

WHILE UNION membership declined nationwide in the last 15 years, New York City has seen a growth of organized workers that is already showing a positive impact on city and state politics.

This resurgence of city unions is discussed in the annual report, “State of the Unions: 2016,” published by the Murphy Institute at the City University of New York.

In their research, the authors of the annual report, Ruth Milkman and Stephanie Luce, found that the organized workforce in New York City has increased significantly, from 21.5 percent to 25.5 percent since 2012.

The authors attribute the growth to the recovery of construction and hospitality industries that took a direct hit in the economic crisis of 2008.

But there are also several other factors that have bolstered union power in the city.

A major contribution has been the Fight for \$15 movement, which DC 37 has been a part of since the movement's inception in late 2012.

The push to organize fast food and other minimum wage service workers is a continuous struggle, and the movement has captured the imagination of millions nationwide. Public pressure caused municipalities

and states to adopt \$15 minimum wage laws, an abrupt break from the pattern of low-wage stagnation.

In New York City, the minimum wage will be increased to \$15 in 2018, which will impact thousands of DC 37 members working at CUNY.

There are aggressive campaigns to organize workers throughout the city, particularly with immigrants working in the service sector.

Last year, the United Steelworkers scored a victory by winning a vote to represent hundreds of warehouse workers in Bushwick and the Brooklyn Navy Yard run by B&H, a New York City-based camera store.

This win reflects the efforts of other major unions in organizing.

Campaigns like organizing Uber drivers in the city and the Laborers' International Union of North America's ongoing efforts with new immigrant workers in the construction trades builds labor unity and power. DC 37 has added members through its organizing efforts.

This aggressive pushback against the national trend strengthens our hand at building a labor fortress against the onslaught of anti-worker attacks backed by Wall Street 1 percenters.

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