



NEW YORK CITY CENTRAL LABOR COUNCIL AFL-CIO

President
VINCENT ALVAREZ

Secretary-Treasurer
JANELLA T. HINDS



Contact: Kate Whalen, kwhalen@nycccl.org, 347-453-7131

WORKERS, CLERGY & COMMUNITY COMMEMORATE WORKERS MEMORIAL DAY AT SITE OF WORKER DEATH

April 26, 2019, New York, NY – Local workers, labor leaders, clergy, and community members gathered today to honor dozens of workers who have died on the job over the past year. This year's commemoration took place on the corner of 8th Avenue and 23rd Street, near the site where an Uber driver, 45-year-old Bing Wan, was [killed in a hit-and-run](#) in October.

At least 40 workers have died on the job in New York City since the last Workers Memorial Day commemoration. Construction was once again the most dangerous industry with at least 16 fatalities.

During the program, workers called attention to the continuing need for increased safety protections and workplace rights, as well as the importance of proper training standards.

"Whenever a worker dies on the job, we have to ask ourselves: did we, as a society, do everything we could for this worker?" said **NYCOSH Executive Director Charlene Obernauer**. "Today, we commemorate workers who lost their lives, but we also call on our government to do more to protect workers."

[A report released by the AFL-CIO this week](#) found that at the Occupational Safety and Health Administration, the number of job safety inspectors is at its lowest level since the 1970s. In 2017, nearly 3.5 million workers across all industries had work-related injuries and illnesses that were reported by employers. Due to limitations in the reporting system and widespread under-reporting, the true toll is estimated to be two to three times greater—or 7.0 million to 10.5 million injuries and illnesses a year.

At the event, **Brendan Sexton, Executive Director of the Independent Drivers Guild**, a Machinists Union affiliate which represents and advocates for more than 70,000 app-based drivers in New York City, remembered the driver who was killed on the job nearby.

"Bing Wan was a hardworking driver and beloved father struck down before his time. We have mourned the loss of too many for-hire vehicle drivers in the last two years," said Sexton. "Whether struck by reckless drivers, like Wan, stabbed to death like Ganiou Gandonou, or by taking their own lives under the financial strain of this industry, like Drivers Guild members Doug Schifter, Fausto Luna, and Lu Wu. In their memories, we will continue fighting to improve safety and working conditions and support the health and wellness of for-hire vehicle drivers and all workers who serve our city."

"We are gathered today in communities across the country to remember and honor hardworking men and women who were hurt or killed in the workplace," said **NYC CLC President Vincent Alvarez**. "Even one death on the job is one death too many. This is why it is so crucial that working people have a voice in the workplace, and that they organize, fight and demand action from employers and their government. We're proud to partner today with NYCOSH and the Independent Drivers Guild to formally recognize and honor those who have been lost, and to renew our struggle for safe workplaces."

Workers' Memorial Day is commemorated in cities nationwide to remember the lives of workers who were hurt or killed on the job, and to recommit to fighting for the rights of all working people.

###

