

**Coalition of Labor Union Women
16th Biennial Convention
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COMBAT GENDER AND AGE DISCRIMINATION AT WORK

Television, radio and digital media reflects who we are to ourselves and to the world. Not only are they venues for reporting news, the events of the day, drama, comedy and reality programming, these outlets are also venues for employment. And, as such, they are charged to provide equal access to employment opportunities and to not discriminate.

The challenges we face in fighting discrimination, promoting equality in the workplace and advancing the most diverse depiction of the American scene in news and entertainment outlets are as daunting today as at any time in the past. It is more than stories and plotlines, it's about jobs. Challenging real and systemic discrimination in these areas is a fundamental civil rights issue.

A recent survey conducted by the American Federation of Television and Radio Artists looked at on-air television newsmen at thirty stations in six major cities, and broke this information down by gender and age. Of the almost 900 employees, the sampling found that women constituted only 47% of the workforce, and only one in five were women over 40. According to a Radio Television Digital News Association/Hofstra University Annual Survey, the percentage of women in TV news and women TV news directors declined. Women as a percentage of the entire TV news workforce have consistently stayed at or under 40% for the last decade. In Radio, 59.1% of stations' news teams are staffed solely with men.

AFTRA is concerned about these findings and the potential discrimination they may uncover; especially as there have been several age and gender discrimination lawsuits that have led to major jury decisions and judgments in this area. Most notably, last August, a Miami-Dade jury awarded former WSVN-Fox 7 healthcare reporter Marilyn Mitzel nearly \$1 million in compensation after finding that she was fired because management thought she was too old to be on television. She was only 52 when she was fired from her station.

While lead roles in television entertainment have increased for women over 40, this growth has not been translated across all categories of employment, as opportunities for women generally begin to decline around the time they reach their forties. A recent breakdown of 2009-2011 television network and cable programs produced under AFTRA contracts looked at 103 shows representing 709 total episodes. Of the almost 14,000 roles, women were hired only 40% of the time, and women over 40 stood at only 12%.

In response to this challenge, delegates at AFTRA's 2009 National Convention unanimously approved a resolution creating a campaign to increase access and employment at all levels and in all categories of work for women over 40, as well as all seniors, in order to stem the tide of discrimination in an increasingly challenging work environment. Further, AFTRA's National Board of Directors recently created a "Combatting Age Discrimination in Broadcasting" national campaign to focus on heightened levels of discrimination against women and women over 40 in the broadcast news arena.

Understanding this issue extends beyond AFTRA's areas of jurisdiction. The foundation of

unionism is Strength through Solidarity.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:

The Coalition of Labor Union Women endorses and supports AFTRA's campaigns to challenge gender and age discrimination in the workplace in all contracts and in all categories of work.

CLUW Chapters and members, in the spirit of solidarity, will challenge gender and age discrimination in their work sectors and monitor signs of hidden, yet, systemic discrimination.

CLUW will transmit this Resolution to the AFL-CIO so that all affiliate unions are reminded of the need to be vigilant and responsive to gender and age discrimination, especially against women over 40, and to promote educational programs within their unions and Central Labor Councils so members know their rights and know how to respond when egregious discrimination takes place.