exceeded its goal of recommitting 5,000 DSA members, with 5,906 recommits. Of these, around 20% committed to monthly dues, part of which get sent back to their home chapters in the form of a dues share and also allow us to budget more accurately.

We agreed to hold our 2023 Convention in Chicago and approved 2023 Convention Steering Committee specifications and the general convention structure. We hope to foster as much democratic debate and deliberation as possible so that we can come out of this event with more direction on the fight ahead.

We also approved the hiring of two new electoral staff positions, as well as an additional new field organizer position for the Organizing team, as a way to continue helping chapters with support, guidance, and direction. These are new positions to be filled alongside any existing vacancies.

Only working-class organizations can defend and expand our rights. And that means each and every one of us has a part to play in this larger fight. *Hasta la victoria!* 🌹



KRISTIAN HERNANDEZ

is chair of the National Political Committee.

FROM THE YDSA

YDSA STANDS UP TO FIGHT BACK

BY GRIFFIN MAHON

When members of the Young Democratic Socialists of America (YDSA) met in Minneapolis, Minnesota, July 22-24, they were more than ready to debate ideas and plan strategy. After two years of online conferences, the energy from this year's representatives of 53 high schools and college chapters was palpable.


Speaking under a banner that proclaimed "Stand Up, Fight Back," Minneapolis Councilmember and DSA member Robin Wonsley Worlobah spoke on the first night of the convention with a rousing speech before members turned to debate on some 30 resolutions and amendments. Spirited discussions showed how serious our youngest members are. In light of recent legislation and rulings, YDSA re-



solved to launch a campaign in defense of bodily autonomy—both in regard to abortion rights and defending trans youth—for which there will be student actions this fall. Members asked incisive questions about internationalism and how we in the United States should relate to leftist movements and governments abroad. Moreover, a proposed leadership quota for disabled comrades offered the occasion to figure out how best to support those with little time, money, or energy as they participate in DSA.

DSA's new co-chairs, Jake Colosa and Leena Yumeen, were elected by acclamation. For the remaining seven at-large seats on the National Co-

ordinating Committee, there was a competitive election among thirteen candidates. That so many members ran this year is a sign that YDSA fosters political pluralism and motivates young organizers to campaign for leadership.

In the tradition of U.S. socialists' meetings, the convention adjourned after singing all six verses of "Solidarity Forever." 

GRIFFIN MAHON is a member of the National Political Education Committee and chaired sessions of the YDSA convention. For more information about YDSA, including how to start a chapter, go to y.dsausa.org

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