



## NATIONAL LAWYERS GUILD DETROIT & MICHIGAN CHAPTER

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Contact: Sara Habbo  
habbo.sara@gmail.com  
(248) 327-0689

Baristas at Great Lakes Coffee Roasting Company (GLCRC) locations across Metro Detroit are requesting that their employer recognize UNITE HERE Local 24 as their collective bargaining representative. Together, they call themselves “Comrades in Coffee” and hope to inspire a movement of coffee workers in Michigan to join their fight for better treatment and working conditions in the coffee shop industry.

The National Lawyers Guild Detroit & Michigan Chapter (NLG) is devoted to the principle that human rights are more sacred than property rights. The NLG has been providing legal support to the movements for social justice and against racism and all forms of oppression since 1937.

Amid the pandemic, workers continued to provide great service and coffee at the flagship and satellite cafes for GLCRC. Great Lakes Coffee baristas feel that throughout the pandemic, the company created an unfair environment for workers both seasoned and new to the café. Now they are preparing to go on strike to win a union and a fair contract to transform their working conditions.

During the course of the pandemic, it has become especially clear that even though the workers produce the products, sell the products, and provide customer service, they are rarely treated as the essential partners that they are in most workplaces. The NLG stands in solidarity with our Comrades in Coffee as they fight to keep Detroit a Union Town.

As the service industry struggles to win back workers, Great Lakes Coffee workers are demonstrating exactly what is needed to do so: safer jobs with good wages, benefits and union representation. Here are some of the contract demands: 1) A safe workplace environment, including PPE and clear COVID protocols, 2) a starting wage of at least \$15 per hour, 3) anti harassment, anti-discrimination protections, 4) affordable health, dental, and vision insurance, 5) paid time off, including paid sick days and parental leave, and 6) better communication from management to staff.

UNITE HERE Local 24 is calling on allies in labor and the Detroit community to show support for Great Lakes Coffee workers in the days and weeks ahead, starting with a public action on Wednesday, February 16 at 11:30am at the Great Lakes Coffee Shop, 3956 Woodward Ave. in Midtown Detroit.

####