



# MILWAUKEE TROUBLEMAKERS SCHOOL

**Saturday, October 4, 2025**

Steamfitters Local 601, 3300 S 103rd Street, Milwaukee, WI 53227

**8:30am-9:25am: Registration and coffee** *Main Hall*

**9:30-10:15am: Welcome and Opening Session**

*Main Hall*

- Kari Thompson, Labor Notes
- David Eppelsheimer, MTEA
- Pam Fendt, Milwaukee Area Labor Council
- Kas Schwerdtfeger, IBT Local 344

**10:30am-12pm: Morning Workshops**

*(See page 3 for more details)*

1. Secrets of a Successful Organizer: Beating Apathy

*Room 25*

2. New Organizing *Room 27*

3. Secrets of a Successful Organizer: Assembling Your Dream Team *Room 30*

4. Assertive Grievance Handling *Room 39*

**12-1pm: Lunch** *Main Hall*

## **COVID precautions**

Masking is encouraged and supported, but not required. We encourage everyone to test at home before and after the event.

## **Sponsored by Labor Notes**

Labor Notes is a media and organizing project that has been the voice of union activists who want to put the movement back in the labor movement since 1979.

Through our magazine, website, books, conferences, and workshops, we promote organizing and encourage connections between workers in different unions and communities to strengthen the labor movement—from the bottom up.

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## 1-2:30: Afternoon Workshops

*(See page 3 for more details)*

1. Secrets of a Successful Organizer: Turning an Issue into a Campaign *Room 25*
2. Labor History *Room 27*
3. Immigrant Rights *Room 30*
4. Doing Politics Differently *Room 39*

## 2:45-4pm: Closing session: Power Mapping to Build Our Strength *Main Hall*

- Kari Thompson, Labor Notes
- Barbara Madeloni, Labor Notes
- With songs led by Craig Siemsen

Workers, unions, our communities: we are facing profound attacks from the billionaire class. It is imperative that we organize to meet this moment and build a powerful labor movement- locally, regionally and nationally. In order to do this we need to assess: how much power do we have now? what power do those in opposition have? how much power do we need to win? This workshop will focus on developing the skills and relationships to analyze regional power in order to build the workers movement we need.

## 5pm: Afterparty

Brass Tap, 7808 W Layton Ave, Greenfield, WI.

Many thanks to our local sponsors:  
Milwaukee Area Labor Council  
Milwaukee Teachers Association  
LIUNA Local 113

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# Morning Workshops: 10:30am-12pm

## 1. Secrets of a Successful Organizer: Beating Apathy *Room 25*

Are you beating your head against the wall trying to get other workers involved? Hear success stories about those who've turned their workplaces around and turned apathy into action. Learn practical organizing tools for engaging your co-workers, taking action, and getting results.

*Anna Dvorak, MTEA  
Nic Onorato, MTEA*

## 2. New Organizing *Room 27*

*Interested in hearing from the workers who have expanded their Locals in the past few years? Representatives of Unions with recent organizing victories will share stories from their efforts, including timelines, tactics, and outcomes. Bring your questions on what worked and what didn't.*

*Michael Cloutheir, OPEIU Local 39- Pathinders  
Maddie Wentzel (she/her), Nurse Practitioner Planned Parenthood Wisconsin  
Adam Dudenhoefer, IAM Local 66  
Facilitator: Rhen Lutz, Steward WFNHP Local 5000 & MALC Exec Board member*

## 3. Secrets of a Successful Organizer: Assembling Your Dream Team *Room 30*

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.

*Barbara Madeloni, Labor Notes*

## 4. Assertive Grievance Handling *Room 39*

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 will focus on how to strategically use the grievance process to target management's pressure points, build more rank and file engagement, and get results without relying solely on your local officers or stewards.

*Don Taylor, AFT Local 223 & AFM Local 166  
Isaac Lauters, Teamsters Local 344 Steward*

*Organizations listed for identification purposes only.*



# Afternoon workshops: 1pm-2:30pm

## 1. Secrets of a Successful Organizer: Turning an Issue into a Campaign Room 25

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

*Kari Thompson, Labor Notes*

*Piper Hogan, WFNHP Local 5000*

## 2. Labor History Room 27

Today's labor activists have a lot to learn from the struggles of those who came before us. By studying our history, we can identify the strategies and tactics of labor that really work. This session will spotlight the UAW Local 248 at Allis-Chalmers, which launched some of the largest and most militant strikes in Wisconsin's history.

*Jacob Flom, Young Workers MALC*

*Jaclyn Kelly, Wisconsin Labor History Society*

*Organizations listed for identification purposes only.*

## 3. Immigrant Rights Room 30

Whether you're an immigrant or a frequent protester, knowing your rights, especially during our current political climate, is crucial to your safety in the streets and in your home. Learn how you can protect yourself and your fellow union siblings against ICE and other federal agencies' attacks on our communities, and hear from one union stepping up to defend immigrant workers in their workplace

*Luz Hernandez, MTEA*

*Julissa Velazquez, Milwaukee Labor Council*

## 4. Doing Politics Differently Room 39

Engaging with politics that help make worker lives better can be exhausting and hopeless feeling. Rather than focusing on what is going on at the federal level, here's how some locals are going all in at the local and state levels to start to chip away at some of the changes union workers need.

*Angelina Cruz, Racine Educators United, President, and State Representative AD 62; Ingrid Walker-Henry, MTEA President; Kent Miller, President/Business Manager WI Laborers' District Council; A.J. Zydzik, Racine Educators United, member & PAC chair.*



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