

LABOR RESEARCH & ACTION NETWORK

CONFERENCE

JUNE 12 - JUNE 13, 2019

Case Western Reserve University
Cleveland, OH

www.lranetwork.org

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

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Co-Hosted by

Social Justice Institute

Case Western Reserve University

10900 Euclid, Crawford Hall A15C

Cleveland, OH 44106-7243

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.

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 12, 2019

Hosted By The Social Justice Institute at Case Western Reserve University

8:00 a.m. **REGISTRATION AND CONTINENTAL BREAKFAST** TVUC-Ballroom C
Case Western Reserve University
Tinkham Veale University Center
11038 Bellflower Rd. Cleveland, OH 44106

9:00 a.m. **WELCOME** TVUC-Ballroom C
• **Ben Woods**, Researcher, Jobs With Justice

9:15 - 10:45 a.m. **PLENARY I: LABOR IN THE MIDWEST** TVUC-Ballroom C

VOICES FROM FRONTLINES OF CLEVELAND, OH
• **Kelly Granda**, Cleveland ACTS AFT
• **Camilo Villa**, SEIU Local 1
• **Rachel Dissell**, Cleveland Plain Dealer News Guild
• **Moderator: Harriet Applegate**, Northshore AFL-CIO Federation of Labor

11:00 a.m. -
12:30 p.m. **WORKSHOP SERIES 1**

1.1 DOMESTIC OUTSOURCING: NEW PERSPECTIVES ON RESEARCH AND ORGANIZING

Thwing-Room 101

Firms have always bought and sold goods and services from one another, but the scale and scope of these activities have changed substantially. Researchers characterize these changes in various ways: as the fissuring of the workplace, vertical disintegration, outsourcing, and subcontracting, among others. Interest in this topic has grown, along with concerns about its consequences for workers. However, research in this area is still scant, especially in the US. This panel will share new perspectives on domestic outsourcing and its consequences for jobs and wages in different industries, and consider what domestic outsourcing means for worker organizing. First, we introduce a new methodology for measuring domestic outsourcing and assessing its impact on wages. Next, we present several distinct forms of domestic outsourcing in different industries, considering what these forms mean for workers' job quality and wages. Finally, we discuss new approaches to worker organizing in the context of outsourcing and industry restructuring. In this panel, we will examine outsourcing in health care, property services, temp services, and the public sector.

Speakers:

- **Hye Jin Rho**, Good Companies, Good Jobs Initiative Sloan School of Management, Massachusetts Institute of Technology
- **Christine Riordan**, Institute for Work and Employment Research, Sloan School of Management, Massachusetts Institute of Technology

- **John Kallas**, School of Industrial and Labor Relations, Cornell University
 - **Max Gerboc**, Assistant Director of Collective Bargaining, SEIU Local 1
 - **Moderator: Jessie Halpern-Finnertt**, UC Berkeley Labor Center, UC Davis Geography
-

1.2 FACULTY FIGHT BACK!

Thwing-Room 201

As higher education becomes increasingly corporatized, faculty are becoming more and more proletarianized and are utilizing new and old weapons to advocate for their collective interest. With the rise of a precarious class of adjunct faculty, faculty can organize at private universities without their employers making the traditional claim to the NLRB that faculty are management and therefore not entitled to bargaining rights. At private universities, institutions are increasingly controlled by administrators rather than academics, with an emphasis on chasing enrollments and enhancing their brands, while diminishing faculty governance and the value of a quality liberal education. At public institutions, with increasing tuition costs, mounting student debt, and broad attacks on public funding, some faculty unions have taken a “common good” approach, emphasizing everything from living wages for student workers, to affordable tuition, to improved race and gender equity among the faculty. Faculty are (sometimes belatedly) realizing that their voices can only be heard within their institutions if they recognize their position as workers and organize accordingly. This panel will present perspectives from a diverse set of rank and file faculty organizing, bargaining and striking on their campuses.

Speakers:

- **Rebecca Kolins Givan**, Rutgers University (AAUP-AFT)
 - **Chris Howell**, Oberlin College (AAUP)
 - **John Martin**, Wright State University (AAUP)
 - **Sirisha Naidu**, Wright State University (AAUP)
 - **Sarah Slavick**, Lesley University, SEIU Local 509
 - **Moderator: Alyssa Picard**, Director, AFT Higher Education
-

1.3 TOWARDS A GREEN NEW DEAL: RACIAL, ECONOMIC, AND CLIMATE JUSTICE

TVUC-Senior Classroom

This panel explores how moving towards a Green New Deal will require campaigns at the intersection of racial, economic, and climate justice at the local level. The panelists will share how their campaigns are reshaping the ways in which local governments think about urban infrastructure to advance a vision of cities that is both cleaner and more equitable. This strategy builds on more than a decade of successes capturing public investment to build power in disenfranchised communities, create good jobs, and promote equity. The panel will situate ongoing campaigns in the energy, transportation, waste, and water infrastructure sectors in Los Angeles, Philadelphia, and New York within the broader context of the Green New Deal.

Speakers:

- **Rabbi Julie Greenberg**, POWER Climate Justice and Jobs Team
- **Terri Burgin**, POWER Climate Justice and Jobs Team
- **Mukul Kumar**, Climate Justice Lead, Partnership for Working Families
- **Daisy Chung**, Deputy Director, ALIGN
- **Sarah Jimenez**, Senior Researcher, Community and Labor United

1.4 UNDERSTANDING THE STRIKE WAVE OF 18-19 IN THE CONTEXT OF TEACHERS WORKING CONDITIONS: IMPLICATIONS FOR ORGANIZING AND MOBILIZING:

TVUC-Student Org Center

In 2015 and 2017, BATS with AFT surveyed 30,000 teachers throughout the country. Given the responses the teachers strike wave that ensued the following year is easily understandable. In fact, perhaps the question should be why we did not see such a wave sooner and why the strike wave has not spread further. In both 2015 and 2017, teachers indicated the type of salient workplace detriments that fit into one element of the various strike/concerted activity models. According to the survey results, nearly 100% of K-12 teachers find their workplaces stressful with over 70% finding work stressful often. They leave work physically and mentally exhausted, seek treatment for stress and mental health and are more likely to be bullied than workers in other professions. These surveys are the most extensive surveys of teacher working conditions in the United States and paint a picture where there is much work to be done, for unions to serve the purpose of making the lives of workers better (Moody). We believe a panel discussion would present an opportunity to present some of the most relevant results of the survey, to discuss how these results relate to the models of strikes and other concerted activities (i.e. how to make the lives of K-12 teachers better through organizing, bargaining, grieving and engaging in concerted activity including strikes) and the implications of these results moving forward in K12 and the labor movement in general.

Speakers:

- **Jerry Carbo**, Professor Shippensburg University, BATS member,
- **Melissa Love Light Tomlinson** – Asst. Executive Director, BATS,
- **Jamy Hyde**, Director BATS QWL Steering Committee,
- **Kathy Berry**, Director BATS QWL Steering Committee

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

TVUC-Ballroom C

1:30 - 2:45 p.m. **KEYNOTE ADDRESS**

TVUC-Ballroom C

Sara Nelson, International President, Association of Flight Attendants-CWA, AFL-CIO
Sara became a United Airlines Flight Attendant in 1996 and has been a union activist

since nearly the beginning of her flying career, including serving as strike chair and leading communications for nearly 10 years at AFA's United chapter. Sara is passionate about AFA's continued mission to achieve fair compensation, job security, and improved quality of life for aviation's first responders as well as a safe, healthy and secure aircraft cabin for passengers and crew alike. She believes Flight Attendants can play a pivotal role in strengthening the Labor Movement with more public contact than almost any other job and access to every corner of the earth. Recently, Sara has served as a leading voice on issues facing women in the workplace and across the country, encouraging women everywhere to "Join Unions, Run Unions." Sara Nelson took office as the International President of the Association of Flight Attendants-CWA, AFL-CIO on June 1, 2014, and she is currently serving her second four-year term. Sara grew up in Corvallis, Oregon and earned a bachelor's degree from Principia College with majors in English and Education. She resides in the DC area with her husband, David Borer and son Jack.

3- 4:30 p.m.

WORKSHOP SERIES 2

2.1 LEVERAGING DIGITAL TOOLS FOR WORKER ORGANIZING

Thwing-Room 101

This panel discussion is focused on how digital technologies are being used to support worker organizing, particularly in the worker center field. This panel will examine the following questions: What are the challenges motivating worker centers to use digital tools and strategies in their organizing work? Why are these tools and strategies important to them at this time? How do worker centers build digital tools into current campaigns and worker organizing efforts? How do they develop new strategies that tap into the possibilities opened up by these tools? What are some of the dilemmas/challenges that emerge in using digital tools to particularly in issues like reaching and protecting immigrant workers, achieving language justice, ensuring community and individual safety, and protecting your organizations? Can these challenges be surmounted, and, if so, how? This panel is being organized by the Labor Innovations for the 21st Century Fund (LIFT) Fund drawing from recent work the topic of technology and worker organizing.

Speakers:

- **Aquilina Soriano Versoza**, Pilipino Worker Center
- **Janet Kwon**, New York Taxi Worker Alliance
- **Rachel Micah-Jones**, Centro de Los Derechos del Migrante
- **Moderators: Beth Gutelius**, University of Illinois at Chicago and **Sanjay Pinto**, Worker Institute at Cornell and Rutgers School of Management and Labor Relations

2.2 UNIONIZING IMMIGRANT WORKERS: CITIZENSHIP, DEPORTATION, AND THE FUTURE OF THE LABOR MOVEMENT, 1920-PRESENT

Thwing-Room 201

This panel explores the history and present-day struggles of immigrant workers. Since the early twentieth century, Mexican and Latin American immigrants in the United States

have grappled with issues of citizenship and national affiliation and with massive anti-union deportation campaigns. All the while, they have collaborated with a wide-range of allies to develop strategies that would improve their lives across the borders and walls that fortify the Global North/South Divide. Their stories have much to teach us about our increasingly unequal and globalizing world and the changes we must make to create something new.

Speakers:

- **Dr. John Flores**, Associate Professor of Immigration History & Co-Director of Social Justice Institute, Case Western Reserve University
- **Veronica Dahlberg**, Founder and Executive Director of HOLA Ohio

2.3 WHEN WALL STREET BECOMES YOUR BOSS: PRIVATE EQUITY'S GROWING ROLE IN THE AMERICAN WORKPLACE & HOW FRONTLINE WORKERS ARE ORGANIZING TO FIGHT BACK

TVUC-Senior Classroom

Wall Street private equity firms use debt financing to acquire or effectively control thousands of companies that employ millions of workers. Private equity firms have wreaked havoc at household names like Sears, General Motors, Payless, and Staples, all in the hopes of turning a quick profit. In 2018, after private equity-owned Toys R Us announced it would close all of its US stores and lay off 30,000 workers, the Fair Workweek Initiative, Organization United for Respect, and allied organizations sprang into action. Months of coordinated Toys R Us worker organizing and advocacy resulted in private equity firms Bain and KKR paying \$20 million into a severance fund for impacted workers. Coming off this victory, advocates are pivoting to support workers at struggling retailers like Sears and Kmart while pushing for broader policy change. Using the retail sector and the Toys R Us victory as a case study, this workshop will discuss the regulatory strategies and worker organizing efforts underway to hold private equity accountable. This panel will 1) outline the destabilizing role of private equity in our economy, 2) highlight vital lessons from the frontline retail workers who successfully fought back, 3) profile original research on the scale of private equity's reach and political influence, and 4) identify points of intervention against private equity so organizers, researchers, and frontline workers can proactively shape the future of work.

Speakers:

- **Asha Dumonthier**, Online to Offline Organizer, United for Respect
- **Charles Khan**, Hedgeclippers and Strong For All
- **Debbie Mizen**, Former Toys R Us employee, Leader at United for Respect
- **Maggie Corser**, Senior Research Analyst, Center for Popular Democracy

2.4 YOU CAN DO SOMETHING ABOUT TEMPORARY WORK--THREE EMERGING STRATEGIES FOR THE CONTINGENT WORK CRISIS

TVUC-Student Org Center

Across all industries, in union and non-union shops, we clearly see how the temporary staffing industry has degraded wages and working conditions. But, three new emerging strategies may help us reduce or even reverse the growth of the temp industry. Will they work for you and your organization? A union and workers' center alliance in Illinois is creating the nation's first "seal of approval" program for staffing agencies to improve enforcement of labor laws and steer public funding toward participants. A "High-Road Staffing Contract" being written with a network of alternative, non-profit staffing agencies may make a similar certification option available nationally. And, ground-breaking research has identified one the largest, most vulnerable profit centers for the temp industry – one dependent on a federal tax incentive that is up for renewal in November 2019. Can we work together to stop it?

Speakers:

- **Tim Bell**, Chicago Workers Collaborative
- **Jane Flanagan**, Leadership in Government Fellow and Visiting Scholar, IIT Chicago-Kent Law School
- **Barry Rose**, Workers' United
- **Chris Schwartz**, Blue Pencil Strategies
- **Moderator: Dave DeSario**, Temp Worker Justice

5 - 7 p.m.

RECEPTION

All conference attendees are welcome.

The Jolly Scholar
Thwing Center,
11111 Euclid Ave
Cleveland, OH 44106

THURSDAY, JUNE 13, 2019

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

TVUC-Ballroom C

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

TVUC-Ballroom C

9:15 - 10:45 a.m. **PLENARY SESSION II: EFFECTIVE ORGANIZING STRATEGIES IN A CHANGING ECONOMY**

TVUC-Ballroom C

This plenary panel will feature a wide range of perspectives on effective and new organizing strategies in a changing economy, workplace, and technologically advanced world. Panelists will discuss how circumstances facing workers today in both the public and private sector (including legal challenges, misclassification, precarious work, privatization, and technology in the workplace) dictate new and innovative strategies to organize union members into unions, build strong bargaining coalitions, and organize workers not covered by US labor laws. Key campaigns that will be discussed include the UTLA teachers strike and bargaining for the common good.

Speakers:

- **Steve Greenhouse**, former New York Times labor and workplace correspondent
- **Erica Smiley**, Executive Director, Jobs with Justice
- **Grace Regullano**, Director of Data & Analytics, UTLA
- **Jane MacAlevey**, Author and Strategist
- **Moderator: Dr. John Flores**, Co-Director of Social Justice Institute, Case Western Reserve University

11:00 a.m. -12:30 p.m. **WORKSHOP SERIES 3**

3.1 EXPANDING THE FRONTIERS OF BARGAINING IN THE 21ST CENTURY

Thwing-Room 101

In the last few decades anti-union corporations and their political allies have undermined federal, state, and local laws protecting collective bargaining, and union density remains at a low point. But as shown by teachers strikes, the actions by air traffic controllers and flight attendants during the shutdown, and growing support for worker action, working people are increasingly exerting their collective power. The workshop will explore the ways working people are gaining access to collective bargaining rights through non-traditional means, discuss possible pitfalls to this activity, and explore what legal framework would need to be in place to protect these new forms of bargaining. This workshop includes empirical evidence to share that tests whether labor unions change their representation strategy in an open shop context. These are results from a study funded by the Department of Labor.

Speakers:

- **Adam Shah**, Senior Policy Analyst, Jobs With Justice

- **Roland Zullo**, University of Michigan

3.2 FUTURE OF THE SUPPLY CHAIN: WORKERS, SUBCONTRACTORS, MISCLASSIFICATION AND TECHNOLOGY FROM PORTS TO CITY STREETS

Thwing-Room 201

Just about every product we use or purchase passes through a US port, warehouse, freight trucking terminal, package sortation center, or sometimes, all of the above, on its way to stores or homes. Yet while the supply chain was once a bastion of family-supporting working-class jobs, thanks to unions like ILWU and the Teamsters, deregulation, misclassification, outsourcing and subcontracting, and the introduction of new technology to both monitor workers and automate their jobs, have all contributed to the rise of low-road jobs that are increasingly extremely low-wage, temporary, dangerous, and that shift risks so-called “economic employers” to small subcontractors or workers themselves. This panel’s participants will discuss research conducted on the state of workers and technology at key junctures in the supply chain and address opportunities to ensure that new technology benefits workers and that subcontractors are held accountable for working conditions.

Speakers:

- **Steve Viscelli**, UPenn
- **Ben Gutelius**, UIC
- **Mike Munoz**, LAANE
- **Ebrima Janneh**, IBT, organizer
- **Moderator: Cassandra Ogren**, IBT

3.3 UNIONS OF THE FUTURE: TECHNOLOGY AND DATA FOR UNIONS

TVUC-Senior Classroom

UnionBase has been working with local unions across the United States, and now unions overseas, to support both internal and external organizing. We believe that the labor movement cannot succeed without having a plan on how to advance its involvement on the internet. With pushback from employers on face-to-face organizing, it’s time to supplement our long-standing tactics with technology that connects workers online.

Speakers:

- **Larry Williams Jr.**, UnionBase
- **Yonathan Micael**, UnionBase
- **Howard Nembhard**, UnionBase
- **Az Kalu**, UnionBase

3.4 MAPPING FINANCIAL POWER FOR LABOR AND COMMUNITY CAMPAIGNS

TVUC-Student Org Center

With Wall Street’s expanding power and influence, it’s more important than ever to follow the money and map out the role of finance in attacks on workers and vulnerable communities. This session will discuss the basics of power research and analysis

and how it can help inform campaign strategies aimed at Wall Street. Presenters will discuss several case studies where different campaigns used power mapping by LittleSis. Participants will learn basic power research skills and learn how they can use the LittleSis data visualization tool (“Oligrapher” - <https://littlesis.org/oligrapher>) to map our and share their findings. LittleSis (the opposite of Big Brother) is a wiki database that tracks the key relationships of politicians, business leaders, lobbyists, financiers and their affiliated institutions. Open source and user-propelled, LittleSis facilitates collaborative research efforts to map the power elite. Two speakers will introduce the basics of power analysis research with case studies and offer a demonstration of the LittleSis power-mapping database and its data visualization tool, Oligrapher.

Speakers:

- **Gin Armstrong**, Deputy Director, LittleSis
- **Derek Seidman**, Research Analyst, LittleSis

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

TVUC-Ballroom B

2:00 - 3:30 p.m. **WORKSHOP SERIES 4**

4.1 BARGAINING FOR THE COMMON GOOD

Thwing-Room 101

Bargaining for the Common Good, an initiative by unions and community allies who are seeking to reinvent collective bargaining for the 21st century. It will review recent achievements made in struggles from the 2012 Chicago teachers strike, to the Fix LA Campaign, to the recent teachers strikes. We will share specifically the work UTLA has done to incorporate common good proposals as a way to connect to social movement unionism and describe the leadership training that was incorporated into their strike preparation and implementation. We will discuss ongoing challenges to the movement including the impact of the Janus v. AFSCME decision on public sector unions’ willingness to engage in experimental bargaining, the complexity of coalition-building between unions and community allies, and the decentralized nature of the initiative. We will share training materials, sample contract demands, and lessons learned for Bargaining for the Common Good, especially initiatives emerging around housing, higher education, racial justice, and environmental justice.

Speakers:

- **Marilyn Sneiderman**, Rutgers University
- **Sheri Davis Faulkner**, Rutgers University
- **Lauren Jacobs**, Partnership for Working Families
- **Maurice Weeks**, Action Center for Race and the Economy

4.2 RECENT STRATEGY AND THEMES FOR ORGANIZING JOURNALISTS

Thwing-Room 201

News Guild-CWA has organized over 2,000 journalists in the past 2 years. Multiple

pressures, including attacks from the President, Private Equity, and digitalization. Journalists and other media workers push back against these trends through a wave of organizing that swept through the industry. This workshop will discuss why and how journalists are building power and how they plan to build their voice in their industry.

Speakers:

- **Stephanie Basile**, Senior Campaign Leader for the NewsGuild
- **Rachel Dissell**, Journalist, Cleveland Plain Dealer

4.3 CHANGING BIG TECH INSIDER AND OUT THROUGH TECH WORKER ORGANIZING

TVUC-Senior Classroom

Over the last two years, we've seen tech workers organizing and taking action in new and interesting ways: online, in the workplace, in public, and more. Workers have demanded change both inside their companies — like the Google MeToo walkouts and the exposure of Facebook's "Black people problem" — and in the ways their companies impact our democracy & planet, like rejecting projects that serve ICE or demanding climate action. During this session, we will hear about important organizing efforts and discuss key emerging questions: How do we situate tech worker organizing in the broader labor rights movement? What dynamics are we seeing in how tech workers are able to impact their workplace versus how they are able to impact corporate conduct? How are the power differences among tech workers impacting organizing? How can those demanding corporate accountability from "outside" the company build most effectively with those doing so "inside?"

Speakers:

- **Aisha Satterwhite**, Managing Director at Coworker.org
- **Johnny Mathias**, Color of Change
- **Francesca Santos**, Tech Workers Coalition

4.4 WHO DO YOU WANT TO BE? CLASSIFICATION AND CONDITIONS MODELS FROM COMMUNITY AND LABOR

TVUC-Senior Classroom

The emergence of 'peer-to-peer' labor platforms and data-centric management strategies allows companies to control large numbers of workers while creating opportunities for misclassification, reclassification, and labor organizing. These platforms and technologies raise pressing questions about the future of essential employment laws, worker classification and the quality and availability of work. Essential questions must also be asked of the workers themselves, though these too often tend to go unasked by organizers and researchers alike: Who do workers want to be? Employees? Independent contractors? Why? This session will explore the conditions of work for both platform (e.g. Uber, TaskRabbit) and traditional workers (e.g. restaurant servers, truck drivers). Panelists will also assess the implications that algorithmic work has on the legal standing and organizing possibilities for workers who toil under these conditions.

Speakers:

- **Veronica Avila**, ROC-United
- **Laura Padin**, NELP
- **Michael R. Slone**, Case Western Reserve University
- **Steve Viscelli**, University of Pennsylvania
- **Saba Waheed**, UCLA Labor Center
- **Moderator: Aiha Nguyen**, Data and Society Research Institute

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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

American Federation of Teachers
Communication Workers of America
DePaul University Labor Education Center
International Association of Machinist and Aerospace
International Brotherhood of Teamsters
Kalmanovitz Initiative for Labor and the Working Poor at Georgetown University
MicroSearch
Service Employees International Union
United Steelworkers
MIT Sloan School of Management
Penn State University School of Labor and Employment and Labor Relations
Rutgers School of Management and Labor Relations
Worker Institute at Cornell

Thanks to the LRAM Conference Planning Committee:

Harriet Applegate, North Shore AFL-CIO
Jessica Cook, DePaul University Labor Education Center
Eric Dirnbach, LIUNA
Julie Farb, AFL-CIO
John Flores, Case Western Reserve Univ.
Erin Johansson, Jobs With Justice
Adam Kader, ARISE
Michael Callahan Kapoor, Nashville CLC
Deb Kline, Cleveland JWW
Lisa Kollins, Case Western Reserve Univ.
Chris Lamberti, Independent Researcher
Tami Lee, Rutgers University
Vonda McDaniels, Nashville CLC
Mariah Montgomery, Partnership for Working Families
Cassandra Ogren, Teamsters
Emily Smith, LERA

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