

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Dec 1, 2021

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Tech Workers at Big Cartel Request Voluntary Recognition of Their Union

Salt Lake City, Utah (Dec. 1, 2021) - Employees at the e-commerce company Big Cartel requested from their employer today voluntary recognition of their union with the Office and Professional Employees International Union (OPEIU) Local Union 1010.

A supermajority of workers at the e-commerce platform -- including product developers, engineers, designers, support, marketing and operations staff -- signed union authorization cards and have publicly signed onto a voluntary recognition letter delivered to Matt Wigham and Eric Turner, co-founders of the company.

In their letter requesting voluntary recognition, Big Cartel employees said "forming a union will promote transparency and collaboration, ensure equity, increase staff well-being and retention, and add to the long list of reasons we choose to work at Big Cartel."

Citing the company's own stated values -- embrace change, empower others, drive bravery and people over profit -- the Big Cartel Workers Union intends to use the collective bargaining process to codify and apply those values to their own workplace. Like many tech workers, workers at Big Cartel are unionizing to improve transparency inside the company's decision-making processes, to guarantee equitable pay and benefits along racial and gender lines, and to ensure workplace policies are fairly enforced and clearly documented.

"Our company is in a moment of transition, and as workers, we deserve a voice in how we move forward together," says Lauren Fazah, who has been at Big Cartel for 4 years. "By unionizing, we're showing our leadership that we're strong together, that we workers have collective power, and we want to use that to benefit each other and the company as a whole."

"With the pandemic, workers have had time to think about what role work plays in their life. We've seen people across tech considering their priorities and leaving when they aren't met," says Andrew Shaw, a worker at Big Cartel. Shaw continues, "We don't want that to happen at Big Cartel. We value our colleagues, and we want this to be a place people choose to stay."

Their union is affiliated with OPEIU's Tech Workers Local Union 1010 -- a first-of-its-kind local union built by and for workers in the burgeoning tech sector.

"Outside of our company," reads the voluntary recognition request, "we're seeing waves of change as unions form across the tech industry, including our OPEIU Local 1010 associates at Kickstarter and Code for America. We want to be a part of this movement that offers employees a say in how they work and how they are valued at work."

The union has asked for voluntary recognition by Monday, Dec. 6, and a good-faith start to first contract negotiations shortly thereafter. If recognition is denied or ignored, the union is prepared to file for an election with the National Labor Relations Board.

ABOUT OPEIU

The Office and Professional Employees International Union (OPEIU), AFL-CIO, represents more than 103,000 working people throughout the United States, Puerto Rico and Canada. Representing employees in nonprofit organizations, technology, credit unions, hospitals, insurance agencies, colleges and universities, hotels, administrative offices and more, OPEIU is committed to advancing economic justice for working people no matter their occupation. Professional organizations and guilds affiliated with OPEIU are a diverse group that includes podiatrists, registered nurses, teachers, Minor League Baseball umpires and helicopter pilots. OPEIU is an affiliate of the 12.5 million-member strong AFL-CIO.

ABOUT OPEIU'S TECH WORKERS UNION LOCAL 1010

OPEIU's Tech Workers Union Local 1010 is organizing workers for a better future through collective bargaining in their own workplaces and beyond. Local 1010 is a local union within OPEIU created for and run by tech workers. Local 1010 is formed around a core of engineers, community support agents, designers, trust and safety analysts, product managers, salespeople, operations specialists, finance administrators and every other person that makes tech companies run.