

CMRJB Workers United: Green Bay Starbucks workers are unionizing

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Early Tuesday morning, the hourly workers at Starbucks, located at Auto Plaza Way & Main, have petitioned the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) for an election and demanded union recognition from CEO Howard Schultz and local management. According to Workers United, an overwhelming majority of workers at the store signed union authorization cards and a petition demanding union recognition.

These baristas are the first in Green Bay and the most recent in Wisconsin to join the Starbucks Workers United movement that has swept across the country. Workers at the international coffee chain have filed for elections at hundreds of locations across the country and have won representation in over one hundred of them. Today these coffee workers join with their counter-parts across the state, the first store to join the movement in north eastern Wisconsin since partners in Appleton, WI won their representation election on June 22nd.

In a letter signed by a majority of the cafe's workers and e-mailed Friday to Starbucks CEO Howard Schultz, the staff expressed clear resolve in organizing their workplace: "It is our belief that the working conditions we are regularly forced to endure disrupt our ability to do our jobs with dignity, and taking collective action to change said conditions is our best, and only, way forward. We are committed to forging a strong contract that returns the pride and honor that the position of Starbucks Barista should have, and hold Starbucks to its promise of working with us, 'with transparency, dignity, and respect.'"

Voicing her support and conviction, Workers United International Vice President Kathy Hanshew added: "Starbucks is a multimillion dollar corporation that tries to pride itself on working in partnership with its employees, all while silencing the

workers and denying them their right to union representation and a collective voice. Starbucks calls its employees “partners”, but it is abundantly clear that this so-called partnership is one of convenience for the company, that leaves many employee concerns unheard. It is time for Starbucks to do the right thing, acknowledge the voice of their “partners”, and allow their workers to unionize without interference.”