

“I’m not going to stop using my voice”: Dana auto parts worker fired for exposing deadly conditions at Detroit area plant

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Kamara Bond, a production worker at the Dana Incorporated auto parts plant in Warren, Michigan, was fired twice for reporting dangerous working conditions on the shop floor. Chemical exposures, high temperatures and poor ventilation at the Detroit area factory could have very well contributed to the death of her co-worker Anthony King in October 2025 and an unidentified janitorial contract worker in 2024.

The Fortune 500 corporation, which employs 28,000 people in 33 countries, reported \$610 million in 2025 profits on \$7.5 billion in sales revenue. In an investor call last month Dana executives boasted they achieved \$35 million in cost reductions during the first quarter and were on schedule to slash \$325 million as part of its Dana 2030 plan.

Dana workers in Warren produce axle, driveshaft, suspension and steering components for some of the most profitable vehicles sold by General Motors, Ford and Stellantis. Far from being protected by United Auto Workers Local 155, workers say union officials have allowed management to sacrifice their health and safety for profit.

Kamara reached out to the *World Socialist Web Site* to share her story and encourage her coworkers to come forward with information on Anthony King’s death. She said workers had to prepare for a fight when the current UAW agreement expires on May 22.

Dangerous heat, oil spills in the plant

Kamara began working at the Dana plant in April 2022. She was diagnosed with high blood pressure and became concerned about unbearable temperatures inside the plant.

“My first OSHA complaint was in June of 2024. I complained about inhumane temperatures. The fans provided no real air circulation in that huge building. There were oil spills on the floor and management was putting a band-aid on the problem. The cleaning crew was hand-mopping these big spills and using kitty litter to clean it. At some point [Dana] didn’t pay their suppliers, so they took all our gloves out of the machines and started trying to make us wear used PPE. That’s when I filed a complaint.”

She continued:

“I was told somebody died in the lunchroom. One of the janitorial workers had his head down. Security thought he was drunk or something. Instead of calling an ambulance, they called his boss. His boss apparently came, took him out of our lunchroom, and he died. We heard he had a brain aneurysm. Some people said he was already gone before they took him out.”

That was when Kamara began calling Michigan Occupational Safety

and Health Administration (MIOSHA). She also learned from investigators that a homicide had taken place in the plant parking lot but workers were not informed. “I was like, who am I working for?” she said.

After she filed a report, she began facing harassment from supervisors who would write her up for violating the dress code, even though other workers wore less clothing because of the oppressive heat but did not get written up. In July 2024, in the weeks following her June OSHA complaint, Kamara received two write-ups in rapid succession. The stated reason: her clothing.

“I’d already been complaining to my supervisor: you’re letting the men do this, but not me. I filed charges with the EEOC (Equal Employment Opportunity Commission) and NLRB (National Labor Relations Board) on June 13. My OSHA complaint was June 24. The Civil Rights Division complaint was July 16, just two days before my termination.”

The write-up that precipitated her firing was dated by HR as received on July 16, but the supposed incident it documented did not occur until July 17. “They had already been working with the union to get rid of me,” she said.

On July 17, 2024, Kamara’s supervisor approached her on the floor without a union representative and ordered her to roll her pant legs down. She complied. But she then went to the area manager to demand an end to what she described as targeted harassment.

“It was a confrontation on the floor. He accused me of calling him the N-word,” Kamara, who is African American, said. “He made up all these false allegations, that I was threatening him. They walked me out with security.”

The following day, July 18, she received a call that she was fired for insubordination. She filed additional charges with the NLRB and OSHA, and began fighting for reinstatement through the union. The fight took six months. She was out of work from July 18, 2024 to February 25, 2025.

Back at work: same conditions, no training, phosphate in the air

When Kamara returned in February 2025 she was placed in a new area of the plant alongside a coworker named Anthony King. She was assigned to a machine Anthony had been running and told she would receive formal training, which never came.

“I waited six weeks before my union filed a grievance, and eight weeks before I started complaining loudly. I had been showing up to work every day but nobody had signed off on my training. In June, they finally tried to see what I knew on the machine. I refused to run it. I’d been there months and no one had certified me.”

Beyond the lack of certification, Kamara discovered that Anthony himself had never been properly trained. When she raised this with management, they could not produce documentation showing he was qualified to train anyone else. The implications went beyond paperwork.

“If you don’t know what you’re doing on these machines, you could push the wrong button, have the wrong robot going the wrong way, crush a part, or crush yourself. If you’ve never been shown how to stop or start the machine, you should at least know what the E-stop button is. According to their own rules, you’re not even supposed to be running a machine unless you’re trained on the matrix.”

The parts in Area 3 came coated in phosphate that drifted through the air. Workers were not given proper PPE, like masks or respirators, and no one told Kamara, Anthony, or any of the other workers that the chemical should not be inhaled.

“The forklift drivers would come through and say, ‘You’re supposed to be wearing a mask.’ I’m like, they didn’t give us masks! Anthony wouldn’t dust himself off. He would wear the phosphate on his shirt all day. He was working two jobs, midnights at Dana, then mornings at Kroger. That man was in good health. But he was breathing that stuff in every day for a year.”

Chronic phosphate inhalation in an industrial setting without proper PPE is a well-established occupational health hazard. The risks are severe and include but are not limited to chemical pneumonitis, chronic bronchitis, and progressive lung fibrosis, as the particles accumulate in lung tissue and trigger sustained inflammatory responses. Some phosphating processes also release phosphine gas as a byproduct, which is acutely toxic even at low concentrations and can cause pulmonary edema, cardiovascular stress, and neurological effects.

UAW buried grievances, collaborated with management

Throughout this period, Kamara’s union rep “was turning in the write-ups but not turning in my side of the story. The grievances he submitted on my behalf had no HR stamp, meaning they were never actually filed. He admitted it. That’s why the regional union leadership had to step in and take over my cases. The UAW rep resigned in July of 2025, after just one year in the position, because he had botched so many grievances.”

The union ultimately combined her multiple grievances into a single case, in violation of her rights and the contract. She eventually accepted a paltry settlement offer that did not make her whole for six months of lost wages.

On June 3, 2025, another oil spill occurred in Area 3. Kamara immediately requested to be moved to a safe environment. Management made her wait until July 7. She was given a three-day suspension for refusing to operate her machine.

On July 22, the second day of her suspension, she had a scheduled meeting with a MIOSHA investigator, who then interviewed 11 workers, including Anthony King, about conditions at the plant through September of 2025.

On August 1, Kamara was called to run a machine she had not operated since 2024. When she arrived, she found the spindle loader wrapped in tape in what she described as a makeshift repair that suggested the machine had not been properly fixed.

“I told my supervisor: I think the company is trying to set me up. He sent me to the conference room. Management and the union were in one room. Then the head of HR came into the room and started questioning me without my union present. I told him to talk to my union. He refused. He started yelling at me to sit down like I’m a dog. My union rep grabbed me because I was saying, ‘This is a hostile work environment, I’m

leaving.’ My rep said if I left he couldn’t help me.”

Kamara was accused of attacking her supervisor and received a termination notice on August 7.

Death of Anthony King

Kamara found out about Anthony’s death by chance, during a phone call in late December 2025 with a former coworker.

“I called a coworker during the Christmas period, just to catch up. I asked how Anthony was doing. He said: ‘Anthony’s dead. He died in October.’ It threw my whole Christmas off. I felt survivors’ remorse. I felt like I had abandoned him when I left. If I had been there, at least I would have called 911.”

Kamara pieced together details from former coworkers and found out that another worker walking past Anthony’s station found him in extreme distress on the ground. Someone called an ambulance and he was transported to a nearby hospital. According to some accounts, Anthony was unresponsive by the time the ambulance left the Dana premises. A union head of safety reportedly visited the hospital that night and was apparently fired.

Some workers alleged that the company tried to clock Anthony out to make it appear as though he had a medical incident off-shift. When workers approached the UAW about it, they were told they weren’t aware.

“Anthony was such a hard worker. I kept telling him: we get paid by the hour, Anthony, not by the parts. Don’t kill yourself over this. He would push and push. I feel like I owe Anthony justice because that could have been me. It could be any one of us.”

Kamara’s case is not an isolated incident. “They knew if they fired me, everyone in the building would have to bow down to them. That’s how it works. Get rid of the person who speaks up, and the rest will fall in line. I’ve been fired from two different companies, both times after filing safety complaints. I’m not going to stop using my voice. That’s what I was given a voice for.”

With Dana’s contract expiring on May 22, Kamara has a direct message for workers at the Warren plant, in Toledo, Ohio and at Dana facilities in all 33 countries where the company operates.

“Don’t be afraid to speak up. Retaliation is real, and I know companies do it. That’s why people don’t come forward. But use your voice. I’m trying to set a precedent. Nobody at any Dana plant, in any country, should face discrimination or retaliation for raising safety concerns.”

Kamara encouraged workers to begin making plans for strike action now, and to link up with other autoworkers in the Big Three and at other Dana facilities worldwide. “If the contract is up and it’s not what workers are looking for, they should walk out. All shifts. Start making picket signs now. Don’t wait until the last minute. If the union won’t lead it, let the workers do it themselves.”

If you are a Dana worker and want to speak out about the death of Anthony King, conditions in the plant, the upcoming contract expiration, or want info on forming a rank-and-file committee, fill out the form below to get in touch. We will protect your anonymity.



To contact the WSWs and the Socialist Equality Party visit:

wsws.org/contact