Building Power in Our Industry

We as full time, union janitors have won $14.27 per hour plus benefits. Non-union contractors are still paying janitors poverty wages of $7.25 - $9.00 with no benefits to do the same work. Building owners are trying to use non-union companies to take our jobs and push us back.

“I work for $8 per hour, part-time, no insurance, cleaning Target stores. We don’t have a union, and at first we were afraid . . . But we decided to organize, and we have gone on strike three times, forced the companies to stop their intimidation, and won back pay of tens of thousands of dollars. But we won’t stop till we win the union.”
-Maristela, Carlson

Discussion Questions:

1. Do you know someone who works at a non union company? How is it different?

2. When building owners switch to non-union companies, how are our members impacted?

3. Look at the picture on the back of this sheet. Why do buildings contract with non-union janitorial and security companies? Who benefits? Who really decides if we get a raise?

4. What actions can we take to build power in our industry?

I am in the union and worked at St Jude. After we won our new contract, a non-union company took over the building. They cut the wages by a lot. Most of my co-workers now are on unemployment or on the layoff list.
-Tim, SBM
Who are the Twin cities’ biggest office building owners/leasers?

#1 Target 4.0 million square feet  
#2 Medtronic 3.9 million square feet  
#3 Wells Fargo 3.2 million square feet  
#5 US Bank 2.7 million square feet