



NUHHCE NEWS

Choices and Opportunities — The Challenge Ahead

VOLUME 2, EDITION 3

CONVENTION DAILY

Wednesday October 26, 2011

Today's Sessions

P.E.O.P.LE Breakfast

7:30 to 9 a.m.

Celebrity Ballroom 1

Craig Ford, Chair

NUHHCE Secretary

Speaker

Steven Horsford,

Majority Leader,

Nevada State Senate

General Session

9:30 a.m.

Celebrity Ballroom 2

Chair

Henry Nicholas President

Guest Speaker

Lee A. Saunders

Secretary-Treasurer

AFSCME International

Election of Officers

11:45 a.m.

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Executive Board Mtg.

Noon to 1 p.m.

Melrose 1 & 2

Labor's Energized and Fighting Back



Bill Lucy, Sheila Cochran, Cheryl Feldman

Sheila Cochran's story of the overnight loss of labor rights in Wisconsin grabbed the attention of NUHHCE members. They were struck by the breadth of the anti-working class agenda and Cochran's warning that your district might be next.

At yesterday's well-attended Town Hall Meeting, Cochran, Secretary-Treasurer and COO of the Milwaukee County Labor Council, AFL-CIO, detailed how the loss of collective bargaining rights for 175,000 public sector workers was only the beginning of an onslaught that included the loss of green jobs, sick leave, apprenticeships, voting rights, victim rights and also employers gaining the right to work children for longer hours.

"It is a national agenda," she cautioned, "it is not a local agenda."

Describing the widely publicized January sit-in by 180,000 at the state capitol in Madison that drew attention to Governor Scott Walker's attack on unions, Cochran said that was the "start of a war and we still are at war." The attack made labor leaders recognize problems in their own ranks. One lesson learned is that "we have to organize the organized *and* the unorganized," Cochran said.

William Lucy, President of the Coalition Black Trade Unionists and retired Secretary-Treasurer of AFSCME, predicted, "It will take us 50 years to undo the damage that has been done in a short period."

The attack has unified the labor movement "like I've never seen it before." Lucy said in response to a question from Dr. Michael Connair, of the Federation of Physicians of Dentists. "As tough as things are, organized labor is going to be there until the end." The attack on collective bargaining is "not an accident of nature," Lucy continued. "This is a designed program against the last institution that can stop this wholesale attack on working people."

The firing of public sector workers in states across the nation has "nothing to do with budgets; it has only to do with undermining the union, the last institution capable of fighting back," Lucy said.

Meanwhile, the right-wing political agenda is undermining the economy by failing to support the development of a skilled workforce, said Andy Van Kleunen, Executive Director of the National Skills Coalition. Some 500,000 people in Philadelphia cannot begin a job training program because they lack math and reading skills necessary to be re-trained.

Praising the 1199C Training & Upgrading Fund and its Executive Director Cheryl Feldman, who was moderating the forum, Van Kleunen said, "The Recovery Act helped but what's needed is a permanent investment in workforce training."

Obama's doing what he can but he's not getting cooperation from the Republicans and "not getting it from some Democrats for that matter," Van Kleunen said, lamenting resistance to passage of the American Jobs Act.

Lois Davis, a member of 1199J since 1973, who works at Hoboken Medical Center, expressed her faith in the labor movement to support herself and others. To Cochran and the people of Wisconsin, Davis said, "Hold on, we're here!"

- Maida Odom

Sackman Honored, 1199 SEIU's Gresham Speaks

Retiring NUHHCE Secretary-Treasurer Kathy Sackman was honored last night at the NUHHCE awards banquet where she was given gifts and high praise for her decades of service to the union.

Ken Deitz, Sackman's successor as president of UNAC/UHCP and presumed successor as NUHHCE Secretary-Treasurer said, "There has never been a greater leader or a greater mentor."

After presentations and the screening of a video about her union career entitled: *Kathy Sackman — Charge Nurse of the Labor Movement*, Sackman addressed the audience of about 200. "We have a mission, we have a vision. We will continue to organize, we will continue to grow."

At the morning general session, Sackman delivered her final financial report and then told members and guests: "I will always value all your friendships. I want you to continue to move this union forward and I believe you will."

By unanimous consent, the union approved a resolution conferring on Sackman the title: Secretary-Treasurer Emeritus. President Nicholas reminded Sackman that this was a "working" title.

Other awardees last night were Chris Woods, acting Executive Vice President of District 1199C, who has had 10 consecutive organizing victories, United Child Care Union Secretary Treasurer Ana Roman who was praised for her outstanding organizing work and Hasan Malone from 1199J who helped 1199J's organizing at halfway houses. Delma DeLora, a founder of 1199NM, was given a special recognition award for her years of service and leadership.

The featured speaker for the evening was George Gresham, president of 1199 SEIU, who focused on the nation's current economic issues, the plight of workers and worker-management relationships.

"The beauty I see in this room is the diversity I see in this room," said Gresham, "When we divide ourselves we make the employers' job easier."

Gresham, who initiated the *We Are One* movement, said the current *Occupy Wall Street* protestors "don't have solutions, but they know what the problem is. Everybody should be able to work with dignity and respect."

"We are living in a moment when working people are put on the defensive and being asked to pay more in taxes than General Electric and Exxon. How do they talk about that when we're paying at the pumps? We know about their profits.

"We're supposed to act like we're all "Stepford" workers and we're supposed to be feeling bad for the rich," he said. Protesting that rather than tax-the-rich and corporations, some public officials plan cuts to education, Medicare, Medicaid and Social Security.

"They underestimate the labor movement," Gresham said, predicting organized labor's response to public officials' attacks will wake up this country.

"All we want is to make sure the next generation does a little better than us. I am totally against anybody being rich at the expense of working people. They act like we owe an apology while they're stealing from our future. How the hell do you vote against a bill called a jobs bill?"



Pres. Nicholas, Kathy Sackman, Barbara Blake, Ken Deitz



Delma DeLora



George Gresham

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1199 SEIU