

Solidarity Shoutouts For The Santa Rita Strikers

November 4, 2019

Below is a facsimile of a letter we sent in with visitors to the [strikers inside Santa Rita Jail](#).

We solicited shoutouts and statements of support to let them know just how far their message has gotten and how many people care. Jail and prison is designed to be an isolating, defeating and dehumanizing experience. Inside is rising up to resist this and it's incumbent on the outside to do the same.

We received shoutouts from all over the country, from prisoners locked up in Angola, Louisiana, from a nine yr old in Arizona, and from an array of people and groups right here in the Bay.

If you want to add your shoutout of support for the strike, please enter it as a comment below the post and we will make sure it makes it inside.

SOLIDARITY SHOUTOUTS FOR THE SANTA RITA STRIKERS

Collected by Oakland IWOC

(Incarcerated Workers Organizing Committee)

November 3, 2019

From all of us at Oakland IWOC to all those imprisoned inside Santa Rita Jail, we send all our respect and support. To the strikers, the minute we got the word you all were in motion, we also got on the move. Media, phone calls, boosting our support outside for releases (Yeah, we're those "pizza people" you might have heard about, waiting outside with rides, smokes, and food for releases late into the night) Santa Rita is a grimy, dehumanizing beast and half of us have

been locked up in that hellhole, some for a weekend, some for years. No more suffering this abuse in silence and shame!

We could write more about how far your example is known, how many people you are inspiring, but instead we reached out across the country to let them tell you themselves. These are just some of the shoutouts of support we gathered in the course of one day.

Oakland IWOC P.O.Box 6305 Oakland CA 94603 Write to us!!

Or hit us up directly on our hotline. We got money on this phone for you **(510) 368-3426**

“From behind the walls, inside maximum security, on the behalf of Jailhouse Lawyers Speak, we send our solidarity with clenched fists of resistance to the striking prisoners of Santa Rita jail. It is important that outside support lift up these prisoners voices to be heard and demand their concerns be addressed. Santa Rita is pushing SLAVERY and denying human decency. These people in that jail are saying hell no, no more exploitation. Stand with us as we stand with them!”

– Jailhouse Lawyers Speak, an incarcerated group of prisoner rights advocates throughout the South

“I, **Marie Levin**, and my brother, **Sitawa Nantambu Jamaa**, support the Santa Rita jail hunger strikers. Be strong. Continue to fight for your demands.”

[Sitawa Nantambu Jamaa is incarcerated in CA and is one of the main organizers of the 2011-13 CA hunger strikes against solitary confinement. Marie, his sister, is a longtime advocate located here in Oakland]

From inside a Florida prison:

“Yooo peace and solidarity comrades, brothers and sisters! This is k!!!ng of the Almighty Latin Kings and Queen Nation!! We are standing with u! Your protest has helped me show the nations and organizations down here in Florida what standing in solidarity looks like and I’m currently putting together our own protest!! Thank u for the push and the sacrifice!! Forever United! Peace Kings and Queens!!”

“We fully support the people on strike inside this concentration camp, and demands that their right to dissent is protected from retaliation. We stand in solidarity.”

– **Community Ready Corps, Oakland**

“Solidarity to all the Rita strikers from someone who only spent 8 hours inside. I know the place is a filthy hellhole, and how the guards disrespect all of you inside the walls. There’s loads of us out here pulling for you all.”

– Tova, **Peoples Alliance, Oakland**

“Solidarity from Carl and Brianna at IWOC HQ in **Kansas City, Missouri!**”

“I don’t have a group to rep. But could you tell them that “the letter writing crew in **Seattle** has their back. Keep your heads up”

A message from a **9 year old in Arizona**

“Dear Hunger strikers, work hard, don’t give up, make sure you’re always fighting for freedom. mwah (kiss noise).”

“I’m an **Oakland public school teacher** fully backing your strike. You are not forgotten!!!” – Jordan

We as Moms for Housing stand in solidarity with the inmates of Santa Rita jail in their hunger and work strike. It’s completely unacceptable to be subjected to these conditions! We support your right to resist!

In unity and struggle,

Moms For Housing, East Oakland

“To those locked in the cages of Santa Rita, your fight for dignity in the bay area is an inspiration to people everywhere who recognize how broken and corrupt the system of incarceration really is. We are currently using our media platform to amplify reports of your actions to people across the world. We stand in solidarity with your brave fight and with your demands. Please know that people are watching and are cheering you on! Inside, outside, all on the same side!”

– **ItsGoingDown.org.**

“Your work for Justice is a gift to our world! Keep fighting! Keep loving! We are with you!” – Talya H-H, **Oakland**

“Love and solidarity to the Santa Rita strikers from **Milwaukee**. Your collective effort is an inspiration.” – **MKE Lit Supply**

“Stay strong we know where you are and stand with you. An injury to one an injury to all.” – Mike Lee, **Oakland**

“Santa Rita Hunger Strikers,

In Tucson, we have been watching the developments of your strike with excitement. All across the country conditions at jails and detention centers are horrible, and it’s only a matter of time before we, too, will have to spend a night, a week, a month or two in jail and live in those conditions. Progress only comes when people are willing to sacrifice to fight for something better, and the ripple effect of those efforts can be felt everywhere. Please know that you’re not alone and you’re not just fighting for yourselves, but for all of us. We’re watching. Together we’re more powerful than you know.”

– Anonymous, **Tucson, AZ**

“We are standing with you, we are inspired by you, we are uplifting your demands and your humanity ... sending all of the love!”

– **Cat Brooks and The Anti Police-Terror Project, Oakland**

“Millions for Prisoners – New Mexico stands in solidarity behind our striking comrades in the Santa Rita county jail. Being denied of basic human dignity is abhorrent and your voices are a beacon of hope to everyone who stands against the oppression and abuse of power within the carceral system.”

From **comrades locked up inside Angola, Louisiana:**

“In the words of Frederick Douglas, “If there is no struggle there is no progress...Power concedes nothing without a demand. It never did and it never will.” Fight on, brothers and sisters. We stand with you.”

“Stay strong. Keep fighting for your human rights! I have loved ones in there.”

– Candice Elder, **Oakland**

From **Rebecca Hensley, Louisiana Network for Criminal Justice Transformation:**

“The world is watching and you do not stand alone. The ancestors that fought before us celebrate your courage. And the children who come after us will sing the praises of those who loved freedom enough to show them how to struggle.”

“Santa Rita is a hell hole. Prayers and power to the striking prisoners. May their demands be met! For their safety, I pray.”

– Pastor Jean Louise, **Oakland**

“You are worthy! Everyone is watching! With each passing day there are more and more posts about conditions at Santa Rita on social media. Stand. ♥♥”

– Andrea Henson, **Oakland**

“Much love from the team at **Dreaming Freedom, Practicing Abolition**, a network of grassroots abolitionist study groups **inside the Pennsylvania prison system.**

We encourage you to keep up the fight. There is power in numbers and knowledge, as well as in the will to push for changes in the prison system through direct protest action. We will spread your message far and wide”

From D., **Puente, CA**

“To every incarcerated individual in Santa Rita & to all other incarcerated folks affected by cruel acts of inhumanity by law enforcement. We stand in solidarity with you, we advocate for you and we are your voice .. You are brave and bold to sacrifice yourselves to prove you deserve basic human rights.”

– Love and Respect, **from those on the outside with Loved ones on the inside”**

“Love and Solidarity from the **Fight Toxic Prisons** crew. Our crew is spread across the entire country and we’ve been amplifying yalls message to the ENTIRE country. You’re putting your lives on the line to expose injustice. We’ll do everything we can from outside the walls to fight alongside you. Brick by brick, wall by wall, your bravery inspires us all. Hasta la Victoria Siempre!”

“Solidarity and strength to you precious prisoners. You deserve all that you desire.”

– Jayne, **Sebastopol, North Bay Letter Writing** group

“Your actions pushing for better conditions inside and uniting and strengthening resistance inside are shaking Santa Rita at its foundations. We see you and are inspired by what you are doing. Thank you!”

–**East Bay Prisoner Support.**

Solidarity from members of the **editorial committee of The Abolitionist: a publication of Critical Resistance.**

“We want to let you know your voices and actions have not gone unnoticed and we’re organizing out here day in and day out with yall towards similar goals! It’s all one struggle at base. Abolish the prison industrial complex! All power to the people!”

“May the power and dignity of every person who has ever suffered within those walls fuel your efforts. May the Spirit of Life fill you with courage and determination. May the God of Love and Justice rise up in you and bless you as you bless each other and all of us on the outside. You are inspiring us all.”

– Rev. Nichola Torbett, **Oakland**

Solidarity from members of **The WL Nolan Mentorship Program, a group of New African revolutionaries inside and out of prison across the country:**

“We got your backs and your demands have been heard and echoed by many on social media!!!

“You are not alone. You are not invisible. You are not forgotten. They will never cage your courage, your voice, or your spirit.”

– Needa Bee, **Oakland**

“Dear Santa Rita strikers,

We uphold your courageous strike, recognizing that this fight to assert your humanity in the face of the craven prison institution is a fight not only for your own fate, but the fate of us all. The rights of the poor, the oppressed, and the downtrodden outside the prison system are entwined with your rights within, and we who live outside the walls that contain you stand with you in solidarity.”

– Christine Smith, **People’s Alliance**

“People in Modesto know about the strike going on in Santa Rita. Keep fighting for your rights! We HEAR you!”

– Gary Novak, **Modesto**

Salutations and a revolutionary embrace to all the loved ones remaining firm in the strike and demanding a response to the inhuman conditions you are forced to live in.

As an individual who spent years in the same box, I hope that the piece of my spirit that is still remaining in there helps to keep the flame burning inside of you all. Rest assured knowing that we have you out here on this side of the wall, that the support will not end until all of these concrete walls are torn down.

Steadfast and forever forward,

Your brother in the struggle,

an ex-incarcerated member of Oakland IWOC

In this rich, so-called progressive Bay Area, there's no excuse for filth, neglect and racist, classist torture or forced austerity in a local jail. We know better and we won't stop making demands until we get better. We salute all strikers — and all who wish they had the courage to strike — and want you to know the Bay View has got your back.

– SF Bay View, National Black Newspaper

“The Ella Baker Center for Human Rights stands in solidarity with the prisoner hunger & labor strike taking place inside Santa Rita Jail. We wholeheartedly support our courageous incarcerated community members, whom in spite of enormous personal risk, are organizing to demand their human rights & human dignity. Any form of retaliation against this incredible brave act of peaceful protest on behalf of Alameda County is unacceptable and blatantly immoral”