ACTIVATING THE GRASSROOTS

LCCA Town Hall Meetings

NEW ORLEANS — In March, CLUW hosted the first of approximately 25 town hall meetings to be held from now until Election Day. Sponsored by the Labor Coalition for Community Action (LCCA), the town hall meetings give voters a chance to sound off on the issues they care most about.

Led by area labor, civic and religious leaders, Louisiana voters came to the town hall meeting to discuss many top-of-mind issues including poverty, job security, health care and education. Moderated by Louisiana AFL-CIO Secretary-Treasurer Sibal Holt, participants held an open dialogue with President of the Louisiana Association of Community Organizations for Reform Now Beulah Labostrie and Secretary-Treasurer of the New Orleans AFL-CIO Anthony Behan.

The New Orleans meeting served as a prototype for many more Town Hall meetings to come. In communities across the country, LCAA will explore key components of the local economies and will work with local leaders to determine which issues are of the greatest concern.

“Your power is your vote,” explained Nat LaCour as participants eyed Election Day as a catalyst of change. An overwhelming majority of town hall participants said the current Administration and Congress have not been responsive to their needs and the needs of working women and men.

2004 is CLUW’s 30th Anniversary.

Help CLUW celebrate three decades of success at its anniversary celebration on Friday, June 11, at 6:00 pm at the AFL-CIO Building., 815 16th Street, NW.

For more on CLUW’s anniversary, visit www.cluw.org
It’s the Economy Stupid

Gloria T. Johnson, CLUW President

A legacy of the Clinton campaign for the White House in 1992 was a slogan coined by “War Room” chief and campaign advisor James Carville, who said “It’s the economy stupid.” When it came to Bill Clinton winning votes, he knew the economy and jobs were the top concerns of voters.

Talking to union women and men today, jobs and the economy still outweigh other policy priorities.

With what began as the promotion of free trade, American companies have been free to scour the globe for the lowest common denominator when it comes to wages, worker rights and the environment. The loss of America’s manufacturing base has led to a crisis in this country and we need to address this problem right away.

In June, CLUW will hold its annual legislative conference as part of the NEB meeting. At that time, we will explore the jobs issue as well as help promote the AFL-CIO agenda for a strong US manufacturing base.

We need “highroad” industrial development policies—increased access to capital investment, technical assistance and workforce training incentives—that modernize and expand the nation’s manufacturing industries, while preserving and creating good manufacturing jobs. Some of the measures include:

1. Fair trade policies that reduce the U.S. trade deficit, protect U.S. trade laws and require inclusion of enforceable workers’ rights and environmental standards in trade agreements.
2. Revised tax laws that eliminate incentives for corporations to move production overseas and punish those that do;
3. Legislation that penalizes companies that incorporate overseas to avoid taxes and denies government contracts to these companies.
4. Strengthening the manufacturing base for national defense and homeland security through procurement reform, enhanced “Buy American” requirements, an updated assessment of critical defense manufacturing capabilities and limits to “offsets” that drain critical technology and good jobs.

In addition, we need to address the health care crisis that has placed tremendous burdens on employer-sponsored health plans. We also need to reform and enforce the nation’s labor laws that are essential to addressing the manufacturing crisis, as well as for promoting good jobs for all American workers.

A strong US manufacturing base not only helps the economy, it creates more jobs. Pushing for needed changes also exposes the shortcomings of the trade and industrial policies of the current Administration and Congress and could affect the outcome of November’s elections. Learn about this and other policy priorities at the CLUW Legislative Conference on June 11 at the Loews L’Enfant Plaza Hotel in Washington, DC. We need your help in the fight for good US jobs.

Find out more about the Agenda for a Strong US Manufacturing Base by visiting www.aflcio.org
From the CLUW Women’s Health Committee

It is a positive coincidence that National Women’s Health Week, May 9-14, overlaps with CLUW’s Working Women’s Awareness Week because women need to be aware of the importance of regular health examinations. As part of this year’s Health Week, organizers have dedicated May 10 as “National Women’s Check-Up Day.” This is an excellent time for a check up appointment with your health care provider or to arrange for any special tests that are needed.

If you are seeing a doctor for the first time, it is important that he or she obtain your complete health history. A good health history is crucial when determining an accurate diagnosis. It is also important to bring your current medications, or a list of them, to your appointment along with their prescribed dosages. Some illnesses, symptoms and side effects may be caused by adverse reactions to the medications you take.

Women should also screen for cervical cancer. PAP tests are currently recommended every one to three years after three consecutive annual tests with normal results. However, sexually active women, and those who have had abnormal test results, should be tested each year. A test for human papilloma virus (HPV) should be done along with the PAP test, as certain strains of HPV can cause cell abnormalities that may develop into cervical cancer. The PAP test is usually done as part of a woman’s gynecologic or pelvic examination. The pelvic examination is important in determining whether there are any abnormalities in the uterus or ovaries, while the PAP test is done to check for cervical abnormalities.

All women should have their height, weight and blood pressure checked and a clinical breast examination should be a routine part of a woman’s physical exam. By age 40, women should get an annual mammogram. Most women over age 50 have never been tested for osteoporosis, the bone-thinning disease. Ask your doctor for a referral for a painless bone density test if you are over 50 and have not had one.

Diabetes is also on the rise and many people have it for years before a diagnosis. A simple blood test can tell you if you have it or if you are at risk. Blood tests can be ordered for a variety of reasons. For example, they can determine if you are anemic, if you have a thyroid disorder, or if your cholesterol is too high. Your doctor should order tests based on the symptoms you report, or based on current guidelines for good health maintenance. However, you may have to ask for the tests you want and check to make certain your insurance covers them. After you have the tests, you probably will need to contact your doctor to get the results.

Legislation and union contracts now require health insurance providers to cover many examinations and screening tests as a part of good health maintenance. If you find that the tests you need are not covered, raise the issue at a CLUW meeting. Organizing to demand coverage for what we need to protect our health is an excellent project for both Working Women’s Awareness Week and for National Women’s Health Week.

CLUW Remembers

CLUW founding member Mildred “Millie” Jeffrey, passed away of a respiratory ailment in Detroit, her home for nearly 50 years. According to the Washington Post, 93 year-old Jeffrey was a “galvanizing force behind a variety of social and political justice movements nationwide.”

Mrs. Jeffrey was a significant behind-the-scenes player in Democratic Party politics and instrumental in promoting women to elected office. Among those she advised and helped elect to public office include Gov. Jennifer M. Granholm, U.S. Sen. Debbie Stabenow and U.S. Rep. Carolyn Cheeks Kilpatrick. In 2000, President Bill Clinton presented her with the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the nation’s highest civilian honor.

Jeffrey spent most of her work life at the UAW in Detroit and was the union’s first Women’s Bureau director. After World War II, she championed the rights of women to work at companies that had hired them as temporary replacements for men fighting overseas. She retired in 1976 as director of UAW’s consumer affairs department.

For a reprinted Washington Post obituary on Mildred Jeffrey, please visit www.cluw.org

Electronic Mentoring

Are you a woman looking for an on-line mentor in a male-dominated field? Or perhaps you are a woman who’s made it and would like to help the women coming behind you pave a smoother path.

WomenTechWorld’s e-Mentors connect female students in technology/trades with women successfully working in male-dominated fields. With e-Mentors, being a newbie just became a little bit easier.

If you are 18 years of age or older, female, and working in a male-dominated job or career, check out mentoring opportunities at www.womentechworld.org/ementoring.htm

Brought to you by the CLUW New Technology Committee.
CLUW, in partnership with the Academy for Educational Development (AED), is working to reduce cervical cancer rates and disparities among working women by promoting increased cervical screening and regular follow-ups for union women and their families.

Their joint program is called Working Women ROCC! and is funded by a grant from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). ROCC! is educating union members on the risk factors for cervical cancer and the critical need for regular screening to ensure early diagnosis and treatment.

Luncheon attendees heard a very personal account from cervical cancer survivor Christine Baze. Baze, a well-known rock performer from Boston, found out she had an advanced form of the cancer after being previously misdiagnosed.

Beating the odds by beating back her cancer, Baze was named one of MS Magazine’s 50 people who are making a difference for her “Yellow Umbrella” tour. Baze, a lifetime musician, has been using music to educate other women about the importance of cervical cancer screening.

A majority of women are hearing that message and are being screened, but a significant minority is not. “Working Women ROCC!” is working to help to change that.

Evidence suggests that annual screenings for cervical cancer save lives, and knowledge of risk factors can help women take action to drastically reduce their chance of getting this cancer. The Digene Corporation has developed effective cervical cancer screening and has been working with Working Women ROCC! and CLUW to promote early detection and prevention.

CLUW members joined other labor activists on April 28th in the observance of Workers Memorial Day. Decades of struggle by workers and their unions have resulted in significant improvements in working conditions. But the fight to protect workers is getting harder as the Bush Administration has joined forces with business groups to roll back or stall needed protections.

Turning its back on workplace safety, the Bush Administration has overturned or blocked measures including the Occupational Safety and Health Administration’s ergonomics standard and new protections on tuberculosis, indoor air quality, reactive chemicals and cancer causing substances. Voluntary compliance has been favored over enforcement and job safety programs have been weakened, leaving workers in danger.

Workers Memorial Day is a time to mourn for the dead and fight for living. While doing so, CLUW members have drawn attention to the fact that many long-recognized hazards have not been addressed and new hazards are getting no attention. “Ergonomic hazards still cripple and injure more workers than any other workplace hazard. Immigrant workers are being killed on the job in record numbers. Millions of workers have no OSHA protections, and companies that break safety laws and kill workers face only weak penalties,” CLUW President Gloria Johnson explained.

For additional information and to learn what you can do to help promote workplace safety, contact the AFL-CIO Department of Safety and Health, 815 16th Street, NW, Washington, DC, 20006; 202-637-5366; or e-mail, oshmail@aflcio.org.
WORKING WOMEN NAME FRIENDS AND FOES WITH ANNUAL HIT AND MS LIST

US Secretary of Labor Elaine Chao heads this year’s list of “Hits,” or those who have stood in the way of progress for women and minorities. Chao has been a proponent of a Bush Administration proposal that would change the Fair Labor Standards Act on overtime pay.

According to the AFL-CIO, “some 8 million workers, including police officers, nurses, store supervisors and many other workers would face unpredictable work schedules and reduced pay because of an increased demand for extra hours for which employers would not have to compensate workers. The proposal also could take away overtime pay protections for America’s military veterans.

For the third straight year, President George W. Bush also received a hit for repeated attacks on workers, civil rights, and endangering the lives of US military women and men without international consent and cooperation. One example is his opposition to gay marriage. The question of gay marriage has moved to the forefront of American politics after a U.S. Supreme Court decision in June struck down state laws banning sodomy. The President went as far as threatening Constitutional changes to prevent gay marriages.

The California Supreme Court took on discrimination, this time in employer health plans. Although there were favorable results, (see Ms. mentions), California State Judge Janice Brown received a “Hit” for her dissenting vote on a state court ruling that would require female contraceptive coverage in employee health plans. Brown, a conservative judge nominated by George Bush for the DC Circuit Court, was labeled by DC Representative Eleanor Holmes Norton at a Congressional Black Caucus press conference as “being cut out of the same cloth as Clarence Thomas.”

Anchoring this year’s “Hits” are Safeway and Wal-Mart. Safeway CEO Steve Burd was singled out for his anti-worker stance as the company tried to cut labor and benefit costs resulting in a longstanding strike by its workers. According to UFCW, during a 2003 conference call with Wall Street analysts, Burd characterized the employer’s attempt to hold down labor costs as “an investment in our future” and predicted that lost sales during the present work stoppage would prove to be “infinitesimal, compared to the cost of not doing this.”

Wal-Mart is no stranger to the CLUW “Hit” list. Like the past several years, Wal-Mart was once again nominated for its anti-worker, anti-union practices and policies.

On a more positive note, the California Supreme Court case that resulted in a “Hit” for Judge Janice Brown, also earned the court a “Ms,” nomination for helping the progress of women. The ruling, which would require Catholic Charities to provide women contraceptive coverage regardless of the organization’s religious opposition, has sweeping implications for religion-based nonprofit organizations and hospitals throughout the state. It could also influence decisions made in at least 20 other states that have similar laws requiring employers to provide contraception as part of employee health coverage, legal experts said.

UFCW workers who endured the long strike against Safeway-owned Vons and Pavillions stores, Albertsons and Kroger-owned Ralphs received a Ms award for standing up for affordable health care, putting health care on the national agenda and sending a message to employers everywhere that attempts to eliminate health care benefits will come at a high price. The strike also raised the alarm for national health care reform.


Another journalist, Bill Moyers, received a “Ms” nomination for program NOW and its coverage of FTAA and NAFTA. NOW, which airs on PBS, called attention to unfair trade policies in its’ extended coverage of FTAA. NOW’s repeated examination of job migration and related protests have shed the light on globalization that hurts Americans.

The organizers of the March for Women’s Lives received a Ms. honor for bringing together masses of supporters to march on Washington in support of the right to choose. The groups include National Organization for Women, Planned Parenthood, Feminist Majority, NARAL Pro Choice America, American Civil Liberties Union, Black Women’s Health Imperative and National Latina Institute for Reproductive Health. Rounding off the list of “Ms” nominations this year is two of labor’s own. The AFL-CIO’s Karen Nussbaum and Rachna Choudhry were recognized by union women for their work with women’s, civil rights, community and religious organizations to bring into focus what needs to be changed to balance work and family, make ends meet and get ahead.
Washington DC

Every year, in celebration of Women’s History Month, the Metro DC Chapter holds its Gloria T. Johnson Awards Luncheon in March. This year, the chapter honored Joyce D. Miller (UNITE!), Pat Scarcelli (UFCW) and Metro Washington, DC AFL-CIO President Jos Williams.

The Johnson Award honors the outstanding achievements of labor leaders who have dedicated their lifetime to leadership and service. According to DC Chapter President Sheila Love, who introduced the honorees, former CLUW National President Joyce Miller is a woman of “firsts.”

Miller was the first woman to serve on the AFL-CIO Executive Council. “Think of what it must have been like being the first,” Love said. “I’m sure it wasn’t easy. But through it all, Joyce made a way for all of us to achieve great heights. There are no limits on what we can do. By honoring these trailblazers, we are not only honoring the best of our own, we are honoring the best of ourselves.” Love added.

UFCW International Vice President Pat Scarcelli was also honored for her enduring legacy and long list of accomplishments. UFCW is the nation’s second largest union where Scarcelli also serves as the director of the union’s Legislative and Political Affairs Department. Formerly, Scarcelli directed the union’s Women’s Affairs Department where she implemented programs on women’s equality issues. Metro DC AFL-CIO President Jos Williams was also honored.

Williams, a long-time friend of Gloria Johnson’s, credited her with encouraging his involvement in the labor union movement and serving as a strong foundation for his success.

Detroit

“Rap It Up” — HIV-AIDS Conference

African-American and Latino women are disproportionately affected by HIV/AIDS and account for more than 77 percent of the cases in women. Of the 15,500 cases in Michigan, 6960 live in Detroit. HIV/AIDS is the fifth leading cause of death among women ages 25 to 44, and the third leading cause of death among African-American women in this age group.


Philadelphia

Unfortunately, mainstream American media doesn’t cover much about the working poor. Out of curiosity and concern, writer Barbara Ehrenreich went under cover as an unskilled worker to see how low-wage workers make ends meet.

After working at Wal-Mart and as a waitress, she concluded that the working poor should be afforded more health care, housing assistance, and respect. Her book “Nickel and Dimed” was...
**LOCAL NEWS**

transformed into a theater production and Philadelphia CLUW packed the house for a dress rehearsal fundraiser earlier this year.

**Chicago**

CLUW joined area labor leaders as they picketed in front of the Chicago headquarters of Halliburton and Kellogg Brown and Root in February. The informational picket was organized to bring attention to war profiteering practices by anti-union U.S. corporations with close ties to the Bush Administration.

![Image of CLUW members participating in a workshop](image1)

**THANK YOUS**

CLUW wishes to thank the following contributing ($50), supporting ($75) and sustaining ($150) members. To become a special member of CLUW, please make your check payable to CLUW and mail to the CLUW National Treasurer, Susan L. Phillips, 1925 K Street, NW, #402, Washington, DC 20006. Your contribution will help empower women through the labor movement.

**Contributing Members**
- Melody Dawn Robinson, AFSCME
- Grace Lomba, AFT
- Myrtis Johnson, AFT
- Dr. Brenda L. Mitchell, AFT
- Donna L. Valentine, CWA
- Susan Fuldauer, OPEIU
- Dennis London, IAM
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- Russ Wittkop, IAM
- Jill McCullars, AFGE
- Allison Beck, IAM
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- Shirley Jean Taylor, APWU
- Patty Woodside, UAW
- Jerry Lozupone, WBCTC
- Barbara Walden, BCTGM
- Cheryl Eastburn, IAM
- Washington State Council 2

Grassroots, cont’d

Formed in late 2003 around the need for grassroots activism in communities, LCCA is using the collective strength of AFL-CIO constituencies such as CLUW to bring together broad segments of the community to discuss, analyze and assess policy issues that affect our lives. This year, it is targeting selected cities for mobilization and education projects to highlight some of the key issues and concerns that, in turn, can motivate citizens to actively participate in their communities and the election process. Other Town Hall meetings have occurred in Las Vegas, Detroit and Jacksonville and are scheduled in cities such as Albuquerque, Los Angeles, Baltimore, Atlanta, Columbus, Philadelphia and many more.

In addition to CLUW, the other LCCA organizations include A. Philip Randolph Institute, Asian Pacific American Labor Alliance, Coalition of Black Trade Unionists, Labor Council for Latin American Advancement and Pride at Work.

![Image of CLUW members](image2)

www.cluw.org
On April 20, CLUW chapters joined a national day of action against unfair pay. This day is symbolic because it is the point of time when a woman must work this year to match the pay of male counterparts from 2003.

According to the US Census Bureau, women are only paid 77 cents to each dollar earned by men. CLUW President Gloria Johnson said, “This is not just a women’s issue. This is a family issue. Equal pay for women raises family income so the whole family benefits.”

The wage gap is widest in the state of Wyoming where women only earn 63 cents to each dollar earned by men. Washington, DC has the most narrow wage gap at 86 cents to the dollar.

The AFL-CIO estimates that over a 40-year career, the average 25 year old today would earn $523,000 less than the average man. “Not only does this effect present day income, it affects retirement security and long-term economic security,” Johnson added.

Johnson feels that equal pay protects older workers. “As we look for ways to address the long-term solvency of Social Security, a simple measure like equal pay can do a great deal to keep women more secure in the future,” Johnson said.

Although Equal Pay Day is a day of national awareness, the campaign for pay equity must be a year round effort. From luncheons, press conferences, leafleting, and issuing public proclamations, to releasing reports, introducing legislation, holding rallies and special events, CLUW chapters remain at the frontline of the battle for equal pay.

Learn how you can lead the fight by contacting the National Committee on Pay Equity at www.pay-equity.org

CLUW Membership Application

Name __________________________
Address _________________________
City, State, ZIP ____________________
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Enclosed are my CLUW dues for one year.

☐ $30  ☐ $15 (retiree)
I am a member of a bona fide collective bargaining organization.
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