

Co-sponsored by the *American Prospect*, *Dissent*, Georgetown University's Kalmanovitz Initiative for Labor and the Working Poor, and the Center for Innovation in Worker Organization (CIWO) in the Rutgers School of Management and Labor Relations

# The Future of American Labor: Initiatives for a New Era

#laborfuture

Friday, Feb. 8, and Saturday Feb. 9, 2019

## SPEAKERS

### **Kate Andrias, Professor of Law, University of Michigan Law School**

Professor Kate Andrias teaches and writes in the fields of constitutional law, labor law, and administrative law. Her current research focuses on the relationship between these areas of law and economic inequality and on questions of democratic governance. In 2016, Professor Andrias was the recipient of the Law School's L. Hart Wright Award for Excellence in Teaching. She previously served as special assistant and associate counsel to the president of the United States, and as chief of staff of the White House Counsel's Office. While in the White House, she focused on constitutional and administrative law issues and on domestic policy, including labor and immigration. Prior to joining the Obama administration, Professor Andrias was an attorney in the political law and appellate litigation groups of Perkins Coie LLP. She remains active in pro bono cases, including *Epic Systems v. Lewis* (S.Ct. 2018), for amici Main Street Alliance, the American Sustainable Business Council, and Nick Hanauer; *MetLife Inc. v. Financial Stability Oversight Council* (D.D.C. 2015), for amici Professors of Law and Finance, arguing in support of the Financial Stability Oversight Council; and *Home Care Association of America v. Weil* (D.C. Cir. 2015), for amici Paraprofessional Health Institute et al., arguing in support of a Department of Labor regulation extending overtime and minimum wage protections to home care workers. Professor Andrias clerked for Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg of the U.S. Supreme Court and the Honorable Stephen Reinhardt of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit. She also has served as an Academic Fellow at Columbia Law School, and taught American Constitutional Law as a visiting professor at L'Institut d'Études Politiques (Sciences Po) in Paris. Professor Andrias graduated from Yale Law School, where she served on the *Yale Law Journal* and as a Coker Fellow. Prior to law school, Professor Andrias worked as a union organizer.

### **Craig Becker, General Counsel, AFL-CIO**

Craig Becker is general counsel to the AFL-CIO. Before assuming that position, Craig was a member of the National Labor Relations Board, having been appointed by President Obama in March 2010 and serving until January 2012. Before joining the Board, Craig served as associate general counsel to both the SEIU and the AFL-CIO. After law school Craig clerked for the Honorable Donald P. Lay, chief judge of the United States Court of Appeals for the Eighth Circuit and then became a partner in a Washington, D.C. law firm that was counsel to the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees. Craig was a professor of law at the UCLA School of Law between 1989 and 1994 and has also taught at the University of Chicago and Georgetown Law Schools. Craig has published numerous articles on labor and employment law in scholarly journals as well as in the popular press, and has argued labor and employment cases in virtually every federal court of appeals and before the United States Supreme Court. Craig graduated Yale College in 1978 and received his J.D. in 1981 from Yale Law School where he was an editor of the *Yale Law Journal*.

### **Mary Best, President, AFT-Oklahoma**

Mary Best was elected the president of AFT-Oklahoma in 2014. But she is first and foremost a classroom teacher and the daughter of a teacher. Best taught 33 for years at Oklahoma City's Northeast Academy. While teaching computer applications, she was named a finalist for Oklahoma City Public Schools Teacher of the Year, an Excellent Educator, OKC-AFT Union Teacher of the Year and the Oklahoma Career Tech Business Teacher of the Year. She became a union activist early in her teaching career. She served as her school's building representative before being elected as a union officer and member of the executive council of the Oklahoma City American Federation of Teachers (OKC-AFT). In 2008, Best became the AFT liaison for the union's Peer Assistance and

Review program and OKC-AFT's director of Professional Development. She received her Bachelor's degree from the University of Oklahoma and her Master's degree from the University of Central Oklahoma. In addition, Best is a National Board Certified Teacher and serves as a mentor to other teachers seeking National Board certification.

**Harvey Bischof, *President, Ontario Secondary School Teachers Federation, Canada***

An English teacher with the Durham District School Board, Harvey Bischof was first elected to the Provincial Executive as executive officer in 2007. He was elected three times as vice president and is currently in his first term as president, after being elected at the 2017 Annual Meeting of the Provincial Assembly. His current term will run until June 2019. He received his elementary and secondary education in Pickering, Ontario. After earning an Hons. B.A. from Trent University and an M.A. and B.Ed from Queen's University, he returned to Durham in 1990 to teach English at Henry Street High School and then at Exeter High School. He has served OSSTF/FEESO as branch president, provincial councillor, chief negotiator and as district president for OSSTF/FEESO District 13, Durham.

**Kate Bronfenbrenner, *Director of Labor Education Research, Senior Lecturer, Cornell University's School of Industrial and Labor Relations***

Kate Bronfenbrenner is the director of Labor Education Research and a senior lecturer at Cornell University's School of Industrial and Labor Relations, where she teaches and does research on union and employer strategies in organizing and bargaining in the global economy. She has also done extensive research on the impact of trade policy on employment, wages, and unionization. Prior to joining the Cornell faculty in 1993, Bronfenbrenner was an assistant professor in Labor Studies at Penn State University and worked for many years as an organizer and union representative with the United Woodcutters Association in Mississippi and with SEIU in Boston, as well as a welfare rights organizer in Seattle. Bronfenbrenner, who received her Ph.D. from Cornell in 1993, is the co-author and editor of several books on union strategies including *Global Unions: Challenging Transnational Capital Through Cross Border Campaigns*, *Union Organizing in the Public Sector: An Analysis of State and Local Elections*, *Organizing to Win: New Research on Union Strategies*, and *Ravenswood: The Steelworkers' Victory and the Revival of American Labor*. She has also published numerous articles, book chapters, and monographs on labor policy, employer and union behavior in public and private sector organizing and first contract campaigns, comprehensive campaigns, union leadership development, women and unions, and global trade and investment policy. Her most recent study on employers' serious unfair labor practices, "Election timing, employer freed speech, and unfair labor practice occurrence: whose rights are at risk?," played a central role in informing the NLRB's recent election streamlining rule changes. Because of her expertise, Bronfenbrenner has been brought in to testify as an expert witness at Labor Department and Congressional hearings and is frequently quoted in the major news media. She has been the recipient of many awards most notably one of Cornell's highest honors, the Carpenter Memorial Advising Award in 2012. A three-time Merrill Outstanding Educator, she was the William E. Weiss Lecturer at Skidmore in 2013, won the Labor Research Association's Ernest DeMaio Labor Award in 2009, IRRRA's Outstanding Young Scholar Award, ILR's 60th Anniversary Outstanding Contribution to Labor Education Award, the Labor Party's first Karen Silkwood Award in 1998, the New York Labor History Association's John Commerford Labor Education Award in 2000, the General Mills Foundation Award for Exemplary Undergraduate Teaching in 2003, the Robert N. Stern Mentoring Award in 2007, and was selected to give the 24th Memorial Sefton Lecture at the University of Toronto in 2006.

**Leo Casey, *Executive Director, Albert Shanker Institute***

Leo Casey is the executive director of the Albert Shanker Institute, a think tank established by the American Federation of Teachers which focuses on issues of public education, unionism and democracy promotion. He previously served as vice president from academic high schools for the United Federation of Teachers (UFT), New York City's 200,000 person strong teacher union. After a stint in political organizing, Casey began his teaching career at Clara Barton High School in the Crown Heights section of Brooklyn, where he taught for fifteen years. For ten years in a row, his classes—composed entirely of students of color, who were largely immigrant and predominantly female—won the New York City championship of the national We The People civics competition, winning the New York State championship four times and placing fourth in the nation twice. Casey won many additional awards for his teaching and was named national Social Studies Teacher of the Year for the American Teacher Awards in 1992. In 1999, Casey became a full-time UFT special representative for high schools and was

elected vice president from academic high schools in 2007. While vice president, he taught a class in Global Studies every day at Bard High School Early College in Manhattan. He has a long history of union involvement, including work as a United Farm Worker's organizer and participation in the first unionization drive of graduate teaching assistants in Canada, serving as vice president of the Graduate Student Union at the University of Toronto and on the executive of the Ontario Federation of Students. Casey led the design team for the UFT's Secondary Charter School, and led the UFT's work with charter schools, including charter organizing, while he served as UFT vice president.

**Larry Cohen, *Former President, Communications Workers of America***

Larry Cohen served as president of the 600,000 member Communications Workers of America from 2005-2015, and spent nearly all of his adult life as a member, organizer, and officer of the union. Larry was also the founding chair of Jobs with Justice, an organization that brings labor, community, student, and faith voices together at the national and local levels to win improvements in people's lives and shape the public discourse on workers' rights and the economy. Cohen was the founding chair of the Democracy Initiative, a coalition of more than 50 membership organizations working together on securing voting rights and removing big money from politics. He is a member of the Democratic National Committee, and was appointed by Senator Bernie Sanders as vice-chair of the Unity Reform Commission. On August 25, 2018, DNC members approved major reform proposals related to the 2020 presidential nominating process and national and state party transparency and democracy. Larry currently chairs the board of Our Revolution, the successor organization to Bernie 2016.

**Karen Curtis, *Deputy Director, International Labor Standards Department, ILO***

Karen Curtis, the deputy director of the International Labour Standards Department of the International Labour Organization, has specific responsibility for freedom of association matters, an area in which she has been working for nearly fifteen years. In January 2004, Curtis had the responsibility of chief of the Secretariat for the Commission of Inquiry, which was established to examine trade union rights violations in Belarus. She is a graduate of the University of Minnesota Law School and majored in Philosophy at Barnard College. She joined the ILO Standards Department in 1988 after serving a fellowship at the Minnesota Lawyers for International Human Rights.

**Elizabeth Davis, *President, Washington Teachers' Union***

Elizabeth A. Davis, the elected president of the Washington Teachers' Union (WTU), holds a Master's degree in Education Administration and Supervision and has taught in the District of Columbia Public Schools for 42 years, where she was recognized as a highly effective, award-winning educator. Davis, who has been hailed by the *Washington Post* and WTU members as a "game changer," has always been at the forefront of public education advocacy and reform. But more recently, she has transformed the WTU into a social justice, solution-driven organization that is dedicated to advancing and promoting quality education for all children, irrespective of their zip codes, improving teaching and learning conditions and aggressively amplifying the voice of teachers in the dialogue around issues of teaching and learning. Under her leadership, the WTU has reimaged itself as a powerful, solution-driven organization of professionals that is highly respected by its members and the DC community at large. Her writings about social justice teaching and teacher leadership have been published in three nationally acclaimed books; *Putting the Movement Back Into Civil Rights Teaching*; *Writing for A Change* and *How Teachers Become Leaders*. She is a member of: The National Save Our Schools Coalition; Jobs with Justice Executive Board; Mayor's DC Statehood Coalition; DC Labor/Management Partnership Council; Metropolitan Washington Labor Council Executive Board; Area Vice President MD State & DC AFL-CIO; American Federation of Teachers Program and Policy Council (PPC); Delta Kappa Gamma International Society of Women Educators; DC Community School Task Force; Advisory Panel to the National Commission on Writing in America's Schools.

**Keith Ewing, *Professor of Law, King's College London***

Keith Ewing has been a professor of public law at King's College, University of London since 1989. He previously taught at the Universities of Edinburgh (1978-83) and Cambridge (1983-89), and has held visiting positions in Australia, Canada and Japan. Ewing is recognized as a leading scholar in public law and labor law. His most recent work relates to reforming labor law to strengthen trade union freedom, constitutional reform, public participation in the political process and the status of social and economic rights. He is president of the Institute

of Employment Rights and the Campaign for Trade Union Freedom, as well as vice president of the International Centre for Trade Union Rights. Ewing is the author of numerous books and publications and general editor of his university's *King's Law Journal*.

**Sarita Gupta, Co-Executive Director, Jobs with Justice**

Sarita Gupta is the co-executive director of Jobs with Justice. She is a nationally recognized expert on the economic and political issues affecting working people across all industries, particularly low-wage workers. Gupta was named one of the 19 Young Activists Changing America by Bill Moyers and has appeared in *The Wall Street Journal*, *Bloomberg*, *Politico*, and *The Hill*, as well as on MSNBC, the former Current TV (now Al Jazeera America) and several international television news programs. She writes regularly for *The Huffington Post*, *The Hill*, and *Bill Moyers*. Gupta began her career as a community activist and grassroots organizer and was president of the United States Student Association. She has held several leadership positions at Chicago Jobs with Justice and with the national Jobs with Justice organization, Gupta also serves as co-director of Caring Across Generations, a national coalition of 200 advocacy organizations working together for quality care and support and a dignified quality of life for all Americans. She also serves on several boards of directors for progressive groups and as received a number of achievement awards.

**John Hendy, General Counsel, UK Institute for Employment Rights**

John Hendy QC is a barrister (trial lawyer) in London, UK. He is an honorary professor in the Faculty of Law, University College, London. As an advocate he is best known for his work in industrial relations and trade union law, having appeared in most of the UK's leading collective labor law cases over the last 40 years, particularly in industrial action cases. He is standing counsel to eight UK unions. He has appeared in the European Court of Human Rights, the Court of Justice of the European Union, the UK Supreme Court (including the House of Lords and Privy Council), the Court of Appeal, the High Court and all courts and tribunals dealing with labor law below this level. He has appeared in the Irish Labour Court and the New South Wales Industrial Relations Court. He has acted for the Irish Congress of Trade Unions, and advised the European Trade Union Confederation, the International Transport Workers' Federation and various European unions, and has acted as a consultant for the ITUC. Amongst the dozens of trade union cases in which he has appeared, he notably represented the National Union of Mineworkers in all the civil litigation arising out of the 1984-5 strike. He is chair of the Institute of Employment Rights (IER) and a vice president of the International Centre for Trade Union Rights. A frequent writer and speaker on trade union rights issues, he co-authored for the IER "A Manifesto for Labour Law" in 2016, and "Rolling out the Manifesto for Labour Law" in 2018, which the Shadow Chancellor of the Exchequer described as "the blueprint" for the labor law legislation to be introduced by the next Labour Government.

**Mary Kay Henry, President, Service Employees International Union**

Mary Kay Henry is the international president of the 2 million-member Service Employees International Union (SEIU), and her leadership is rooted in a deep-seated belief that when individuals join together they can make the impossible possible. Under her leadership, SEIU has won major victories to improve working families' lives by strengthening and uniting healthcare, property services and public sector workers with other working people across the United States, Canada and Puerto Rico. In 2010, Mary Kay Henry became the first woman elected to lead SEIU, after more than 30 years of helping unite healthcare workers. By 2015, she was named one of the 100 most creative leaders by *Fast Company* magazine and was included in the top 50 visionaries reshaping American politics by *Politico* magazine for SEIU's innovative leadership in propelling the fight for living wages embodied in the historic movement known as the "Fight for \$15." Henry believes that to better fulfill the promise of a just society America has always aspired to be, we must fight for justice on all fronts including defending the gains accomplished for access to affordable healthcare for all families under the Affordable Care Act, comprehensive immigration reform and a path to citizenship for all hardworking immigrant families, and safety and justice in all communities of color across the country

**Rep. Pramila Jayapal, (D-Wash.), Co-Chair of the Congressional Progressive Caucus**

Congresswoman Pramila Jayapal represents Washington's 7th Congressional District, which encompasses most of Seattle and surrounding areas, including Shoreline, Vashon Island, Lake Forest Park, Edmonds and parts of Burien and Normandy Park. She is committed to ensuring that every resident of the district has economic

opportunity; fairness and equity; and safe and healthy communities. She is proud of the district's role in leading the country on issues such as the minimum wage, racial equity and innovation, and will work to support that work and lift it up as a model for the rest of the country. Her focus is on ensuring income equality; access to education, from early learning to higher education, including debt-free college; expanding Social Security and Medicare; protecting our environment for our next generation; and ensuring immigrant, civil and human rights for all. Jayapal will push for campaign finance reform, tax reform, voting rights and an end to institutionalized racism. She will also continue to build the movement to expand our democracy and create the political space for policy change that benefits working families and responsible businesses. The first Indian-American woman in the House of Representatives, Jayapal has spent the last twenty years working internationally and domestically as a leading national advocate for women's, immigrant, civil, and human rights. She came to the United States by herself at the age of 16 to attend college at Georgetown University and later received her MBA from Northwestern University. She has worked in a number of industries in both the public and private sector.

**Lorretta Johnson, Secretary-Treasurer, American Federation of Teachers**

Lorretta Johnson is the secretary-treasurer of the American Federation of Teachers. Previously, she served as the union's executive vice president from 2008 to 2011. Also in 2011, Johnson was elected treasurer of the Albert Shanker Institute and AFT Educational Foundation, as well as chair of the AFT Benefit Trust. Johnson was an AFT vice president for 30 years, and she chaired the AFT Paraprofessionals and School-Related Personnel program and policy council for 32 years. She served as president of the Baltimore Teachers Union's paraprofessional chapter for 35 years and as president of AFT-Maryland for 17 years. Johnson started her career in 1966 as a teacher's aide in a Baltimore elementary school, where she earned \$2.25 an hour and received no benefits. To improve the work situation of paraprofessionals like herself, she organized them into the Baltimore Teachers Union. In 1970, she negotiated the union's first contract. Over the years, she has served as chief negotiator for many other teacher and paraprofessional contracts as well. Johnson has held, and currently holds, several leadership positions outside the AFT. She is a vice president of the AFL-CIO and serves on the boards of the AFL-CIO's Transportation Trades Department, Union Label and Service Trades Department, and Union Privilege organization. She was vice president of the Metropolitan Baltimore Council AFL-CIO and is a trustee for the Maryland State and District of Columbia AFL-CIO. She also serves on the board of directors of the Municipal Employees Credit Union of Baltimore. Johnson was named treasurer of the national board of the A. Philip Randolph Institute in 2008, and is president of APRI's Baltimore chapter. She is the assistant treasurer for the Baltimore County chapter of the NAACP. She is on the boards of the BlueGreen Alliance, Citizens for Tax Justice, the Child Labor Coalition (which she co-chairs), the Faith & Politics Institute, and the Institute for Women's Policy Research (which she chairs). In 2015, Johnson was named corporate representative to the National Alliance of Black School Educators. Johnson was honored as 2005 Labor Leader of the Year by the Maryland Democratic Party. *Ebony* magazine also featured her in an article titled "Blacks of Influence in Unions." Johnson earned her teaching degree through the Career Opportunities Program at Coppin State University in Maryland.

**Carolyn Jones, Director UK Institute for Employment Rights**

Carolyn Jones has been director of the Institute of Employment Rights since its establishment in 1989. Prior to that she was a legal officer in the trade union MSF (Manufacturing Science and Finance, now part of UNITE). She is national secretary of the Campaign for Trade Union Freedom, chair of the editorial board of the journal *International Union Rights*, and Vice Chair of the Management Committee of the daily newspaper, the *Morning Star*.

**Robert King, President Emeritus, International Union of United Automobile, Aerospace and Agricultural Implement Workers of America**

Bob King retired from the United Automobile Workers (UAW) in June 2014, after completing a four-year term as president. The UAW Executive Board honored him with the status of "president emeritus." King served three terms as a UAW vice president. In his last term as vice president, he directed the Ford, Severstal, and Competitive Shops/Independents, Parts and Suppliers (IPS) Departments. As vice president, King played a major role in both the UAW Ford 2007 National Agreement and the 2009 modifications of the agreement. As vice-president and president, he led efforts to create formal networks of international unions representing workers for the same global corporation. Working with IndustriALL and unions representing Ford workers around the world, King led

negotiations of the first Global Framework Agreement with a US-based global corporation. Under his leadership, the UAW negotiated a provision in the UAW Ford contract for annual meetings of union representatives from all Ford facilities globally to meet once each year. King also served for four years as a labor representative for IG Metall on the supervisory board of Opel, a General Motors European subsidiary. Since retiring, King has served as a visiting researcher at the University of California, Berkeley, and during the spring of 2015 semester, he co-taught a seminar for both undergraduate and graduate students with professor Harley Shaiken on "Labor and the Global Economy." He is currently a lecturer at the University of Michigan, teaching the importance of collective action and collective bargaining in winning greater economic equality in the US and the world. As a UM lecturer, King is a member of the Lecturers Employee Organization (LEO) which is local 6244 of the American Federation of Teachers. He is an active member, serving as a volunteer on many committees, as a delegate the Huron Valley Area Labor Federation and as an activist on the UM All Campus Labor Council.

**Rep. Andy Levin (D-Mich), *Vice Chair, House Committee on Education and Labor***

A union organizer, human rights activist, workforce policy expert and green energy entrepreneur, Congressman Andy Levin has spent his career fighting for an equitable and inclusive future for all people which continues as the representative for Michigan's 9th Congressional District. Levin has been advocating for working families since the 1980s, when he organized hundreds of health care workers for the Service Employees International Union (SEIU). After working with Haitian immigrant workers, he co-founded an organization to assist immigrants with challenges posed by the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986. Levin also worked as a staff attorney to the presidential Commission on the Future of Worker-Management Relations and in the secretary's office of the U.S. Department of Labor. He worked with unions and employers on legislation critical for workers' rights including the National Labor Relations Act, the proposed TEAM Act, the Federal Transit's Act and the Fair Labor Standards Act. From 1995-2006, Levin served as Assistant Director of Organizing at the national AFL-CIO, where he created and ran Union Summer, helped many unions with collaborative organizing campaigns around the country, and created and led the Voice@Work Campaign, which organized the national movement to pass the Employee Free Choice Act. Levin created and ran the Michigan's No Work Left Behind initiative that helped more than 160,000 unemployed and underemployed Michiganders go back to school during the Great Recession. He also helped create Michigan's Green Jobs Initiative in 2008 and the Green Jobs Report in 2009. Levin went on to create the Michigan Academy for Green Mobility Alliance (MAGMA), which trained hundreds of unemployed and incumbent engineers to electrify cars. In 2011, he founded Levin Energy Partners LLC to help shape Michigan's and America's energy future. He created and ran a statewide market to finance clean energy building improvements called Lean & Green Michigan, which has become one of the most innovative Property Assessed Clean Energy (PACE) programs in the US. Levin has worked on human rights for decades, including doing legal work for asylum seekers in the US and investigating and reporting on human rights abuses in Haiti, China and Tibet. Levin is an honors graduate of Williams College and Harvard Law School and holds a Masters Degree from the University of Michigan in Asian Languages and Cultures, where he was a Mellon Fellow in the Humanities. Until his election to Congress, Levin served as president of a Reconstructionist Jewish synagogue, Congregation T'chayah, and as chair of the steering committee of Detroit Jews for Justice, an organization he helped create to fight for racial and economic justice in Detroit.

**Frederika McClary, *Director of Healthcare Organizing for Nurses and Health Professionals, AFT***

Frederika McClary is currently director of healthcare organizing for Nurses and Health Professionals at the American Federation of Teachers. Originally from Buffalo, her career in labor began as a project organizer through the AFL-CIO's Organizing Institute. Her first assignment was with the United Teachers of New Orleans after Hurricane Katrina. Since that time, she has worked in many cities, with many leaders and members and on various campaigns, all centered around helping workers fight for a voice, dignity and respect in their places of work. Some assignment highlights include: assisting with the implementation of AFT's first alternative dues deduction system in Wisconsin and Michigan due to attacks on payroll deduction; leading the coalition-driven campaign that stopped the Home Rule Charter reform takeover of the Dallas Independent School District; and leading the final act of an internal and community campaign waged by the Detroit Federation of Teachers to end an era of state control under an emergency manager.

**Harold Meyerson, *Executive Editor, The American Prospect***

Harold Meyerson is executive editor of *The American Prospect* as well as a member of the editorial board. From 2003 through 2015, he was a weekly op-ed columnist for *The Washington Post*. From 1989 to 2001, he was executive editor of the *L.A. Weekly*. From 1991 to 1995, Meyerson hosted the weekly show “Real Politics” on the public radio station KCRW in Santa Monica, Calif. Meyerson was previously columnist-at-large for the *L.A. Weekly*, the nation’s largest metropolitan weekly, where he served as executive editor from 1989 through 2001. His articles on politics, labor, the economy, foreign policy and American culture have also appeared in *The New Yorker*, *The Atlantic*, *The New Republic*, *The Nation*, *The New Statesman*; the op-ed, commentary and book review sections of *The New York Times* and *The Los Angeles Times*, and in numerous other publications. He is also a frequent guest on television and radio talk shows. He is the author of *Who Put the Rainbow in The Wizard of Oz?* (1995), a biography of Broadway lyricist Yip Harburg. In September, 2009 *Atlantic Monthly* named Meyerson one of the “50 Most Influential Columnists,” calling this list “its all-star team.” He is also a member of the Albert Shanker Institute Board of Directors.

**Aneta Molenda, *Digital Director, Organization United for Respect (OUR)***

Currently, Aneta Molenda serves as digital director for the Organization United for Respect (OUR, most known for OUR Walmart), where she is building a retail worker organizing campaign and an organizer-in-residence program at Civic Hall. Molenda comes to digital organizing via the labor movement, working as a field organizer with the New York Taxi Workers Alliance before helping to launch an alt-labor organizing program at Working America, the community affiliate of the AFL-CIO. She has consulted on digital strategy for various organizations including “Fight for \$15” and Planned Parenthood. At OUR, she is exploring new and innovative ways to scale national organizing using online-first strategies that translate to deep leadership and mass offline action, including most recently the successful campaign for severance pay at Toys R Us. She spends her days thinking about online-to-offline recruitment and scaling national organizing programs using digital tools.

**Brent McDonnell, *Georgetown Alliance of Graduate Employees (GAGE)***

Brent McDonnell is a third-year PhD student in the History Department at Georgetown University, focusing on far-right politics in Italy and West Germany from the late 1960s into the early 1980s. He has received an MA in German and European Studies, also at Georgetown, as well as a BA in Political Science and Italian Language and Literature from Fordham University in New York. McDonnell is an active member of the Georgetown Alliance of Graduate Employees, GAGE, an AFT-affiliated union representing graduate teachers and researchers on campus. He is eagerly looking forward to the beginning of bargaining for GAGE’s first contract with Georgetown administration this semester.

**Cecilia Nahón, *Executive Director, Model G20 Initiative, American University School of International Service; Former Ambassador of Argentina to the United States***

Cecilia Nahón joined the American University faculty in 2016, bringing academic, private sector and diplomatic experience to its campus. She is the executive director of the new AU Model G20 Initiative, the first US-based complete and accurate simulation of the G20 Leaders’ Summit. Previously, Cecilia Nahón served as Ambassador of Argentina to the United States (2013-15) and as G20 Sherpa of Argentina (2012-15), among other government positions. In such capacities, she was responsible for high-level bilateral and multilateral negotiations on trade, investment, climate change, debt, development and anti-corruption. Ambassador Nahón is an economist specializing in regional and international affairs. Aside from leading Model G20, she teaches undergraduate and graduate level courses at the School of International Service (SIS) and the Washington College of Law (WCL). Recent courses include “Theory and Practice of the G20” and “International, Legal and Policy Issues in Sovereign Debt Restructuring.”

**Tom Perez, *Former U.S. Secretary of Labor; Chairman, Democratic National Committee***

Tom Perez is the chairman of the Democratic National Committee. The son of immigrants from the Dominican Republic, Perez grew up in Buffalo where he learned the values of a union town: hard work, integrity, service, and perseverance. After putting himself through college with Pell Grants and working on the back of a garbage truck, he passed up offers from white-shoe law firms, instead choosing to start his career as a civil rights attorney for the U.S. Justice Department prosecuting racially motivated hate crimes. For eight years, he served in President

Obama's administration: first as head of the Justice Department's Civil Rights Division, where he led the charge against police misconduct, voter suppression, anti-LGBT discrimination, and immigrant-bashing sheriffs' departments; then as Secretary of Labor, fighting to protect and expand opportunities for America's working people—from better wages and overtime pay, to retirement security and collective bargaining rights. But Perez's strongest roots are in local organizing. In 2002, he became the first Latino elected to the Montgomery County Council. And as board president of CASA de Maryland, Tom helped grow the organization from a small service provider in the basement of a church to one of the largest immigrant advocacy groups in the mid-Atlantic.

**Sandra Polaski, *Independent Expert; Former Deputy Director General, ILO***

Sandra Polaski is an independent expert on labor and social policy. She was the Deputy Director-General for Policy of the International Labor Organization (ILO) from 2012-2016. In that capacity, she provided leadership to the ILO staff and departments responsible for research, statistics, policy analysis and policy advice for the ILO's 185 Member States. Prior to joining the ILO, she served as U.S. Deputy Undersecretary of Labor in charge of the International Labor Affairs Bureau (ILAB), where she led bilateral and regional policy dialogues with other governments and was responsible for labor issues in the context of trade and trade agreements. Earlier she directed a research and policy program focusing on development, trade and income distribution at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, a global think tank. She served as special representative of the Secretary of State for International Labor Affairs in the Clinton administration. Before that she was the director of research at the secretariat supporting the North American Agreement on Labor Cooperation (NAALC). She is the author of numerous reports, book chapters, policy briefs and blogs covering issues of employment, labor rights, social policy, trade policy and development. She has testified before committees on foreign affairs, trade, finance and employment of the U.S. Senate, U.S. House of Representatives, European Parliament and Canadian Senate and spoken in a wide variety of multilateral fora. She was educated at the Johns Hopkins School for Advanced International Studies (SAIS), the University of Wisconsin and University of Dayton and holds an honorary doctorate from Middlesex University.

**Becky Pringle, *Vice President, National Education Association***

Becky Pringle is a middle school science teacher with 31 years of classroom experience, and also serves as the vice president of the nation's first and largest labor union and professional association for educators. She directs NEA's work to combat institutional racism and spotlight systemic patterns of racism and educational injustice that impact students. Under her guidance, NEA works to widen access and opportunity by demanding changes to policies, programs, and practices. The association's goal is to ensure the systemic, fair treatment of people of all races so that equitable opportunities and outcomes are within reach for every student. In the social justice arena, she also fights for the rights of students who have disabilities, identify as LGBTQ, or are English language learners. Pringle co-chaired NEA's Task Force on School Discipline and the School to Prison Pipeline. In that role, she guided the development of a new school-to-prison pipeline policy statement that calls attention to and compels NEA's 3-million members to address the inequitable and unfair policies and practices that push many students out of public schools and into the criminal justice system. She has also led NEA's work to transform the education professions and improve student learning. Most notably, she led the work group that produced the association's groundbreaking "Policy Statement on Teacher Evaluation and Accountability"—NEA's first broad endorsement of the need for a student-centered, educator-led evaluation and shared accountability system. This led to the development of two seminal frameworks, "Transforming Teaching: Connecting Professional Responsibility With Student Learning" and the "ESP Professional Growth Continuum," which focused on how we can improve educators' professional practice to make an even greater impact on the health, safety, well-being, learning, and development of their students. Pringle has a long record of advocacy at the national, state, and local levels. She began her leadership journey as a local NEA president, and then went on to serve on the NEA Board of Directors and the Pennsylvania State Education Association. She also served two terms as a member of NEA Executive Committee. As NEA secretary-treasurer, Pringle led the union through one of the worst economic periods in recent history. Her efforts enabled the association to emerge on strong financial footing with more power to advance its mission. She is a recipient of the Black Women's Roundtable Education Innovation & Social Justice Leadership Award from the National Coalition on Black Civic Participation, Woman of Power Award from the National Action Network and was named Community Woman of the Year by the American Association of University Women. She is also a lifetime member of the NAACP. Becky served with distinction on President

Obama's Commission on Educational Excellence for African Americans. Her work included addressing issues on teacher recruitment and retention, STEM access and opportunities, and college preparation and completion.

**Juan Ramirez, *Elementary Vice President, United Teachers of Los Angeles***

Juan Ramirez is the elementary vice president of the United Teachers of Los Angeles (UTLA). In this capacity he has worked with teachers, parents, and community members to counter Parent Revolution (a Walton-backed initiative to weaken teacher unions), as well as standing up for teachers harassed by administrators and the district. He is the current vice president for the California Federation of Teachers' Early Childhood/K-12 Committee, which advocates for educators and students at the state level. As part of his commitment to working with the community, he has hosted a Spanish radio show and written for a Spanish-language newspaper. Ramirez has 17 years' teaching experience in kindergarten and grades second through fourth. He also taught adult education at the Wilson Lincoln Adult School for nine years. His UTLA activism includes serving as Chapter chair at Fishburn Elementary; Bilingual Education Committee chair and co-chair; South Area Steering Committee member; UTLA House of Representatives member; NEA Representative Assembly delegate; CTA State Council delegate; South Area director, UTLA Elementary Vice President (2011 to present)

**Lee Saunders, *President, American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees, AFL-CIO***

Lee Saunders is president of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME), with members in communities across the nation, serving in hundreds of different occupations—from nurses to corrections officers, child care providers to sanitation workers. He was elected at the union's 40th International Convention in June 2012. Saunders, the first African American to serve as AFSCME's president, was previously elected secretary-treasurer at the union's 39th International Convention in July 2010. Saunders grew up in a union household in Cleveland, Ohio. This inspired him to join the Ohio Civil Service Employees Association (OCSEA) when he began working for the Ohio Bureau of Employment Services in 1975. His father was a bus driver and a member of the Amalgamated Transit Union. His mother was a community organizer and, after raising two sons, returned to college and became a community college professor and a member of the American Association of University Professors. Saunders began his career with AFSCME in 1978 as a labor economist. He has served in the capacities of assistant director of Research and Collective Bargaining Services, director of Community Action and deputy director of Organizing and Field Services. Saunders also served as executive assistant to the president of AFSCME and was responsible for managing what is acknowledged to be one of the most effective political and legislative operations in the history of the American labor movement. AFSCME's clout in fundraising and member mobilization, and its lobbying expertise are unmatched in the ranks of the AFL-CIO and beyond. Under Saunders' leadership, the union has launched a program called AFSCME Strong that builds power through internal and external organizing, and recognizes the individual contributions AFSCME members make to serving and strengthening their communities. The program is credited with growth in AFSCME membership despite current challenges faced by the labor movement as a whole. Saunders serves as a vice president of the AFL-CIO Executive Council and chair of its Political Committee. He is an at-large member of the Democratic National Committee, president of Working America and treasurer of the Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights. He also serves as a board member of Priorities USA and the Democracy Alliance.

**Christopher Shelton, *President, Communications Workers of America***

Christopher Shelton was elected president of the Communications Workers of America (CWA) by acclamation at the union's 75th convention on June 8, 2015. Prior to his election as president, Shelton served as vice president of CWA District 1, representing 160,000 members in more than 300 CWA locals in New Jersey, New York and New England. He served as the Verizon Regional Bargaining Chair in 2000 and 2003, and overall chair of Verizon bargaining for CWA District 1, District 2-13, IBEW New Jersey and New England in 2008 and 2011. He also chaired negotiations in New Jersey for 40,000 State Workers in 2008 and 2011. Shelton started his union career when he went to work for New York Telephone in 1968 as an outside technician. He was elected a CWA Local 1101 shop steward in 1968 and served Local 1101 in various positions until December 1988 when he joined the CWA national staff.

**Tom Suozzi (D-NY)**

Tom Suozzi, who trained as an attorney and a CPA, is currently the U.S. representative from the 3<sup>rd</sup> Congressional District in New York. He serves on the House Foreign Affairs Committee, House Armed Services Committee, is Vice-Chair of the Problem Solvers Caucus, Co-Chair of the bipartisan Long Island Sound Caucus, and Co-Chair of the Quiet Skies Caucus. Suozzi previously served as mayor of his hometown, Glen Cove, NY, from 1994-2001 and as Nassau County Executive from 2002-2009. He is credited with "turnarounds" in both. In 2004, Suozzi created FixAlbany.com in order to expose and root out corruption in New York state politics and get a cap on local Medicaid expenses. In 2005, he was honored as *Governing Magazine's* "Public Official of the Year." In 2007, he was appointed to lead a state commission that proposed the first property tax cap, which has now become law. In 2008, the New York State League of Conservation Voters named him "Environmentalist of the Year." In 2010 Suozzi returned to the private sector as a "Senior Advisor" to investment banking firm Lazard and as "of counsel" at Harris Beach law firm. Prior to his time in elected office, Suozzi worked as a litigator for Shearman & Sterling, law clerk to the Chief Judge of the Eastern District, and an auditor for Arthur Andersen & Co.

**Randi Weingarten, President, American Federation of Teachers**

Randi Weingarten is president of the 1.6 million-member American Federation of Teachers (AFT), 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. She is also president of the Albert Shanker Institute. Prior to her election as AFT president, Weingarten served for 12 years as president of the United Federation of Teachers, 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. 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 that give rise to the achievement gap. 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, including those representing higher education and other public service employees. As chair of the MLC, she coordinated labor negotiations and bargaining for benefits on behalf of the MLC unions' 365,000 members. From 1986 to 1998, Weingarten served as counsel to UFT president Sandra Feldman, taking a lead role in contract negotiations and enforcement. 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. Weingarten's column "What Matters Most" appears in the *New York Times*. Weingarten holds degrees from Cornell University's School of Industrial and Labor Relations and the Cardozo School of Law.

**Kristen Zeis, Photojournalist, The Virginian-Pilot, Norfolk; Member, Tidewater Media Guild, CWA**

Kristen Zeis is a staff photojournalist at *The Virginian-Pilot* in Norfolk. She has helped with organizing efforts for the establishment of Tidewater Media Guild, part of the Washington-Baltimore NewsGuild CWA, in mid-2018. She now serves as an executive committee member and chief steward of her bargaining unit. She is a graduate of the University of Missouri and the Danish School of Media and Journalism (Aarhus, Denmark).

**Mark Zuckerman, President, The Century Foundation**

Mark Zuckerman is president of The Century Foundation. He served in the Obama White House as the deputy director of the Domestic Policy Council, leading teams on key initiatives, including reducing student debt, increasing accountability at for-profit educational institutions, reducing workplace discrimination, increasing wages for home health care workers, and expanding access to job training. Prior to that, as staff director of the House Education and Labor Committee, he helped win passage of landmark legislation such as the Affordable Care Act; the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act; the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act; and the Student Aid and Fiscal Responsibility Act.