



## Newsletter

Year 01 Edition 04 - June, 2022

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

May was an incredible month for us at the Brazilian Worker Center! I cannot wait to share our updates with you!

From continuing to move forward and diligently with our coalition work to promoting the passing of the Work and Family Mobility and Wage Theft Bill to marching with other worker centers in Massachusetts during the Labor Day Rally on May 1st, we were unstoppable.

Our Dreamers also had a very busy month, and we were excited to not only continue to offer classes with specialists in their respective fields but also engage our immigrant youth with activities during OSHA's national Safety Stand Down awareness week.

In May, the BWC also led and engaged in multiple activities in support of domestic workers' rights, including, leading Domestic Workers Know Your Rights workshops, participating in the second ever National Domestic Workers Alliance Dignity Unity Power Institute, and joining a rally organized and sponsored by the



National Domestic Workers Alliance (NDWA) in Washington, D.C.

We would also like to thank the opportunities we had to meet with and discuss ways of improving working conditions for injured workers with Senator Sal DiDomenico and identify priorities to improve our Boston community with our Boston Mayor Michelle Wu.

Check out our May newsletter and learn more about the Brazilian Worker Center and our accomplishments.

Warm regards,

**Lenita Reason**

Executive Director of Brazilian Worker Center



# We Move In the Right Direction!



On May 1st, the Brazilian Worker Center was on the move! To celebrate Labor Day, we joined our fellow community members and marched together to celebrate workers' rights. It was such a powerful experience for us to walk alongside State Senator Lydia Edwards, members of our immigrant community and representatives of local worker centers to promote and advocate for such an important cause. We at the Brazilian Worker Center believe that workers' rights are humans' rights, and we are proud to participate in community events such as the Labor Day March to continue to fight on behalf of our communities in Massachusetts.





# Dream a little dream about us

The Brazilian Worker Center has several dreams and even more dreamers! Since April, our group of 12 amazing Brazilian immigrant youth, our Dreamers, have been actively participating in dynamic classes with several specialists in multiple fields. In May, our Dreamers completed the Work Readiness: Interviewing and Writing Resume course led by BWC's Director of Development Anna Barbosa, and continued to learn about immigrants' rights, the importance of paying taxes and how to obtain An Individual Taxpayer Identification Number or ITIN, and participated in a Q&A session with BWC's Domestic Workers Organizer & Immigrants Defense Project Coordinator, Lorraine Reiter and Finances specialist, Ana Panori.

As part of our commitment to promoting safety working conditions for construction workers, we invited our trainer Rony Jabour to speak to our Dreamers about OSHA's Stand Down for Fall Protection. During Rony's presentation, he explained about the importance of following safety regulations in the workplace including how to stay safe while working on roofs using full body safety harnesses. The BWC is proud of collaborating with Rony Jabour to continue to train construction workers on such important safety guidelines as part of our Fall Prevention program.

The first week of May 2022 represents the Occupational Safety and Health Administration's (OSHA) national Safety Stand Down awareness week. The week is meant to raise awareness around safety procedures that could prevent workplace fatalities and injuries in construction. The Brazilian Workers Center continues to educate and train construction workers on safe work conditions because when we stop falls, we save lives. In addition to providing training for construction workers, on May 7th, the Brazilian Workers Center prepared a special lesson for the young people involved in the Dreamers Project about workplace safety. The Dreamers project supports immigrant youth by providing skills and resources. We believe that it is incredibly important to prepare young people who are entering the labor market so that they know not only how to identify a safe workplace but also their rights and duties.





# Justice's brewing

On May 19th, the Brazilian Worker Center joined Justice At Work (J@W) to celebrate their 11th Anniversary. The celebration took place at the Democracy Brewing pub in Boston. This was an important day to celebrate the impact that our long-term partner organization has had in promoting immigrant workers' rights in Massachusetts.

The event was attended by members of other local Organizations and J@W team members and we are honored to have been invited to celebrate this important event!

The Brazilian Worker Center is proud to collaborate with J@W to implement our Building Justice program and we look forward to continuing our meaningful partnership for years to come.



## Workers Rights are Human Rights



The Brazilian Worker Center's commitment to capacitate our immigrant community on workers' rights is well-known in the State of Massachusetts. As part of our services, we offer Know Your Rights workshops to members of our immigrant community on important issues associated with their rights, fair wages, among others. The BWC was invited to participate in the job fair hosted by Agencia Alpha and BWC's Domestic Workers Organizer & Immigrants Defense Project Coordinator, Lorryne Reiter, led two sessions of the No Te Dejes Explotar workshop for domestic workers. Several domestic workers from the Boston area attended the event and they had the opportunity to ask important question

and learn about their rights in the workplace. For more information about upcoming workshops, please call us at (617) 783-8001 or visit us at 14 Harvard st, 2nd floor, Allston, MA 02134. You can also follow us on social media at @brazilianworkercenter, check out our website at [www.braziliancenter.org](http://www.braziliancenter.org), or email us at [info@braziliancenter.org](mailto:info@braziliancenter.org).



# Driving Families Forward

The Brazilian Worker Center and the DFF coalition, led by our BWC's Executive Director, Lenita Reason and SEIU 32BJ's Chrystel Murrieta Ruiz, would like to thank all of our partners and members, including all Senators who have voted in favor of the Work and Family Mobility Act, for their tireless efforts to promote the passing of this Bill. This is an important time for MA and we look forward to continuing to work together with members of our community to promote the passing of this Bill. We are confident that before the end of June we will have the Work and Family Mobility Act passed as a Bill.



## Health Equity is Not Just a Dream

The Brazilian Worker Center is proud to partner with the City of Boston to implement our Dreamers project, for the empowerment of immigrant Youth. As part of our commitment to empower and capacitate these youth, our team brought out youth to participate in a Health Equity event hosted by BINCA on Saturday, May 21st. The day was full of activities that allowed the youth to access information about health access, LGBTQ+ health, and learn how to Empower themselves as members of our immigrant communities.

We are excited to continue our partnership with the City of Boston and continue to participate in such amazing and meaningful experiences to empower our youth!

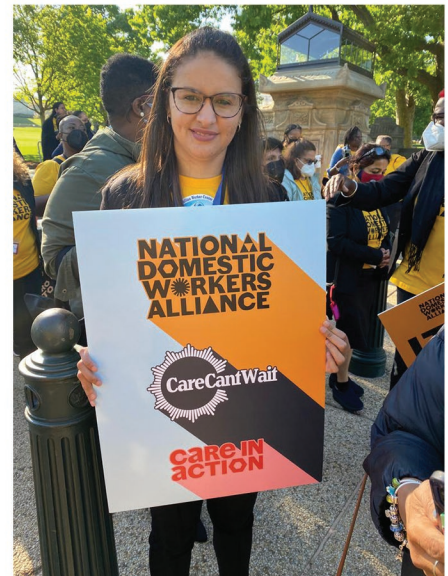


# Without Care Work, No Other Work



On May 11th, 2022, BWC's Executive Director, Lenita Reason, and Paula Correa, traveled to Washington, D.C. to participate in a rally organized and sponsored by the National Domestic Workers Alliance (NDWA). The NDWA is an alliance of over 70 grassroots organizations from around the country and a community of over 250,000 domestic workers. The NDWA works to organize domestic workers, develop policy solutions, shift narratives, and mobilize for equity and dignity. This particular event was a day of lobbying the federal senate to raise awareness for a federal Domestic Workers Bill of Rights and push for the passage of investments in caregiving within the budget reconciliation bill that would protect domestic workers. Lenita was one of the leaders that visited federal legislators representing Massachusetts and urged them to not wait any longer on this bill. The NDWA and the Brazilian Workers Center know that without care work, no other work is possible so we must pressure political leaders to enact policies that support domestic workers.

Lenita Reason, and Paula Correa, also participated in the second ever National Domestic Workers Alliance Dignity Unity Power Institute. The first Dignity Unity Power Institute took place in February 2020, bringing together the largest gathering of domestic workers in history. The event brought together leaders, organizers, and domestic workers from across the country to be trained in organizing and leadership skills related to domestic work legislation, organizational growth, and the intersection of domestic work, race, and immigration.





# We Retreat, We Advance



The BWC's Executive Director, Lenita Reason, Finance and Program Coordinator, Gizele Bombardier, and Receptionist, Paula Correa, participated in the Massachusetts Immigrant Collaborative (MIC) Coalition Retreat on May 12, 2022. The MIC is a coalition of 15 partner organizations, of which Lenita serves on the steering committee. The coalition formed in April 2020 and worked closely with the Mayor's Office of Immigrant Advancement of the City of Boston to support Massachusetts' immigrant population—particularly given the ongoing context of the COVID-19 pandemic. Since then, MIC

has provided thousands of immigrant workers and their families with emergency cash as well as culturally competent food and household products. Given that immigrant workers and their families have been deeply impacted by the ongoing pandemic, this Coalition Retreat provided space for the 15 organizations to review the criteria and expectations for participating organizations. Additionally, the organizations worked together to create a work plan for the upcoming year to continue their collective work of providing support to Massachusetts' immigrant community.

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## Wage Theft: A Serious Problem in Massachusetts

Co-chairs of the Wage Theft Coalition, Lenita Reason and Kevin Brousseau hosted a legislative briefing on May 13th to urge legislators to move forward with the Act to Prevent Wage Theft. Wage theft is a serious problem in Massachusetts that directly impacts low-wage workers. This bill is meant to improve employer accountability so that lead contractors could be held accountable for any wage theft violations conducted by subcontractors. It would also support public enforcement by creating an avenue for the Attorney General's Office as well as employees and whistleblowers to more easily bring wage theft grievances to court. Finally, it would allow the Attorney General's Office to stop work if wage theft violations have been found so that employers can correct the issue if they wish for work to continue. The Wage Theft Coalition will continue working tirelessly to encourage legislators to prioritize the Act to Prevent Wage Theft so that low-wage workers, many of which are immigrant workers, are not experiencing this workplace injustice.



# Strengthening Workers Protections



The BWC's Executive Director, Lenita Reason, and BWC's Domestic Workers Organizer & Immigrants Defense Project Coordinator, Lorryne Reiter, joined fellow workers centers and Greater Boston Legal Services attorney Audrey Richardson for a meeting with Senator Sal DiDomenico on May 19th. This meeting was to discuss the Protecting Injured Workers Act which is meant to protect workers from workplace retaliation. The bill improves existing anti-retaliation law and creates an avenue for complaint and enforcement. It would support workers who have been injured but are pressured by employers to not report the injury or seek treatment. Strengthening workers protections and access to workers compensation benefits is crucial for supporting immigrant workers.

## Boston: Our City, Our Home

The BWC's Executive Director, Lenita Reason, was invited to join a select group of organizations for a face-to-face meeting with Boston Mayor Michelle Wu on May 24th. In this meeting they talked about priorities for Boston residents. We are honored to have been selected as one of the organizations invited to join this important group and share our perspectives and knowledge on how to improve the betterment of our immigrant communities in Boston. Thank you Boston Mayor Michelle Wu for this opportunity and we look forward to continuing to advocate for economic, social, political and racial justice for all.



# Victorious Immigrant Women

In May, as part of our unwavering commitment to promoting health equity within our immigrant communities, we initiated activities associated with our Mulheres Vencedoras project. Mulheres Vencedoras is a women-led project developed and implemented by the Brazilian Worker Center. This mindfulness-based project intervention aims to disseminate the importance of mental health and wellness among immigrant workers who may experience chronic health issues, including cancer, anxiety, among others. Through this project, immigrant women from our community have opportunities to attend mindfulness classes and learn invaluable skills to improve their resilience, emotional balance and overall wellness. Understanding the importance of this type of programming for the mental health of Brazilian immigrant workers in our Massachusetts community, our programming has been designed to address challenges such as cultural resistance, lack of awareness about importance of self-care and prioritizing oneself over daily responsibilities; language restriction and lack of cultural sensitivity about the importance of mental health among the Brazilian immigrant community. We are excited to provide these services to our immigrant community and we look forward to sharing more information about our upcoming health equity programs in the near future.

## Visit Our New Website [www.braziliancenter.org](http://www.braziliancenter.org)

We are excited to have launched our new website which includes updated, insightful content to help you find out more about us and what we can do to help you.

We have created a clean, modern design and improved site navigation to help our users find exactly what they're looking for and better represent who we are as an institution.

