

# 2023

## ANNUAL REPORT

### DELIVERING JUSTICE



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# 2023 was a landmark year for Worker's Justice Project.

Following the Adams administration's mandate of minimum pay for app delivery workers in June, multi-billion dollar app delivery companies including UberEats, DoorDash, and Grubhub launched a lawsuit and fought tooth and nail to prevent the mandate's implementation. As the case moved through the New York Supreme and Appellate courts, we never gave up on the fight to deliver justice for New York City delivery app workers.



Thanks to the unwavering support and generosity of our allies, donors, and community supporters, we were able to defy the efforts of these companies to maintain poverty wages. **Instead, we made history as the first city in the country to legalize minimum pay for app delivery workers.**

We also made strides for workers in our Construction Workers United and Liberty Cleaners divisions. This year, we championed preparing the next generation of builders in NYC by delivering effective, culturally competent health and safety trainings, wage negotiations, job placement assistance and more. Similarly, we continued essential work to educate women in the cleaning industry about their rights, health and safety, provided English classes and supported sustainable job placements for these workers.

These historic victories and the work we do to fight for better working conditions for essential workers would not have been possible without the contribution of our funders, supporters, and donors. We could not be more grateful for your generous support and dedication.

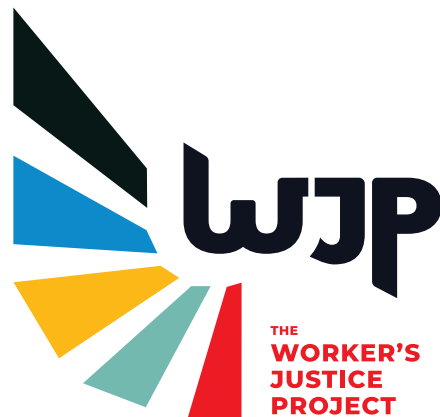
**It's never been clearer that unity, collective care, and organized determination are the seeds of workers' power.** In 2024, we look forward to continuing this work together and building on these landmark advancements for New York City's immigrant workforce.

We hope you will remain by our side as we continue the fight for workers' justice.

In solidarity,

**LIGIA GUALLPA**  
Executive Director

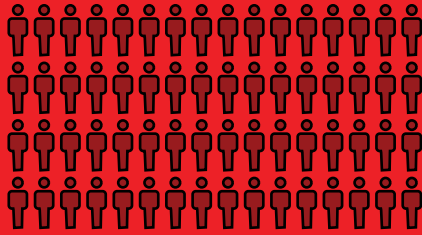
WJP was founded in 2010 with the mission to organize and empower workers, as well as to advocate, educate and fight to secure better workplace conditions for workers in the New York City area. Our three divisions, Los Deliveristas Unidos, Liberty Cleaners, and Construction Workers United, operate to educate workers from majority migrant backgrounds on their right to dignified working conditions and wages.



# OUR IMPACT

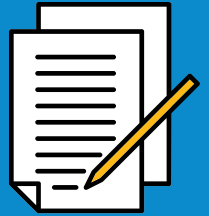
**66,983**  
**WORKERS**

reached across  
all programs



**1,619**  
**LETTERS SENT TO**  
**MAYOR ADAMS**

in favor of Deliverista  
minimum pay



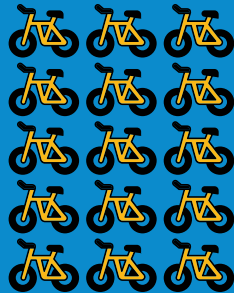
**20** RALLIES,  
IN-PERSON ACTIONS  
AND GATHERINGS



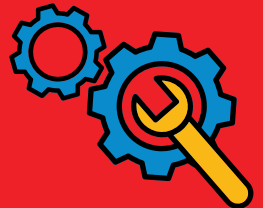
**429**  
**JOB PLACEMENTS**



**15** E-BIKE  
TUNEUPS AND  
EDUCATION  
SESSIONS



**9** PROFESSIONAL  
TRAININGS AND  
WORKSHOPS



**5** NEW YORK  
BOROUGHS  
ACTIVATED



**2** EDUCATIONAL  
ROUNDTABLES

for donors and  
campaign supporters



**UNPRECEDENTED**  
**PACKET OF**  
**LEGISLATIVE BILLS**

passed to protect app  
delivery workers



**1** CAMPAIGN  
WEBSITE LAUNCH





“ Solidarity is really important for this kind of campaign. It’s really important to have a means of uniting delivery workers because we all work alone, but having this organization [LDU] has been so important to our ability to provide support to each other to fight together. And the support between us is something that even the public notices. ”

**ANTONIO SOLIS**

“ [Because of the new minimum pay rate], you don’t have to risk your life to try to save two minutes anymore. You can take your time and ride safely and have a better chance of making it home at the end of the shift. ”

**JOSH WOOD**

“ Securing a first-in-the-nation minimum pay for delivery workers brings me immense pride and joy. Three years ago, I could only hope for this moment. This is a tremendous change, and it shows that anything is possible. ”

**GUSTAVO AJCHE**





There are **over 65,000 delivery app workers** in New York City alone. Throughout the pandemic, these workers toiled at all hours of the day and night, exposed to dangerous working conditions like severe weather, traffic crimes, and unsafe infrastructure, all to provide New York City's residents with essentials such as groceries and medicine.


The harrowing working conditions and exceedingly low pay rates galvanized workers to fight for just pay. In March 2020, we began organizing food delivery workers from all 5 boroughs who work through apps such as Grubhub, DoorDash, UberEats, and more. This network quickly became known as Los Deliveristas Unidos (LDU).

Over the past few years, we have educated workers on their rights to dignified working conditions and wages, mobilized workers, elected officials, NYC delivery app customers, and labor allies to demand much-needed legislative changes and continued fighting and winning legal battles against large corporations trying to maintain poverty wages. Together, we are creating a model of urban mobility that could change the way people, as well as goods, move around the City.

## BY THE NUMBERS

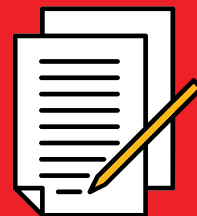
**65,000  
DELIVERISTAS  
IN NYC**



 = 1000 workers

**1,619  
LETTERS SENT TO  
MAYOR ADAMS**

in favor of Deliverista  
minimum pay



**15 E-BIKE  
TUNEUPS**

and Education Sessions  
in the 4 boroughs in NY



**20 RALLIES,  
IN-PERSON ACTIONS  
AND GATHERINGS**

alongside our allies and  
sister organizations



**1 DONOR  
ROUNDTABLE  
EVENT**

(Championing Change)



**1 CUSTOMER  
ACTIVIST  
ROUNDTABLE  
EVENT**

(Justice Talks)



**1 WEBSITE  
LAUNCH**



**1 MINIMUM PAY  
MANDATE AND  
5 ADDITIONAL  
BILLS**

passed to provide better working  
conditions to app delivery workers  
(including mandated access to  
bathrooms at restaurants and limits  
on distance of delivery trips)







## Deliverista Hubs

Whether it's a snowstorm or sweltering heat, Deliveristas keep the City running. We are essential workers, and we deserve essential services.

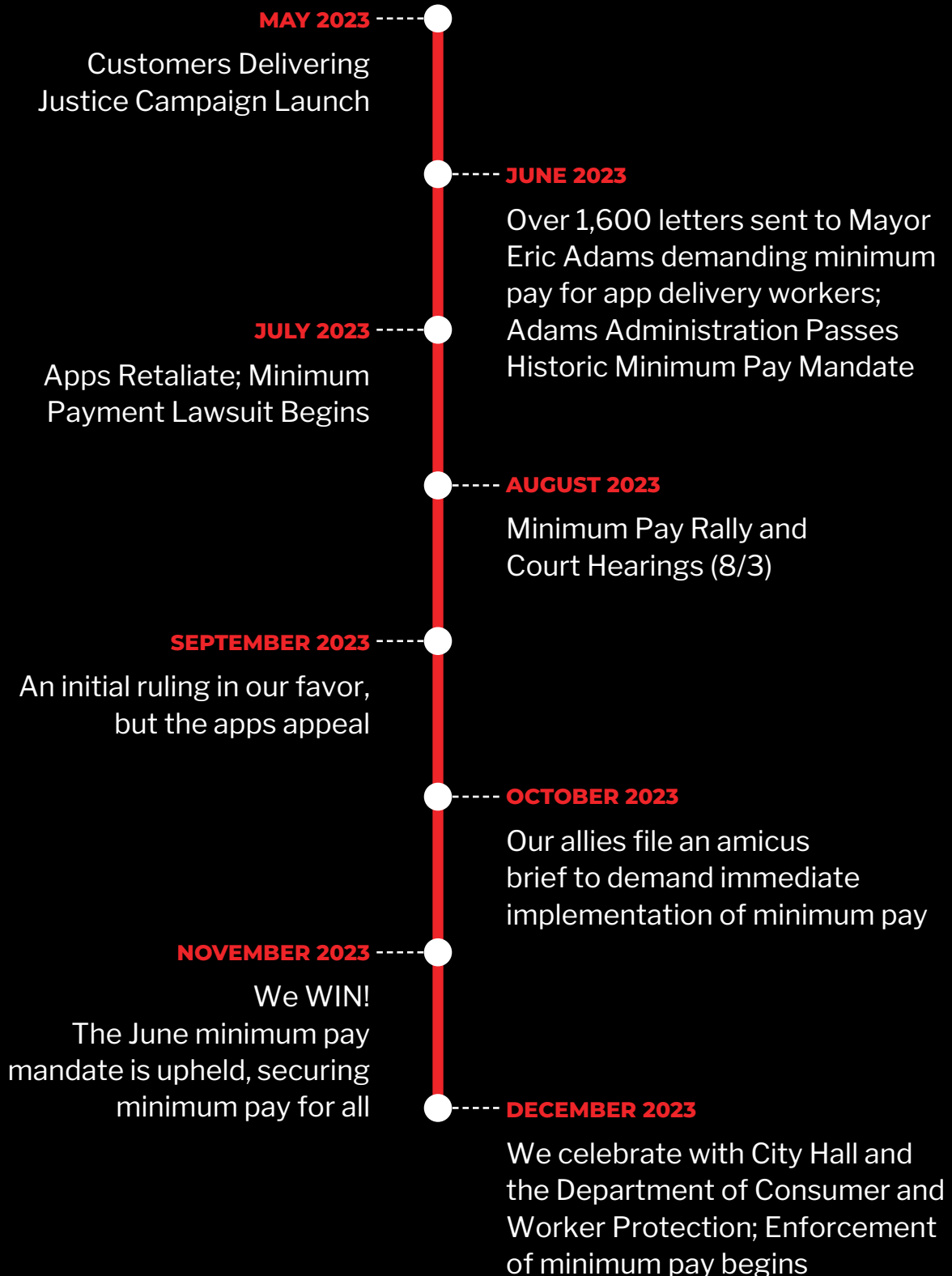
In October 2022, Mayor Eric Adams and Senator Chuck Schumer announced a **first-of-its-kind hub for the City's delivery app workers**. The design of these hubs was carefully developed for Deliveristas, and is a new infrastructure model that centers worker-led training programs, essential services, workers' rights information, micro-mobility charging stations, and—most importantly—safe spaces for workers to rest.

**Senator Schumer pledged \$1 million** to further support the development of these hubs and a renovated worker center. His commitment and investment will ensure that delivery app workers have the infrastructure to do their jobs in a safe, dignified way. We look forward to sharing more updates and announcements about these hubs in 2024.





# The Struggle to Secure Minimum Pay Against App Company Retaliation





Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, delivery app workers found themselves continually exposed to dangerous working conditions including hazardous weather, traffic crimes, and unsafe roads, all while providing essential groceries and medicine to New Yorkers forced to shelter in place. Unjustifiably low pay rates (averaging \$7.09/hour at the time) for such work galvanized workers to organize and fight for more. **We knew that collective action was the only way to hold politicians and corporations accountable to the people.**

And so we took [our message](#) to the public. Over the summer of 2023, we started our Customers Delivering Justice campaign with a More Perfect Union. Our goal was to highlight the [struggles of delivery app workers](#), let New Yorkers know there was a [socially responsible way to order from delivery apps](#), and pressure the Adams Administration to pass a minimum pay mandate for workers. As a result of this outreach, over 1,600 customers, supporters, and allies sent letters in support of minimum pay implementation to Mayor Eric Adams. The Mayor couldn't help but respond to our pressure, eventually [passing a historic](#) minimum pay mandate in June – the first of its kind in the country!

 **NBC NEWS**

**10 hours in the smoke: NYC delivery workers say they had 'no choice' but to work**

**AP**

**New York City will implement minimum wage for app-based workers, marking national first**

With this new mandate in place, delivery apps would be required to provide fair pay to workers by July 12. However, this was only the beginning of a long road to victory.



## Retaliation and our Fight Back

In response to our victory, UberEats, DoorDash, Grubhub, and Relay [filed a lawsuit](#) against the City of New York with the goal of reversing the minimum pay mandate, putting implementation of the law on hold and preventing workers from earning a livable wage. Instead of investing in workers, these apps chose to invest their billions in upholding poverty wages. This was nothing new to us. Billion-dollar apps have been using these tactics to penny-pinch workers since they first launched – and we knew it wouldn't work. So, we fought back.



On **August 3** our trial against the apps kicked off with a rally organized by WJP. Deliveristas stood side by side with elected officials, community members, and labor allies outside of the New York Supreme Court to make our intentions loud and clear: Apps Must Pay Us What We Deserve! These companies had gotten away with paying poverty wages for far too long, and each week that minimum pay was delayed, millions of dollars were being withheld from delivery workers. It took several months, an attempt by the app companies to appeal an [initial ruling in our favor](#), and the help of our allies to submit an amicus brief demanding immediate implementation, but [we secured minimum pay](#) for Deliveristas in **November 2023!**

©CBS NEWS  
Judge rules New York City can raise  
minimum wage for Uber, Grubhub,  
DoorDash workers

Gothamist  
Judge upholds NYC's minimum  
wage for delivery workers



As a result of a hard-fought campaign, and years of advocating and organizing, we showed large corporations that they cannot profit at the expense of immigrant workers and get away with it. This victory was a stark reminder that there is power in collective organization and action. Standing alongside delivery app workers, our community supporters have transformed the campaign to secure minimum pay by putting much-needed pressure on big app companies and elected leaders to pass crucial legislation for delivery workers.

On **December 6th**, we stood with Mayor Eric Adams, the Department of Consumer and Worker Protection (DCWP), SEIU 32BJ, NYC Central Labor Council, and community supporters to celebrate this landmark victory and proudly declare New York City as the first in the country to win minimum pay for delivery app workers. Finally, the more than 65,000 Deliveristas will receive the pay that we've been fighting for for years.





## Continued Education and Advocacy

**Donor and Supporter Events:** Over the course of the fall, while our legal case against the app companies was wending its way through court, we continued mobilizing our allies in the fight for workers' rights. To commemorate Labor Day, we hosted **Championing Change**, an exclusive roundtable event to share progress and plans with donors and sustainers, while giving them a chance to ask questions about the ongoing minimum pay hearing for Deliveristas. In late September, we also hosted **Justice Talks: Customers for Change**, an informational roundtable in which we shared updates with consumers about the role they could play in our #DeliverJustice campaign.

**Encouraging Tipping Amidst App's Deception:** The very same week in December that we celebrated the courts upholding the minimum pay mandate, Uber and DoorDash retaliated by [overhauling their tipping structure](#) to dissuade customers from providing tips to deliveristas. This was during the holiday season, when deliveristas were facing the challenges of winter, including frigid temperatures and significant slowdowns in the amount of delivery work available. And now the delivery apps were shortchanging them by hiding the tipping option! The apps also began releasing intentionally misleading updates around worker pay calculation to sow confusion. In response, we ramped up our advocacy efforts. Together with DCWP, we created multiple resources to reclaim the narrative about minimum pay and new payment methods, reinforce the critical nature of consumer tips during the holiday season, and reassure workers that we were working closely with the City to ensure that the apps obeyed the law we fought so hard to implement. This included a video produced with DCWP Commissioner Vilda Vera Mayuga to answer some of the most frequently asked questions about the new pay rate as well as videos from workers themselves detailing their experiences with the slowdown in work.

### **Bloomberg**

**Uber, DoorDash Make Tipping Deliveries Harder After NYC Wage Law**

**Dec. 14 Check Distribution Event:** In July 2023, we helped 13 workers file wage theft complaints against DoorDash. The 13 complaints—covering the missed pay mostly between April and May of this year—collectively amounted to nearly \$22,000 in lost wages owed to them by DoorDash which they received on December 14.



## What's Next?

Heading into 2024, we are continuing to mobilize our communities to stay educated and informed about the minimum pay legislation. We will continue fighting for advancements in worker justice and putting pressure on the apps to comply with the ruling, ensuring they pay app delivery workers the wages they are rightfully owed. We continue to make the safety of deliveristas and the public one of our main priorities - in 2024, we look forward to working closely with our network of allies and the administration to support meaningful legislation that will make the streets of New York safer for all residents.

Deliveristas are revolutionizing the industry, and we're not stopping now.

**“ We chose the name Liberty Cleaners because it signifies freedom. Before, we had to work under terrible conditions and had no say in the matter and no freedom to decide what our working conditions would be. But we learned that we have rights in this country and we can fight for them and decide for ourselves how we work. Now we have a minimum salary that we can demand and we have the right to undertake our own professional development. Liberty Cleaners has done so much to help us in that development through trainings and much greater awareness of our rights. We have learned that if we work together we can achieve so much more. ”**

**MARIA GUIRACOCHA**







Liberty Cleaners is a **collective of strong women** that came together in 2018 to transform the cleaning industry into one that provides better wages, safer working conditions, formalizes the employer-worker relationship, while creating more transparency and basic employment standards for this type of work. The overall aim is to turn domestic cleaning into a profession of well-paid jobs. WJP does this through:

- ★ Leadership development
- ★ Workforce development including OSHA and cleaning training as well as job connection services
- ★ Workers' rights education including on wage theft
- ★ Organizing workers to collectively negotiate with employers

With respect to workforce development, WJP is focused on professionalizing the industry by innovating work readiness preparation programs, including through a pre-apprenticeship program developed with SUNY Empire that covers:

- ★ How to conduct cleaning jobs in a professional setting
- ★ How to incorporate technology to make the job more professional, to better connect with employers, and to more easily find employment
- ★ How to make the job safer, using more environmentally healthy products while recommending those projects to employers

As is the case with all our divisions and programs, collective organizing in Liberty Cleaners was central to the goal of industry transformation. Despite being essential workers, domestic cleaners are not protected under the Occupational Safety and Health Act (OSHA) or the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB), meaning these workers cannot unionize and are instead hired and treated as independent contractors. And even though New York is the first state in the country to extend basic labor protections to domestic workers through the Domestic Workers Bill of Rights, there is still a long way to go to ensure they enjoy the same protections and unionization rights as other workers. For this reason, since its inception, Liberty Cleaners has always **sought innovative means to garner more power for workers in the domestic cleaning industry**, including to collectively raise wages and set basic health and safety standards through direct engagement and signed agreements with employers.



By collectively organizing, Liberty Cleaners has established a \$22-\$25 an hour pay rate, more than 40% above minimum wage. Liberty Cleaners workers have also negotiated a lunch break, standards for a safe workplace with health and safety equipment, and guaranteed compensation for tasks that go beyond the scope of work in their signed employer agreement. Negotiating these contracts collectively not only raises labor standards and minimum pay rates, it also changes how the domestic cleaning industry is perceived and thus how domestic workers are treated. By treating domestic cleaning as a modernized profession, Liberty Cleaners has compelled employers to treat it as such and to engage with these essential workers as professionals with **guaranteed protections, rights, and power.**

As the numbers reveal, workers in the division are stepping up, including the 40 women who took English classes through Liberty Cleaners this past year to empower themselves to more directly engage employers, claim their worksites, and transform their industry. In addition, nearly 500 immigrant women, mostly from Latin America, were certified in health and safety trainings in addition to learning about workplace rights and services such as applying for IDNYC, NYC CARE, the Fair Fares NYC card, as well as filing an OSHA or DOL complaint if they are experiencing unsafe working conditions or wage theft.

### BY THE NUMBERS

English classes:

**40**

**PARTICIPANTS**

OSHA Training:

**488**

**ATTENDEES**

Jobs Dispatched:

**429**



“ Having these trainings and support from WJP helps so much because we face a lot of abuses on the job. And when you have nothing, and you feel alone, that kind of support and help means a lot. Now, there’s an entire group of us who know each other and support each other, and from these first trainings with WJP, that started us helping each other and teaching one another, so that we’re able to pass that knowledge on and bring people together and can face these challenges together. ”

JOEL SANCHEZ





Construction Workers United (CWU) organizes and advocates for day laborers and low-wage immigrant workers in New York City’s construction industry. At the heart of CWU’s mission lies a **commitment to fostering the next generation of builders in the city that never sleeps**. Through a multifaceted approach, CWU not only provides culturally sensitive health and safety training mandated by Local Law 196, but also endeavors to elevate the wage standards for day laborers through diligent negotiations with employers. In addition, CWU operates a vital hiring hall for day laborers, shielding them from the perils of wage theft while fostering connections between workforce development and robust worker protections.

This past year, Worker’s Justice Project’s construction division provided a holistic set of workforce development trainings to over 1,000 workers ranging from Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) protocols to soft skills and financial literacy training to be more effective in and outside of the construction zone, as well as facilitated connections to vital community and job resources such as NYC Care and NYC ID. We have successfully increased the participation of women in OSHA/SST courses, signaling our dedication to fostering gender inclusivity as we work toward a more inclusive and equal workforce by breaking barriers and encouraging diversity. In the summer of 2022, we also extended our services to many new arrivals by providing pro-bono rights training to reflect our commitment to justice and inclusivity, reaching those who were not yet members of our organization. From newly-arrived New Yorkers to those who have been in the industry for months or years, **our organizing efforts and resources are set to open a new, safer chapter for the construction industry.**



As the city skyline continues to evolve, so too does the mandate of Construction Workers United. With ambitious plans to expand educational programs and galvanize more workers into the fold, CWU stands poised on the precipice of a transformative year. In the face of challenges old and new, CWU remains steadfast in its commitment to championing the rights and dignity of those who build the foundations of our urban landscape.



## OSHA 30 TRAINING:

**638** PEOPLE  
TOTAL

- ★ 485 men
- ★ 153 women

## SST TRAINING:

### Hard Skills Training:

**209** PEOPLE  
TOTAL

- ★ 133 in Scaffolding
- ★ 76 in Flagging

### Soft Skills Training:

**179** PEOPLE  
TOTAL

- ★ 85 in Qualitas: Finance Workshop
- ★ 28 in How to Use Zoom
- ★ 26 in Stephanie Reyes' How to Start a Business
- ★ 21 in Resume-Building
- ★ 19 in Working Safe

## City & State Power of Diversity: Latino 100 Award

### 82. Ligia Gualpa

*Executive Director, Workers Justice Project*



Ligia Gualpa, the daughter of Ecuadorian immigrant laborers, is intimately familiar with the challenges faced by low-wage immigrant workers. Through a project that eventually led to the creation of Los Deliveristas Unidos, Gualpa and the organization managed a stunning political victory with new city rules to guarantee delivery workers a minimum wage, the first of their kind. As the old adage goes, success can be a curse, and this triumph led to rifts in the Workers Justice Project as some workers complained of delays in implementation and other concerns. Implementation of the rules is still pending first by delays by city officials and then by ongoing litigation.

## City & State Labor Power 100 Award

### 55. Ligia Gualpa

*Executive Director, Workers Justice Project*



Ligia Gualpa is focused on helping low-income immigrant workers in New York City. The executive director of the Workers Justice Project has been focused on issues affecting the city's day laborers, construction workers and domestic workers. This has included efforts to create two new worker centers in Brooklyn and a new union, Laborers Local 10. She helped found Los Deliveristas Unidos to advocate for app-based food delivery workers, but its members are upset over changes by city officials that include a smaller wage hike.

## City & State Labor Power 100 Award

### 56. Gustavo Ajche

*Co-Founder and Organizer, Los Deliveristas Unidos*



Ligia Gualpa is focused on helping low-income immigrant workers in New York City. The executive director of the Workers Justice Project has been focused on issues affecting the city's day laborers, construction workers and domestic workers. This has included efforts to create two new worker centers in Brooklyn and a new union, Laborers Local 10. She helped found Los Deliveristas Unidos to advocate for app-based food delivery workers, but its members are upset over changes by city officials that include a smaller wage hike.



## City & State Winners & Losers

### This week's biggest Winners & Losers

Who's up and who's down this week?

# Winners & Losers



## WINNERS:

### Sergio Ajche -

New York City's food delivery workers – many of them immigrants, many of them members of the grassroots Los Deliveristas Unidos – have fought for years for fair pay and protections in a job that has only gotten more difficult under the rise of app-based companies like Doordash and Uber Eats. This week, the city's new minimum wage went into effect – a real cause for celebration for Los Deliveristas co-founder Sergio Ajche and other workers. Still, [reporting from The City](#) on new tipping practices suddenly underway on the apps suggests that the workers' fight isn't over yet.

**EXECUTIVE STAFF**



**LIGIA GUALIPA**  
Executive Director/  
Co-Founder



**APRIL HERMS**  
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Finance and  
Operations Director



**ARMARY PEREZ**  
Director, Construction  
Workers United

**DEVELOPMENT STAFF**

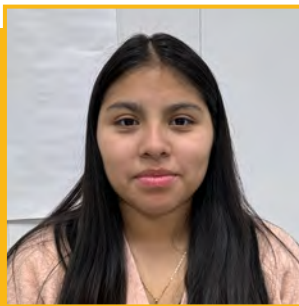


**NAOMI ZABASAJJA**  
Donor Relations  
Associate

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