

“Like you, I want justice for Jacoby!”

Workers honor young Ford worker who died at Detroit-area plant

10 July 2018

Autoworkers from Ohio and Indiana sent greetings to the family of Jacoby Hennings, who held a memorial picnic in suburban Detroit on Sunday to honor the young autoworker who died at the Woodhaven Stamping plant on October 20, 2017.

Among the hundreds of family members, friends and co-workers at the memorial picnic were large numbers of Fiat Chrysler, Ford, General Motors and auto parts workers. Jacoby’s parents—Shemeeka and Bernard Jr.—along with several aunts and uncles are long-time Chrysler workers.

The circumstances surrounding the death of the 21-year-old temporary part-time worker (TPT) have still not been revealed, more than eight months after his tragic death. Police and United Auto Workers (UAW) officials claim the young man pulled a gun on UAW officials during an unexplained “labor dispute” and then shot himself as police rushed him.

However, family and friends said Jacoby, affectionately known as “Coby,” was a well-loved and personable young man who had no reason to take his life. The case has generated widespread concern among autoworkers who are well aware of the oppressive conditions in the plants, particularly for TPTs who pay union dues to the UAW but have no rights.

The World Socialist Web Site *Autoworker Newsletter’s* demand for a full investigation has won widespread support from autoworkers throughout Detroit and in other states.

Below we reprint two messages sent to the Hennings family from two Fiat Chrysler workers:

Dear Friends and Fellow Workers,

I’m with you in spirit and join you in celebrating the life of one gone too soon. Jacoby’s character and values are a shining example of my hopes for all of our

futures! As a fifth generation UAW member, I stand with you in solidarity waiting for the answers you deserve. Though we never met, I would have been so proud to have taken Coby under my wing and been his sister and true friend because he deserved that. I feel so protective of all TPT’S because I recognize their unfair vulnerability. My heart is with you all and like you, I want JUSTICE FOR JACOBY!

Love and Solidarity,

Beth J.

Kokomo, Indiana

To the family of our fallen brother on the line Coby Hennings,

Words cannot express the sorrow and sadness we share with you about his loss to not only your family but the auto worker family at large. Although we cannot feel the level of pain you must feel with this tragedy, we truly know the loss of a true brother with his passing. He stood when others kneeled. He will be remembered as a hero to the working class of not only the United States but to the whole world. The autoworkers of Toledo Jeep stand beside you to not only mourn his loss but to celebrate his life. He will be remembered as a righteous son of freedom and sadly a victim of the struggle of the working class. I follow his story or, as you will, the miscarriage of justice and pray for justice for not only him but for all autoworkers who struggle for what is right. I myself was a TPT for Chrysler for 6 years and dealt with the same ungodly treatment. I know too well the struggles mentally and physically your son and our brother endured.

Your brother,

Robert R.



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