

From Targeted to Trusted:

How One Member's Fight Strengthened the Entire Shop

When management pushed too far, CWA Local 1180 members at the National Domestic Workers Alliance (NDWA) didn't just push back, they organized, mobilized — and won.

At the center of it all was **Micky Jordan**, a graphic designer who never expected to become a Shop Steward. Like many members, Jordan didn't fully grasp the power of the union until he needed it.

"The backbone of any strong union is its Shop Stewards. These rank and file leaders are the ones who have their finger on the pulse of our member's needs, advocate for them during disciplinary action, and organize their unit when it's time to band together," Jordan said.

Jordan came to NDWA with a background in nonprofits and community organizing, but no prior union experience. At first, union membership didn't feel particularly relevant.

"I didn't internalize it as a thing I might need, our team was really healthy, at the beginning. I knew other people were having issues at work, but they weren't affecting me," he said.

However, that all changed in spring 2024.

A major organizational restructuring reshuffled roles and brought in a new supervisor, one already known among staff for problematic behavior. Jordan and his coworkers immediately raised concerns, submitting a detailed three-page letter to management.

"When we first saw the restructure plan, we were upset about it and wrote a three-page letter to management describing our concerns," he said.

But the warning went ignored. What followed was a rapid decline in workplace conditions. After years of positive evaluations, Jordan suddenly found himself targeted.

"Before I had her as my supervisor, I felt good about my job and myself, I felt good about being here, but from the time she was in charge and supervising me I felt increasingly more anxious, depressed and enraged," he said.

That's when Local 1180 stepped in.

Shop Stewards worked alongside Jordan, escalating concerns to Human Resources and

filing grievances. But as Steward Summer Kim put it, "Ultimately HR is their to protect NDWA, not staff. So for me the union was the only way to address these issues. I felt like the union was the only avenue to deal with the situation, there was no other way to address Micky's issues."

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Recognizing the problem extended far beyond one person, the unit organized. A letter detailing widespread concerns was sent to leadership and later to the Board of Trustees—signed by 95% of members. Within days, the manager was gone.

But the fight wasn't over. Amid ongoing contract negotiations, another shock hit: a planned layoff of 28% of staff. Jordan was on the list.

"When we got the emails [announcing the layoffs], I was stressed, because of the economy. At first, I didn't believe that we could save the jobs, but I was down to do whatever we could, as the Union."

And that's exactly what they did.

The unit sprang into action—organizing town halls, launching petitions, and staging a nationwide 11-state picket. Negotiations intensified. Members prepared for a strike, even compiling detailed "to do" lists of their work to demonstrate the impact of a walkout. The message was clear: they were ready.

It worked.

Within days, an agreement was reached—saving one in three jobs slated for elimination. Jordan kept his job.

Not long after, as the dust settled, the shop moved into steward nominations. To Jordan's surprise, his name was put forward.

"I didn't expect it, but once it happened I thought 'why not? I can try!'"

For fellow **Shop Steward Tess Griffin**, it made perfect sense. "He took on a more leader role when we decided to write a letter the board. Micky became a big part of talking to people, advocating for himself and others. He was able to show people this wasn't just about him.

Today, as NDWA faces ongoing challenges in the nonprofit sector, its union members stand stronger—and more united—than ever. With new contract protections in place and a new generation of leadership stepping up, including Jordan, one thing is clear:

When members come together, they don't just survive — they win.



Have an **UPDATE** or **NEWS** from your Private Sector Shop?

Send information and photos to either Staff Rep Chris Thomas cthomas@cwa1180.org
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