By combining on-the-ground organizing with smart policy work, we believe will help us continue successfully organizing the South.

Hi Lauren,

Jobs to Move America was featured in an article in the American Prospect, “Has Organized Labor Finally Cracked the South?”

With the workers' recent union win at New Flyer, I'd certainly say so. But in the same week as workers overwhelmingly voted to join IUE-CWA at the New Flyer Anniston plant and won their first contract, a campaign by United Auto Workers at the Mercedes plant in the state fell short after a brutal anti-union campaign from the company.

It's clear that while momentum is growing, there's still work to be done. We'll continue to stand by UAW in their effort to get workers the unionization and life-changing raises they deserve. And at JMA, we have an innovative approach combining on-the-ground organizing with smart policy work that we believe will help us continue successfully organizing the South. Here's how it works:

1. **Fight for a community benefits agreement.** As the American Prospect article points out, the path to unionization at New Flyer started a while ago. We signed a CBA with New
Flyer in 2022 that included many pro-worker provisions—including a union neutrality agreement. Companies can get behind a CBA because it provides them with a pipeline of skilled workers thanks to the establishment of apprenticeship programs. These CBAs also are a commitment to the communities the factories and the workers are in. Once we have that CBA, we can work toward another CBA—a collective bargaining agreement.

2. **Take the time to educate and build relationships.** In a historically anti-labor part of the country where workers are used to being bound by those “golden handcuffs,” it can be hard to convey why a union is worth fighting for. But you do it by talking to people one-on-one and forming relationships—which takes time.

3. **Work in a sector that’s part of a significant societal transition.** JMA’s work focuses on the burgeoning greentech sector, which is leading the massive transition away from fossil fuels. There are also lots of newer, smaller manufacturers in this space. This sector is also seeing a raft of federal funds from the Biden Administration’s landmark legislation, and we are working to ensure those funds come with high standards for the jobs they create and the people they benefit. We can leverage these public funds to demand better jobs and opportunity for all, and these smaller companies can benefit from the good PR that comes with that. Workers win, and companies win, too.

4. **We work on the ground and in the air.** When workers were trying to organize a union at Amazon in Bessemer, Alabama, I was JMA’s Southern Director at the time and talked a lot about the *barbershop* approach of spreading the word about unions in communal institutions. At JMA, we understand the importance of local knowledge and long-term commitment. Our robust team of organizers and researchers in the South—and the other regions where we are based—are deeply rooted in their communities, and are our greatest strength. They can build relationships with workers and rally their communities to ultimately come to the table with these global companies. The South is often underestimated and misunderstood—but our folks on the ground know the region and are best equipped to fight for what we deserve.

By being strategic and taking the time to build for the long-term, we can win big in the South. Exploitation and racism have been going on for a long time in the South—so we also need to be prepared to be in the movement for the long run.

In solidarity,

**Erica Iheme**
Co-Executive Director

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**What We're Reading and Watching**

- Read more about the workers’ win at New Flyer on [Alabama Political Reporter](https://www.alpolireport.com/) and [The New Republic](https://www.thenewrepublic.com/). JMA Southern Organizer Haeden Wright also talked to [AL.com](https://www.al.com/) about the significance of the Mercedes-Benz vote: “**We in Alabama have been painted as an**
exploitable workforce. This is letting people know their work is worth more than that and they can do something about it. That's powerful,” she said.

- **Jacobin** went long about the New Flyer victory as well as JMA's “innovative labor strategy”: “JMA's work offers a useful blueprint for intervening in this manufacturing investment to improve labor standards, and it could also be applied to other sectors involved in the green transition — construction, transportation, agriculture, energy systems, etc.”

- The U.S. Labor Department sued Hyundai over use of child labor in Alabama, according to the New York Times. Our coalition in Alabama has been demanding the company **end the use of child labor** in its supply chain and negotiate a community benefits agreement.

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**Get to Know JMA in D.C. and Chicago**

![JMA team photo](https://info.jobstomoveamerica.org/webmail/968783/1385735670/f8ca25d5f193fcb2fe6a025dd180ca2c260d705e853179f9a60ed2da5aaa4e1b)

Want to learn more about our work across the country? We're hosting two upcoming events for supporters new and old to learn about what we're doing to create good jobs in the cleantech sector:

- **June 11 - D.C.:** Heather Booth, Secky Fascione, Carl Kennebrew and Cassandra McKee will host us at Democracy Partners, where where Co-Executive Directors Madeline Janis and Erica Iheme will both present about our national work and the impact of our work in the South. There will also be an opportunity for Q&A and conversation with key JMA staff.

- **July 17 - Chicago:** Deborah Philbrick will host us at the MacArthur Foundation. Madeline and Erica will also be present and will lead a Q&A and conversation.
Join us in the fight for good jobs and healthy communities.

Donate Today

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