



January 13, 2023

A STRONGER AMAZON LABOUR UNION MEANS A STRONGER CUPW

The Amazon Labor Union (ALU), the independent union of Amazon workers who won a union election at the JFK8 facility in Staten Island, New York in the Spring of 2022, have had their election victory upheld by the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB), the highest labour tribunal in the United States.

The election saw the ALU win by a total of 2,654 votes to 2,131, out of a total of 8,000 workers at the massive Amazon facility. Amazon immediately filed an objection to the vote, citing unfair treatment from the NLRB regional directors, and alleged intimidation of workers to vote for the ALU, amongst other procedural issues. An NLRB hearing officer recommended overruling the objections in August, to which Amazon filed exceptions.

On January 11th, the NLRB Region 28 regional director overruled Amazon's objections and certified the ALU as the official bargaining representative of workers at JFK8.

This is an important win, not only because the ALU officially becomes the first officially recognized bargaining representative at an Amazon facility in North America, but because it shows how union determination and commitment are the key to beating employer intimidation and stalling tactics.

Since the union election in March, Amazon has received a cease and desist order from the NLRB for firing workers for union organizing and suspending several workers who called out health and safety violations in JFK8. These are attempts to undermine the ALU's momentum and dissuade workers from supporting the unionization effort. To counter the employers' tactics, the ALU has kept workers united and concentrated on the real prize, a union contract.

While the certification should be celebrated, the ALU has a much bigger fight ahead of them to win their first contract.

Amazon will use its endless legal resources to delay procedural aspects of negotiations, while increasing intimidation tactics, such as arbitrary firings and discipline, surveillance and divide and conquer tactics amongst workers. Workers at JFK8 will need to be more organized and united than ever before. The labour movement in Canada and the United States needs to be with them to stop Amazon from paying its way out of union recognition. Actions, campaigns, new union organizing and new legislation must be deployed in tandem to make Amazon sit down at the table and bargain.

CUPW supports the struggle of the workers at JFK8 and of all Amazon workers to win a fairly negotiated union contract. Canada Post's operations are inextricably tied to Amazon's. As workers at Amazon can exert more control over their pay and working conditions, less pressure will be put on CUPW members by CPC managers to compete by cutting labour costs. Our struggles are one and the same. As the ALU will not collect dues until a contract is secured, they are relying on donations to maintain their operations and escalate their organizing efforts. Our National Executive Board unanimously voted to make a small contribution; now, we are asking our members to encourage their Locals (as per section 9.37 of our National constitution) to also offer donations to the ALU to help them win their first contract. To donate visit:

<https://actionnetwork.org/fundraising/support-the-alu/>

In Solidarity,

Roland Schmidt
3rd National Vice-President

Ryan Lum
Union Representative for External Organizing