

Letter: Joint Award on Safety

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We greatly appreciate The Chief-Leader's coverage of the June 12 NYCOSH awards ceremony ("NYCOSH Recognizes Those Who Go Extra Mile on Job Safety," (June 20 issue). As the civil-service newspaper of record, The Chief's reporting over the years on NYCOSH's tireless efforts in support of the health and safety of working New Yorkers has been extraordinarily valuable.

We would like to offer one brief correction to your recent story. The Karen Silkwood award was jointly presented to us both for our work on 9/11 health and safety issues over more than a decade and for our efforts to bring together labor and community forces in all aspects of the 9/11 health struggle.

Together, in a spirit of fairness and mutual respect, community and labor mounted a multi-faceted struggle for proper environmental cleanup, safe demolition of contaminated buildings and for the Federal World Trade Center Health Program created by the James Zadroga 9/11 Health and Compensation Act of 2010.

Working together, community and labor discovered that the ability to leverage our differences was among our greatest assets. We discovered that occupational-health issues and public-health issues were two aspects of the same struggle. We found that those closest to the ground, whether they be individual community members or rank-and-file union members, often had insights that were the key to waging winning campaigns.

The passage of the Zadroga Act in 2010 was a great victory in the face of many obstacles. In 2016, Zadroga must be reauthorized and, once again, the political climate will likely be challenging. To that challenge, labor and community will need to bring both the formidable lessons we have learned in the struggle and the spirit of fairness and mutual respect that has informed our work as labor and community allies.

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