

# 2019 Labor Notes Upstate New York Troublemakers School

March 23, 9am - 4pm ♦ Plumbers and Steamfitters Building

8am - 9am: Registration (coffee and light snacks)

9am: Welcome - Pete Meyers, Tompkins County Workers Center

9:15am: Opening Panel: Expect the Unexpected  
*Samantha Mason, Workers United Local 2833, Gimme! Coffee, Yana Kalmyka, People's Organizing Collective, Cornell, Scott Slawson, President, United Electrical Workers Local 506, Erie, PA*  
Facilitator: *Ellen David Friedman, Labor Notes*



10am - 12pm: Workshop Block 1

1. Secrets of a Successful Organizer: Beating Apathy
2. Organizing in High Turnover, Low Wage Jobs
3. Race and Labor: Let's Talk About It
4. What's Wage Theft and How Do We Fight it?
5. Assertive Grievance Handling

12pm - 1pm: Lunch (provided)

1pm - 3pm: Workshop Block 2

1. Secrets of a Successful Organizer 2: Mapping Your Workplace and Assembling Your Dream Team
2. Secrets of a Successful Organizer 3: Turning an Issue into a Campaign
3. Creating Resistance: Using Satire, Parody, and Humor in Organizing
4. How We Win Livable Wages
5. Dealing with Bullying Bosses

3pm - 4pm: Closing Activity: Community Union Organizers

After-party: *Join us at Liquid State, 620 W. Green Street, for drinks. Bring your own food, or we'll collectively order some pizzas.*



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Save the Date:  
2020 Labor Notes  
Conference  
April 17-19, 2020  
Chicago, Illinois  
[www.labornotes.org](http://www.labornotes.org)

## Morning Workshops

### 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. Learn practical organizing tools for engaging your co-workers, taking action, and getting results. You'll emerge with ideas for how to diagnose the issues in your workplace and turn apathy into action.

**Dan DiMaggio**, *Labor Notes*

**Patrick Young**, *Cornell School of Labor and Industrial Relations, former Steelworkers organizer*

### 2. Organizing in High Turnover, Low Wage Jobs

In the richest country in the world, why are so many of us barely able to scrape by on poverty wages? Why are so many of our jobs terrible? What makes workers want to quit and move on, rather than stick together and demand better wages and working conditions? Come hear from some workers in these kinds of jobs who've made the choice to stand and fight. Get inspired and learn how you can do this too.

**Kerrie Gordon**, *Green Star SEED Organizing Committee*

**Sophie Tantillo**, *Workers United Local 2833, Gimme! Coffee*

**Chandler Smith**, *former Collegetown Bagels worker*

**Facilitator: Ellen David Friedman**, *Labor Notes*

### 3. 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*

**Patrick Weisansal**, *Communications Workers Local 1168*

### 4. What's Wage Theft and How Do We Fight It?

What is wage theft, and how does it show up in different workplaces? You'll learn the basics of the law, explore some common examples, and then have the chance to discuss different strategies to win "stolen wages" and to prevent wage theft where you work.

**Carlos Gutierrez**, *Tompkins County Workers Center*

**Rob Brown**, *Tompkins County Workers Center*

### 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 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.

**Joe DeManuelle-Hall**, *Labor Notes*

## Afternoon Workshops

### 1. Secrets of a Successful Organizer 2: Mapping Your Workplace and 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 out 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 knit them together into an organizing committee.

**Bianca Cunningham**, *Labor Notes*

**Patrick Weisansal**, *Communications Workers Local 1168*

### 2. Secrets of a Successful Organizer 3: 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 your co-workers, bring people together, and make an escalating plan to solve the problem.

**Joe DeManuelle-Hall**, *Labor Notes*

**Mary Nowocien**, *Communications Workers Local 1168*

**Elaine Morley**, *Communications Workers Local 1168*

### 3. Creating Resistance: Using Satire, Parody, and Humor in Organizing

We may not always think of it this way, but organizing workers is a creative act. Come explore your creative side and discuss how we can have some fun while fighting the boss, reviving memberships, or organizing from scratch. You'll walk away with real examples from other organizers and plenty of ideas about using theatrical tactics.

**Korbin Richards**, one of the original organizers of the Gimme! Coffee Union

### 4. How We Win Livable Wages

There are many ways to fight for a Living Wage. In this workshop we'll explore successful campaigns that the TCWC has won, or played a strong supportive role, in both unionized and non-unionized workplaces. We'll also look at the campaign to raise the local minimum wage to a living wage, and how workers can make this happen.

**Pete Meyers**, *Tompkins County Workers Center*

**Helen English**, *Education Support Professionals of Ithaca-NYSUT*

**Stanley McPherson & Milton Webb**, *former Tompkins County Recycling Center workers*

### 5. Dealing with Bullying Bosses

No matter where you work, or what kind of job you do, chances are that you've had run-in with a bullying boss... or that you've seen your co-workers bullied by a boss. This is nothing we should stand for—but the question is how we change it. We'll discuss how to assess the balance of power in a worksite, how to overcome fear, how to build a group of co-workers to fight back, and how to bring dignity to the work environment.

**Matt Stupak**, *Workers United Local 2833, Gimme! Coffee*

**Ellen David Friedman**, *Labor Notes*