

NEW DAY AT USPS



NEWS FOR USPS WORKERS, BY USPS WORKERS!

BLACK AUGUST AND THE FIGHT FOR WORKING CLASS UNITY

Black August is a month-long commemoration of the struggle for Black liberation, honoring those who gave their lives or remain imprisoned for resisting national oppression. Emerging from the Black Liberation Movement of the 1970s, Black August was developed by incarcerated revolutionaries as a period of political education, collective discipline, remembrance, and renewed commitment to the struggle. It traces its origins to the sacrifices of Jonathan Jackson, George Jackson, William Christmas, James McClain, and Khatari Gaulden, who were murdered by the state for being leaders in the struggle for Black liberation. Gaulden was instrumental in developing Black August through the Black Guerilla Family, a prison-based Black liberation organization founded by George Jackson. Throughout the month, members wore black armbands, studied revolutionary theory, practiced collective discipline, and embraced the principles of unity and self-sacrifice. Over time, Black August grew beyond the prison movement to become an important annual tradition across the broader Black/New Afrikan liberation movement.

The Postal Service has long been one of the largest employers of Black workers in the United States, with Black workers making up nearly 30 percent of the USPS workforce.

Despite this, a 2023 Government Accountability Office review found that Black postal workers remain underrepresented in management and are promoted at lower rates than similarly qualified white employees, even after accounting for factors such as tenure. These disparities are not simply individual prejudice; they reflect the broader system of racial oppression under capitalism. Capitalism has historically relied on the superexploitation of Black people while granting sections of white workers relative advantages that can tie them more closely to the existing system. The bosses benefit from these unequal conditions; workers benefit from consciously fighting to overcome them.

The struggle for Black liberation is therefore not a separate struggle that postal workers are asked to support from the sidelines. Black postal workers are part of the broader working class, and the exploitation they experience on the job cannot be separated from the racial oppression Black people face throughout society. Like all workers, we produce value through our labor while the owners take a portion of it for themselves. But Black workers also face the particular forms of oppression imposed on Black people, both at work and outside of it from discrimination and workplace surveillance to policing,

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housing inequality, and state repression. The fight against white supremacy is therefore inseparable from the fight against capitalist exploitation: ending the oppression of Black workers is part of building the unity and power necessary for the liberation of the entire working class.

Black August also reminds us that the struggle against repression did not end in the 1970s. State repression is on the rise in the US, as we've seen with the recent politically motivated arrests at Georgia State University, of the Michigan 8 (for Palestinian solidarity efforts), of the Prairieland Defendants (for immigrant solidarity/anti-ICE activism), and many others. There have been countless political prisoners throughout the Black liberation movement, with many still imprisoned that require the same solidarity and justice. All of these groups, focused on different aspects, are part of a common struggle against the violence, repression, and broader oppression of the US and its allies. This same logic of surveillance and control exists within our own workplaces. Postal workers have seen increasing reliance on surveillance technologies, including artificial intelligence systems, to monitor and discipline workers. These tools are not simply about efficiency; they are part of a broader effort by management to increase control over the labor process and limit workers' collective power.

Black August teaches us that liberation has never been won through individual action or appeals to those in power. It has been won through organized people building collective power. For postal workers, the fight for Black liberation is not a separate struggle from the fight for better wages, safer conditions, and dignity at work; it is an essential part of that struggle. A working class divided by racism and oppression cannot fully exercise its power, but a working class united in the fight against exploitation and oppression is strong.

Building unity across crafts and developing rank-and-file organization are necessary steps toward transforming our collective potential into real power. The same principles of discipline, solidarity, and collective struggle that Black August honors remain necessary today.

Update on Militant Educators Joining the New Labor Organizing Committee

An organization of militant, class conscious education sector workers has officially affiliated with the New Labor Organizing Committee. This organization is called the Wildcat Education Movement. Wildcat because they uphold the militant tactics of the 2018 wildcat strike movement; education because while they are primarily composed of teachers they seek to organize support staff as well into one education sector union; and movement because any victory in the education sector will require the support of students and the community who are affected by the education system.

The grievances of those working in education are too numerous to recount here. We will merely say that in addition to common issues of wages, hours, and workload, teachers also must deal with increasing class sizes, diminishing classroom resources and poorly maintained facilities, unpaid extracurricular work, reactionary and incorrect ideas in pre-made educational materials, and belligerent administrators. On top of this, the educators are restricted by the standard labor laws in addition to extra restrictions placed on public sector and municipal employees, usually on a state by state basis. This makes the need for militant wildcat organizing extremely urgent, as the state unions--mainly the NEA and AFT--have uncritically accepted these restrictions on the rights of teachers.