

MAR 21

2018

# UNION UPDATE

## MEMBER ACTIVIST

# LEADING BY EXAMPLE

Ryan Brown began his state service eight years ago as a Unit 15 Custodian in San Quentin State Prison and has been intrigued about the power our union brought to its members ever since. He remembers engaging in conversations with organizers and learning more about Local 1000. It was three years later, after a transfer to Fresno as a Custodian at the Department of Veterans Affairs, when he began his leadership with our union.

Brown chose to become a steward in 2017 after he realized he had a voice to fight for social, economic and environmental justice at his worksite and in his community. He was appointed to be the Unit 15 District Bargaining Unit Representative (DBUR) for District Labor Council (DLC) 772.

Leading by example is something Brown does in each aspect of his life, work and community.

He is a member organizer on the frontlines educating co workers about the attack on unions from the so-called Freedom Foundation. He has been appointed to the Custodian Task Force and Local 1000's Sustainable Career and Upward Mobility Task Force, all while setting time aside to focus on his son's Pop Warner football team as a coach and vice president of the league.

"It's important to use your voice to create the change that you want to see," Brown said. "Nothing is ever given to you. You can't just expect other members to go out there and do everything for you. If you're willing to talk the talk, you got to walk the walk."

Brown is currently working on developing other members and building leadership in the Central Valley.



*"I choose my union because our union is the only organization fighting for our future and for our kids' future. They are the only ones fighting for our justice."*

**-RYAN BROWN**

CUSTODIAN, DVA, FRESNO, UNIT 15  
DBUR, JOB STEWARD, DLC 772

## STANDING UP FOR ALL FAMILIES AND OUR COMMUNITIES

*Our members stood up with community allies on March 8 to send a strong message to U.S. Attorney General Jeff Sessions, who was in Sacramento to advance his divisive anti-immigrant agenda: We will always fight for the right for all California families to live free of fear and oppression.*



*"History has its eyes on us and we will tell our story. Our story is the one where labor stands for its communities. Where faith leaders provide refuge. Where students can shut out their fears, their doubts and their struggles — at least for a few hours — and dream."*  
- Miguel Cordova, Bargaining Unit 21 Chair



## Resource Center

Monday-Friday  
7 a.m. to 7 p.m.  
866.471.SEIU (7348)

## Website

seiu1000.org

## Connect with Local 1000

Facebook  
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## WOMEN'S HISTORY — month —

### LUISA MORENO

A BRAVE ORGANIZER MAKING CHANGE DURING DANGEROUS TIMES

There are many examples of women in labor whose actions led to dramatic change in the social and economic landscape. What's easily forgotten is that many stood up and exposed themselves to great personal danger while fighting for that change.

Luisa Moreno, a Guatemalan immigrant, worked as a labor activist in the 1930s, 40s and 50s in a half dozen states. Her story serves as a reminder of just how dangerous the conditions were in those days to simply make one's voice heard, but her bravery helped change those conditions for the better.

Working at Zeligreen's Cafeteria in New York City, she and a co-worker protested the employer's exploitation of its workers with long hours, constant sexual harassment and the threat of dismissal, should anyone object to the treatment.

Arriving one day at the cafeteria



door—which was blocked by police—she pulled a picket sign from under her coat and yelled, “strike.” Two officers lifted her off the sidewalk, hustled her away from the scene; she returned shortly with her face bleeding ... and spent the next 20 years organizing workers across the country.

She later organized African-American and Latina cigar makers in Florida. She became a representative of the United Cannery, Agricultural, Packing and Allied Workers of America, where she organized workers in Texas and California during the 1930s.

Moreno was a staunch advocate for the rights of immigrants, especially from Latin American countries. In the 1950s, she was targeted by immigration officials because of her politics and activism. She was offered citizenship in exchange for testifying against a labor leader, but she refused, stating that she would not be “a free woman with a mortgaged soul.” She was soon deported, but her brave approach to improving issues of immigration, employment and civil rights left a lasting impact on labor.

*“It is we who must sound the alarm for the workers and the people to take notice. Today, as the right to organize and strike was fought and won, as the fight against discrimination is being fought but far from won, so the fight for the very fundamentals of American democracy must again be fought for and reestablished.”*

— LUISA MORENO, FROM A 1949 SPEECH TO THE CONGRESS OF INDUSTRIAL ORGANIZATIONS (CIO)

