



GARMENT WORKER CENTER

Youth Promotores Orientation



TODAY'S TOPICS

**REVIEW OF GWC'S
WORK**

**OVERVIEW OF THE
GARMENT INDUSTRY**

YOUTH ORGANIZING

GJYLA OVERVIEW

WHAT IS YOUR RELATIONSHIP TO THE GARMENT INDUSTRY?





OUR MISSION

Garment Worker Center is a worker rights organization leading an anti-sweatshop movement to improve conditions for tens of thousands of Los Angeles garment workers. Through direct organizing, GWC develops leaders who demand enforcement of strong labor laws and accountability from factory owners, manufacturers, and fashion brands. We center immigrant workers, women of color, and their families who are impacted by exploitation in the fashion industry.

GWC HISTORY

Founded in 2001, GWC began because of the infamous Thai garment worker slave case in El Monte California. Dozens of workers had been trafficked from Thailand and imprisoned in an apartment building made into a makeshift factory. When the workers were found, there was no organization that focused on garment workers. Instead, a group of immigrant rights organizations and worker advocates came together to assist the workers. After the El Monte workers won their campaign, the coalition moved forward to establish GWC.



MEMBERSHIP

1. Collective Power
2. Popular education
3. Leadership Development





CAMPAIGNS

1. SB62
2. FABRIC Act
3. Protect LA
4. Workforce Development

Liberatory Services

1. Help meet the materials needs of workers
2. Recruit workers

Wage Clinic

1. Combat wage theft
2. Collect Industry information
3. Empower workers
4. Advocate within the LCO, BOFE & DOL

Service Referral / Emergency Aid

1. Emergency relief
2. References for other issues: immigration, housing, health, mental health, food assistance, etc.
3. Create mutual aid systems



Factory Organizing

1. Committee-Based
2. BOFE
3. Health & Safety: OSHA & Dept. of Public Health



GWC MEMBERS

- Approximately 32,000 garment workers in CA
- Majority women, majority Latine
- From Mexico and Central America
- GWC contacts = approximately 1,811 workers that live primarily in Pico Union, Westlake and South LA (8/23)
- GWC reach = approximately 5,000 workers



Garment Industry Pyramid



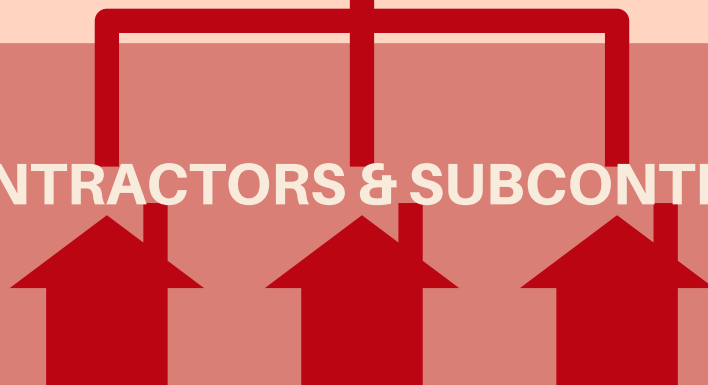
Brands at the top of the supply chain provide purchasing orders to manufacturers dictating how many garments to produce in which styles, sizes, & fabrics, and the cost per unit they will pay, and the deadline for fulfilling the order. Brands may also register as manufacturers themselves.

MANUFACTURERS



Manufacturers receive orders from the brands and may also contract for the manufacturing of garments that they or others sell wholesale, retail, or directly to consumers. They work with their network of contractors and vendors to fulfill the order.

CONTRACTORS & SUBCONTRACTORS



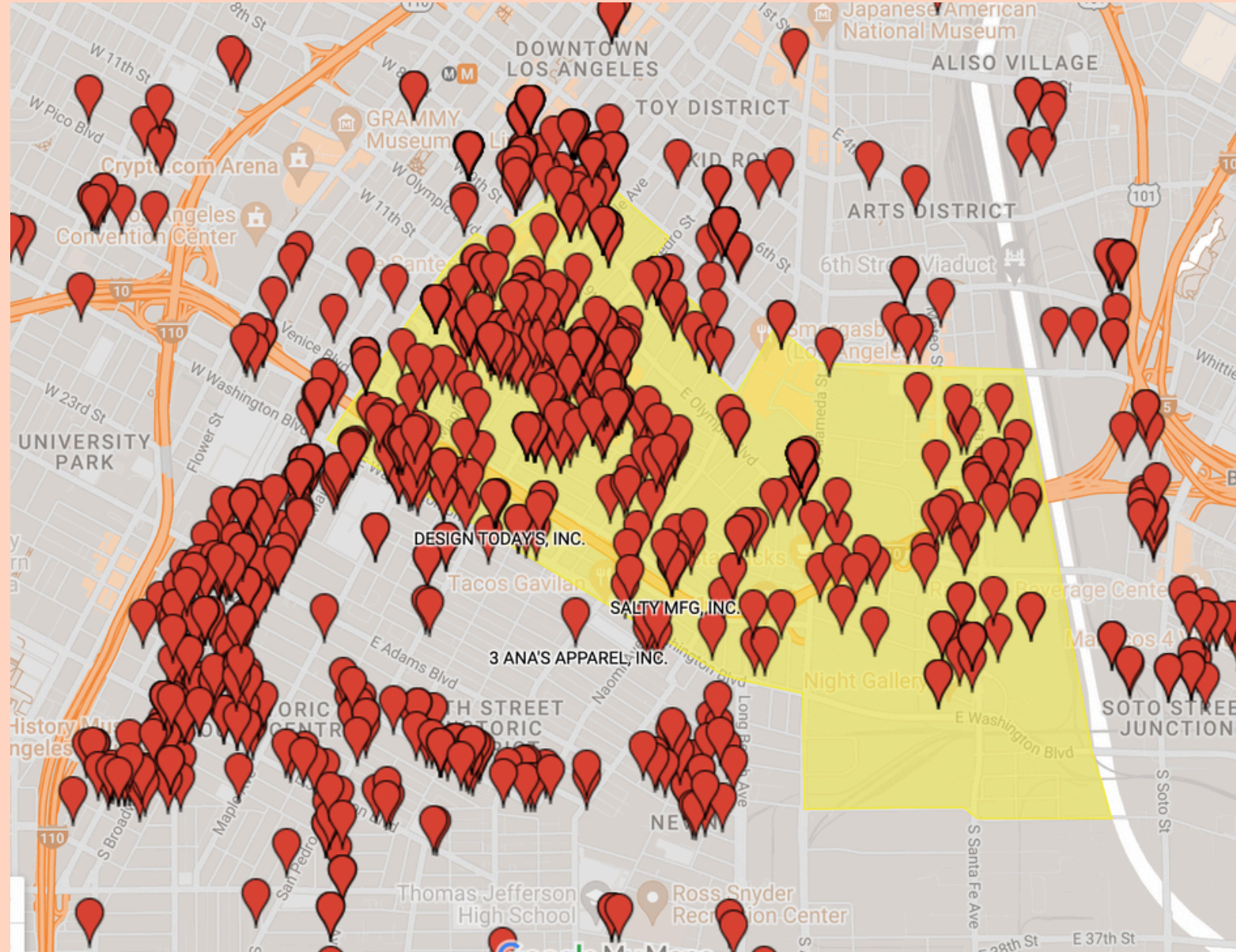
Contractors & subcontractors are the factories & facilities where the garment manufacturing operations (sewing, cutting, etc) are completed by garment workers. Orders may be split up and distributed to multiple contractors.

GARMENT WORKERS



Garment workers in California must be paid wages totaling an hourly rate not less than the prevailing minimum wage. Under SB62, they may file wage theft claims all the way up to the brand, and cannot be paid by the piece.

THE LA GARMENT INDUSTRY



LA has the biggest garment manufacturing hub in the nation with over 31,000 garment workers!

Fast fashion retailers and manufacturers rely on low-wage labor in L.A. to produce quick turn around clothes that generate millions of dollars in profit for these companies.

Fast fashion's demand for increased apparel production results in unrealistic manufacturer deadlines, which can lead to dangerous working conditions exploitative, unhealthy and dangerous workplace conditions

YOUTH ORGANIZING



Garment Justice Youth Program

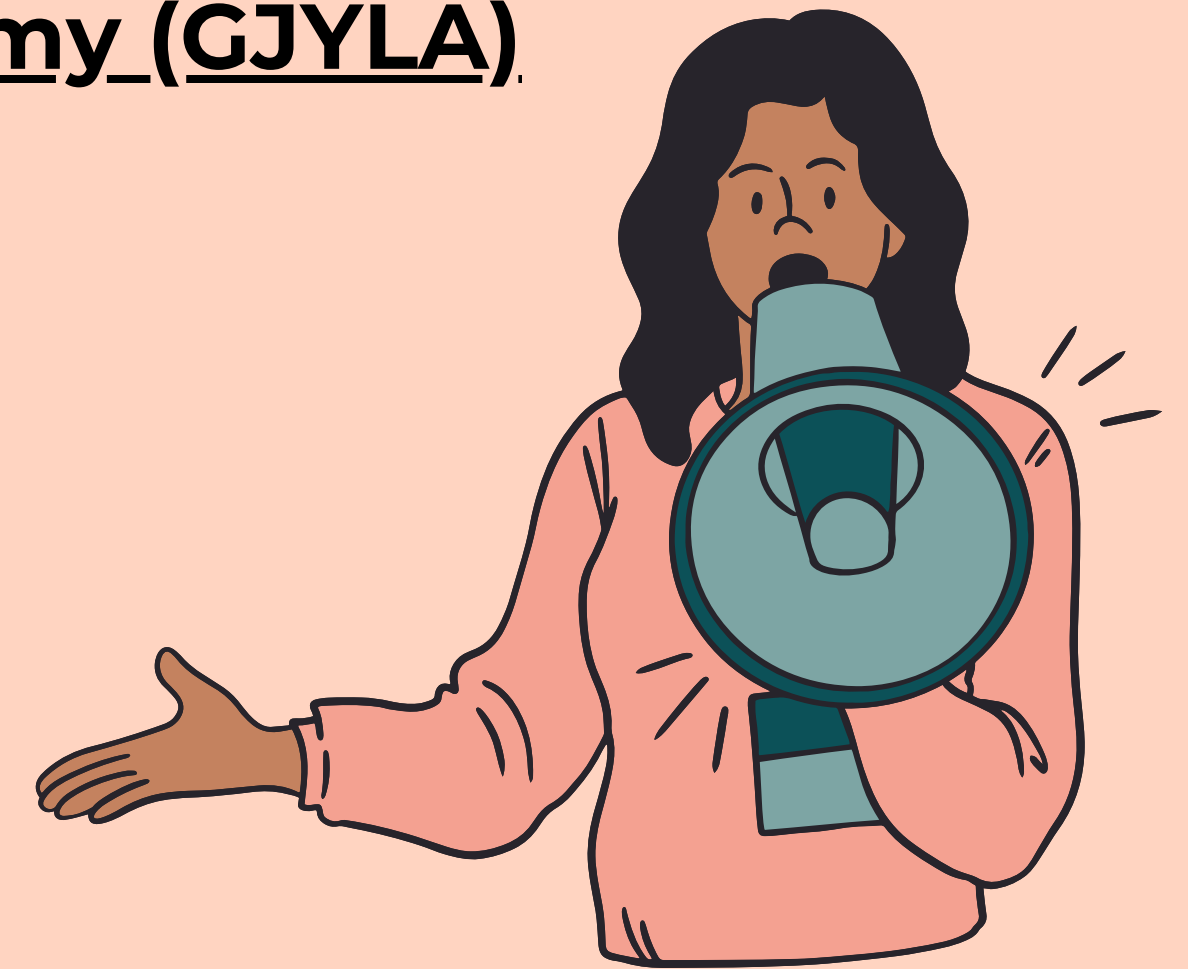
This youth program is a space for high school and college age students, especially those with family sewing for garment brands, to work to eliminate sweatshop labor, since they are most closely impacted by the fashion industry.

Youth participate in this change through participating in know your rights workshops, in leadership development, GWC's campaigns, political education, and supporting GWC's membership work.



Garment Justice Youth Leader Academy (GJYLA)

The Garment Justice Youth Leader Academy is part of GWC's Youth Promotores Program. GWC's Youth Promotores Program is funded by California's Department of Industrial Relations and is intended to develop promotor's organizing & technical skills, with a focus on in depth labor rights knowledge, political history and wage theft in the industry.



This program is for youth ages 14-22, who are interested in becoming advocates in their communities and is catered to young people who have a direct connection to the exploitation in the garment industry.



GJYLA Program Schedule



Orientation & Political Education

WEEK 1

Promotores will familiarize themselves with the Promotores Program, get to know one another, and their own history & connection to the garment industry.

Promotores Foundations

WEEK 2

Promotores will learn basic worker protections and basics of organizing.

Facilitator Trainings & Meeting Preparation

WEEK 3

Trainings will focus developing skills as facilitators and organizers. They will also work on practicing their skills

PROMOTOR SKILLS & EXPECTATIONS

All promotores will be trained and prepared to become advocates in their community.

- Conducting outreach (presentations, tabling, calls)
- Creating & facilitating educational labor rights trainings for other Garment Worker Youth. Each promotor is expected to facilitate at least 1 training in Fall 2026.
- Sharing labor rights education with peers
- Recruiting Peers to join Garment Justice Youth Program



QUESTIONS?

TIME FOR A

• BREAK •

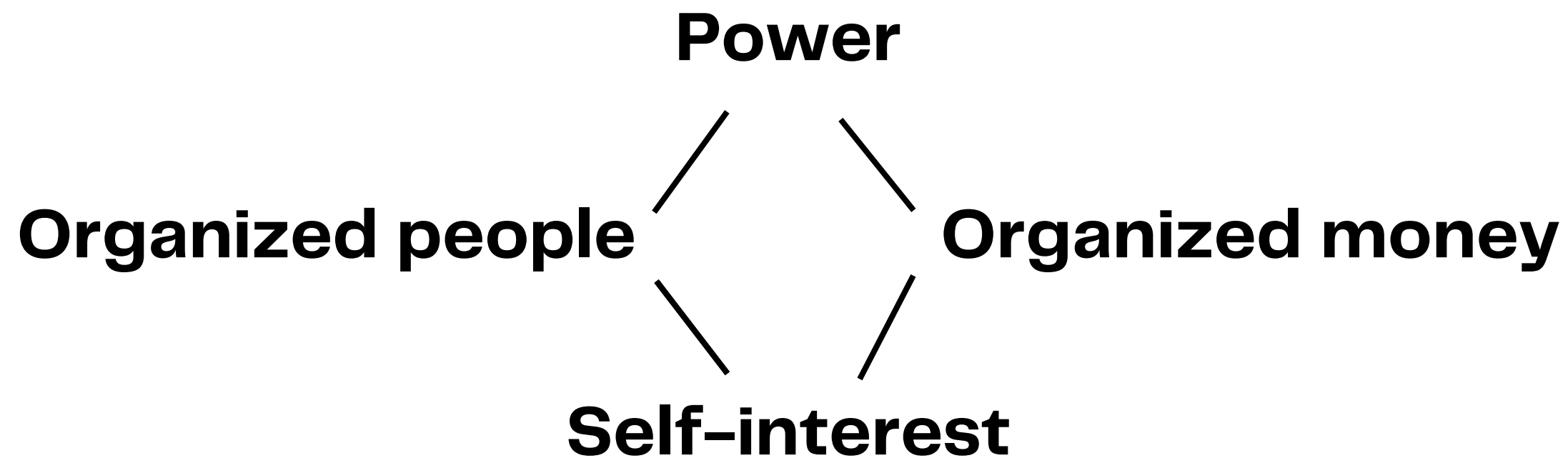
Life Story Workshop



In order to create social change and improve your world you must shift the relations of **POWER**. You shift the relations of power by having people come together to find **common interests** to work toward a goal that improves the material conditions they live in and places the power into the hands of the **PEOPLE**. This process is called community organizing.

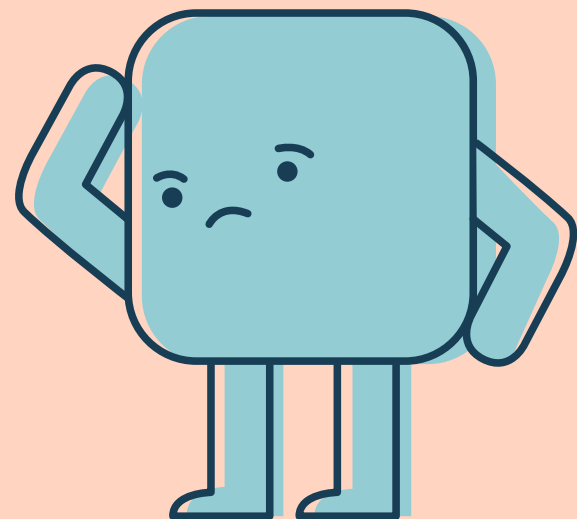


WHAT IS POWER? WHO HAS IT? WHO DOESN'T?



You need to build **relationships** based on your self-interest to get what the group wants!

You build community power by building relationships with people based on your self interest. This is **community organizing**! Community organizers develop campaigns to win our goals & shift the power!



What matters most to you?

What issues do you see people organizing around?



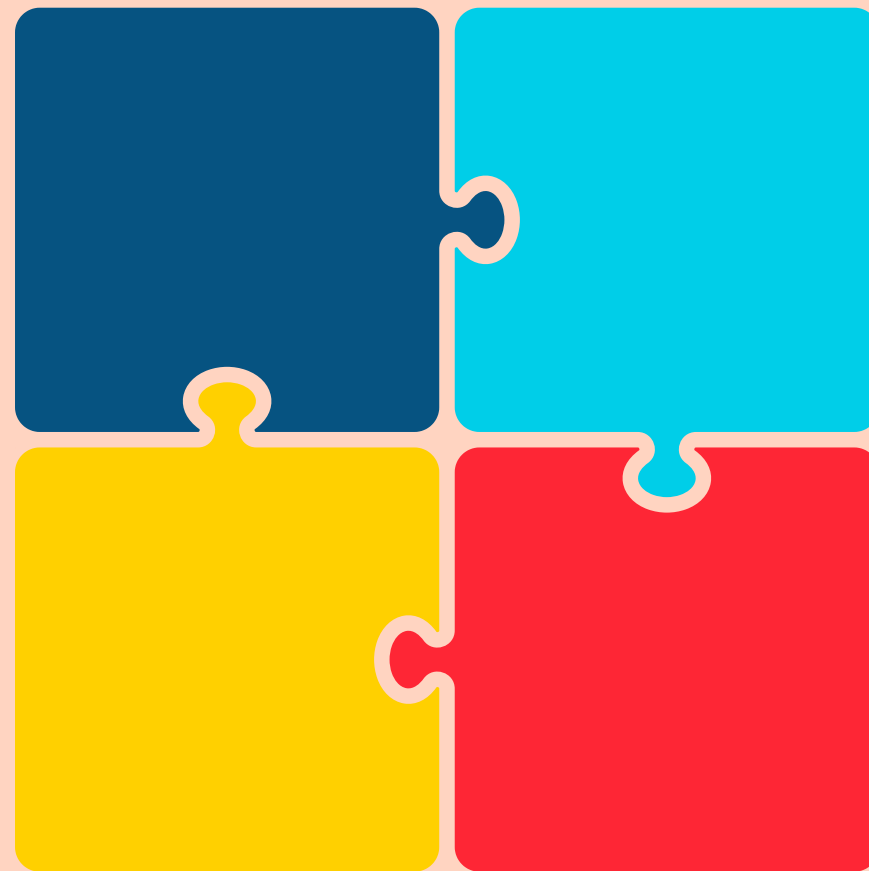
What do you want your world and future to look like?



IT'S TIME TO ASSESS YOUR OWN SELF-INTEREST!



4 Corners Game



What year was the Garment Worker Center Founded?



1995



2001

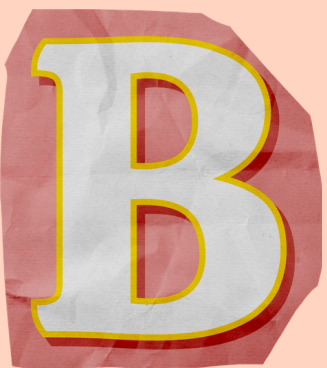


1998



2002

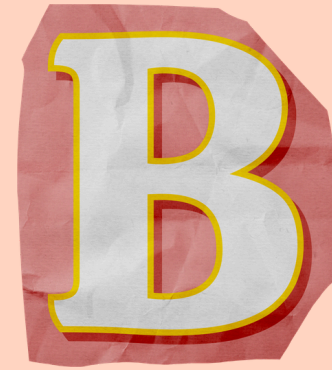
What is the correct order of the Garment Industry Pyramid?



Which strategy does GWC use to create change in the Garment Industry?



**Know Your Rights
education for garment
workers & youth**



**Wage clinic - wage
recovery and advocacy**



**Factory organizing:
Support workers to form
committees; Use BOFE
inspections and cases as
a tool.**

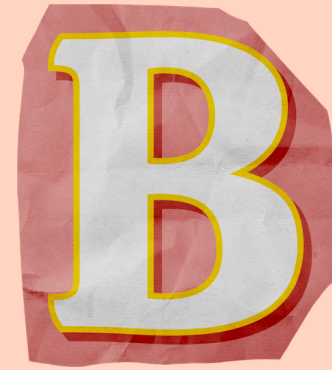


**Member support - emergency
aid and service referral**

Who funds the GWC's youth program & Youth Promotores Program?



**CA's Department of
Industrial Relations (DIR)**



**LA County's Department of
Public Health**



UCLA Labor Center



City of Los Angeles

What is essential to community organizing?



**Building your
relationships**



Education



**Identifying your self
interest**



**Identifying key
issues**

THANKYOU