

LABOR RESEARCH & ACTION NETWORK

C O N F E R E N C E

JUNE 24-25, 2016

**DePaul University
Chicago, IL**

Hosted by the DePaul University Labor Education Center

www.lranetwork.org

LRAN is a project of the Jobs With Justice Education Fund.

FRIDAY, JUNE 24, 2016

8:30 a.m. **REGISTRATION AND CONTINENTAL BREAKFAST** *DePaul Center 8005*
DePaul University Downtown Loop Campus
1 East Jackson Boulevard, Chicago, IL

9:15 a.m. **WELCOME**
• **Bob Breving**, DePaul University Labor Education Center
• **Jessica Cook**, University of Illinois Chicago and LRA
• **Elce Redmond**, Chicago Jobs With Justice

9:30 - 11 a.m. **OPENING PLENARY: CREATING A MOVEMENT FOR THE PUBLIC GOOD**
• **Kenneth Franklin**, President, Amalgamated Transit Union Local 308
• **Karen Lewis**, President, Chicago Teachers Union
• **Roberta Lynch**, Executive Director, AFSCME Council 31
• Moderator: **Jack Metzgar**, Professor of Humanities, Roosevelt University

11:15 a.m. -
12:45 p.m. **WORKSHOP SERIES 1**

1.1 A DAY'S WORK DOCUMENTARY FILM SCREENING *DePaul Center 8010*

Film description: 90 minutes before he was killed on his first day of work as a temporary employee, 21-year-old Day Davis texted a picture of himself to his girlfriend, excited for their future. Now Day's sister, 17-year-old Antonia, searches for answers. An investigation reveals the troubling issues that led to Day's death and how the \$100 billion temporary staffing industry is putting millions of American workers at risk. The film is screening with leading labor, occupational safety, and government agencies across the country. Centered on research conducted by ProPublica that finds a hidden epidemic of injury and death on the job, the film has proven to be an education and emotional tool for the labor community.

• **Dave DeSario**, Executive Producer of A Day's Work (www.TempFilm.com), Founding Member of TemporaryEmployees.org

1.2 ORGANIZING LOW WAGE WORKERS *DePaul Center 8009*

Organizing low wage workers presents an amalgam of challenges. Diversity issues dealing with race, ethnicity, and gender intersect to complicate building the relationships between and among workers and union representatives necessary for organizing disparate identities into a cohesive group. Overlain with language and cultural differences between racial and ethnic populations, fear of reprimand or dismissal, and uncertainty about the legality of union activities within the workplace, many low wages workers are hesitant to engage in organizing activities at all. The power dynamics

present in organizing drives, which are further complicated by laws and policies dictating processes which disfavor organizing, suggest exploring new and different organizational strategies. This panel explores organizing a variety of low wage workers from various industries and regions.

- **Gerrie Casey**, Assistant Professor, Indiana University, South Bend
- **Joe Varga**, Associate Professor, Indiana University, Bloomington
- **Marquita Walker**, Associate Professor, Indiana University - Purdue University Indianapolis

1.3 TRANSFORMING THE UNIVERSITY: CASE STUDIES IN PRO-LABOR ACCOUNTABILITY AND INSTITUTION BUILDING

DePaul Center 8014

This panel examines the university as contested space and details efforts to hold institutions of higher education accountable to the needs of working people both in the local and global arena. Examined as case studies, UC Irvine and the University of Notre Dame provide new perspectives on accountability and institution building. Established in 2013, the UC Irvine Community & Labor Project provides critical research and education with direct input from community and labor partners in its mission to build the first new Labor Center in the University of California system in over fifty years. All the more remarkable is the center's location in California's Orange County, a region known for its conservative atmosphere and strong anti-union sentiment. Halfway across the country, the University of Notre Dame has long boasted of possessing the country's strongest licensing code of conduct, barring production from countries not recognizing workers' legal right to freedom of association. However, recent attempts to develop alternative measures of "worker participation" through a controversial "China pilot project" have raised questions about not only the university's stated commitment to Catholic Social Teaching, but also the understanding of unions in the contemporary American imagination. This panel explores the challenges of instituting lasting impactful change in support of labor rights at the university, as well as the strategies employed to address those challenges.

- **Nicholas F. Centino**, UCLA Labor Center, UC Irvine Community & Labor Project
- **Dan Graff**, University of Notre Dame Higgins Labor Program
- **Ana Luz Gonzalez**, UC Irvine School of Law and Community & Labor Project
- **Moderator: Mac-Z Zurawski**, Chicago State University and Laborers Local 1001

1.4 THE PROMISE OF LABOR MOVEMENT AND WORKER COOPERATIVE PARTNERSHIPS: FROM ENTERPRISE DEVELOPMENT TO POLICY AND CAMPAIGN ALIGNMENT

DePaul Center 8002

Labor organizations are looking at alternative strategies to ensure worker involvement in the workplace. One of these strategies is building and supporting worker co-ops, in which workers are owners and managers as well as labor. In the first part of the session, we'll cover what worker co-ops are and how labor can help workers create new worker co-ops. In the second part of the session we'll look at several current union coop partnerships and how they bring communities together to create a sustainable

economy. In the final portion of the session we'll explore how the labor movement and the cooperative movement can go beyond the walls of the workplace and coordinate together on politics, policy and grassroots campaigns. Relevant examples of these larger movement ties will be discussed, as well as potential future connections on issues like secure retirement, immigrant rights, and wage and workplace standards among others.

- **Phil Amadon**, Founder of the Cincinnati Union Cooperative Initiative
- **Mark Fick**, Director of Lending, Shared Capital Cooperative
- **Neil Gladstein**, Director of Strategic Resources, International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers
- **Charity Schmidt**, Organizer, Madison South Central Federation of Labor and Madison Cooperative Development Collaborative
- Moderator: **Sheena Foster**, Regional Organizer, National Community Reinvestment Coalition

12:45 - 1:15 p.m. **BOXED LUNCH**

1:15 - 2:45 p.m. **PLENARY SESSION: A FIGHT FOR RACIAL JUSTICE IS A FIGHT FOR ECONOMIC JUSTICE** *DePaul Center 8005*

- **Tefere Gebre**, Executive Vice President, AFL-CIO
- **Steven Pitts**, Associate Chair, UC Berkeley Labor Center
- **Tania Unzueta**, Organizer, Mijente
- Moderator: **Richard Wallace**, Organizer, Workers Center for Racial Justice

3 - 4:30 p.m. **WORKSHOP SERIES 2**

2.1 APPRENTICESHIPS IN THE BUILDING TRADES AND HEALTH CARE: THE PROMISE AND CHALLENGE OF REMAKING THE MODEL FOR STRONGER UNIONS *DePaul Center 8010*

For advocates seeking to expand opportunity for women and people of color, apprenticeship seems a model with real potential. Apprenticeship is also gaining federal attention and investment, with the goal of building apprenticeship beyond construction. This trend raises a host of questions about apprenticeships, exclusion, diversity, and collective power for working people. This panel will draw from the experiences of Boston's Policy Group on Tradeswomen's Issues, a multi-stakeholder collaboration, and community efforts in Minneapolis to diversify the trades, including the important role of apprenticeships. Presenters will also discuss the growing experience in health care apprenticeship SEIU-affiliated Healthcare Career Advancement Project (H-CAP), which connects with more than 900 employers and half a million workers. Panelists will consider the apprenticeship model, its strengths and limitations, and the essential contributions of unions to both the model and its evolution. This workshop will also consider the role of researchers from academia and nonprofit organizations in integrating theory, documenting lessons learned, and advocating for expanded power and opportunities for everyone.

- **Daniel Bustillo**, Director, Healthcare Career Advancement Program (H-CAP)
 - **Laura Dresser**, Associate Director, Center On Wisconsin Strategy, UW Madison
 - **Erin Johansson**, Researcher Director, Jobs With Justice Education Fund
 - **Susan Moir**, Director of Research for Labor Resource Center, University of Massachusetts Boston
-

2.2 A RESEARCH SKILL-SHARE: ACTIONABLE INTELLIGENCE FOR STRATEGIC CAMPAIGNS

DePaul Center 8014

This workshop will train organizers to think like researchers, and train researchers and academics to think like organizers. Chicago organizers and researchers have used creative research strategies to further campaigns for justice. We will cover the following research tactics: 1) How to FOIA the police department to release videos of officer involved shootings. 2) How research is used in strategic campaigns - and how a small community organization forced the University of Chicago to open a Level 1 Trauma Center on the South side. 3) Research on safe staffing in special education at the Chicago Public Schools that reversed layoffs of special education teachers and aides.

- **Freddy Martinez**, Lucy Parsons Labs
 - **Alex Goldenberg**, Southside Together Organizing for Power
 - **Sarah Hains**, Chicago Teachers Union
 - **Dan Lichtenstein-Boris**, SEIU Local 73
-

2.3 WHEN RESEARCH AND TEACHING IS YOUR GIG: CONTINGENT FACULTY ORGANIZING IN CHICAGO

DePaul Center 8002

One of the major barriers to organizing faculty unions is that many academics do not view a “life of the mind” as labor. This panel will discuss, first-hand, the recent organizing efforts of adjunct and non-tenure track faculty at private universities and colleges in Chicago, including recent victories at the University of Chicago and Loyola University as well as on-going organizing campaigns at Northwestern, DePaul, and the Illinois Institute of Technology. What will be unique about this panel is that discussants will focus on the convergence and divergence of academic research and scholarship with strategic campaign research and organizing in academic settings. In addition to discussing the gig economy of higher education and the ins-and-outs of faculty organizing campaigns, panelists will talk about how they view their academic training in terms of both helping and hindering organizing efforts at their respective institutions and within their departments/disciplines.

- **Alyson Paige Warren**, Adjunct Instructor, Columbia College Chicago and Loyola University Chicago
 - **Barbara Tilley**, Visiting Assistant Professor, DePaul University
 - **David Mihalyfy**, Lecturer, School of the Art Institute of Chicago
 - Moderator: **Matt Hoffmann**, Adjunct Instructor, Illinois Institute of Technology and SEIU Local 73
-

2.4 GETTING OUR MONEY BACK FROM WALL STREET

DePaul Center 8009

Bankers and billionaires have systematically been defunding the public sector over the last 35 years, and as a result our state and local governments have been forced to take out record levels of debt. In this session, we discuss how we can go on offense in budget and contract fights by holding Wall Street accountable for contributing to the budget crises facing our cities, states, and school districts. We will lay out a framework for thinking about predatory municipal finance and focus on specific examples of deals that are problematic, like toxic swaps, capital appreciation bonds, and police brutality bonds. We will discuss how campaigns can use these issues to fight for revenue, drawing on particular examples of work in places like Chicago, Los Angeles, and Puerto Rico.

- **Saqib Bhatti**, ReFund America Project
- **Carol Meyers**, Service Employees International Union
- **Carrie Sloan**, ReFund America Project

5 - 7 p.m.

RECEPTION

All conference attendees are welcome.

Exchequer Restaurant & Pub
226 S Wabash Ave, Chicago, IL 60604
Walking distance from DePaul

SATURDAY, JUNE 25, 2016

8:30 a.m. -
9:30 a.m.

BREAKFAST

DePaul Center 8005

9:30 - 11 a.m.

PLENARY SESSION: ORGANIZING FOR A NEW CHICAGO

DePaul Center 8005

- **David Adenekan**, Cab Drivers United
- **LaDonna DeGolyer**, The Nabisco 600
- **Omari Nyamweya**, CAN TV
- **Anna Wood**, Responsible Business Act
- Moderator: **Thomas Geoghegan**, Author of *Only One Thing Can Save Us*

11:15 a.m. -
12:45 p.m.

WORKSHOP SERIES 3

3.1 I DO HAVE RIGHTS: THE FIGHT FOR SAFE WORKING CONDITIONS

DePaul Center 8009

In Metropolitan Chicago, close to 300,000 workers labor in low-paying, hazardous light manufacturing and warehousing jobs through temporary staffing agencies. Begun in 2014, a collaboration between two worker centers representing temp workers (Chicago Workers Collaborative and Warehouse Workers for Justice), and research partners at the University of Illinois at Chicago, School of Public Health (UIC SPH) emerged. Panelists will describe how temp workers increased their capacity to map out hazardous worksites in Chicago's 5-county region, raised temp workers' awareness of their safety rights, and tested OSHA's Temporary Worker Initiative. In collaboration with UIC SPH students and staff, the worker centers have expanded their data base of working conditions and employment abuses in the Temporary Staffing Industry, built a corps of temp worker leaders, supported temp workers in taking action to address unsafe conditions, and used workplace safety as an organizing tool to grow their organizations.

- **Tim Bell**, Organizing Director, Chicago Workers Collaborative
- **Sean Fulkerson**, Warehouse Workers for Justice Lead Organizer
- **Tessa Bonney**, University of Illinois Chicago School of Public Health

3.2 BEYOND THE "WIN": THE CHALLENGE OF ENFORCING STANDARDS AND BUILDING, CONSOLIDATING AND MOBILIZING WORKER POWER FOR ALT-LABOR ORGANIZING

DePaul Center 8002

While encouraging examples of Alt-Labor victories abound—from Ban-the-Box legislation, to wage theft victories, to the formation of new union locals among workers excluded from traditional labor protections—how are organizations translating these wins into more permanent power for workers? Much attention has been devoted to organizing strategies and tactics of traditional unions vs. new forms of organization and social movements, but what about the other core functions of unions—representation, mobilization and contract enforcement? Participants will talk about challenges and opportunities in reimagining and adapting traditional steward structures, using legal and regulatory tools to enforce organizing victories and balancing the demands of new organizing with maintaining and consolidating ground.

- **Ezz Abdelmajid**, Cab Drivers United, AFSCME Local 2500
 - **David Bensman**, Rutgers University
 - **Mark Meinster**, Warehouse Workers for Justice
 - **Nataki Rhodes**, Restaurant Opportunities Center
 - Moderator: **Meg Lewis**, AFSCME Council 31
-

3.3 SECTION 7 RIGHTS OF UNORGANIZED WORKERS

DePaul Center 8014

In the last decade, while traditional unions have been fighting hard to hold on to what they have achieved, new forms of worker organization, such as “Fight for 15,” workers centers, and other workers’ rights groups, have flourished. The AFL-CIO has worked to build relationships with the workers center movement, but much more remains to be done.

This panel focuses on several organizing campaigns in Chicago and Los Angeles that illustrate how workers centers can use the NLRA not only to give workers another way to challenge unlawful retaliation, but also to give an extra layer of protection for their workplace activities. Leone Bicchieri of the Chicago Workers Collaborative and Alvar Ayala of the Workers’ Law Office, P.C. will cover the multi-front battle that the CWC has been fighting with staffing agencies while Henry Willis will cover similar campaigns in Southern California and the project to recruit labor lawyers for this work.

- **Alvar Ayala**, Workers Law Office, P.C.
 - **Leone Bicchieri**, Chicago Workers Collaborative
 - **Yolanda Carrillo**, Raise The Floor Alliance
 - **Henry Willis**, National Lawyers Guild
-

3.4 THE IMPACT OF PRIVATIZATION ON THE PUBLIC GOOD

DePaul Center 8010

Large corporations and their ideological allies have targeted the \$6 trillion in annual local, state and federal public spending. Corrections, immigrant detention and public education alone account for nearly a trillion dollars each year. And each of them is experiencing a growth of privatized services and corporate influence on these important public functions. The panel will discuss privatization trends in these areas, specific impacts on the public good such as increased segregation, public policy and further disinvestment in public services, and strategies for fighting back.

- **Donald Cohen**, In The Public Interest
 - **Elizabeth Parisian**, Hedgeclippers
 - **Julie Serfass**, American Federation Teachers
-

12:45 - 2 p.m.

LUNCH AND LRAN MEMBERSHIP MEETING

DePaul Center 8005

Open to all conference attendees

2 - 3:30 p.m. **WORKSHOP PANELS 4**

4.1 CHANGING MINDS, BUILDING SOLIDARITY

DePaul Center 8002

Our educational programs focus mainly on labor-management relations: collective bargaining, grievance handling, arbitration and corporate research. Even our organizing classes tend to zero in on skill-based components. These are, of course, critical, but we could be integrating personal experiences with the economic/historical & political context in ways that question the status quo.

A transformational methodology can be used whether teaching grievance handling or history. The purpose of this workshop is to share efforts a few of us have made to integrate information with transformation, with the goal of enabling workers who see themselves as victims to recognize their potential as agents of change and activist leaders. Our examples include the Health & Safety training of the USW, an update on Brazilian education programs as part of their social movements, a Labor Studies program in NW Indiana that produced communities of activists, the Greenhouse Fellowship with minority high school graduates in East Chicago, and programs on racism.

- **Latisa Kindred**, Chicago Women in the Trades
- **Ruth Needleman**, Professor Emerita, Indiana University Labor Studies
- **Asif Wilson**, Director of Academic Support Services, Harold Washington College

4.2 TEMP LAB: THINKING BIG ABOUT ORGANIZING TEMP WORKERS

DePaul Center 8010

At least 2.9 million Americans work for staffing firms – which is more than the number of ALL of the Walmart workers in the world. Businesses that used to employ thousands are turning to agencies to provide many – and sometimes a majority – of their workers. It's not far off to imagine a future where most companies are no longer in the business of employing people. In some industries, the shift has already begun. In this discussion, campaigners will be competing to win an (imaginary) \$2 million to develop a first step toward a comprehensive solution toward organizing temporary workers. It's up to you as the audience to vote on and discuss who should win the temp lab grant.

- **Alma Castro**, Chicago Workers Collaborative
- **George Gonos**, Florida International University Center for Labor Research and Studies
- **Alfred Marshall**, STAND with Dignity
- Moderator: **Chris Schwartz**, United Auto Workers

4.3 LRAN NEW SCHOLARS GRANT FINALISTS

DePaul Center 8009

This panel is composed of the winners of the LRAN New Scholars Research Grant competition. The grant is awarded to graduate students and untenured faculty for research on U.S. labor-focused projects, broadly defined. One of the core missions of the LRAN is to help develop the next generation of labor scholars while also linking these

scholars to labor activists. Since the inception of Jobs with Justice, academics have played an important role in supporting workers' rights campaigns. Many of the previous awardees continue to be active with LRAM.

- **Lucius John Couloute Jr.**, University of Massachusetts at Amherst, “Working on the Margins: An Examination of Former Prisoners’ Precarious Work Experiences”
 - **Hannah Johnston**, Queen’s University, “Organizing in the Age of Uber”
 - **Tommy Wu**, City University of New York, “Political Economy of the Chinese Restaurant Industry and the New Regime of Flexible Labor”
 - Moderator: **Jessica Cook**, Ph.D. candidate at University of Illinois Chicago, steward of GEO IFT Local 6297
-

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Thanks to the following organizations and individuals for sponsoring this conference:

AFL-CIO
Amalgamated Transit Union
American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees
American Federation of Teachers
DePaul University Labor Center
Daniel Graff
International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers
Laborers Local 1001
The LIFT Fund
Massachusetts Institute of Technology Sloan School of Management
Pennsylvania State University School of Labor and Employment Relations
Rutgers School of Management and Labor Relations
Service Employees International Union
SEIU Local 73
University of Illinois at Chicago School of Public Health
University of Illinois School of Labor and Employment Relations - Labor Education Program
University of Massachusetts Labor Center
United Food and Commercial Workers
United Steelworkers
Joseph Varga
The Worker Institute at Cornell University
Workers United, Chicago and Midwest Regional Joint Board

Thanks to the LRAN conference planning committee:

David Bensman, Rutgers University
Paul Booth, AFSCME
Jessica Cook, University of Illinois at Chicago
Julie Farb Blain, AFL-CIO
Sheena Foster, National Community Reinvestment Coalition
Eric Geist, Department for Professional Employees, AFL-CIO
Beth Gutelius, University of Illinois at Chicago
Erin Johansson, Jobs With Justice Education Fund
Adam Kader, ARISE Chicago
Christopher Lamberti, Workers United, Chicago and Midwest Regional Joint Board
Meg Lewis, AFSCME Council 31
Marsha Love, University of Illinois at Chicago
Maryanne Salm, American Federation of Teachers
Lane Windham, University of Maryland
Benjamin Woods, Jobs With Justice Education Fund
Mac-Z Zurawski, Chicago State University and Laborers Local 1001

Thanks to the following individuals for their assistance with the conference:

Dan Boris-Lichtenstein, Bob Breving, Nora Kelly, Natakhi Rhodes and Richard Wallace

LRAN ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Union Representatives

Tom Chamberlain, Oregon AFL-CIO

Matthew Mayers, American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees

Cassandra Ogren, International Brotherhood of Teamsters

Christian Sweeney, AFL-CIO

Worker Center Representatives

Bethany Boggess, Workers Defense Project

Carl Lipscombe, National Guestworkers Alliance

Marién Casillas Pabellón, Interfaith Worker Justice

Academic Representatives

David Bensman, Rutgers University

Jessica Cook, University of Illinois at Chicago

Janice Fine, Rutgers University

Jeff Grabelsky, The Worker Institute at Cornell University

Beth Gutelius, University of Illinois at Chicago

Erin Hatton, SUNY Buffalo

Gordon Lafer, University of Oregon, Labor Education and Research Center

Nonprofit Representatives

Sheena Foster, National Community Reinvestment Coalition

Adam Kader, Arise Chicago

The Labor Research and Action Network is a project of Jobs With Justice Education Fund, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. Contributions to LRAM are 100% tax deductible under the law, as no goods or services are being exchanged.



**LABOR RESEARCH &
ACTION NETWORK**

www.Iranetwork.org