



TAKING a STAND FOR FAIRNESS AT NEW YORK CITY'S AIRPORTS

Every day, nearly 12,000 men and women who are hired to perform service labor for the various airlines at John F. Kennedy and LaGuardia airports dutifully arrive to work without the promise of a fair wage or time to care for themselves or family members in the event of illness. The agency responsible for oversight of the labor contracts under which these workers are employed is the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey. Last year, 32BJ SEIU, the union which represents these workers, demanded that the PANYNJ require airlines to only enter into work agreements with contractors that pay their workers a livable wage and offer basic benefits, to no avail.

On January 20, 2014, as the nation paused to celebrate the life and legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., these workers were denied the observance of this holiday as so many of us have done since its inception in 1986. I, along with numerous elected officials from all over the City joined the leadership of 32BJ to occupy the access bridge to LaGuardia airport. Our protest was in response to PANYNJ's failure to support the airport worker's demands for fair wages and fair labor standards. I was honored to lead the charge at the front line and stand with these hard working men and women to call for what so many others take for granted. The ability to earn a fair wage for the critical services they provide to these airlines is not an unreasonable request. In cities all over America, workers toil endlessly to keep some of the busiest airports in the world moving. Millions of passengers pass through the gates of JFK and LGA airports every year without ever knowing that the luggage assistance, elderly transport service and maintenance work that is being provided - around the clock - is being performed at the hands of a worker who barely earns enough to live independent of public assistance or who cannot take a day off for fear of losing their job. As Dr. King once wrote from the confines of a Birmingham jail following his arrest for civil disobedience, "injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere". We, as a society should never idly stand by while those beside us are left to struggle in the trenches of poverty. Dozens of protesters were arrested by the NYPD for civil disobedience on MLK Remembrance Day this year and I was proud to be among them.

Update: In the weeks following the 32BJ Day of Action, the Port Authority finally agreed to step in and do the right thing. Just days ago, the agency issued an order mandating that workers making \$9 per hour or less be given a \$1-an-hour raise.



Assemblyman Wright is arrested for civil disobedience on Martin Luther King, Jr. Day



Assemblyman Wright alongside members of 32BJ SEIU and Assemblyman Felix Ortiz

COMMUNITY HAPPENINGS

HARLEM WELLNESS CENTER INVITES YOU TO JOIN US in the pursuit of better health with regular fitness and nutrition classes, right in our Harlem neighborhood:

Located in room 107 of the Dempsey Center
127 West 127th Street
(Between 7th Ave and Lenox Ave)

Visit harlemwellness.org to see a schedule of our available classes

For more information, call (646) 682-7993 or email info@harlemwellness.org

Ask about how you can get a coupon for a free trial class!

All are welcome!

ALBANY UPDATE

The State Fiscal Year 2014-15 budget process is underway.

In the coming weeks, I will be providing an update on the issues and programs that I will be advocating for in this year's budget negotiations.

Please join me on **Thursday, February 6, 2014 at 2:00 p.m.** for a very important conversation on the preservation of low and middle-income housing under the Mitchell-Lama program

**New York City
Thursday
February 6, 2014
2:00 PM
Assembly Hearing Room
Room 1923, 19th Floor
250 Broadway**

TEAM WRIGHT AT WORK

Senior Coordinator, Cathleen McCadden worked with a constituent whose son is in a correctional facility and unable to communicate with his mother, Ms. Jones*. Ms. Jones was very concerned and distraught about her son's medical condition and could not receive agency response concerning how the conditions came about or plans to ensure that he received adequate treatment. Ms. McCadden was able to facilitate Ms. Jones' understanding of her son's life-saving surgery and full involvement of all his medical affairs.

*names have been changed to ensure confidentiality

BUSINESS SPOTLIGHT

The New York City Bar Association is now accepting applications for our **2014 Thurgood Marshall Summer Law Internship Program**. This Program is part of the New York City Bar's continuing efforts to enhance the diversity of the legal profession. By reaching out and exposing inner-city youth to the law, we hope that we will fill the pipeline with diverse talent.

Eligible applicants:

- are high school juniors or seniors (must be 16 yrs old)
- are enrolled in the Law & Justice Program at their school or have a demonstrated interest in the law
- have above average grades

Applications **MUST** be received by **February 28th**

For more information, visit
<http://www.nycbar.org/images/stories/pdfs/sleop/tmsliapplication.pdf>

I encourage you to nominate a high-achieving student to participate in this program.

For more information or if you have any problems we can help solve, please do not hesitate to contact our office directly. We are always here to help.

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