



Newsletter

Year 01 Edition 02 - April, 2022

A Word by Lenita Reason Executive Director of the Brazilian Worker Center

As the Executive Director of the Brazilian Worker Center, as a Latina, woman of color and as a 1st generation immigrant, I live by the mantra: When we take care of each other, we become better together.

I believe that it is important that this mantra not only permeates the work and services offered by the BWC to our immigrant worker community but also inspire our partnering organizations and guide us as an organization to empower ourselves as individuals, teammates and members of our immigrant communities.

The month of March was very busy with meetings, participations in campaigns and capacity building for our team members.

From welcoming an Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) representative to BWC to engaging our staff with an exciting capacity training on social media and communications and Know Your Rights training, and participating in two



community rallies in support of our MA community.

We did it all! Check out our March newsletter and learn more about our amazing accomplishments!

Warm regards,

Lenita Reason

Executive Director of Brazilian Worker Center



Empowering our community starts with us!

As part of our commitment to taking care of our immigrant worker community, the BWC understands that the empowerment of immigrant workers starts with us. For this reason, our Executive Director, Lenita Reason, has invited professionals from our community to administer two very important capacity training for our BWC staff: Know Your Rights led by Thomas Smith and his legal team and Social Media Training for NGOs led by digital marketing expert, Alexandre Simões.

In the Know Your Rights workshop, our team had the opportunity to expand our knowledge associated with Workers Rights in MA and relevant information about wages and benefits as per MA legal requirements. Participating in this type of training was and is essential to maintaining our team informed about changes in legislation that may affect immigrant workers and keep our team ready to attend to the needs of our community.

At the BWC, we know that it is important that we have a strong social media presence to best represent the services we provide as well as the impact of our work in the community. Therefore, capacitating our BWC team is imperative to accomplish this goal. We are proud to have received Social Media training on March 12th, 2022, which provided us with invaluable information about how to create intentional targeted posting that is relevant to our audience and contributes to disseminating information about our organization.

By having our team engage in regular capacity training, the BWC will be able to return this knowledge to the community and continue to honor our mission: to capacitate immigrant workers to learn about workplace rights, immigration and health equity and empower immigrants with knowledge and skills to promote economic, social, political, and racial justice for all.

Where there is OSHA, there is excellence!



As part of our partnership agreement with the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA), the Brazilian Worker Center participates in regular meetings to provide updates about our OSHA funded training programs. On March 11th, 2022, we had the pleasure to welcome Mr. Peter Baeta to our organization in Allston, MA. The BWC is proud to have been a recipient of OSHA's funding in support of our Fall Prevention training for construction workers for over 11 years and for having received funding from OSHA in support of our Infectious Diseases and COVID-19 training for immigrant workers. It is because of this long-term partnership that BWC is able to offer and sustain the only Portuguese-speaking Fall Prevention

capacity training program for construction workers in the country. This program is also offered in Spanish at BWC. We look forward to continuing our collaboration with OSHA and to sharing more updates throughout the year.

BWC talks the talk and walks the walk!

It is not just important for us to teach our immigrant worker community the importance of organizing as a way to advocate for our rights, but it is imperative that we join our community whenever it needs us the most.

On March 12th and 15th, the BWC stood proud with members of our community, respectively, in defense of delivery and ride-share drivers' right to be classified as employees instead of contractors, and endorsing the Coalition for a Just Allston + Brighton (CJAB). On March 12th, the BWC's Executive Director, Lenita Reason joined Congresswoman Ayanna Pressly, State Senator Lydia Edwards and the "Massachusetts is Not For Sale" group, as they voiced their support for workers and other community activists against big tech exploitation of app-based workers. And, on March 15th, Lenita publicly endorsed the CJAB in their efforts to unite Allston-Brighton residents and leverage their voices on behalf of mutually beneficial relationships with Harvard, the single-largest landholder in Allston/Brighton, as it seeks to develop its 360 acres of land in these neighborhoods.

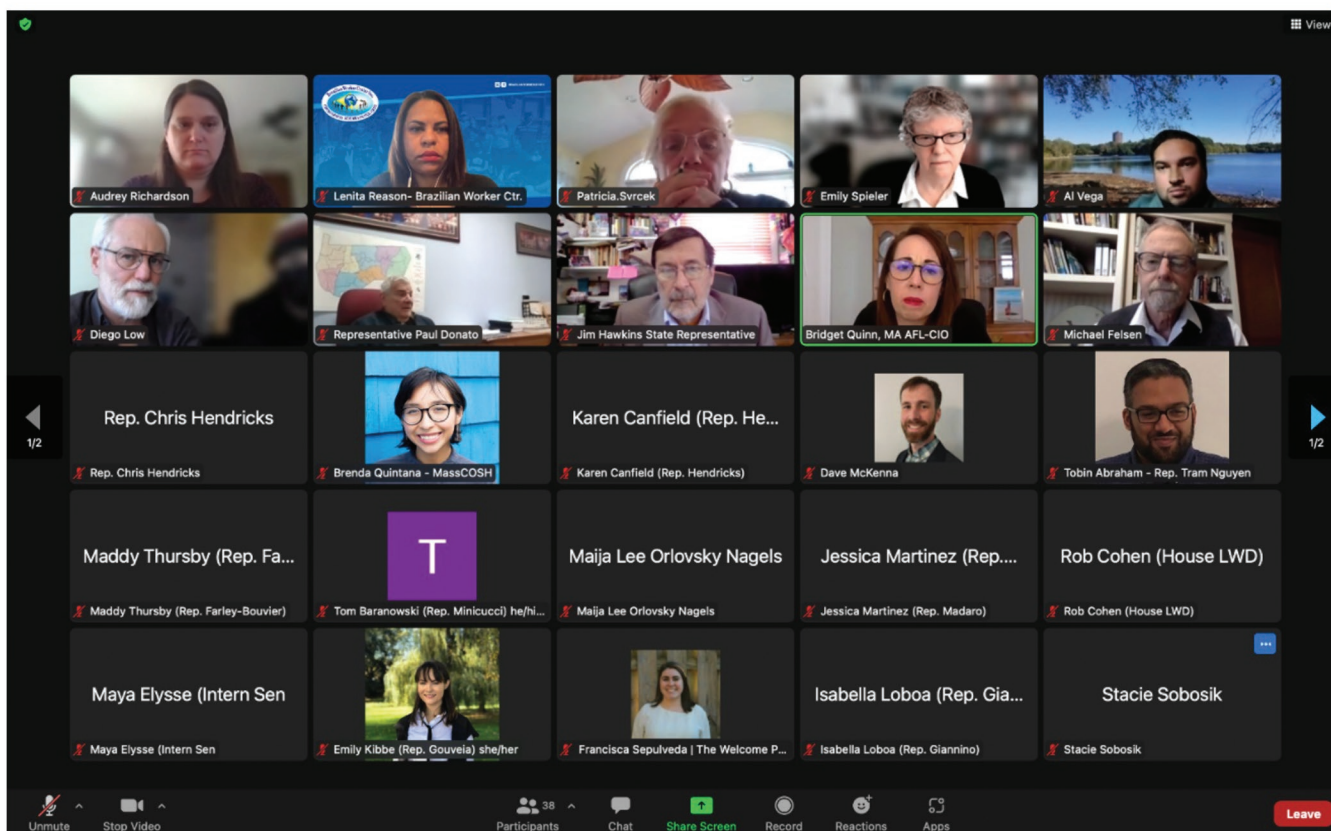


The BWC's presence in these community-led initiatives and campaigns is a testament of our organization's commitment to accelerating the betterment of our immigrant communities and quality of life in the State. We are honored to have participated in these campaigns and we continue to stand together with our MA community in the fight against social, economic, and political injustice.

BWC joins the coalition to protect injured workers' rights!

On March 23rd, BWC's Executive Director, Lenita Reason, participated in a Zoom meeting with other worker groups and advocates as part of the coalition that supports An Act to Protect Injured Workers. This act is very important as it fights on behalf of injured or ill workers, as the law still leaves them largely unprotected when employers retaliate against them or try to prevent them from reporting a workplace injury or illness, seeking medical care, or filing a workers' comp. An Act to Protect Injured Workers strengthens the anti-retaliation law, provides for complaint, investigation, and enforcement mechanisms through the Attorney General's Office and a strengthened private right of action, and otherwise addresses employer misconduct that prevents workers from receiving timely medical care and benefits.

In this legislative briefing, Lenita was joined by Senator Jamie Eldridge, Lead Senate Sponsor; Representative Tram Nguyen, Lead House Sponsor; Al Vega, Director of Policy & Programs, MassCOSH; Ms. Audrey Richardson, Managing Attorney, Employment Law Unit, Greater Boston Legal Services; Diego Low, Director, MetroWest Worker Center/Casa; Emily Spieler, Edwin W. Hadley Professor of Law at Northeastern University School of Law; Bridget Quinn, Legislative Director, Massachusetts AFL-CIO; Michael Felsen, Senior Advisor, Justice at Work & Former Regional Solicitor, U.S. Dept. of Labor. The meeting covered an overview of the Act and stakeholders discussed the need to strengthen the workers' compensation anti-retaliation law. We are proud of Lenita and BWC for continuing to stand up for workers' rights in the workplace!





At BWC we build justice, one case at a time!

Building Justice, an initiative created in 2014 by the BWC and implemented in partnership with Justice At Work (J@W), aims to fight and support workers against wage theft. This equal partnership initiative is co-facilitated by BWC's Executive Director, Lenita Reason, and J@W's Tom Smith.

A year has passed since our last in person meeting, but as of March 12th, 2022, we are back!

Together, we discussed new cases and ways of supporting workers who have been victims of wage theft as well as important events scheduled for 2022. Thank you to the Miller Innovation Fund and the Cummings Foundation for having supported our work and believed in our mission. We would also like to thank our Building Justice team members and specially to Mr. Helio Moreira, who kindly hosted us at his house in Watertown. BWC is proud of all the work that we have done and continue doing and we look forward to sharing more updates about our team's accomplishments in the coming months.

Stay tuned!



BWC: we work together, we learn together!

March 26th was not a typical Saturday for the BWC. Three members of our BWC team joined our Executive Director, Lenita Reason, to participate in the 2022 Boston Labor Conference. Presented by the Labor Resource Center at UMass Boston, the Conference included illustrious speakers, such as Steve Tolman, President, Massachusetts AFL-CIO and Steve Striffler, UMB Labor Resource Center, among others. Several relevant themes were discussed during this event, such as The Pandemic and The Working Class; Food, Labor, and Hospitality in the Pandemic; The Education Industry in the Pandemic; Women and Solidarity in the Pandemic; The Urgency of Health and Safety Organizing; and, The Health care Industry in the Pandemic. It was such an honor to participate in this conference and have the opportunity to not only represent our organization but also network with incredible professionals who are making a difference in the field of Labor Studies. We thank our Executive Director for extending this opportunity to members of the team and we look forward to bringing our updated knowledge back to our immigrant community.

At BWC, Immigrants' Day is Everyday!



MIRA! A much-anticipated event took place on Tuesday, March 29th, and the Brazilian Worker Center was there, front and center!

This year, in addition to the celebration of our immigrant communities, BWC had an even bigger reason to commemorate the Annual Immigrants' Day at the MA State House, i.e. the extraordinary and unprecedented support from both Senate and House leadership in favor of the Work and Family Mobility Act, crowning the success of the Driving Families Forward campaign, co-chaired by BWC's Executive Director, Lenita Reason. BWC would like to extend our gratitude to Massachusetts Senate President Karen E. Spilka, Massachusetts House Speaker Ronald J. Mariano, State Senator Adam Gomez, State Representative Carlos Gonzalez, and Boston Mayor Michelle Wu for their commitment to the betterment of the overall quality of life of our immigrant communities in the State and for their support to promote the passage of the Work and Family Mobility Act.

After 20 years of organizing work to mobilize our MA community, the Driving Families Forward campaign, the Massachusetts Immigrant and Refugee Advocacy Coalition, the Brazilian Worker Center and our partners' efforts were recognized and celebrated by the leadership present in the event, with BWC's contribution being directly acknowledged and appreciated by both Massachusetts House Speaker Ronald J. Mariano and Boston's Mayor Michelle Wu.

BWC stands proud with our coalition partners and with our immigrant community, and we invite you to email your Senate and ask them to support the passing of this bill. Help us take care of our MA community so we can become better together!