

2018 New York City Labor Notes

Troublemakers School

September 29, 9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. ♦ James Baldwin High School

8:30 - 9:00 a.m. Registration *(coffee and light snacks)*

Opening Plenary 9:00 - 10:00 a.m. *(1st floor auditorium)*

Jia Lee, Movement of Rank-and-file Educators
Mark Cohen, Teamsters for a Democratic Union
Chair: Alexandra Bradbury, Labor Notes

Morning Workshops: 10:15 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. *(3rd floor)*

1. Secrets of a Successful Organizer: Beating Apathy
2. Secrets of a Successful Organizer: Assembling Your Dream Team
3. Secrets of a Successful Organizer: Turning an Issue into a Campaign
4. Runaway Inequality: How Does Financial Strip-Mining Affect Us?
5. Assertive Grievance Handling
6. Defending Immigrant Workers and Communities
7. The Militant History of New York City's Public Sector Unions
8. Race and Labor: Let's Talk About It
9. Researching Your Employer
10. Beating Back Bullying Bosses *(1st floor auditorium)*



12:00 - 1:30 p.m. Lunch *(provided, in cafeteria, 6th floor)*

Afternoon Workshops: 1:30 - 3:15 p.m. *(3rd floor)*

1. Secrets of a Successful Organizer: Beating Apathy
2. Secrets of a Successful Organizer: Assembling Your Dream Team
3. Secrets of a Successful Organizer: Turning an Issue into a Campaign
4. Runaway Inequality: Institutional Racism Helps the 1% Stay in Power
5. Legal Rights of Union Stewards
6. Direct Action
7. Fighting the Lean Machine
8. Organizing under *Janus*
9. Building a Winning Contract Campaign
10. Running for Union Office *(1st floor auditorium)*



Closing Plenary 3:15 - 4:00 p.m. *(1st floor auditorium)*

Abraham Lobe, New York Taxi Workers Alliance
Jewel Tolliver, Melissa Brown, & Mike Clancy, Count Me In
Chair: Samantha Winslow, Labor Notes

Afterwards: Social Hour at Peter McManus, NW Corner of 19th Street

Morning Workshops

MORNING 10:15 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

1. Secrets of a Successful Organizer: Beating Apathy

Are you beating your head against the wall trying to get people involved? This workshop is for you. Hear success stories about how others have turned their workplaces around and turned apathy into action. Learn practical organizing tools for engaging your co-workers, taking action, and getting results.

Laura Gabby, Carpenters Local 157

Kevin Prosen, MORE, United Federation of Teachers

2. Secrets of a Successful Organizer: Assembling Your Dream Team

Your workplace may feel like an unorganized mess, but the truth is you're not starting from zero. There's organization there already—though it might have nothing to do with the union. Learn how to map out the existing networks in your workplace, identify the leaders in those networks, and then knit them together into an organizing committee.

Jason Kozlowski, University of West Virginia

Marybeth Seitz-Brown, New York NewsGuild

3. Secrets of a Successful Organizer: Turning an Issue into a Campaign

Everybody has complaints and frustrations, but an organizer has the skills to turn problems into opportunities. Learn how to sort the issues you hear from co-workers, bring people together, and make an escalating plan to solve the problem.

Nico Fuentes, Retail Union

Lena Solow, Communications Workers 1180

4. Runaway Inequality: How Does Financial Strip-Mining Affect Us?

How can unions help create a social movement to take on Wall Street's economic and political dominance? This interactive workshop provides a crash course in how the expanding power of corporate America is behind the rapidly growing gap between the super-rich and ordinary workers.

Dan Kozak, Communications Workers 1120

Nick Hoh, Communications Workers 1104

5. Assertive Grievance Handling

Fighting grievances isn't only about how well you argue your case. It's also about organizing members to build pressure on management. This workshop for stewards and union reps will focus on how to win creatively without going to arbitration—or sometimes without even filing a grievance. We'll discuss the do's and don'ts of settling grievances as well.

Marsha Niemeijer, New York State Nurses

6. Defending Immigrant Workers and Communities

Employers and politicians are attempting to divide workers and weaken the labor movement by attacking immigrants. Learn how unions and worker centers from Nashville to Manhattan are fighting back—and how you can too.

Rosa Ponce, Alianza Laboral / Worker Resource Center, Nashville

Raymond Queliz, Association of Legal Aid Attorneys

Lupita (Denise) Romero, Legal Services Staff Association

Daniel Gross, Brandworkers

7. The Militant History of New York City's Public Sector Unions

New York's Taylor Law bans public sector strikes... but workers don't always let that stop us! After all, the only illegal strike is an unsuccessful strike. This workshop, featuring veterans of the 1970 postal strike and 2005 subway strike, will examine the history of grassroots militancy in New York City and the lessons for us today.

Priscilla Murolo, labor historian

Timothy Schermerhorn, Transport Workers Union

Eleanor Bailey, New York Metro Postal Workers Union

8. Race and Labor: Let's Talk About It

How does racism show up in our workplaces, and even in our unions? What are some strategies to confront it through our bargaining, organizing, union culture, and community connections? And what can you say to union sisters and brothers who aren't convinced racial justice has anything to do with union politics? This workshop will spark conversations that the labor movement needs.

Bianca Cunningham, Labor Notes

9. Researching Your Employer

It's easy to drown in all the corporate information you can find on the Internet. Learn how to drill down to the specific information you need, find the primary sources, summarize and make sense of what you've found, and turn your corporate research into a comprehensive campaign strategy.

David Hancock, union researcher

Ben Bennett, union researcher

10. Beating Back Bullying Bosses (1st floor auditorium)

The rise of "bully culture" in our workplaces has led to a whole range of serious problems—fear, anxiety, isolation, division, and shame—and a general sense of hopelessness and powerlessness. Come learn about successful campaigns against bullying bosses, and think through what you can do in your workplace.

Ellen David Friedman, Labor Notes

Afternoon Workshops

AFTERNOON 1:30 - 3:15 p.m.

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Laura Gabby, Carpenters Local 157

Kevin Prosen, MORE, United Federation of Teachers

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Nico Fuentes, Retail Union

Lena Solow, Communications Workers 1180

4. Runaway Inequality: Institutional Racism Helps the 1% Stay in Power

Elites use racial division to maintain the political and economic structures that keep them in power. This workshop will explore how unions can build a multi-racial movement capable of taking on both the 1% and institutional racial discrimination.

Dan Kozak, Communications Workers 1120

Nick Hoh, Communications Workers 1104

5. Legal Rights of Union Stewards

Learn how stewards can enforce their legal rights to solicit and investigate grievances, distinguish between grievances and unfair labor practices, use information requests, and defend members at disciplinary interviews and grievance hearings.

Gay Semel, labor attorney

6. Direct Action

Direct action stops business as usual. From the shop floor to the streets, worker activists are using direct action to make their demands heard. Hear how activists train for, prepare, and take direct action in a wide range of campaigns.

Mary Clinton, Communications Workers

7. Fighting the Lean Machine

It started in the auto factories, but now “Lean Production,” or the Toyota model, is used in many industries—hospitals, schools, package delivery—to take power away from workers under the guise of cooperation with management. Speakers will describe how lean techniques such as just-in-time production, continuous improvement, speed-up, management by stress, standardization, deskilling, outsourcing, technological surveillance, teams, and two-tier are transforming their workplaces for the worse. Learn to decode management's buzzwords and help your co-workers recognize what's behind management's latest employee-participation scheme.

William Johnson, United Federation of Teachers

Ken Reiman, Teamsters for a Democratic Union

Sarah Dowd, New York State Nurses

8. Organizing under Janus

The Supreme Court case *Janus v. AFSCME* imposed “right-to-work” conditions on the public sector nationally, but that doesn't have to mean game over for your union. Get organized in this interactive training. You'll brush up on the terminology, learn how to talk with your co-workers about membership, and hear how unions have adapted and built power even in a mandatory open shop.

Samantha Winslow, Labor Notes

9. Building a Winning Contract Campaign

Learn how to start building a member-focused campaign long before your contract expires. We will discuss member mobilization, campaign escalation, creative tactics, and other building blocks of a good campaign, including bringing in community allies and taking the fight directly to management.

Pam Galpern, Communications Workers 1101

10. Running for Union Office (1st floor auditorium)

Learn how to build an effective campaign team, increase your visibility, identify voters, deal with negative attacks, avoid common mistakes, and get out the votes.

David Levin, Teamsters for a Democratic Union

Save the Date:
2020 Labor Notes Conference
April 17-19, 2020
Chicago, Illinois