



Dear Howard,

We, the partners at Columbia Turnpike Starbucks, who live and work in Upstate New York (the sovereign land of the Mohawk peoples and the Haudenosaunee alliance of Iroquois nations) are filing for a union election in solidarity with partners across the nation. We are parents, college students, coffee enthusiasts, and tea lovers who all chose Starbucks for reasons as unique as we are. Some of us are lifelong coffee drinkers, eager to perfect our barista skills. Some of us were drawn to the ASU program to pursue our dream careers. Some of us have been in customer service since we entered the workforce. Differences aside, we are people worthy of respect, living wages, and power equality.

We know our manager has our best interests at heart but upper management and corporate have limited her abilities by doing what they always do: putting profit above people. As a result of this, Starbucks has been engaging in union busting tactics and unfair labor practices. Ever since the Latham and Stuyvesant Plaza Starbucks' won their elections, there has been a rapid influx of corporate presence in our stores. There have been labor cuts despite Starbucks making record breaking profits during the height of COVID and having the highest single quarter profits ever during the first quarter of this year. This has resulted in our night crew being severely understaffed, despite the supposed overstaffing at our store. There have been threats to remove benefits from unionized stores, while offering benefits to non-unionized stores. Benefits are not promised as partners are not always given the minimum amount of hours needed to receive said benefits. There have been strict crackdowns on minor offenses along with sudden policy change and aggressive policy enforcement where there previously was none. These tactics



have had the opposite effect. Instead of driving us out of our store, they have increased our desire to unionize as corporate has underestimated our collective power.

In our store we have faced constant sexual harassment from regulars both on and off the floor despite multiple partner's concerns and complaints. The policies in place limit our abilities as to what we can and can't do, ultimately not providing us with the protection and agency we need. There has been failure to accommodate neurodivergent partners all while holding them to the same standards as neurotypical partners. This has caused them great discomfort, difficulty, anxiety and/or pain. The work day can be insurmountable and overwhelming for neurodivergent partners due to the stimulating Starbucks environment, and reasonable accommodations that can be made to ease these difficulties have either been challenged or denied.

There have been multiple safety hazards and unsafe working conditions we've had to endure, such as store flooding, clutter in the back room creating a tripping/falling hazard and blown fuses. Additionally, our registers, specifically drive thru, and credit and debit card machines have also been crashing and malfunctioning. As a result, baristas have to physically take customer's phones and walk across the cafe to the front registers to process payments. This tanks our drive times, and makes taking orders very difficult and inefficient all while expected to meet a drive time goal of 50 seconds.

Research shows that people would rather be stuck in the same toxic environment because they've become accustomed to it. We have decided that we will no longer stand for abusive power structures. We have decided that if we are not going to have our basic needs met, we are going to put up a fair and legal fight for them. Unionizing has been a right of United States



citizens since the Labor Movement of the 1920's. Past generations were able to retire comfortably due to benefits, pensions and retirement plans afforded to them by unions and high-paying jobs. The more unions in a given community, the higher the standard of living. It boosts the local economy and creates wage competition, resulting in *real* living wages for all. Our generations have not been afforded those same privileges. This has made it harder for us to have access to comprehensive, affordable healthcare. In a time when women, racial minorities, the disabled community, and LGBTQ+ Americans have had healthcare rights stripped away, comprehensive healthcare is vital for survival.

With this letter, we are hoping to not only inspire our fellow partners to organize, but the rest of America to do the same. We are earning paychecks that are wildly disproportionate to that of our corporate counterparts and our mental health is declining due to the exorbitant amount of work we put in to simply scrape by. Statistically, 50% of Americans are *only* \$500 away from becoming houseless. These issues present real consequences in our day to day lives and our livelihoods are put in danger due to the complete lack of care and total failure of these corporations. Starbucks has presented itself as a "progressive" company yet has exhibited anti-Union behaviors and patterns which speak to corporate's true values: to make as much money as possible, no matter the cost of the working class. To try to stop our unionization efforts is illegal and denying us our fundamental and federal rights as Americans.

For these reasons, we know forming a union is in our stores' best interests, and in the best interest of people everywhere. We've been promised that our voices and concerns will be heard with no action to show for it. We are not asking for much considering we are truly what



makes this company successful. For Howard to call us his partners, he needs to give us a seat at his table. We have seen over 150 stores achieve victory and we are ready to be among their ranks. As the phrase "rising water lifts all boats" goes, we will continue to fight for change. Together.

In Solidarity,

HG Warrender

Chris Burgazoli

Atlas King

Araceli Herrera

Taliesin Bruni

Kambel Hoffman

Jessika Ramos

And others who wish to be left anonymous