



THE INTERNATIONAL REFUGEE CRISIS

May 18, 2016

SPEAKERS

Mark Hetfield

President and CEO, HIAS

Mark Hetfield is President and CEO of HIAS. He comes to the position after a 25-year career, much of it served at HIAS, most recently as the agency's senior vice president of policy and programs. An expert in refugee and immigration law, policy, and programs, Hetfield has led HIAS' transformation from an organization focused on Jewish immigrants to a global agency assisting refugees of all faiths and ethnicities. As a result, HIAS currently is a major implementing partner of the United Nations Refugee Agency and the U.S. Department of State. Under Hetfield's leadership, HIAS has gained international prominence and recognition as the pre-eminent voice of the American Jewish community on refugee and immigration issues.

Hetfield began his career as a HIAS caseworker in Rome, Italy assisting Jewish refugee applicants from the Soviet Union. He later rejoined the agency as its Washington, D.C. representative, and again as its director of international operations. Between his roles at HIAS, Hetfield served as senior advisor on refugee issues at the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom, where he directed a congressionally-authorized study on the treatment of asylum seekers. Released in 2005, it is the most comprehensive study on expedited removal to date. Hetfield and his team were recognized for their work with the Arthur C. Helton Award for the Advancement of Human Rights, presented by the American Immigration Lawyers Association.

Prior to these positions, Hetfield adjudicated appeals at the Immigration and Naturalization Service. In 1994, he was posted to the U.S. Embassy in Haiti, when the country was under the control of the military junta. Earlier in his career, Hetfield practiced immigration law in Washington, D.C.. He graduated cum laude with a juris doctor degree from Georgetown University, from which he also holds a Bachelor of Science in Foreign Service.

Shelly Pitterman

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees' (UNHCR) regional representative for the United States and the Caribbean

Shelly Pitterman is the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees' Regional Representative to the United States and the Caribbean, based in Washington, D.C. Pitterman joined UNHCR in 1984 as a program officer in Sudan and has managed UNHCR field and country operations in Guinea, Burundi and Kenya. He also served as the Director of Operations in Jordan for the UN Relief and Works Agency. Mr. Pitterman has held positions in UNHCR's Geneva headquarters, including as Chief of Resettlement and as Director of Human Resources Management before taking up his assignment in the United States in 2013. Pitterman went to Brandeis University and earned his M.A. and Ph.D from Northwestern University.

Jennifer Podkul

Director of Policy, Kids in Need of Defense (KIND)

Jennifer Podkul is an international human rights lawyer and expert on child migration in the United States. Prior to joining KIND, Podkul was a senior program officer at the Women's Refugee Commission where she researched issues facing vulnerable migrants seeking protection in the United States and advocated for improved treatment. She is a national expert on issues affecting immigrant children, has published articles, handbooks and reports on U.S. immigration law, and she presents regularly as an expert at various conferences, briefings, and professional trainings. She co-authored "Forced From Home: The Lost Boys and Girls from Central America" and was a contributing author to "Childhood, Migration, and Human Rights in Central and North America: Causes, Policies, Practices, and Challenges." Jennifer has taught child migration at Georgetown Law Center's Human Rights Institute. Podkul began her legal career as an attorney at Ayuda in Washington, D.C. first as an Equal Justice Works Fellow and later as a KIND Fellow. She served as a Peace Corps volunteer in Honduras, holds a B.A. in American Studies and Spanish from Franklin and Marshall College and a J.D. with honors from the Washington College of Law, American University, where she was a Public Interest/Public Service Scholar.

Jay Winik

Best selling author and Historian

Jay Winik, one of the nation's leading historians, is renowned for his gifted and creative approaches to history. His latest book is *1944: FDR and the Year That Changed History*. He is also the author of *The New York Times* and #1 bestseller *April 1865*, which received wide international acclaim and became an award-winning documentary on the History Channel. His prior book, *The Great Upheaval: America and the Birth of the Modern World 1788-1800*, was also a *New York Times* bestseller.

Winik's articles and commentary have been widely published, including in the *New York Times*, the *Washington Post*, *The Boston Globe*, *The Los Angeles Times*, and the *Wall Street Journal* Leisure and Arts page, as well as its op-ed page, *Time* magazine, the *Smithsonian* magazine, the *American Heritage* magazine, *The Huffington Post*, *Parade*, and numerous other scholarly and popular publications. For nearly two decades he had variously been a Senior Scholar of History and Public Policy and a Visiting Professor at the University of Maryland's School of Public Policy and also has taught at Yale and George Washington University; earlier he had had a distinguished government career in national security and foreign policy, including advising two Secretaries of Defense and helping to create the landmark United Nations Plan for ending the Cambodian civil war.

Winik is a graduate of Yale College, and holds an M.Sc. with distinction from the London School of Economics and a Ph.D. from Yale University. He is a member of the Council on Foreign Relations, is an elected Fellow of the Society of American Historians, and served or serves on the Governing Council of the National Endowment for the Humanities, a presidential appointment, as well as the boards for *American Heritage* magazine and the journal, *World Affairs*; he is also a trustee or advisory board member of a number of non-profit boards.

HOSTS

Stuart Appelbaum

International President, Jewish Labor Committee and Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Union, UFCW

Stuart Appelbaum first became involved in the labor movement because he believed that the best way to end injustice is by organizing people for change. As President of the Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Union (RWDSU) since 1998, he has been a transformative labor leader and improved the lives of thousands of workers across the country. Under his leadership the union has secured contracts for retail workers and other workers that have raised industry standards for scheduling, wages, benefits, and a variety of job protections. Appelbaum has championed new models of organizing, and has greatly increased the influence of the RWDSU and UFCW as forces for economic justice and social progress.

In 2010, Appelbaum oversaw the successful strike at Mott's Applesauce in upstate New York, which led to a strong new contract with wage hikes and benefit increases for more than 300 RWDSU members. To bridge the gap between union and nonunion retail, Appelbaum launched the Retail Action Project (RAP), a member-based organization with the mission of building worker power through collective action, elevating industry standards, and promoting family-sustaining jobs. Under Appelbaum's leadership, the RWDSU has also successfully pushed the New York City Council to pass the strongest municipal living wage law in the country, and secured numerous contracts for car wash workers, setting a new precedent for a previously unorganized workforce.

Appelbaum has been a leading national critic of Walmart's harmful business model and mistreatment of workers, and has defeated Walmart's numerous efforts in recent years to enter New York City. A strong believer in the importance of political action and engagement, Appelbaum is an active member of the Democratic National Committee, serving on its Executive Committee, and as Vice Chair of the DNC Labor Council and has been elected a delegate to every Democratic National Convention since 1992. In 2008, he served as a member of the Electoral College as an Obama elector from New York.

Appelbaum is a Vice President of the national AFL-CIO and a member of the Federation's Executive Council. He is also the President of the Jewish Labor Committee (JLC), the voice of the Jewish community in the labor movement and the voice of the labor movement in the Jewish community. Appelbaum is also an officer of two global union federations: IUF and UNI. Before joining the RWDSU, he worked for the Michigan State AFL-CIO. Prior to that, he served as Chief House Counsel of the DNC, and as Executive Assistant to the Connecticut Secretary of the State. Appelbaum graduated with honors from Harvard Law School, and summa cum laude from Brandeis University and he is a member of the bar of Connecticut.

Randi Weingarten

President, American Federation of Teachers and Albert Shanker Institute

RANDI WEINGARTEN is president of the 1.6 million-member American Federation of Teachers, AFL-CIO, which represents teachers; paraprofessionals and school-related personnel; higher education faculty and staff; nurses and other healthcare professionals; local, state and federal government employees; and early childhood educators. Prior to her election as AFT president in 2008, Weingarten served for 12 years as president of the United Federation of Teachers, AFT Local 2, representing approximately 200,000 educators in the New York City public school system, as well as home child care providers and other workers in health, law and education.

Weingarten has launched major efforts to place real education reform high on the nation's and her union's agendas. She created the AFT Innovation Fund, a groundbreaking initiative to support sustainable, innovative and collaborative education reform projects developed by members and their local unions. At Weingarten's direction, the AFT developed a model to transform teacher evaluations from a way of simply rating teachers to a tool for continuous improvement and feedback, and is using this model to align tenure and due process so that tenure serves as a guarantee of fairness, not of a job for life. Weingarten led an AFT committee that called for all prospective teachers to meet a high entry standard—as in medicine or law—so that they're prepared from the day they enter the classroom.

Weingarten oversaw the development of the AFT's Quality Education Agenda, which advocates for reforms grounded in evidence, equity, scalability and sustainability. She promotes what she calls "solution-driven unionism"—an approach to collective bargaining and collective action that unites the interests of union members and those they serve in the pursuit of solutions that benefit students, schools and communities.

The AFT and a broad array of parent and community partners have collaborated on events across the country to advance a community- and educator-driven agenda for public school reform. Weingarten spearheaded the development by the AFT and British partner TES Connect of Share My Lesson, the United States' largest free collection of educational resources created by teachers, for teachers. Weingarten and the AFT lead a partnership to transform McDowell County, W.Va., one of the poorest counties in the United States. The AFT has developed a partnership with First Book to provide free and reduced-price books to children.

In 2012-13, Weingarten served on an education reform commission convened by New York Gov. Andrew Cuomo, which made a series of recommendations to improve teaching and learning. She was appointed to the Equity and Excellence Commission, a federal advisory committee chartered by Congress to examine and make recommendations concerning the disparities in educational opportunities.

For 10 years, while president of the UFT, Weingarten chaired New York City's Municipal Labor Committee, an umbrella organization for the city's 100-plus public sector unions. From 1986 to 1998, Weingarten served as counsel to UFT president Sandra Feldman, taking a lead role in contract negotiations and enforcement, and in lawsuits in which the union fought for adequate school funding and building conditions. A teacher of history at Clara Barton High School in Brooklyn's Crown Heights neighborhood from 1991 to 1997, Weingarten helped her students win several state and national awards debating constitutional issues. Elected as the local union's assistant secretary in 1995 and as treasurer two years later, she became UFT president after Feldman became president of the AFT, was elected to her first full term as UFT president in 1998 and was re-elected three times.

Weingarten holds degrees from Cornell University's School of Industrial and Labor Relations and the Cardozo School of Law. She is an active member of the Democratic National Committee and numerous professional, civic and philanthropic organizations.