



Tradesisters and Readers of Pride and a Paycheck:
The following article was written and submitted to Pride and a Paycheck by Susan Eisenberg, Boston MA. Susan is an Electrician, Tradeswoman Activist, Author and Artist (See “On Equal Terms – 30 Years and Still Organizing” Installation description on the internet. Thanks to Susan for being our eyes and ears to this important issue.

THE STORY IN A NUTSHELL: “Everybody kisses engineer Steve”

In 2007, Bianca Wisniewski Kuros, a single parent of two daughters, began work as Safety Coordinator for Total Safety on JPMorgan Chase's 270 Park Ave. construction site in Manhattan. She alleged, in a \$20 million lawsuit filed July 2009 against elevator operator Steve Greco, Total Safety, and JP Morgan Chase, that the company ignored her complaints of lewd propositions and groping from Greco, and then laid her off. She was set to give evidence in court on October 19, but died the day before in a two-alarm fire — still “under investigation” — that brought 110 firefighters to her apartment at 3 am, and left her 16-year-old daughter in a coma for three days, and two others in critical condition.

I never met Bianca Wisniewski Kuros or even heard of her. But when I learned that she died in a suspicious fire that ravaged her Queens’ apartment the day before she was to give evidence in a sexual harassment lawsuit, I was stunned and sickened. My mind began to swirl with the faces of so many tradeswomen I’ve known over the last three decades who stood up to intimidation for our right to fair access to training and jobs. Bianca was the first tradeswoman I’ve heard of who died doing that. When “Justice for Bianca” invited me to join a rally in New York City outside the courthouse on November 5, 2009, I was grateful for the chance to do something.

On the sidewalk, the group was ready not only with a press kit, signs, leaflets, and fabulous T-shirts, but plenty of coffee and pastries! While many leafleted passersby, two of us went inside, where Bianca’s attorney, Steve Wittels, told the judge that Bianca’s daughters’ intended to honor their mother’s memory by continuing the case.

Over the next few months, a process will establish her 18-year-old daughter, Nicole, as representative of her estate; then, a new complaint will be entered around February 1. It was sobering to realize that these tragic circumstances leave the weight and risk for carrying forward the issues of sexual harassment and gender discrimination in our industry on the shoulders of an 18-year-old young woman.

MEANWHILE BACK IN BOSTON

On November 17, I reported on Justice for Bianca at a Massachusetts Tradeswomen Association Meeting. I asked if the story resonated for anyone. Immediately, an apprentice spoke about the terrifying harassment she faced daily from a journeyman on her job. She had even made sure her kids knew his name in case something happened to her. This was her first meeting, and the first time she’d talked about the situation. The group rallied with advice — to document the harassment and report it to her apprenticeship director — as well as offers of support, personal cell phone numbers, and a song.

WHAT YOU CAN DO TODAY

Justice for Bianca is looking for your immediate help to make clear to authorities in the NY Fire Department and the City of New York that the harassment and intimidation of tradeswomen will not be tolerated! You can help us make sure that the fire that killed Bianca is fully investigated, by making a personal request for a copy of both the “**FIRE INCIDENT REPORT**” and the **FIRE MARSHALL’S “INVESTIGATION REPORT”**. To receive the forms, and clear instructions and information for filling them out, email justiceforbianca@gmail.com. By taking this action, you will help put on record the wide concern felt **across the country** for this case, and that Bianca’s daughters are not standing alone.

WHAT’S NEXT

Join the Justice for Bianca Facebook page to link to articles and information — the tremendous support from tradeswomen and allies has been deeply appreciated! As this case proceeds, Justice for Bianca plans to maintain a visible tradeswomen presence in the courtroom. Justice for Bianca will be forming coalitions with other groups to take actions that let government and industry officials know that we expect them to ensure that sexual harassment stops, and that women have fair access to training and work in all occupations. To stay informed on actions, or to join the coalition, email: justiceforbianca@gmail.com

-----Susan Eisenberg...Director, On Equal Terms Project / OnEqualTerms@brandeis.edu

**Pride and a Paycheck welcomes
"Sisters In The Building Trades" to the SF Bay Area!**
sistersinthebuildingtrades.org
By Mercy Haley and Gloria Dorn

Over the past five years Gloria and I have attended the Tradeswomen "Women Building CA" conference. It was at these meetings that where we met wonderful women from all walks of life, in all trades that were struggling with the same issues that we and other women in the trades were up against. We were introduced to "Sisters in the Building Trades" a non-profit organization and immediately wanted to take action to start a meeting in California. "Sisters in the Building Trades" has their headquarters in Kent, WA. This past year we have organized a couple of meetings to introduce the group, by having a "Sisters Happy Hour" in the bay area. We believe in what this group has to offer to all women, union and non-union and we believe women can be successful in the trades. The organization focuses on ALL women who work, worked or would like to work in the building trades, union or non-union. We provide mentoring to other sisters and we support local community events or just being there for another sister. **We are currently organizing a "Sisters Happy Hour" for Sat. Jan. 30, 2010 in San Jose, CA.** Time and location to be determined at a later date. If you would like more information or have any questions, please feel free to contact one of us and we will be happy to fill you in with all the details of what we have to offer. We will also put you on the list to receive updates of our meetings.

Respectfully, Mercy Haley - mercyme007@yahoo.com and
Gloria Dorn - carepenterdorn@yahoo.com

**Pride and a Paycheck welcomes Meg Vasey as the new
Executive Director of Tradeswomen, Inc. in Oakland California.**

Tradeswomen, Inc., California's first organization for women in the trades, was founded in 1979 as a grass-roots support organization. The organization builds community among the growing numbers of women in blue collar, skilled craft jobs. Tradeswomen, Inc. has three goals: 1. Recruit more women into building and construction trades. 2. Promote retention of women in the trades. And 3. Develop tradeswomen's capacity for leadership and career growth, on the job and in their unions. Visit Tradeswomen, Inc.'s website at www.tradeswomen.org or call the office at 510-891-8773, ext 315. **While you're there order a new 2010 Calendar!**

Lots happening for tradeswomen to get involved in!

We know that you're tired when you come home from work and the last thing on your mind is going to a meeting or helping organize tradeswomen events. But if the founding mothers of Tradeswomen Inc. and other tradeswomen support organizations around the country had thought that way...you probably wouldn't be in the job you're in right now and you wouldn't know any other tradeswomen because we would be few (fewer than we even are) and far between! And you certainly wouldn't be reading these words...because Pride and a Paycheck would not exist! The momentum of the tradeswomen community (yes we ARE a community around the country) would not have pushed, organized, demonstrated, filed legal law suits etc and etc...without tradeswomen organizing into groups such as Tradeswomen Inc. and Sisters in the Building Trades. It's up to all of us to keep this momentum going so that recruiting, training, hiring, job retention and the struggles against, discrimination and sexual harassment are in the forefront of our tradeswomen lives!

Sue Doro, Editor

DEAR SISTERS BY IRONWORKER JEANNE PARK

There are many reasons for women to enter the building trades. The pay scale and benefits are guaranteed, the work is physical and immediately rewarding and the skills learned are useful in many practical aspects of life. The downside of working construction is that there aren't many women who accept the challenge of being in the trades. During World War II, women took their place in the building and construction trades, and on assembly lines with strong government support and a powerful feeling of doing their duty for their country. Women did their jobs well and were productive and proud of their jobs.



After the war, to make way for soldiers returning from WWII, an intense campaign began to put women back into kitchens as homemakers and out of the workplace as breadwinners, though for many years there weren't enough qualified workers to fill the jobs they vacated. The trades have suffered from this inequity since.

To explain this lack of women in construction throughout the decades, dated and unfair rationalizations have taken hold and spread. Women are seen as inferior physically and mentally as a whole. Issues of dating and sex, unprofessional in any workplace, have taken priority over skills and experience. And of course, the less women there are to prove these lies wrong, the longer these assumptions persist.

Women who succeed in the trades often have to work twice as hard as the average male worker, excel at the skills of the trade, or be cleverer and wittier than her co-workers. She has to know which battles to fight—know a stupid comment that can be brushed off from a series of full on discriminatory acts, which must be documented and fought. She is not only acting for herself, but in the eyes of her coworkers representing all the women who have the potential and willingness to work in the trades, but maybe not the stubbornness and desire to be a pioneer. Unfortunately this is a burden she must bear and solutions that she often must seek out herself.

Conditions are not nearly as bad as they were ten or even five years ago. More men support and encourage women on the worksite and realize a building project is a collaborative effort, not macho competition. At the same time, there are increasingly more women and support groups to lend a hand or even just a sympathetic ear. Ideally we will all be judged on the work that we do, and not our gender, race, religion or sexual orientation. For now, we must do the best we can and take on the double job of work and building equity for the future.

Take care...work safe...Jeanne Park

PRIDE AND A PAYCHECK'S PHONE IS (510) 627-0063. Mailing Address is 484 Lake Park Avenue, #315, Oakland CA 94610. Email us at: tradesis@aol.com. Send your poetry and work stories to this address! Special thanks to Madeline Mixer for her indispensable support, funding and proofreading skills as well as topic ideas. Thanks to my railroad sister Penny Artis Nunes for her support. And thanks for special support to Larry Robbin, Joe Mixer, Amy Reynolds, Jeanne Park, Raequel Smith, Susan Eisenberg, Jan Jenson, Vicky Hamlin, as well as the WATT Woman Electricians of Houston Texas and their President Pat Burnham. Also thanks to Jane LaTour, as well as the New York Tradeswomen; and Pat Williams, Los Angeles "connection" and Melina Harris & Mercy Haley from Sisters in the Building Trades. Thanks to WINTER for being our fiscal agent. **We also want to thank the Northern CA Drywall Lathing Apprenticeship for their consistent support and donations.** Sue Doro, the Editor of *Pride and a Paycheck* is a retired Railroad Machinist and member of the National Writers Union, Local 1981 (a United Auto Worker's Union Affiliate). She is also a member of the United Association of Labor Education, Local 189 (an Affiliate of the Communication Workers of America), and the Working Class Studies Association (www.wcstudies.org), as well as a retired member of the American Federation of Government Employees (AFGE) and International Association of Machinists (IAM). Sue is a disabled worker, injured in a previous (white-collar) job and uses voice-activated computer technology to machine the newsletter. *Pride and a Paycheck* is produced by the Editor, with funds from a San Francisco Foundation private grant. The Editor is solely responsible for the content of this newsletter. Thanks to Fastprint on Lakeshore Avenue in Oakland CA for the printing and mailing.

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KEEPING IT REAL BY RAEQUEL SMITH (PAPILLON)

Keeping it real no matter if it is popular or not, is the way I demand respect when it comes to any inappropriate sexual innuendos or advances at work or else where. I demand the command of my dignity and hold myself in a fashion that everyone around me knows Raequel does not play. Not when it comes to my personal space. There was an incident when I was getting foods out of our company refrigerator when a co-worker decided to stand over me to get something out of the freezer as I was stooped down. I immediately confronted him having his person to close to mine and made a big deal about it because it was a big deal.



He took the stance of Mr. Innocent and that he did not mean anything by it. Well I made sure he and everyone else in my company knew that my personal space will be respected. It was uncomfortable because it felt like the feedback that I was getting was that I was making too much out of nothing. It was something to me and I refuse to work in an environment that is violating my body in any way. I did not like turning from trying to get something out of the refrigerator and seeing this persons' middle section right in my face. Unacceptable!

So I blew the whistle. LOAD. That person has respected my space every since. Now I have had to learn through experience to say what is ok with me or not. There have been jobs that I have had as a Tradeswomen that I feared saying anything because I did not want to be fired or picked on and I thought I have to take their sexual inappropriateness because that is just the way it is. **NO MORE.** We have to speak up for ourselves. A closed mouth don't get fed.

I became fed up with just taking comments that made me feel less than a person and feeling that if I do not play the game I will lose, so I started to tip toe at first into using language that simply stated what respect I was due. I do a job worth pay, respect and pride. That does not mean anyone from whatever motive has the right to talk to me sexually, degradingly or out of pocket. Once I used my voice I liked the sound of it and have been using it ever since. I must speak to the many issues that I have had in my life of sexual abuses in my childhood that keep my mouth shut, frightened that if I spoke up or said what was wrong that I would pay. **NO MORE. NO MORE,** am I trapped in the lies of secretes and just getting by or ruled by fear. I have found my voice. Now they, it, them can't shut me up. I sound off for justice. I sound off for the right to be treated with respect. I sound off for the right to be a woman who works in the Trades and does not have to trade off my dignity to just get by. It is our right to be at our places of employment with a carefree mind. We must keep it real, quickly confronting any behaviors that have us at dis-ease. **Keeping it real sister's in the trades is being true to ourselves and showing our worthiness by example...to the sister's that are coming after us.**

Raequel is a San Francisco City Worker. She lives in San Pablo CA.

AND HERE'S TWO FOR THE GOOD GUYS!

Two more poems from the Blue Jean Writers Workshop at the 2009 Women Building California Conference in Los Angeles

Graphic by Vicky Hamlin



I'M SO BLESSED

To have gotten into the trades
Got rid of whole lot of stress
Just to look around and say:
I'm a construction worker
And a Cement Mason at that!

I used to look around back in the day
And see nothing but men
But today is a new day because
I see my sisters of all trades on job sites
And I don't feel alone

So that's why I can say today:
I'm so blessed!
From 1978 to 2009 and still going!
So you see I'm still being blessed!

© By Rosalynn Domino, San Pablo CA
Cement Mason Local 300

WHAT A CREW!

On this site now two years
Just the boss and I

Then we hire one from the hall
We were in class five years together
A friend

Next month, we hire another
We worked together before
A friend

Next month, one comes from another site
We get to know each other, and now
A friend



Who knew?
A crew of four...All friends!
Four good Journey Workers
Three men
One woman



Four good Journey Workers
Four equals looking out for each other
Preparing, laying out, thinking ahead
Making the work good
May this job go on and on!
Months now together
We still have each other's backs!

© By Josey Cable, Los Angeles CA, IBEW 595

OUR HANDS



HAVE A RIGHT

TO WORK!

Sue Doro 2010

HIRED HANDS

Our hands have a right to work
Free from sexual harassment
Wherever we are trained to work
Wherever we are hired to work
Wherever we want to work
Our hands
Our women's hands
Our hands

ELLA PUEDE

她可以做到

SHE CAN DO IT

Thanks to Amy Reynolds for new resource additions. If anyone has more training programs or support organizations they think will be helpful please email Sue Doro at tradesis@aol.com
THANK YOU!!!

A big tradeswomen thank you to Electrician and Tradeswomen activist Carol Toliver for her generous gift to Pride and a Paycheck. In this difficult economic time it's so gratifying to receive donations to keep us afloat! Thank you dear sister for your encouraging words and monetary gift of support. (From Madeline & Sue)

EQUAL RIGHTS ADVOCATES San Francisco CA (Equal Rights and Economic Opportunities for Women and Girls)
For questions about your legal rights call the Advice and Counseling Line: 1-800-839-4372.

KNOWING YOUR RIGHTS GIVES YOU THE POWER TO FIGHT BACK AGAINST DISCRIMINATION AND HARASSMENT.

You may leave a message at ANY time and a counselor will call you back. www.equalrights.org for more info.

From: Pride and a Paycheck
Sue Doro, Editor
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**REMEMBER..IT'S NEVER TOO LATE
TO BUY YOUR TRADESWOMEN CALENDARS!**

Tradeswomen Inc.'s "Women Hangin' Tuff"
(Contact www.tradeswomen.org)
Ironworker Jeanne Park's "Ironworking Women"
(Contact www.ironworkergear.com) OR FREE if you
are an Ironworker...at Jeanne@ironworking.com

**This issue of Pride and a Paycheck
is dedicated to the struggle against sexual harassment.**

WOMEN'S BLUE-COLLAR RESOURCE AGENCIES ORGANIZATIONS & TRAINING PROGRAMS (S.F. Bay Area and Beyond)

NORTHERN CALIFORNIA DRYWALL / LATHING APPRENTICESHIP in Hayward at (510) 785-5885. **SISTERS IN THE BUILDING TRADES** Chatter Page: shyeshye@aol.com
Web site and Links: sistersinthebuildingtrades.org **SISTERS IN THE BROTHERHOOD** www.sistersinthebrotherhood.info (New York Chapter of Sisters in the Brotherhood: www.unionwomencarpenters.com) Charity Cultural Services Center in San Francisco at (415) 989-8224. Youth Build San Jose in San Jose at (408) 918-1014. Youth Build in Richmond CA (510) 215-3306. **RICHMOND WORKS** (510) 307-8014 The California Women's Ventures Project in Watsonville at (831) 724-0206. Ella Hill Hutch Community Center in San Francisco at (415) 921-6276. The Cypress Mandela/WIST Training Center in Oakland at (510) 208-7350. Chinese For Affirmative Action in San Francisco at (415) 274-6750. Tradeswomen, Inc. Oakland at (510) 891-8773, ext. 315. www.tradeswomen.org Asian Neighborhood Design in San Francisco at (415) 648-7070. Asian Neighborhood Design in Oakland at (510) 433-1370. Mission Hiring Hall in San Francisco at (415) 626-1919. BACAP (Build a Career Project of Glide Memorial Church) in San Francisco at (415) 674-6176. Laney Workforce Development/CalWORKS in Oakland at (510) 986-6946 or (510) 986-6920. City College of San Francisco Construction Training. (415) 550-4444 or 4440 or 4409. College of Alameda Diesel and Truck Mechanic Program at (510) 748-2357. Alameda California WINTER (Women In Nontraditional Employment Roles), 690 Studebaker Rd, Long Beach, CA 90803 at (562) 431-0302 www.winterwomen.org WEMA (Women Empowered to Move Ahead), in San Jose, CA at (408) 251-3165 or email Lori Ramos Ehrlich: Lori.Ramos@ctsj.org **REBUILDING TOGETHER OAKLAND** (Volunteer experience) 510-625-0316. So California Tradeswomen information - Pat Williams: Patjwilliams4@aol.com **NEW LISTINGS: JOB CORPS INFORMATION** www.jobcorps.gov (800)-773-JOBS. **CAREER TECHNICAL EDUCATION PROGRAM** - 21st CENTURY LEARNING PARTNERSHIPS - Lynn Garcia (Parent/Community Outreach Coordinator) 415-750-8689, garciala@sfusd.edu San Francisco CITY BUILD PRE-APPRENTICESHIP PROGRAM - Janan Howell, Employer Liaison (415) 581-2309.