

Dallas Fort Worth Professional
Musicians Association
1939 Stadium Oaks Court
Arlington, TX 76011

Why We Belong

Messages From Our Members

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THE NEED TO ORGANIZE

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"Power concedes nothing without a demand." — Frederick Douglass.

Frederick Douglass was a former slave who later became a hugely influential speaker and advocate for the abolitionist cause and women's rights. He conferred with Abraham Lincoln during the Civil War, and recruited African Americans for the Union army. In Douglass's time, power belonged to those who owned other human beings.

Today, Capital has power. And, Capital has only one Need – that is, to maximize capital. It does so in large part by minimizing its cost. Hence, Capital is unwaveringly dedicated to lowering the cost of labor, and, to the extent it succeeds, it increases its power. Unfortunately, that power is not always wielded justly.

For example, Wal-Mart is one of the most powerful organizations in the world. Yet, it can plunge an entire extended family from financial security into poverty just by opening a big box down the street from a "mom and pop" store. Wal-Mart doesn't pay manufacturers what small businesses pay for goods. Rather, Wal-Mart dictates to its vendors what Wal-Mart's wholesale cost of goods is going to be. Wal-Mart can insist by contract that a supplier's CEO purchase a \$3 million dollar home in Bentonville, Arkansas, for the purpose of servicing Wal-Mart exclusively. Wal-Mart looks like a benevolent god to the neighbors in Bentonville. However, Wal-Mart can, and routinely does, unilaterally terminate contracts with its suppliers, leaving them suddenly with a \$3 million dollar mortgage and no job. How "benevolent" is that?

Wal-Mart can do this because it has, it *is*, Capital. Yet, it is not enough. Wal-Mart continually violates federal labor laws by interfering with and restraining its employees' right to self-organize and engage in concerted activities for their mutual aid and protection. It isolates its employees from one another. Wal-Mart specifically trains its managers how to identify union organizers, and instructs managers to discipline and/or terminate those employees. Despite Wal-Mart's incomprehensible profit margin, it will not pay one cent over minimum wage to its employees. Its Need to slash labor costs to bone is not mitigated to any degree by its soaring profits. Is this economic justice? Does anyone really believe that Wal-Mart simply cannot afford to pay a living wage?

This example clearly illustrates that Capital's singular Need is never fully satiated. Labor could give Capital absolutely everything it demands, and it would still want more.

THE NEED TO ORGANIZE *(cont.)*

Yet, conceding everything gets Labor nowhere. It yields nothing in return.

Capital has long used fear to gain more and deeper concessions from Labor. Capital will say that if Labor will simply give in and bow to The Need of Capital, there will be more work. On the other hand, if Labor demands that some of its own needs be addressed, we will be replaced, outsourced, or rendered obsolete by technology. The goal is to cause panic and division among the workforce.

The use of fear by Capital is nothing new. Employers have used this tactic ever since the industrial revolution began in the eighteenth century. It was around that time that many Americans started becoming uncomfortable with a legal system in which those with power owned the labor of others, and the concept of freely contracted employment for a wage gained footing. The "labor problem" has been fairly tricky ever since.

The need for labor to organize is about the need for justice. There can be no economic justice where a deal is based on the needs (or Need) of only one side. Rather than responding with fear, an organized workforce responds with solidarity. The very existence of a unified workforce exerts pressure on an employer to improve wages and working conditions, because it is then harder for the employer to find cheap replacements. Musicians have additional leverage in that live performers can hardly be replaced with any technological development. Some employers have tried, but their patrons just don't buy it.

The Musicians Union helps musicians articulate and prioritize their needs and advocates on their behalf with employers. As a result, musicians are earning higher wages. Some employers here in North Texas have attempted to drive musicians' wages to rock bottom through the use of fear. However, our Union has successfully resisted, demanded and won economic fairness. This could not be achieved without an organized and unified workforce. It is in every working musician's interest to have a strong Union. But our strength and comes from the membership of each and every working musician in the area.

By joining the Union, you help the Union obtain fairness for all musicians, and you will personally benefit from that for the rest of your professional life. Join today and give the Union more power. The Union will empower you. With the additional strength of your membership, we will achieve greater solidarity. Through solidarity and with the power of more members, we will achieve justice.

As Frederick Douglass said, power never has, and never will, concede this without a demand.

Band Discount: Save big bucks if you join all together

There has never been a better time to join the Union if you play in a band or group. Our new group discount plan will save money and get your group on the road to Union benefits in no time flat.

Musicians performing in self-contained bands or musical groups of two or more can avoid paying \$165 each in Local and Federation initiation fees *if all band members apply together and join the Union at the same time.*

A bylaw change at the AFM Convention in June has paved the way for locals to offer musicians a "Band Discount" if all band members join at once. To take advantage of the special group rate at Local 72-147, each band member pays annual dues in advance, plus dues for the current period. Local and Federation initiation fees are waived.

Musicians can download membership application information, pay

with credit cards through Paypal and join online at www.musiciansdfw.org, where affiliated groups can get their own free web page listing with photo, bios, and sound files for booking and job referrals.

Other important group membership benefits include assistance in the collection of local and traveling claims, low-cost equipment insurance, use of AFM engagement contract forms, access to online membership directories, and much more.

Spread the word – *Bands who join together save together.* Empowerment has never been more reasonable. For more information, call the Union office or visit www.musiciansdfw.org and click "How to Join."

JOIN TODAY!

Go To : www.musiciansdfw.org

Click "How To Join"

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Or Call

817-469-6040 (Metro)

1-800-635-0072 (Toll Free)