

“ **I wasn't powerless anymore.**”

— **LILIANA MORALES,**  
Facebook Cafeteria

After I moved to California from Mexico, I worked for 9 years in grocery stores as a cashier and a supervisor. At one store I was held up at gunpoint in a robbery. It was terrifying. Even after a second armed robbery happened a week later, the manager refused to hire a security guard to protect the workers.

I was glad to get hired by Flagship to serve food at the Facebook headquarters cafeteria in Northern California in 2015. It was close to my home, and a safer work environment. My starting pay was \$14 an hour. I got promoted to a lead position which raised my pay. But I also felt we deserved more respect on the job.

When the union campaign began, I quickly volunteered to get involved. I didn't want to continue to feel powerless. I wanted to feel free to speak up and be involved in making my workplace as good as possible without the fear of getting in trouble for it.

We recruited a team of leaders for my cafeteria where 50 people worked between the front of the house and the kitchen. I recommended others who were trustworthy. In the beginning everything was undercover; we built our network quietly. The union formed teams of leaders in the other cafeterias also. At union meetings we shared all the things we wanted to change, like ending favoritism, raising our wages, and protections for immigrant workers. And health care; I was paying \$800 a month for insurance.



When it was time to sign up, I was able to inspire my front of the house Latinx co-workers to join. They trusted my opinion. I had a strong co-worker who is from Tonga who had the trust of the Asian workers. Together we signed up a big majority in my cafeteria.

Now that we have a union contract at Facebook, the biggest change for me is that I feel appreciated when I go to work. I feel comfortable and respected working there. Recently I represented a co-worker who wanted training to be a prep cook, but the manager was dismissing his ambition. I wasn't powerless anymore. I took charge and made them provide training and he got the promotion.

I believe that you will always lose if go up against management alone. It's totally different when you organize. Now, when co-workers come to me with their problems, I can tell them we have rights and I say: "if you want, I can come with you to talk to that manager and let them know they have to respect you".

**UNITEHERE!**