

QUARTERLY PUBLICATION FROM THE CHICAGO FEDERATION OF LABOR • SUMMER/FALL 2013



# **⊗**Federation News **From Airline Pilots to Zookeepers** The Chicago labor movement is made up of talented men and women in a diverse range of industries. In a new series, we are featuring some of the men and women with extraordinary jobs—union jobs. Our series begins on Page 9 with Lincoln Park Zoo animal keeper Anthony Nielsen.

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COVER PHOTO COURTESY OF LIFE IS MY MOVIE

#### CONNECT





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#### **President's Report**



PHOTO COURTESY OF LIFE IS MY MOVIE

#### From Washington D.C. to Los Angeles, Calif.,

the American labor movement is responding to stagnating wages, attacks on their collective bargaining rights, and other attempts to weaken workers' voices by looking to new strategies and partnerships to change the course of history toward prosperity and growth for the middle class.

At the AFL-CIO convention in September, the federation took bold steps by changing its structure to allow greater participation from our allies in the community, ranging from religious- and faith-based groups, progressive



organizations, civil rights groups, worker centers and others who share our common cause.

The reality is that we cannot do it on our own. The labor movement is strong—especially in the Chicago area—but we are stronger when we join with others who want to engage in battles against right-wing political leaders, greedy corporate interests and anti-union ideologues who want to destroy the only voice that workers have: The labor movement.

This Labor Day, we launched a new video featuring local leaders both young and old talking about the importance of unions to

help the people we represent. We previewed this video at a luncheon attended by union leaders and high-ranking elected officials from across the state. Our message is clear: We need people who are willing to fight with us and for us.

In Chicago, we remain strong because of the involvement from union leaders from organizations large and small. But we can't be content to sit on our hands. "Right-to-work" legislation or a governor like Wisconsin's Scott Walker could be just one election away if we don't stay vigilant and active. There is a saying, "anything gained at the bargaining table can be taken away in the halls of government." We need to remain engaged in politics, organizing, and every other area where we can have a positive impact on working men and women.

VISIT WWW.CHICAGOLABOR.ORG/VIDEO TO WATCH THE NEW VIDEOS



Read more on these topics at www.chicagolabor.org/news

### **Affiliate News**

#### Maryville Academy Employees Join AFSCME

The 335 employees of Maryville Academy have voted overwhelmingly to form their union with the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) Council 31.

Maryville Academy is a not-forprofit agency that provides therapeutic, residential and transitional services to abused or neglected children and children with developmental disabilities. Its facilities are located in Chicago, Des Plaines and Bartlett.

"To have a real voice at work, we knew we needed a union," Maryville employee and union activist LaVar Barfield said. "By coming together with AFSCME, Maryville employees can improve the quality of care we provide and ensure we are treated fairly."

"The mental health counselors, youth care workers and other frontline employees at Maryville make a positive difference in the lives of at-risk youth," AFSCME Council 31 Executive Director Henry Bayer said. "In return they deserve respect on the job, safe working conditions, and fair pay and benefits."

#### Hotel Workers, Hyatt Reach Agreement

Hyatt Hotels Corporation and UNITE HERE, the union of hospitality workers in the U.S. and Canada, reached a national agreement that resolves long-standing disputes between the two organizations. The agreement creates a framework for the company and the union to work together moving forward. Both UNITE HERE and Hyatt hailed the pact as a positive step.

Pending associate approval, the contracts will provide retroactive wage increases and maintain quality health care and pension benefits. A key provision of the agreement establishes a fair process, which includes a mechanism for employees at a number of Hyatt hotels to vote on whether they wish to be represented by UNITE HERE. As part of the accord, upon ratification of the union contracts, UNITE HERE will end its global boycott of Hyatt.

D. Taylor, the president of UNITE HERE, said, "We look forward to a new collaborative relationship with Hyatt. This agreement shows that when workers across the hotel industry stand together, they can move forward, even in a tough economy. Both organizations deserve credit for working out this constructive step forward."

#### UNITE HERE Local 1 Elects First Female President

The members of UNITE HERE Local 1, the union representing 15,000 hospitality workers in Chicago, have elected Karen Kent as their new President. Kent replaces Henry Tamarin, President since 2001, who stepped aside to take on a new role with the international organization. She is the first woman elected to lead the local union's predominantly female membership of hotel house-keepers, school lunch ladies, airport retail staff and other workers.

"I am honored to serve as Local 1's President," said Kent. "I am proud of what our union has accomplished under Henry's leadership. I'm confident that we can build on that success, but it's going to require taking some real risks."

Spending six years as Executive Director, Kent has played a key role in leading the transformation of UNITE HERE Local 1 into a dynamic grassroots organization that has achieved significant victories on behalf of working people in Chicago. In the last decade, Local 1 has organized thousands of new workers into the union and doubled wages for house-

keepers and other hotel workers in Chicago.

The membership also elected Lou Weeks as Executive Vice President. For the last decade, he worked as Local 1's organizing director in Chicago, leading living wage campaigns for food service workers at regional airports and universities.

"In recent years the labor movement has experienced significant challenges and major victories. We need leadership that not only reflects who our union is, but where we are going," said Tamarin. "It's time for a new generation to lead Local 1."

#### **UFCW Rejoins AFL-CIO**

The 1.3 million members of the United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) are rejoining the AFL-CIO after an announcement at the union's convention in Chicago this summer. UFCW President Joe Hansen said, "We join the AFL-CIO because it is the right thing to do for UFCW members, giving them power and influence."

AFL-CIO President Richard Trumka welcomed the union into the federation because of the potential impact on the national labor movement.

"A stronger, more unified grassroots movement of working men and women is exactly what's needed to





raise wages for workers and rebuild an American middle class," said Trumka. "Together we are stronger—it's as simple as that."

The UFCW represents workers primarily in the retail and meatpacking, food processing and poultry industries.

# Sun-Times Fires Entire Photography Staff

The Chicago Sun-Times became the subject of national headlines recently when its parent company, Wrapports LLC, fired the entire photography staff for the Sun-Times Media publications earlier this summer. The staff of 20-30 photojournalists, represented by the Chicago Newspaper Guild, CWA, included Pulitzer Prize and other award-winning photographers for the Chicago Sun-Times, Southtown Star, Naperville Sun, Joliet Herald-News and other area publications.

The Chicago-area labor community stood with the photographers at rallies outside of the Sun-Times head-quarters and at the Thompson Center. The Guild planned to file a grievance with the National Labor Relations Board over the company's actions.

"The photojournalists that have contributed to this company over the years have been invaluable, and it is appalling that the Sun-Times has made such a move that will impact the quality of photojournalism the newspaper produces," said President David Pollard. "The Chicago Newspaper Guild sees this action as unacceptable

and a direct effort to weaken the Guild's presence in the company."

## Local Funeral Directors On Strike

Funeral directors and drivers represented by Teamsters Local 727 at Houston-based funeral giant Service Corporation International went on strike July 2 after an overwhelming vote by members. The corporation operates 16 Dignity Memorial funeral homes in the Chicago area, employing 59 employees.

"In 100 years of representing workers in Chicago's funeral industry, the Teamsters have always been able to reach amicable agreements. Unfortunately, it is obvious that SCI intended from the beginning to destroy that achievement and force its employees to strike," said John T. Coli, Teamsters Local 727 Secretary-Treasurer and President of Joint Council 25. "The company admits it can easily afford to maintain these workers' benefits. They just simply will not, because their business model calls for them to siphon more money out of the Chicago community and send it back to Houston."

The workers are sensitive to families who have pre-arranged funerals with the company and vowed to perform the services. However, it hopes others will patronize funeral homes that are not involved in a labor dispute.

"In 40 years as a funeral director I've helped thousands of people

through some of the most difficult times in their lives. Striking is not something I ever thought I would have to do," said John Liberatore, a director at Piser Funeral Services in Skokie. "We will not picket any funeral we arranged prior to this vote. For any future arrangements, we have created a website and a hotline to help our families connect with a community-friendly company while the strike is ongoing."

FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT WWW.INTEGRITYINILLINOIS.COM.

#### **Group Announces Massive Black Friday Strikes**

A group of 100 workers and community members were arrested in 11 cities, including Chicago, while calling on the employer to reinstate illegally fired and disciplined workers, publicly commit to improve jobs and end the company's aggressive violations of workers' rights. Thousands of supporters joined the group in 15 cities in the largest mobilization since Black Friday in 2012.

In response to Walmart's inaction, the group announced widespread, massive strikes and protests for Black Friday in 2013. The group made headlines last year on Black Friday with the largest strike in the company's history.

A report from the national public policy center Demos shows that better jobs at Walmart and other large retailers would even help the store's bottom line, as well as have an impact

on individual families and the larger economy. A wage floor equivalent of \$25,000 per year for a full-time, year-round employee for retailers with more than 1,000 employees would lift 1.5 million retail workers and their families out of poverty or near poverty, add to economic growth, increase retail sales and create more than 100,000 new jobs.

Rather than providing good jobs that American workers need and deserve, Walmart is trying to silence workers who are standing up with their co-workers to live better and spending its time and money trying to deny workers a decent day's pay. But ongoing labor mismanagement concerns, including Walmart's inaction on ending illegal retaliation, improving jobs at stores and putting meaningful protections in place at its suppliers, have contributed to record-levels of votes against Walmart's Board of Directors and even shareholder divestment this year.

Since June, Walmart has illegally disciplined nearly 80 workers, including firing 20 worker-leaders. More than 100 Unfair Labor Practice charges have been filed with the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) against Walmart. Workers in California recently announced that after an investigation, the NLRB regional office found that Walmart committed 11 violations of national labor law.





FROM LEFT: WORKERS AT MARYVILLE ACADEMY HAVE VOTED TO JOIN AFSCME FOR COLLECTIVE BARGAINING REPRESENTATION (PHOTO: AFSCME COUNCIL 31); UFCW GENERAL PRESIDENT JOE HANSEN SPEAKS AT THE UNION'S CONVENTION IN CHICAGO WHERE HE ANNOUNCED AFFILIATING WITH THE AFL-CIO (PHOTO: UFCW); PULITZER PRIZE-WINNING PHOTOGRAPHER JOHN WHITE JOINS OTHER SUN-TIMES PHOTO JOURNALISTS AND SUPPORTERS AT A RALLY PROTESTING THE COMPANY'S DECISION TO FIRE THE ENTIRE STAFF OF PHOTOGRAPHERS (PHOTO: CHICAGO NEWSPAPER GUILD); MEMBERS OF THE CWA LEAD A RALLY IN FEDERAL PLAZA IN CHICAGO CALLING FOR A FULLY-FUNCTIONING NATIONAL LABOR **RELATIONS BOARD IN ORDER TO** PROTECT WORKERS' RIGHTS (PHOTO: NABET-CWA LOCAL 41)

### **Make It In America**

With the Chicago Transit Authority (CTA) planning to spend as much as \$2 billion on nearly 900 new rail cars to replace its aging fleet, unions, community leaders and others asked a simple, yet important question: How much of that money will stay in Chicago?

The answer is not so clear.

While the CTA cannot require potential bidders to create local jobs, it can ask them to provide detailed information about how their bid will impact the local economy and, more importantly, local workers. That is exactly what the leaders from nearly a dozen different local organizations want to see happen, at the very least.

In a letter sent to CTA President Forrest Claypool, leaders from the Chicago Federation of Labor (CFL), the Chicago and Cook County Building and Construction Trades Council and a number of unions affiliated with the CFL, as well as Citizen Action/Illinois, Chicago Jobs with Justice, and others, urge that the agency put pressure on companies bidding for contracts by asking for information about how they are going to create job opportunities for area workers.

They call the idea the "American Jobs Plan," and they are working with the AFL-CIO and the Los Angeles Alliance for a New Economy on designing a strategy that would maximize the benefit of local tax dollars on local economies throughout the country.

"This American Jobs Plan disclosure requirement should include information about the quantity, proposed wages and benefits, location, investment in work-force training and plans for recruitment of disadvantaged workers related to the proposed manufacture of the vehicles," they write in the letter sent earlier this summer.

CFL President Jorge Ramirez says the issue is a "no-brainer" on which labor, community and government leaders should be in agreement.

"This is a rare problem to which a commonsense solution exists," said Ramirez. "Our federal, state and local government bodies should be leveraging as many opportunities as possible to create jobs for local workers. We have had very positive discussions with the leadership at the City of Chicago and the CTA. Now we just need to move forward and urge manufacturers to work in partnership with the CTA to create quality manufacturing jobs here in Chicago."

But if the idea is a "no-brainer," then why is the effort needed?

"For too long we have been reading the obituary for American manufacturing or the American labor movement. We can't succumb to that analysis when it simply is not true," Ramirez added. "We are seeing not only in Chicago but across the country a renewed call for economic patriotism. We don't have to surrender manufacturing to foreign markets. We can create jobs here at home. Taxpayers and consumers alike can have a voice in whether their money is spent here at home or abroad."

The question of how American consumers can help rewrite the history of domestic manufacturing is raised by a new documentary screened by the CFL earlier this summer.

The film, titled "American Made Movie," features interviews with workers, small business owners, policy analysts, economists and others to get to the bottom of a simple question: What's our part in bringing back American manufacturing?

The filmmakers point to factors such as currency and trade manipulation by countries such as China and Wall Street's endless quest to please shareholders as playing a large factor in the decline in American manufacturing over the last few decades.

But in highlighting companies such as Louisville Slugger and New Balance that value domestic production, the film suggests consumers—with the assistance of policy makers—can have a strong impact on setting the value of American-made products.

Organized labor is just one of many groups working to promote local manufacturing and create new opportunities for the next generation of workers. In Chicago, World Business Chicago has adopted a strategy for increasing high-skilled manufacturing as part of its guiding Plan for Economic Growth and Jobs. Ramirez co-chairs the committee along with Steve Kersten from Water Saver Faucet Co.

At the AFL-CIO convention in Los Angeles in September, Ramirez helped lead an action session on the national manufacturing renaissance strategy and encouraged regional labor leaders to take the initiative in forming partnerships and plans to retain and attract skilled manufacturing jobs that pay middle class wages.

None of these strategies are enough to repair the damage done to the economy over the years. However, they provide a glimpse at how unions, government, taxpayers, private companies and consumers can take action that will create jobs for working men and women.

"We're not going to fix the entire economy by ourselves," added Ramirez. "But we can help. And when the labor movement is engaged, we can have a say in the direction the recovery takes."



"For too long we have been reading the obituary for American manufacturing of the American Labor Movement. We can't succumb to that analysis when it simply is not true."

JORGE RAMIREZ PRESIDENT OF CFL







FROM LEFT: PRESIDENT JORGE RAMIREZ LEADS A DISCUSSION ON THE NATIONAL MANUFACTURING RENAISSANCE MODEL BASED ON CHICAGO; UNION ACTIVISTS AT A DOCUMENTARY SCREENING ON AMERICAN MANUFACTURING; SECRETARY-TREASURER ROBERT REITER SPEAKS AFTER THE FILM SCREENING; BELOW: THE AMERICAN MADE MOVIE U.S. TOUR VISITS CHICAGO



### **Feature Stories**

#### **Groups Call For Vote On Privatization Transparency Bill**

A group of aldermen, community organizations,

unions and watchdog groups urged the Chicago City Council to take action on a long-stalled ordinance to create oversight and transparency to city privatization agreements.

The Privatization Accountability and Transparency Ordinance has sat in the City Council Rules Committee since last year despite having 31 co-sponsors signed on. So far, aldermen have not had an opportunity to discuss the ordinance in committee, let alone before the entire voting body.

Past privatization deals—such as those for city parking meters and health clinics— have raised serious unanswered questions about service quality, cost, the loss of middle-class jobs for city residents and the best interests of all Chicagoans.

"This ordinance would increase transparency when privatization is considered," said Chicago Federation of Labor President Jorge Ramirez. "Too often, privatization is a rush to judgment, and promised savings don't pan out. In fact, our Budget Efficiency Report found many examples of outsourcing and privatization that actually cost taxpayers more. This ordinance is part of a thoughtful, collaborative approach, bringing together

workers, their unions, the City Council and management.

"Any time the City considers taking jobs away from residents and outsourcing them to private companies, it owes those workers a fair chance to keep their jobs," Ramirez added. "Let's work together to keep those jobs here and continue to deliver vital services to taxpayers.'

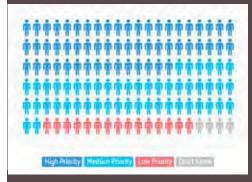
In its 2012 Budget Efficiency Report, the Coalition of Unionized Public Employees cited instances where the city could save money by bringing back contracts offered to outside contractors or vendors to be completed inhouse. The coalition also outlined ways that labor and management could work together to develop a framework for fair competition that would benefit taxpayers.



UNION LEADERS JOIN ALDERMEN AND GOVERNMENT WATCHDOGS IN CALLING FOR MORE TRANSPARENCY AND ACCOUNTABILITY IN PRIVATIZATION.

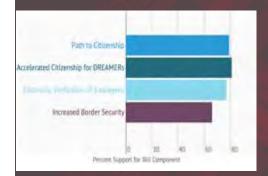
#### **Illinois Voters Want Immigration Reform**

#### **Passing immigration** reform is a priority to 85% of Illinois voters



Immigration reform must provide the thousands of ard-working immigrants in Illinois with a realistic

JORGE RAMIREZ PRESIDENT OF CFL



JUNE 17 RESEARCH CONDUCTED BY FAKO & ASSOCIATES, INC. AND CHESAPEAKE BEACH CONSULTING FOR THE AFL-CIO.

#### 'Right-To-Work' Struck Down In Indiana

An Indiana judge dealt the anti-union "right-to-work" law its biggest defeat in the nation when it ruled the measure violated the state's constitution. The decision was in response to a lawsuit brought forth by the International Union of Operating Engineers Local 150.

Local 150's lawsuit claimed that the law was a violation of Article 1, Section 21 of Indiana's Constitution, which states that, "No person's particular services shall be demanded, without just compensation." Local 150 argued that Indiana's right to work law is unconstitutional because it makes it illegal for unions to collect fees for services that they are federally required to provide.

In his decision, Judge John M. Sedia stated that under Indiana's right to work law, "it becomes a criminal offense for a union to receive just compensation for particular services federal law demands it provide to employees." Judge Sedia concluded that, "the Court therefore has no choice but to find that [the laws] violate Article 1, Section 21 of the Indiana Constitution."

"This is a victory for the middle class," said Local 150 President-Business Manager James M. Sweeney. "These laws are nothing but thinly-veiled tools to weaken unions, and this is a big win for workers who rely on unions to provide decent wages and benefits. We pledged on the day that this law was passed that they hadn't seen the last of us, and we are delighted with this ruling."

Indiana Supreme Court rule 4(a)(1)(b) gives exclusive jurisdiction to the Supreme Court for appeals for final judgments declaring a state statute in whole or in part unconstitutional. The judgment is subject to mandatory review within 30 days.

# SEIU Member Cares

t's not quite Jurassic Park, but this union job definitely keeps you on your toes.
"Animals are smart. You need to come to work with your game face on. These animals are smart, and they have all day to figure out how to mess with you," said Anthony Nielsen, lead keeper of the Kovler Lion House and Seal Pool at Lincoln Park Zoo in Chicago.

Nielsen has been at the zoo for 13 years, and has been lead keeper since 2009. He works with lions, tigers and other rare cats, as well as harbor seals, training them to voluntarily cooperate with routine medical exams.

He is an SEIU Local 73 member and said he has found his dream job: Something physically as well as emotionally fulfilling.

"The fun part is animal training. We get them to offer a paw or limb for medication or a simple blood test, rather than tranquilizing them." Nielsen has been training three harbor seals the zoo received in April from Sea World in Orlando.

"We train them to cooperate and voluntarily come to us, that was our first goal," he said. "It's much less stressful on the animal, and it builds a trust between them and the keeper."

Nielsen said a connection is definitely formed between human and animal, regardless of the species.

"You do build a bond with the animals, for better or for worse. You get up close and interact with them, and you're able to see their personalities. They're all unique." he said. "There are years where nothing will happen, but this is a job where you deal with a lot of geriatric animals, and it's sad to see them go. Those are the worst days on the job."



### **CFL News**

















#### **Scholarship Winners**

The Chicago Federation of Labor awarded ten graduating high school seniors with the 2013 William A. Lee Memorial Scholarships. The winners and their families were accompanied by representatives from their local unions.

Every year, the Chicago Federation of Labor offers ten scholarships to Chicago-area students graduating from high school who belong to, or whose parents belong to, an affiliated union.

"We are all proud of the winners of this year's William A. Lee scholarship competition," said Secretary-Treasurer Robert G. Reiter. "Your futures are bright, and we are encouraged that your generation will someday be leaders of this country. The Chicago Federation of Labor is proud to support you and your families as you pursue your dreams that will have a profound impact on working people throughout the world."

The winners of this year's scholarship are:

- Elizabeth Lesley Benson AFGE Local 704
- Juliana Marie Ennes UFCW Local 881
- Emma Leah Grisanzio Northwest Suburban Teachers Union Local 1211
- Bryant Harwell AFGE Local 704
- John Vernon Mayer Sprinkler Fitters Local 281
- Stephanie Louise Miklaszewski Chicago Teachers Union Local 1
- Brendan Patrick Moriarty Chicago Firefighters Local 2
- Jose Manuel Pescador SEIU Local 1
- Kaelin Louise Pratt AFGE Local 648
- Anne Marie Urban Teamsters Local 727



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Jeff\_Johnson27

@chicagoaficio Great screening of "American Made Movie" Shocking how many manufacturing jobs the U.S has lost. #1u

11 1 retweets

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#### **CFL Releases New Videos For Labor Day**

The Chicago Federation of Labor released two new videos over Labor Day weekend paying tribute to the historic events and the people who have shaped the labor movement.

"CFL Voices," features voices of Chicago labor leaders and activists who are leading our movement. Working men and women face stiff opposition from right-wing political leaders and anti-union corporate interests. The labor movement is the only way working people can fight back.

The video features interviews with Brian Hickey, IUOE Local 399, Bob Pierson, IBEW Local 9, Rose Daylie, AFSCME Council 31 (retired), Joe Pijanowski, IAMAW Local 126, Robert Boskovich, Iron Workers District Council, and Jennifer Johnson, Chicago Teachers Union.

A second video, "It's Local," looks at Chicago's rich history as the hometown of the American labor movement with struggles such as the Haymarket Affair, the Pullman strike, and the strike and massacre at Republic Steel. From those events grew a strong labor movement of local unions that, when joined together, amplify the voices of working men and women.



Check out these and more videos from the Chicago Federation of Labor at www.chicagolabor.org/video





CFL Executive Board Member Joe Pijanowski (IAMAW Local 126) leads a group discussion at a listening session conducted following a CFL delegates meeting. The groups answered questions to help guide a conversation about the future of the labor movement at the AFL-CIO convention.

#### **Proud Union Home Lawn Signs Are Back!**

Help your members show the world they're union proud!

Signs are available to local unions for distribution from the CFL at a low cost. For information contact us at 312-222-1000 or email info@chicagolabor.org.





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# CFL Delegates Meetings

Tuesday, February 4, 2014
Tuesday, March 4, 2014
Tuesday, April 1, 2014

START TIME: 6 p.m.

WHERE: Chicago Plumbers Local 130 Hall 1340 W. Washington, Chicago





# **Press Play**

Check out videos from the Chicago Federation of Labor at www.chicagolabor.org/video

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