

LABOR RESEARCH & ACTION NETWORK

C O N F E R E N C E

JUNE 8-9, 2017

**Howard University
Washington, DC**

Hosted by the Political Science Department at Howard University

www.lranetwork.org

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

THURSDAY, JUNE 8, 2017

8:00 a.m. **REGISTRATION/BREAKFAST**
Howard University
Blackburn Center
2397 6th St NW Washington, DC

Ballroom West

9 - 9:15 a.m. **WELCOME**

- **Sarita Gupta**, Executive Director, Jobs With Justice
- **Clarence Lusane**, Professor, Howard University

9:15 - 10:45 a.m. **PLENARY SESSION I:
BUILDING WORKER POWER UNDER A TRUMP ADMINISTRATION**

- Keynote speaker: **Princess Moss**, Secretary-Treasurer, National Education Association
- **Greg Carr, Professor**, Howard University
- **Tanya Wallace-Goburn**, Executive Director, National Black Workers Center Project
- Moderator: **Clarence Lusane**, Professor, Howard University

11:00 a.m. -
12:30 p.m. **WORKSHOP SERIES 1
1.1 THE INTERSECTIONS OF RACIAL AND ECONOMIC JUSTICE IN
WASHINGTON D.C.**

Ballroom West

This panel is a discussion of the challenges and organizing strategies related to racial and economic justice in the metropolitan DC area. The panel includes academics, representatives of local unions and the metro labor council. It looks at questions like: How does privatization impact Black workers in DC? What research is being used to challenge the schemes to privatize public transportation? How would the EITC policy change effect Black and Latino works in the district?

- **Jackie Jeter**, President, Metropolitan Washington Labor Council, President, ATU Local 689
- **Parisa Norouzi**, Executive Director, EmpowerDC
- **Amira Alghumgham**, Howard University Department of Economics
- **Jeff Rosenberg**, Director of Government Affairs, ATU International Union
- **Michael McCall-Delgado**, Organizer, Field Mobilization & Research, ATU International Union

**1.2 WINNING THE MESSAGE WAR ON UNIONS AND
COLLECTIVE BARGAINING**

Room 148

Are you interested in talking with people, and not past people about unions and collective bargaining? Do you aspire to deepen the engagement of union members

and others who should be on our side? Are you open to learning how to frame your ideas with values so your appeals have a better chance of reaching your intended audiences? During this workshop, we will present compelling research on how to boost support for unions and collective bargaining, share key lessons from cognitive science on how the brain processes messages and information, and discuss ways to put these learnings into action.

- **Liz Cattaneo**, Communications Director, Jobs With Justice
- **John Kretzschmar**, Director, William Brennan Institute for Labor Studies, University of Nebraska at Omaha

1.3 EXPANDING THE ALLIANCE BETWEEN LABOR AND LAWYERS *Room 150*

This panel examines how a deeper alliance between labor and lawyers—one that moves litigation from an option of last resort, to part of an advocacy agenda—can generate new weapons for our depleted arsenal. Public Justice is a nationwide, consumer-oriented public interest law firm, with a focus on using state and federal court litigation to bring about progressive change. Our attorneys have years of experience fighting corporate abuses, and have been using that experience to develop novel ways to protect workers. We hope that this panel will be an interactive discussion in which impact litigators present a new framework for how lawsuits can contribute to labor activism—and thus expand the types of litigation organizers and community groups may wish to consider—and attorneys can hear about the needs and challenges of those on the ground. In this manner, we hope to contribute to a paradigm in which labor and lawyers see each other as partners in campaigns and jointly strategize from the get-go regarding how they can collectively reform industry.

- **Jennifer Bennett**, Attorney, Public Justice
- **David Muraskin**, Attorney, Public Justice
- **Leah Nicholls**, Attorney Public Justice

1.4 PUBLIC SECTOR WORKERS FIGHT BACK *Forum Room*

Only five months into 2017 and people working at all levels of the government have faced an onslaught of attacks against their jobs and their unions. This panel will cover the community alliances, organizing efforts, political work and other strategies employed by workers and their unions to fight back against attacks on the public sector. Questions that the session addresses are: What are new challenges presented by the administration? What is the role of unions in defending the rights of federal employees to “resist”? What are public sector unions doing to prepare for the Janus vs. AFSCME case?

- **Sabeela Ally**, Strategic Analyst, AFSCME
- **Nate James**, President, AFGE Local 3331
- **Jacque Simon**, Public Policy Director, AFGE
- **Larry Williams Jr.**, Labor and Coal Coordinator, Sierra Club

12:30- 1:15 p.m. **LUNCH**

1:30 - 2:45 p.m. **PLENARY SESSION II
FIGHT FOR ECONOMIC JUSTICE**

Ballroom West

Featured speaker: Carmen Perez, Executive Director, The Gathering for Justice

Carmen Perez is something of a Renaissance woman in modern-day activism. She has dedicated 20 years to advocating for many of today's important civil rights issues, including mass incarceration, gender equity, violence prevention, racial healing and community policing. As the Executive Director of The Gathering for Justice, a nonprofit founded by legendary artist and activist Harry Belafonte, Carmen has crossed the globe promoting peace through civil and human rights, building alternatives to incarceration and violence, and providing commentary and guidance for state and federal policy creation. In 2011, Carmen helped develop Purple Gold, a young worker's program that engages and cultivates the membership of 1199SEIU's 35-and-under members, while setting the future for the Labor Movement. Carmen's most recent work is her role as the National Co-Chair of the Women's March on Washington, drew over 5 million people across the globe who marched in resistance of hatred and bigotry, affirming women of all identities' rights as human beings.

3 - 4:30 p.m. **WORKSHOPS SERIES II
2.1 RECRUITMENT AND RETENTION OF
BLACK UNION RESEARCHERS**

Ballroom West

This panel is a discussion about the dearth of union researchers of color, particularly Black researchers. Black and Latinos are the two groups of people most likely to join a labor union but they are poorly represented in the ranks of researchers who work directly for unions. They have unique experiences and they bring those experiences when doing research on strategic campaigns. This panel is workshop to begin the process of strategizing different initiatives, including concrete ideas for LRAN to coordinate, to encourage unions, nonprofits and academic institutions to hire and retain researchers of color, particularly Black researchers. The panel will include three Black researchers and one labor organizer.

- **Marc Bayard**, Director, Black Workers Initiative, Institute for Policy Studies
- **Cassandra Ogren**, Deputy Director – Strategic Research and Campaigns Department, International Brotherhood of Teamsters
- **Valerie Wilson**, Director, Program on Race, Ethnicity, and the Economy, Economic Policy Institute
- **Tanya Wallace-Goburn**, Executive Director, National Black Workers Center Project
- Moderator: **Ben Woods**, Researcher, Jobs With Justice

2.2 LEVERAGE PUBLIC DOLLARS TO HOLD INDUSTRIES ACCOUNTABLE: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND PROCUREMENT

Room 148

Billions of dollars are given out to developers and awarded to companies by states and municipalities every year. Over the last decade, some unions have successfully built high road practices permanently into economic development and procurement processes to win for workers, leading to union membership growth. This workshop will share compelling case studies and unpack challenges. An emphasis will be put on the importance of solid and deep analysis of the industries involved and the potential for academic support in building public purchasing, development project and subsidy tracking programs that are key to supporting a comprehensive and ultimately successful strategy. In terms of folks who will be leading the workshop, below is what we have right now, though it may change.

- **Abhilasha Bhola** – California Research Analyst, Jobs to Move America
- **Julie Farb** - Director, Center for Strategic Research, Organizing Department, AFL-CIO
- **Sara Myklebust** - Senior Lead Researcher, Center for Strategic Research, Organizing Department, AFL CIO
- **Mariah Montgomery**, Future of Work Director, Partnership for Working Families
- **Erica Smiley**, Organizing Director, Jobs With Justice

2.3 MAPPING THE POWER FOR LABOR AND COMMUNITY CAMPAIGNS

Forum Room

With escalating attacks on workers and looming federal budget cuts, organizers need tools to fight more effectively. This workshop will offer two: a database about powerful people and institutions; and new data revealing hidden costs of corporate welfare. The LittleSis database and Oligrapher help activists map power. LittleSis is a wiki database tracking key relationships of politicians, business leaders, lobbyists, financiers and affiliated institutions. Open source and user-propelled, LittleSis facilitates collaboration. Good Jobs First's Subsidy Tracker provides company-specific data on tax breaks. Now a new government accounting rule requires most local and state governments to report much revenue they lose to corporate welfare—just in time to help organizers fight Trump-era spending cuts.

- **Derek Seidman**, Research Analyst, Public Accountability Initiative
- **Greg LeRoy**, Executive Director, Good Jobs First

2.4 FUTURE OF WORKERS IN THE LOGISTICS INDUSTRY

Room 150

The logistics industry is the social infrastructure that makes global trade work. For the past forty years, jobs in the logistics industry has become increasingly precarious, for seafarers, longshoremen, truck drivers, warehouse workers and

parcel delivery drivers. Recent developments - from the introduction of mega container ships to the rise of online retailing have accelerated the trend toward precarity, and undermined the union status, collective bargaining agreements, and job security of workers in the logistics industry. This panel will examine how workers and their unions are fighting back against precarious work in logistics in the U.S. and through global labor action.

- **Sharon Martinez**, Research Analyst, Teamsters Local Union 1932, San Bernardino, CA
- **Sean Sayer**, Research Analyst, International Transport Workers Federation
- **Nantina Vgontzas**, Doctoral Candidate, NYU Department of Sociology
- Moderator: **David Bensman**, Professor, Rutgers University School of Management and Labor Relations

5 - 7 p.m.

RECEPTION

All conference attendees are welcome.

The Midlands Beer Garden
3333 Georgia Ave NW
Washington, DC 20010

FRIDAY, JUNE 9, 2017

8:00 - 9:00 a.m. **BREAKFAST**

Ballroom West

9:00 - 9:15 a.m. **WELCOME**

Ballroom West

9:15-10:45 a.m. **PLENARY SESSION III: MESSAGING TO WIN**

Ballroom West

Now more than ever unions, worker centers, and progressive movements need to define themselves not only in opposition to or on the defense against the Trump administration and everything it stands for, but also articulate a vision for a better world. Unions need to avoid falling into the “right to work for less” narrative and reframe the debate on their terms without repeating right-wing rhetoric. The same goes for numerous other issues from health care and living wages to retirement security and paid parental leave. Panelists will focus on how we can communicate our vision more effectively and proactively, through new policy narratives, storytelling, and bold, forward-thinking proposals.

- **April Copes**, Adjunct Professor, Howard University
- **Christine Cordero**, Executive Director, Center for Story-based Strategy
- Moderator: **Liz Cattaneo**, Communications Director, Jobs With Justice

11 - 12:30 p.m. **WORKSHOP SERIES III**

3.1 WOMEN WORKERS AND THE RESISTANCE: HARNESSING OUTRAGE AND BUILDING POWER

Ballroom West

The historic Women’s March on Washington on January 21st made clear that women’s issues will be a core platform for progressive resistance to a hostile Trump Administration. Since the inauguration, women’s economic issues have been central to the developing tidal wave of protests. During a “A Day without Immigrants” on February 16th, thousands of low-wage women workers participated in, and in many cases led, the largest U.S. general strike in recent memory. Women Rising protests on International Women’s Day, March 8th united women workers across class and racial lines. Dignity and respect for women were even key to the downfall of Trump’s first proposed U.S. Labor Secretary nominee, Andrew Puzder. In a nation in which women are the vast majority of low-wage workers, and in which women comprise 47 percent of union members, women’s labor issues offer enormous potential as a potent organizing platform for the resistance. Yet how can the workers’ movement harness the virulent outrage that women so colorfully displayed in the Women’s March? Can working women build power within today’s reformulated political landscape, even in the face of attacks on labor regulations and labor organizations? We propose a panel discussion to address women’s labor issues in the resistance. It will include brief remarks from each of the panelists, and then a discussion with the audience.

- **Lane Windham**, Fellow, Kalmanovitz Initiative at Georgetown University
- **Marilyn Sneiderman**, Director of the Center for Innovation in Worker Organization, Rutgers School of Management and Labor Relations

- **Sheri Davis-Faulkner**, Director for Community Engagement, Georgia Tech
 - **Amanda Pacheco**, Director of Education, International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers
-

3.2 THE VICIOUS CYCLE OF AUSTERITY AND PRIVATIZATION & SOCIAL IMPACT BONDS

Room 148

Inequality in the United States, which began its most recent rise in the late 1970s, is being fueled by a vicious cycle. Though state revenues are starting to inch closer to pre-Great Recession levels, recovery for state and local governments has been slow, uneven, and incomplete. This has decreased funding for public goods and services that more and more Americans, due to increasing economic inequality, have been forced to rely upon. Too often, the answer to this funding dilemma is privatization, which in turn increases political inequality by weakening democratic public control and expanding corporate power. This dynamic is perhaps most pronounced in public education, infrastructure, and the criminal justice system, where disparities often fall vividly along economic and racial lines. The panel will discuss the growth of the charter school, for-profit water, and private prison industries; specific impacts of that growth such as increased segregation and further disinvestment in public services; and strategies for fighting back. The implications of the financialisation of government and public service delivery are largely unknown. Social Impact Bonds (SIBs) or Pay for Success (PFS) Bonds represent another step to use social investment to deliver public services using private funds and for private corporations to access the public tax dollar. Dr. Huckfield will examine their impact.

- **Jeremy Mohler**, In the Public Interest
 - **Mary Grant**, Food & Water Watch
 - **Leslie Huckfield**, Lecturer, Glasgow Caledonian University
-

3.3 WORKER-DRIVEN SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY: A NEW MODEL FOR LABOR RIGHTS ENFORCEMENT IN GLOBAL SUPPLY CHAINS

Room 150

Independent mechanisms for protecting the rights of workers in corporate supply chains will become increasingly important as we enter an era in which labor law enforcement by the federal government is likely to deteriorate significantly. While corporations prefer to tout their own “corporate social responsibility” programs, with unenforceable pledge, workers and allies have developed and implemented “worker-driven social responsibility” programs built on accountability to workers. Such mechanisms must require implementation of labor standards through agreements that are legally binding and enforceable through market consequences. Under the Accord on Fire and Building Safety in Bangladesh, brands and trade unions have come together in a legally-binding agreement in which buyers are obligated to make their supplier factories safe. Through a program of worker-to-worker education, independent audits, and swift consequences for zero tolerance violations, the CIW has transformed the Florida tomato industry, and is currently expanding its program up the East Coast. This panel will explore the lessons of the worker-driven social responsibility model, which can serve to protect workers’ rights when governments fail to do so.

- **Jessica Champagne**, Director of Research and Advocacy, Worker Rights Consortium
- **Cathy Feingold**, Director of the International Department, AFL-CIO
- **Janice Fine**, Associate Professor, Rutgers University Center for Innovation in Worker Organization
- **Steve Hitov**, General Counsel, Coalition of Immokalee Workers

3.4 BEAT BACK THE BROAD WALMART ATTACK: A FIGHT FOR THE SOUL OF PUBLIC SCHOOLS

Forum Room

This workshop will focus on the major components of UTLA's multi-faceted community-based campaign to push back on school privatization efforts while advancing a vision for equitability and Community Schools. Participants will explore how UTLA's members and coalition partners have employed strategic research, data analytics and visualization, parent and community partnerships, paid media, and political action to organize resistance to the privatization agenda and advance policies that will ensure that all students in Los Angeles have access to the schools they deserve. In addition, participants will discuss ideas of how this model can be replicated in other coalition-based campaigns in their own communities, as well as discuss how UTLA's Los Angeles-based efforts might be expanded on as the grip of education reform continues to tighten on the nation as a whole.

- **Grace Regullano**, Director, Strategic Research and Analytics, United Teachers Los Angeles
- **Ed Gutierrez**, Research Specialist, United Teachers Los Angeles

12:30 - 1:45 p.m. LUNCH AND LRAN MEMBERSHIP MEETING

All conference attendees are welcome and encouraged to participate

2 - 3:30 p.m. WORKSHOP PANELS IV

4.1 RENEWING LABOR AND BUILDING ALLIANCES IN THE TIME OF TRUMP

Forum Room

In an environment of hostility to working people and immigrants, the labor and social justice movement faces the necessity to renew its approach to organizing, in order to offer more effective protection to the individuals/groups it seeks to defend. In this process, thinking of and forging new alliances is key. By looking at the work of the Taste of Justice Campaign, U.S. Labor Against the War and the Street Vendor Project, we will explore the different modalities of coalition-building, the possibilities they offer, as well as the challenges organizers and workers may encounter in this process.

- **Reece Chenault**, National Coordinator, U.S. Labor Against the War
- **Melissa Hysing**, Strategic Research Director, Minnesota AFL-CIO
- **Darakshan Raja**, Executive Director, Washington Peace Center
- **Sirine Mechbal**, PhD Candidate at the Sorbonne University (Paris, France)/Visiting Scholar at Columbia University (New York City)

4.2 MEDICAL BILLING AND DEBT

Room 148

This workshop will discuss how issues related to medical billing and debt can be used to build labor and community campaigns. Given recent efforts at the federal level to defund and dismantle public health insurance and safety net programs that would lead to more people uninsured or underinsured, medical debt will pose a greater risk to the health and financial condition of working people—both union and nonunion. Participants will exit the session with an understanding of the scope of the problem, the current (inadequate) state of protections for patients and consumers, legislative approaches to shield people from abusive medical billing practices and debt, and ideas for tactics to use in a contract or organizing campaign.

- **Michael Piccinelli**, American Federation of Teachers
- **Jake Williams**, American Federation of Teachers
- **Kyle Arnone**, American Federation of Teachers

4.3 LRAN NEW SCHOLARS GRANT FINALISTS

Ballroom West

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 LRAN.

- **Brenda Rodriguez**, Centro de Trabajadores Unidos, **Richard Wallace**, Worker Center for Racial Justice, **Jessica Cook**, DePaul University Labor Education Center, and **Marsha Love**, UIC School of Public Health: “Structural Racism in the On Demand Economy”
- **Connor Donegan**, graduate student, University of Texas- Dallas School of Economic, Political and Policy Sciences: “Labor, Disability and Migration in Florida’s Convict Leasing Program, 1877-1919”
- **Eleni Schirmer**, PhD Candidate, University of Wisconsin- Madison: “Changing Structures, Structuring Change: A Critical Analysis of Teachers’ Unions, Racial Politics and Education Privatization Movements in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, 1965-present”
- **Connor Gadek**, PhD Candidate, American University: “Police Unions Prevent Police Reform: Anthropology of U.S. Law Enforcement Officers in Intra-Class Antagonism”
- **Melina Juárez**, PhD Candidate, University of New Mexico- Albuquerque: “From Margin to Margin: LGBTQ Latinxs in the U.S. Workforce”
- Moderator: **Tamara Lee**, Assistant Professor, Rutgers School of Management and Labor Relations

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National Education Association

Penn State University School of Labor and Employment Relations

Rutgers University School of Management and Labor Relations

Service Employees International Union

UMass Labor Center

United Food and Commercial Workers

United Steelworkers

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