



# CLUWnews

May/June 2000, Volume 26, No. 3

Coalition of Labor Union Women

## From Shopping Malls to Legislative Halls: CLUW Women Take Action

ARLINGTON, VA — Although it sells soaps and other fragrant products, something smells rotten at the Bath and Body Works store where young women are being intimidated for expressing their legal rights to a safe and unionized workplace. Bath and Body Works is part of the Limited Inc. This retail conglomerate owns Limited, Express, Structure, Victoria's Secret, Lane Bryant and other familiar stores.

For Pentagon City Mall employee Michelle Williams, Bath and Body Works seemed like an ideal job. Flexible hours meant the Georgetown University student could work and study.

So too thought Michelle Darkentell, the Catholic University law student who needed a part-time job. But Williams, Darkentell and their coworkers were forced, without prior notice, to work on inventory as late as 4:00 a.m. when regular shifts end at 9:30 p.m.

"Not only did it interfere with studying, for some of the other girls having no transportation home at that hour was downright dangerous," explained four-year Bath and Body Works employee Tracie Prince who was subsequently fired for her union organizing activities.

In addition to the forced overtime, other common complaints at the Northern Virginia store included no paid rest room breaks, dangerous

*(continued on page 6)*



L to R, Tracie Prince, Michelle Williams, and Michelle Darkentell

## Election 2000: Educate & Vote

WASHINGTON—Labor can become the deciding factor in Election 2000 and the CLUW National Executive Board Meeting held here in June was focused on turning out women voters and putting an end to a tide in Congress that has attempted to silence working families.

AFL-CIO Deputy Political Director Karen Ackerman said, "In 1996, Labor played a huge role in saying 'no' to the "Republican Contract With America" that would have cut Medicare, cut education spending, gutted OSHA, rolled back the Davis-Bacon Act and promoted the agenda

*(continued on page 7)*

### Don't Forget

#### CLUW NEB Meeting

September 14-17, 2000  
Fairmont Hotel  
New Orleans, LA

#### CLUW 2001 11th Biennial Convention

Date: TBA  
Location: Las Vegas, Nevada

#### Unity 2000 March

Help demonstrate the power of labor at the Republican National Convention  
July 30, 2000  
Philadelphia, PA  
For more info: [www.unity2000.com](http://www.unity2000.com)

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## CLUW Point Staying on Course to Election 2000

In my last "CLUW Point" column, I outlined a simple Three-Step plan to make a difference in our lives.

Working women count and we will be counted. By now, you should have completed Step One—I hope all of you have stood up to be counted in Census 2000.

So now it's time for Step Two: voter registration and education. The sisters who joined us in Washington for CLUW's Political Education Conference are armed with the facts, tools and sisterhood to turn out union women voters on Election Day. Step three is voting. But since I know you will vote, we'll skip step three for now and focus on step two.

Voter education is critical this year as candidates stand far apart on issues that mean the most to us. With threats to end affirmative action, ignore pay equity, deny workers their rights and turn back the progress union women have made, we need to make the most out of this Presidential election year -- not to mention several hotly contested House and Senate contests and gubernatorial races in 11 states.

From the course that state and federal lawmakers choose over these next years to meet the added demands on health and retirement security for a growing pool of women workers, to the decisions that come down through the court system that affect our lives at home and at work, our elected officials will confront many of the issues that we care about. Thus, we need not only to educate ourselves about the candidates up for election, but also talk to our co-workers about the importance of their votes.

In this issue of the News, pay close attention to the CLUW/Labor 2000 Seven Point Plan. Although it has more numbers than the CLUW Three-Step plan, it's just as simple. Talk to women voters about the issues that matter the most. Ask them to vote. And for many, help is needed to get them to the polls.

When our paychecks, promotional opportunities, reproductive rights and our right to organize are threatened, it's amazing what our voices at the ballot box can do. In 1998, union women helped throw out anti-worker members of Congress. In the year 2000, we have much to protect.

CLUW and the AFL-CIO will provide working women with the information they need to make informed decisions in November. We will find out where the candidates stand on equal pay, health care, family and medical leave, child care, retirement security and other issues most important to women in the workplace. Look for special voter education material from CLUW and the AFL-CIO that will help you learn more about specific candidates.

The May-June CLUW News places a special emphasis on empowering women politically. Share this important information and, as election day nears, keep your eyes open for workplace flyers that provide facts about candidates' records on our major issues.



## Pennsylvania

### Philadelphia

This colonial city has always stood for independence and with the help of Philadelphia CLUW, women are one step closer to financial independence. Working Women's Awareness Week in Philadelphia was highlighted by City Council passing an Equal Pay Day resolution to help close the wage gap between women and men. Pictured left at City Hall are Sally Davidow (APWU), City Council Member Marian Tasco, Philadelphia CLUW President Kathy Black, City Council Member Blondell Reynolds-Brown, and Dawn Moody (HERE).

### Pittsburgh

Vice President of Northwestern Pennsylvania CLUW Chapter Ann McCandless was elected the first woman president of Amalgamated Local 5306 of USWA. Serving 750 members in the Northwestern part of the state, McCandless was sworn in May to serve her first term. McCandless can turn to CLUW to help her improve the union's voice in the community as well as increase educational opportunities for union members and their families.

### New York

Working Moms Unite! Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Union (RWDSU) workers at Bloomingdale's successfully negotiated for emergency child care. This experimental program will last for a year and then be evaluated. For a low ten dollar fee, workers needing child care can use a certified area day care center. President of RWDSU Local 3 Ida Torres said this break through program offers great assistance to many women struggling to meet the demands of work and family life.

### Detroit

Michigan State Representative Derrick Hale, son of Metro Detroit President Millie Hall, successfully introduced a resolution in the Michigan legislature that commemorated Equal Pay Day on May 11.

**NOW MORE THAN EVER**

**WORKPLACE SOLUTIONS FOR HIV AND AIDS**  
September 7-8, 2000, Omni Shoreham Hotel, Washington, DC

HIV and AIDS will remain workplace issues for years to come. Attend this conference to obtain valuable information, skills and resources on areas such as:

- Returning to Work, Disability Coverage, and the Americans with Disabilities Act
- Impact of HIV/AIDS on Global Business & Labor Organizations
- Community Service and Philanthropy: The Role of Business and Labor Leaders
- Managed Care and HIV Prevention: Implications for Workplace Policies

**Visit the CDC Business Responds to AIDS/Labor Responds to AIDS Web site [www.brta-lrta.org](http://www.brta-lrta.org) for updates on the conference or call the Business and Labor Resource Service at 1-800-458-5231.**

**BUSINESS RESPONDS TO AIDS** **CDC** **LABOR RESPONDS TO AIDS**  
CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL AND PREVENTION

## Phoenix

Workers at Southwest Gas voted to join IBEW in May 1999 but have since been fighting a company that is appealing the election and refusing to bargain. CLUW joined a rally in support of the gas company workers which has become a **Voice @ Work** "Campaign for Justice."

Since the election, Southwest Gas has intimidated workers, and has told them it will tie the union up in the legal process for years before coming to the bargaining table. The company also fired a 20-year employee for her union activities, who subsequently won a unfair labor practice suit against the company. CLUW Executive Director Carol Rosenblatt told the employees and their supporters that CLUW is watching the company's actions and will spread the word of this injustice.

## St. Louis

Metro St. Louis CLUW cosponsored the first Labor Women's Recognition Awards Banquet. Other cosponsors included St. Louis AFL-CIO Women's Connection, UAW, UFCW and OPEIU.

The Malone/Lippman Labor Women of Achievement Awards were presented to Judy Davidson (UFCW), Fay Davis (UAW) and Alice Moore-Jones (UAW). This great award will be presented each year in honor of Ora Lee Malone and Winnie Lippman (pictured at right) who were founding members of CLUW in Missouri and Illinois.



Pictured at the rally (left to right) are Diane Bacon (CWA), Dora Peterson (UFCW), CLUW Arizona VP Laura Roth (OPEIU), Annie Rogers (CWA) and Carol Rosenblatt. Not pictured is CLUW Copper Chapter President Rebekah Friend (IBEW) who worked hard on the **Voice @ Work** campaign. Other CLUW Chapters have been involved in **Voice @ Work** campaigns, including Sacramento, Indianapolis, Chicago, Miami, Hanover, NH, and Philadelphia.



## Kentucky

Vera Newton (UAW), President, Louisville/Derby City CLUW and Janice Yankey (UAW), CLUW KY Vice President (left) show their pride in being union women. These beautifully embroidered jackets were the fashion statement of the CLUW NEB in June. Check out these and other fashionable CLUW items today by contacting the National CLUW office or visiting CLUW on line at [www.cluw.org](http://www.cluw.org).



PHOTO BY MARGOTT WELTIN

## In Memoriam

### Jean DeBow

CLUW regretfully announces the death of long-time labor activist and CLUW Vice President Jean DeBow. Jean was a passenger in a fatal car accident in Brooklyn on June 17. Her philosophy for work and life evolved from her favorite quotation, "God's faith can move mountains." Jean practiced this quotation everyday and is loved and missed by CLUW.

Sister DeBow began her career in the labor movement in Brooklyn in 1981 as a shop steward in Division 191 of the Public Employees Federation (PEF) of New York State. She quickly moved through the ranks ultimately being elected in 1997 as Vice President of the New York State Public Employees Federation, representing 54,000 professional, scientific, and technical employees across the state including more than 15,000 in the New York metropolitan area.

Jean earned her Master of Arts degree in urban studies at Queens College. She also furthered her labor education at Cornell University and Long Island University.

A longtime member and officer of CLUW, Jean served as officer liaison to CLUW's Young Women Workers' Task Force. Her energy and commitment to empowering young women through the labor movement was proven by her unyielding support and guidance of the task force.

Sister DeBow received numerous awards for her contributions to the community and the labor movement and is survived by her mother Louise DeBow (AFSCME), a longtime CLUW member and New York CLUW Vice President.

Cards and condolences may be sent to Louise DeBow at:  
523 Madison Street  
New York, NY 11221

Donations may also be sent in Jean DeBow's memory to Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD), in honor of Louise DeBow. Please call 1-800-245-6233 to find the local MADD chapter nearest you, or call 718-331-7509 to donate to the Brooklyn Chapter.



## Clara Day

CLUW was sad to learn that on May 31st, Executive Vice President Clara Day suffered a brain hemorrhage. A blood clot was removed and she is breathing with the help of a respirator. On June 9th, CLUW learned that Clara is also suffering from a punctured lung.

Please continue to keep Clara in your thoughts and prayers. Her family is most grateful for everyone's concern. Cards and flowers may be sent to Clara at:

Vencor Hospital-Chicago Lake Shore  
Room #319  
6130 N. Sheridan  
Chicago, IL 60660

## Thank You

CLUW wishes to thank the following contributing (\$50), supporting (\$75) and sustaining members of CLUW:

### Contributing Members

Glenda Deering, UAW  
Jodi Rita Hakim  
Cynthia Hall, AFT  
Laurel Brennan, UNITE!  
Judith Wishnia, UUP  
Sheila Radloff, UAW  
OPEIU Local 8  
Betty Karabees  
Fred Tricarico, CWA

### Supporting member

Jay Herzmark, AFSCME

To become a contributing, supporting or sustaining member of CLUW, please makes checks payable to CLUW Treasurer Lela Foreman. Your contributions will help empower women through the labor movement.

## Washington, DC

CLUW members from the nation's capitol and union members from all points on the map marched on Washington in May (photo at left). The "Million Mom March" helped educate and draw national attention to the need for sensible gun laws including licensing of handgun owners, registration of handguns, creating consumer product safety standards, closing the "gun show" loophole and limiting purchases to no more than one gun a month.

## CLUW Women Take Action (continued)

storage of inventory, discriminatory pay practices and other problems which were not being addressed.

When Williams, daughter of CLUW member Lois Williams (CWA), was injured on the job by the improperly stored boxes that store management refused to fix, she knew it was time to take charge. Williams called CLUW which put her in contact with UFCW.

“Not only has CLUW been reaching young women with messages about the union advantage, but it also acts as a bridge between young women and the best resources the labor movement has to offer,” explained Lois Williams.

It certainly will take the best resources available to help these women when the Limited Inc. is fighting them every step of the way and is consistently using strong-arm tactics to try to crush the women’s efforts to unionize.

Tracie Prince remembers the hired guards the Limited placed in front of Bath and Body Works and other Pentagon City stores the day of the union election. “Clearly they did that to try to intimidate all Limited Inc. workers from talking to union organizers. Luckily, it didn’t stop workers from wanting to join.”

### “Don’t drop the ball when it comes to talking about unions to your children.”

—Michelle Williams

For Williams it was “spite,” Darkentell “principle” and Prince “respect.” But whatever the reason, in April, Bath and Body Works employees voted 9 to 3 to join UFCW.

Michelle Williams resents the way the company treated her and her co-workers. Instead of working with the young women to address their concerns, the company spent tens of thousands of dollars on union-busting activities. “Even though we have a union, we still face an uphill battle in contract negotiations with a company that refuses to accept unions in any of its stores.”

How hard will it be? Ask Tracie Prince who was fired for alleged “hearsay” about another employee. “We all know I was singled out for supporting the union,” she said. “I voted for the union because I support fair pay. Although I had four years of experience, the store manager paid others with less experience more money if their skin color was lighter than mine,” explained the 34-year old of black and American Indian descent.

CLUW President Gloria Johnson said, “Today’s merger mania has created bigger and bigger entities that have

made affecting change more challenging. Organizing a new local chapter is a huge victory, but it is just one small battle in what has become out and out war with many companies that put profits before people. For the two Michelles, and Tracie, the story is just beginning. How it ends is up to the rest of the labor movement.”

“It will take a united front to change the behavior of an antiunion company the size of the Limited,” Johnson readily admits. “We must continue to reach out to as many young women as possible,” she added.

Michelle Williams offers some common sense advice that’s all too often ignored. “Don’t drop the ball when it comes to talking about unions to your children. Union parents should talk to their children about the values of unionism. My parents talked to me and now I am inspired,” said college senior Williams who is now considering going on for a law degree to put to use for a labor organization.

All three women admit that CLUW provided the most inspiration. “When I see all these women accomplishing things through their unions, I know I can empower myself to take on my life challenges,” said Darkentell.

At the June NEB, CLUW gave a free membership to the young women, and CLUW members donated several hundred dollars to Tracie Prince who will challenge what she believes was wrongful discharge. “Whatever happens, I’ve learned a lot by this experience. Women have no limits. And CLUW can help women reach new heights.”



CLUW President Gloria Johnson and Executive Director Carol Rosenblatt at the Rose Garden Ceremony on Equal Pay Day on May 11.

## Voter Education (continued from page 1)

of the National Right to Work Committee.”

In 1996, labor helped cut the Republican majority in Congress in half and defeated Bob Dole for President. The energy of union voters was equally charged in 1998 when union voter turnout was 49 percent, 15 points higher than the national average.

“We’ve increased voter turnout because we’re talking to union members again,” said CLUW President Gloria Johnson.

The Washington Post in March cited a “working family renaissance.” A March 14, 2000 Post article said, “Organized labor’s steady march back to political influence began in the 1996 elections and gained speed in 1998. This year could be better still.”

This year, unions are focused on the Presidential election, winning back a pro-worker majority in Congress, and making a difference in important state races including the Governors’ races in 11 states.

**Gloria Johnson explains, “CLUW has worked very hard to make sure unions reflect the changing faces of the workplace. But those representing us in Congress certainly don’t reflect the faces of America’s working families.”**

The AFL-CIO reports that 181 members of Congress are business people and bankers, 172 members are lawyers and 65 percent of them have advanced education degrees. Less than one percent of Americans are millionaires, yet nearly one-quarter of those serving in Congress are part of the financially elite. With 1,851 Americans having served in the US Senate, there have only been 3 Latinos, 4 African-Americans, 5 Asians and 27 women.

The AFL-CIO is aiming for 2000 victories in the year 2000. Presently there are over 2000 union members who hold public office. Those numbers must at least stay constant for workers to have a legislative voice. If the early primaries are any indication, union members will participate at a greater rate.

Labor’s “Election 2000” focuses on getting information to members. Since 40 percent of union members reported that they read their local union newsletter and

69 percent say they vote for their union endorsed candidate, union publications will play a large role in Labor’s Seven-Point plan which focuses on educating working families (see Seven-Point plan story).

The bottom line according to Karen Ackerman is what voters do or do not know. “How much do voters really know about George Bush or Al Gore?,” she asked. “When thinking of Bush, people know he’s the son of the former president, he’s the governor of Texas and that he’s flunked geography.”

“When voters think of Gore, they know he’s the Vice President, that he has defended President Clinton, and that he’s strong on the environment. But do they really know he has a lifetime AFL-CIO Committee on Political Education rating of 88 percent?”

“On the other hand, Bush supports right-to-work, would privatize Social Security, supports paycheck deception, opposed increasing the minimum wage and supports privatizing thousands of state jobs,” Ackerman said.

According to Jonathan Epstein of the Democratic Senatorial Campaign Committee, there are many races where unions could help. Among the endangered Democrats in the U.S. Senate are Lautenberg (NJ), Robb (VA), Bryan (NV) and Kerrey (NE). There are also some Republicans in very serious trouble with voters including Abraham (MI), Ashcroft (MO), Mack (FL), Roth (DE) and Santorum (PA). With 34 marginal races in the House, a strong union vote is essential.

Johnson offered some critical advice. “Educate yourself and vote. Tell those you care about to learn more about their issues. Women must take charge of their lives by first taking charge of those who represent them in public office. Follow the Seven-Point plan and help make a difference this November.”

Through improved communication, CLUW chapters are working harder than ever to make sure those running for office are working for you. This Seven-Point plan is designed by unions and CLUW members to help increase voter participation this fall.

### Correction

In the last issue of the CLUW News, the “Hit and Ms. nominees” included a number of US clothes retailers as hits for their role in the exploitation of workers on the island of Saipan. The list erroneously reported that Chinese workers have “invaded” Saipan, which was misleading since the Chinese workers are being exploited by multinational companies. Thank you Chicago CLUW sister Roberta Wood for bringing it to our attention.

## CLUW/2000 Seven-Point Plan

- 1 Update CLUW membership lists.** Remember to collect email, fax and address changes, as well as phone numbers.
- 2 Increase member voter registration by ten percent.** Offer support to local union registration drives and schedule CLUW chapter events and voter registration activities with other constituency groups, coalition partners and religious and community organizations.
- 3 Distribute leaflets and flyers to members at all CLUW chapter and state-wide meetings, events and coalition activities including local organizing initiatives.** Leaflet twice a month through August and once a week in September and October.
- 4 Include the leaflets and flyers in CLUW chapter newsletters, publications, mailings or e-mail communications.** Arrange for your October newsletter or other communications to feature Labor 2000, reserving the front and back pages for articles and leaflets.
- 5 Send at least two letters from the Chapter President to members (August-October) regarding the importance of voting and provide some information on the issues.**
- 6 Complete at least two rounds of phone calls to members (September-October) explaining the importance of their votes.**
- 7 Use your power and Vote!**

### World March for Women Postcards

Please return World March for Women Postcards to the National CLUW office by September 1st.

## Announcements

### Labor Education Scholarships

Applications are still being accepted for 10 labor education scholarships this fall. The \$500 scholarships will be presented by CLUW to those wishing to participate in labor studies. Please contact Dessadra Lomax at (202) 463-8780 or lomax@pressroom.com for more information.

### Show Us Your Delegates

Congratulations to Massachusetts CLUW State Vice President Fanette Ellis-Felix who will be attending the Democratic National Convention as a delegate from Middlesex, MA. If you or anyone you know is serving as a delegate to the Democratic or Republican National Convention, we would like to hear from you. Please notify Nicole Kresch at (202) 466-4610 or nicole@pressroom.com

### Moving?

Please, Let us know your change of address. Send this coupon to:

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# International News

## Beijing + 5

In June, CLUW President Gloria Johnson called on world leaders to help empower women at an Economic Empowerment Forum held in New York in conjunction with a special session of the UN General Assembly marking the 5th Anniversary of the Beijing Conference on Women. The Forum was sponsored by the AFL-CIO, Center for Policy Alternatives and the Ms. Foundation. At the event CLUW and the National Council of Negro Women sponsored the workshop, "Women's Rights are Workers' Rights," with CLUW sisters Barbara Van Blake (AFT) and Cassandra Berrocal (RWDSU/UFCW) serving as panelists.

## International Solidarity

To help promote women workers around the world, CLUW hosted delegations from Cambodia, Thailand and Croatia over the past several months. Pictured below with CLUW staff and officers are a Croatian delegation (2nd row left to right) Susan Phillips (UFCW), Suzana Kunac, Biserka Momcinovic, Jagoda Martic, Jardanka Tomasic, Sonja Grozic-Zivolic, Katarina Ivankovic, Ana Smajlovic. (1st row left to right) National Council of Women's Organizations Chair Martha Burke, Carol Rosenblatt, Royetta Sanford (IBEW), Gloria Johnson, Lovorka Marinovic and Nicole Kresch.

### Coalition of Labor Union Women Membership Application

I want to help empower women through the labor movement by becoming a member of the Coalition of Labor Union Women.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

City, State, ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Enclosed are my CLUW dues for one year.

\$25     \$10 (retiree)

I am a member of a bona fide collective bargaining organization.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

MAIL TO:

Lela Foreman, CLUW Treasurer  
c/o CLUW  
1126 16th Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20036



**A special thanks to all who participated in the CLUW Auction. This fun-filled event raised over \$5,000 for CLUW!**



# CLUW Health Tip

*Brought to you by the CLUW Women's Health Committee*

**L**istening to your body can save your life. Colon and rectal cancers are the third leading cause of cancer and cancer deaths in both women and men. If detected early, this type of cancer can often be cured. Yet many persons ignore symptoms like painful bowel movements or indigestion.

Women who have had ovarian, endometrial or breast cancer are more likely to develop colon or rectal cancer. The American Cancer Society recommends periodic health exams, including rectal, breast and pelvic examinations. A test for hidden blood in the stool should be done annually after age 50.

If blood is found in the stool, and there is family history of colon cancer, or if a person has symptoms of colon problems, a colonoscopy may be done to examine the colon. Sedation is given to prevent discomfort during the procedure. Small growths in the colon and rectum are easily removed without pain or major surgery. A common growth is a "polyp" which often turns cancerous over time if not removed.

Persons not requiring a colonoscopy are urged to have

a sigmoidoscopy at age 50 and every five years thereafter by the American Cancer Society. This procedure is performed by a gastroenterologist or another specially trained physician.

Early detection of colon or rectal cancer can prevent the disease from spreading and the need for major surgery. Studies are currently being conducted to determine ways to prevent colon cancer, however, a low-fat diet with plenty of fiber and water will reduce your risk of developing colon cancer.

**Colon Cancer Alliance, Inc.** 1-877-422-2030

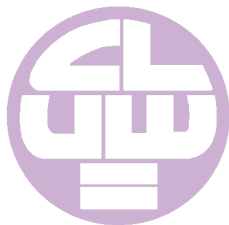
**American Cancer Society** 800-ACS-2345

**Cancer Care, Inc.** 800-813-HOPE

**National Institutes of Health Cancer Information Service/PDQ** 1-800-4-CANCER

## Colon Cancer Alliance

The Colon Cancer Alliance is an organization of colon and rectal cancer survivors, caregivers, people with a genetic predisposition to the disease, and other individuals touched by colorectal cancer. The Colon Cancer Alliance is committed to ending the suffering caused by cancers of the colon, rectum, appendix and anus.



## Coalition of Labor Union Women

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