

2011 Seth Slocum honoree is Chere Chaney

Chere was born and raised in Harrisonville, Missouri where she also attended high school. She married early and moved to Carthage, Mo. where she got a job at Big Smith Manufacturing plant and joined her first union International Ladies Garment Workers Union (ILGWU) remember the song "Look for the Union Label". The factory looked a lot like the one that Norma Ray worked in. She attended every union meeting because if she didn't she had to pay a fine.

She returned to the Kansas City area in early 1966 and got a job at Lake City, worked 6 months and got laid off. She was lucky and got a job at the Western Electric plant in Lee's Summit and became a member of Communication Workers of America (CWA) Local 6450. She was hired in June 1967 and CWA went out on strike in July. She fell in love with the union family as she watched every member care about each other during that strike and she learned what real solidarity meant.

Being very active in her local, Chere held many positions, steward, chief steward and legislative chair. She was active in the "Buy America" committee and involved in many anti-NAFTA rallies and marches. She traveled with thousands of other union members in 1978 to Jefferson City, Missouri to defeat the "Right to Work" legislation, never expecting to see it happen again in her lifetime.

Chere joined the greater Kansas City chapter of the Coalition of Labor Union Women in 1980 and has held many positions locally, statewide, and nationally. She helped organize the largest garage sale in the history of the labor movement so the Chapter could charter a bus for a trip/march in D.C. for the "Family Medical Leave Act".

She received her AA after going to college at night; first at Longview Community College and then transferred to Rockhurst University where she majored in Marketing. She selected this major because she wanted the skills to market the union movement since she believes everyone should be organized. She also is a graduate of the Labor-Management 13 week course and recommends it to all union members.

From 1988 -1998 Chere was the labor representative for the Mid-America Regional Council's Childcare Committee. She received an award from the Department of Labor's Women's Bureau for her work with labor and business about on-site childcare. She served as labor's rep on the Private Industry Council and also on the Labor-Management Council of Greater Kansas City.

In 1988 Western Electric continued to ship work overseas, and rather than being laid off, Chere transferred to the consumer/marketing side of the business. She then became a member of CWA Local 6450. Chere held many positions at Local 6450; steward, chief steward, executive vice president, and in 1993 became president over the 4000 member local. This would also be the year she was elected the Lee's Summit City Council and the Treasurer of "The Right to Truth Labor/Media Committee. She was an executive board member for the Greater Kansas City AFL-CIO and a board member for the Institute of Labor Studies.

In 1999 AT&T offered a buyout and Chere took the money and ran, but not from CWA. She is still a dues paying member of her local 6450 and currently the Chair of the Legislative Committee.

The "nurses campaign" needed a community organizer and hired Chere in 2000. It was a tough fight and one we could not win. That same year she was elected to the Missouri AFL-CIO Executive Board where she still serves. Governor Mel Carnahan had appointed her to the Census 2000 Complete Count Committee. Chere was elected to Jackson County Democratic Committee and still serves as committee woman.

There is never a picket, rally, or march that she does not try to attend. She is a true believer in social and economic justice and knows the union movement is the only way to achieve it.

Chere has really never retired from the union movement and still serves on many boards;

Mo AFL-CIO Executive Board

CWA 6450 Executive Board

Greater Kansas City Coalition of Labor Union Women Executive Board

Labor/Media Right to Truth Executive Board

Missouri Association for Social Welfare Board (MASW)

Greater Kansas City Women's Political Caucus Board

Alliance for Retired Americans Board

Missouri Coalition of Labor Union Women – Vice President

*There have been many awards bestowed upon Chere, here are a few;
Women Legislators of Missouri Award – Recognized for her work in the labor movement.*

Democrat Woman of the Year Award

Dedication of Service Award – City of Lee's Summit, Mo.

Chere is the proud mother of two sons; Gregory Chaney and Christopher Perdue, and five wonderful grandchildren Dillon, Shelby, Jacob, Nash, and Cameron.



COALITION OF LABOR UNION WOMEN

Greater Kansas City Chapter

**The Greater Kansas City Chapter of CLUW
Congratulates one of our own.....**

CHERE CHANEY

**Receiver of the Seth Slocum Union Advocate
of the Year Award.**

Congratulations Chere!

- ◆ **Michele Newby, President**
- ◆ **Janet Kirk, 1st Vice President**
- ◆ **Chere Chaney, 2nd Vice President**
- ◆ **Norma Raya , Treasurer**
- ◆ **Shirley Hudson, Corresponding Secretary**
- ◆ **Julie Weiss, Recording Secretary**