

NEW YORK CITY DOMESTIC WORKER COOPERATIVES

Sustainable. Empowering. Community Building.



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Introduction

The recent adoption of the Domestic Workers Convention, 2011 (No. 189), has provided a great impetus toward the valuation, recognition and protection of the rights of domestic workers. It has also led to an increase in organizational activity amongst domestic workers and support organizations.

This is great progress towards the acceptance of domestic work as work and the recognition of domestic workers as workers. However, a firm collective voice, a united organization led by domestic workers themselves is crucial. Without this, these workers will continue to be exploited and their work will continue to be undervalued.

Cooperatives, membership based organizations, have begun to emerge around the world to organize domestic workers. The International Labour Organization conducted an initial global mapping of domestic worker cooperatives and then began an in-depth study of domestic worker cooperatives specifically in New York City. This pamphlet highlights these cooperative enterprises with a brief explanation of their respective locations to provide a more holistic picture of the type of population these cooperatives attract. The pamphlet will also discuss the cooperative's objectives, founders and activities.

What is a worker cooperative?

A worker owned cooperative is a business that is owned and democratically controlled by the workers themselves. Each cooperative member is a legal owner of the business, participates in collective management decision-making processes and receives income disbursements.

What is domestic work?

The ILO Convention 189 defines “domestic work” as “work performed in or for a household or households” (Art. 1(a)). Domestic work may involve a range of tasks, including cooking, cleaning the house, washing and ironing the laundry, general housework, looking after children, the elderly or persons with disabilities, as well as maintaining the garden, guarding the house premises, and driving the family car.

Quick Facts on Domestic Workers:

- 42.6 per cent of domestic workers globally do not benefit from minimum wage protection
- Over a third of all women domestic workers are currently not entitled to maternity leave and associated maternity cash benefits.
- In New York City, domestic workers earn a mean annual wage of \$15,160 and experience higher levels of poverty than workers in other occupations

How Cooperatives Benefit Domestic Workers:

- Increase job security
- Higher wages
- Opportunity for worker ownership and democratic self-governance
- Acquire and advance their job skills

THE SOUTH BRONX

Neighborhood Snapshot:

The South Bronx is the poorest district in the United States. Almost 50% of the population lives below the poverty line. African Americans and Latinos make up the majority of the community.



Cooperative Home Care Associates

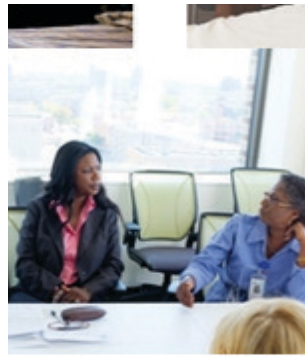
Founder: Rick Surpin and Peggy Powell

Year Founded: 1985

Members: 1,700

Support Organization: Community Services Society

Description: Cooperative Home Care Associates is the largest worker cooperative in the United States with over 1,000 members (out of 2,000 workers) and revenue upward of \$40 million. It started in 1985 with 12 home health care providers, dedicated to a quality care through quality jobs mission. Today, the agency employs more than 2,050 staff, nearly all Latina and African-American women, and stands as the largest worker cooperative in the United States. By improving home care jobs, CHCA transforms challenges faced by unemployed women into sustainable opportunities for economic independence – and improves care for thousands of low-income city residents.



Ethnicity	2008 – 2011
<i>Latina</i>	63%
<i>African American</i>	27%
<i>Caribbean American</i>	5%
<i>African</i>	5%

Place of Origin	2008-2011
Continental U.S	42%
Dominican Republic	34%
Puerto Rico	6%
Ecuador	3%
Jamaica	2%
Another Country	12%

What makes us a better company?

B Impact Report

Certified since: October 2012

Summary:	Company Score	Average Score*
Governance	20	10
Workers	57	22
Community	75	32
Environment	4	9
Overall B Score	155	80

80 out of 200 is eligible for certification
 *Of all businesses that have completed the B Impact Assessment

SUNSET PARK, BROOKLYN

Neighborhood Snapshot:

Sunset Park is a diverse, densely populated, low-income neighborhood in south Brooklyn. For decades, this community has been a first destination for waves of new immigrants from around the world. Almost half - 45% - of community residents were born outside the United States, coming to New York from Puerto Rico and the Dominican Republic, Central and South America, China, the Middle East and Europe. Seventy two percent of them speak a language at home other than English. For many Sunset Park immigrants overcoming a triangle of limitations - limited literacy in English, limited education and limited work history outside of agriculture or trade - makes it very challenging to get jobs that pay a decent wage



Si Se Puede

Founder: Immigrant women

Year Founded: 2006

Members: 51

Support Organization: CFL

Description: Si Se Puede! Women's Cooperative, We Can Do It! Inc. is a women-owned, women-run business designed to create living wage jobs that will be carried out in a safe and healthy environment, and that promotes social supports and educational opportunities for its members. It has more than 1,500 customers on its client list with an annual group income of \$600,000. One of the key principles of this cooperative is that every member receives 100% of their pay. In June 2013, the Si Se Puede! Women's Cleaning Cooperative will have been in operation for seven years. Some of Si Se Puede!'s successes have included developing their own bylaws with the assistance of the Urban Justice Center, incorporating through New York State, building their client base to over 1,000 households and offices, increasing their hourly rate from an average of \$7-\$8/hour at their previous jobs, to making an average of \$20/hour at the co-op, receiving media attention, and establishing a cohesive and growing member base with little turnover.

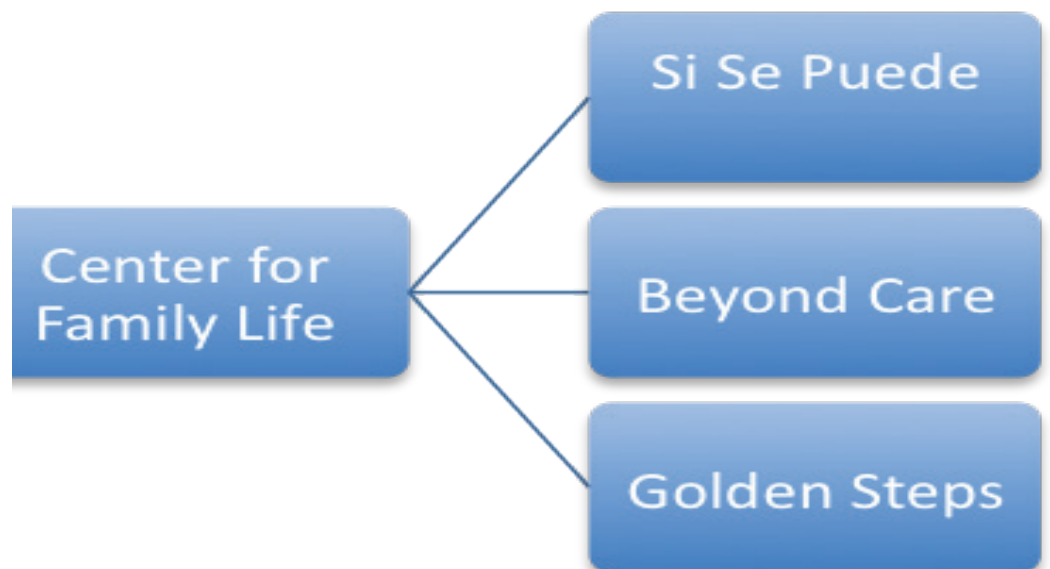


Legal Structure of Sunset Park Cooperatives

COOPERATIVE INCUBATOR

Center for Family Life

The Si Se Puede! Co-op is incorporated as a Not-for-Profit Cooperative Corporation which allows job referrals to come from the CFL office while all of the decisions, small to big, are made by the entire membership using both consensus and majority vote, depending on the time available and size/impact of the decision. This model allows for there to be flexibility for each member in the quantity of work they assume while still maintaining complete control over the operations and decisions of the business.



Beyond Care

Founder: Immigrant women

Year Founded: 2008

Members: 25

Support Organization: Center for Family Life

Description: Beyond Care, Child Care Cooperative was launched in Sunset Park, Brooklyn in June 2008. With the support of the Center for Family Life (CFL), 25 immigrant women have come together to conceptualize, plan and launch a membership cooperative business. The business plan was based on models of immigrant owned cooperatives (particularly in Long Island and Oakland, CA) that have been successful in helping immigrant men and women increase income, build internal leadership and provide mutual support. It has more than 30 cooperative members who have completed business development and nanny training through respective probationary periods.



WHAT IS BEYOND CARE?

Beyond Care is a cooperative child care service created and run by professional nannies. Established in June 2008, Beyond Care began with 19 founding members and is growing. Each of our members is committed to providing child care that goes beyond basic. Any child care provider should keep your children safe; Beyond Care members strive to educate and engage them in ways that nurture and stimulate their development.

OUR SERVICES

- Full time child care (35-40 hours/wk)
- Part time child care (3-34 hours/wk)
- Nanny Share (2 children from 2 families)
- Group child care (meetings, parties, etc.)
- Rapid child care, inc. nights and weekends
- Minimum 3 hours of child care required

917-463-0399 | www.beyondcare.coop



We believe in going beyond basic care to help your children thrive.



WASHINGTON HEIGHTS, MANHATTAN

Neighborhood Snapshot:

Since the 1980s the upper Manhattan neighborhood of Washington Heights/Inwood has been transformed by the immigration of a large Latino population of whom Dominicans have been the most prominent national group. Dominicans moved into the neighborhood in large numbers during the 1980s and 1990s and after 2000 accounted for more than 50% of the neighborhood's total population and more than 70% of all Latinos in the district.



Ecomundo

Year Founded: 2012

Members: 25

Support Organization: Northern Manhattan Improvement Center

Description: Ecomundo Cleaning is a worker cooperative that provides eco-friendly cleaning services to homes, offices and businesses and creates stable employment with a living wage for its members. After completing ten training classes and meeting on a biweekly basis for seven months during 2011 and early 2012, the twenty-eight members of the coop launched their new business on April 23, 2012.

