

CWA - DISTRICT 4 CELEBRATES BLACK HISTORY MONTH

A Newsletter from the District 4 Civil Rights & Equity Committee



This month, CWA District 4 the things happening in your made many contributions to communities where we live part in any activities that

the lives of others. There are many opportunities to help fight back against the many injustices and discriminatory practices that most of us see happening much too often. Some of us are witnesses and, unfortunately, some are victims. Regardless, working together, all of us can make a difference no matter where we're from, what we look like, or where we've been. In District 4, we have a long history of being UNITED no matter what our differences, and we hope to build upon that tradition for many years to come!

would like to share a few of state. African Americans have our organization and in the and work. We should all take will help make a difference in

District 4 State Coordinators

Alisa Brown, Wisconsin – Local 4603

Sylvia Chapman, Illinois – Local 4250

Merlin Milton, Michigan – Local 4004

Danielle Brewer-Collier, Indiana – Local 4900

Kevin Kee, Ohio – Local 4501

Diane Bailey, District 4 CRE Rep

Adriane Weems, District 4 Minority Caucus Rep

Clinton Rodgers, Human Rights Coordinator

Linda L. Hinton, District 4 Vice President

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What's happening??

all! We understand that, "An Injury To One, Is An Injury To All!" I hope to see you at the conference.

National Civil Rights & Equity Update

By Diane Bailey

Sisters and brothers, let me introduce myself for those who may not know me. My name is Diane Bailey, President of CWA Local 4310. I serve as your District 4 Representative on the National Civil Rights and Equity Committee. We are currently working on our upcoming Human Rights Conference to be held jointly with the National Women's Committee.

I would like to ask that you all save the dates of August 22-24, 2016!! The conference will be held in Atlanta, Georgia, home of CWA District 3.

For those of you who have seen our committee in action, whether it has been at a convention giving a committee report, or during one of our previous conferences... you definitely know that this conference will be just as electrifying as always.

We have taken on many issues without hesitation such as sexual harassment, LGBT discrimination, Voter Suppression, Gun Control, Bullying & Violence, and Black Lives Matter. One thing for sure is that when it comes to Civil Rights or Human Rights, our committee stands strong on these issues. We are about fair pay and equality for

About the CWA Minority Caucus

By Adriane Weems

The CWA Minority Caucus was started in the early 1970s. Originally, it was the Black Caucus. The Caucus was formed at the time to address the problems and needs of the Black Members within CWA. In 1980, a growing concern for similar problems within female Hispanics and other Minority groups within CWA, brought forth a name change and the broadening of the challenge to make the newly established Minority Caucus to meet the needs of all its members.

It is our mission to obtain, either by election or appointment, minorities to positions at all levels of CWA, to grow in membership throughout the local levels, to continue the improvement of a well-informed network throughout CWA, and to develop a forum for all minorities to have a united voice in our union, nation, and lives.

We are responsible for the appointment of four Diversity Representatives to the National Executive Board, the Women's and Civil Rights & Equity Committee being able to read their reports at the National Convention, various appointments of minorities to convention committees and staff ... (Cont' on next page)

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positions, as well as a substantial increase in the number of minority local officers and delegates to the convention.

Our Executive Board consists of:

- President: Walter D. Andrews*
- Vice-President: Maurice Washington*
- Treasurer: Rose Whitney*
- Assistant Treasurer: Carl Baxter*
- Secretary: Gerald Brown*
- Assistant Secretary: Mary E. Garr*

The District Members are:

- District No. 1: Ronda Wilson*
- District No. 2: Helen L. Durant*
- District No. 3: Steven Andrews*
- District No. 4: Adriane M. Weems*
- District No. 6: Steven Flores*
- District No. 7: Rachelle Long*
- District No. 9: Domonique Thomas*
- District No. 13: Simone Harris*
- President Emeritus: Rudy Francis*

Be sure to look out for more news and scholarships provided by The CWA National Minority Caucus.

Illinois -

Food for Thought

By Sylvia Chapman

In Illinois, cursive writing has been removed from the school curriculum. I have been pondering why this was done. I even asked a couple of Chicago Public School teachers that I know, and they are not sure why it was done either. So far, the only answer is that it is no longer necessary with the students doing their work on computers and electronic signatures being acceptable. Whereas

technology is great and has provided for educational advancements, it doesn't replace individual expressions, such as a signature. Being able to sign your name is as important and individual as your DNA.

A signature is important when signing a paper petition, an ID, credit or bank card and your driver's license. It is also important when signing a voter's registration form or to receive a voting ballot. I feel this agenda is taking this generation back to the time when people who could not read or write made an (X), and it was witnessed by someone who could read and write.

It is our duty as parents and citizens to ensure this generation of young people knows the importance of having a personal signature. In this time when self-expression and individuality is key to our society, this basic, fundamental action should not be lost or taken for granted.

Wisconsin -

Positivity in Milwaukee

By Alisa Brown

CWA represents close to 2,000 members that live in the Milwaukee area or in the nearby vicinity. We are very fortunate to be represented by one of the best labor organizations in the world because with our negotiated wages and benefits we help raise the standard of living in major cities like Milwaukee and other places all over the United States.

Recently, Milwaukee, WI was named the worst place for African Americans to live. The difference between white and black high school attainment is 94.9% and 80.7%. The income median for white households is about... (Cont' on next page)

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\$61,675 and for black households it is \$25,646. This happens to be one of the nation's largest income disparities out of all 50 states. In addition to these staggering statistics, Milwaukee also has one of the highest percentages of black male incarceration rates in the nation. Unfortunately, these are the reports that we constantly read about and see on television.

Here's something positive that happened in Milwaukee. Let's take a moment to get up close and personal with our African American community and Community Activist Andre Lee Ellis's grassroots program "We Got This." In late 2015, 100 African American men and youth took to the streets of Milwaukee with cheers and chants of "black lives matter." 100 men and mentors, ages ranging from 6 – 79, marched in the streets. They went from "boys in the hood" to "gentlemen on the town" dressed in tuxedos through downtown Milwaukee to Carson's Prime Steak & Famous Barbeque Restaurant to enjoy a formal dinner, conversation, and a lesson on etiquette. Each mentor covered the cost for the tuxedo rental, and the dinner was provided by an unnamed sponsor.

The labor movement only represents about 6% of the workforce in the U.S., so this is just an example of something positive happening and offers us an opportunity to go out in OUR communities to build alliances and coalition partners as we continue to fight back attacks on our movement, THE UNION!



Indiana -

Civil Rights for All

By Danielle Brewer-Collier

Civil rights are the rights of individuals to receive equal treatment (and to be free from unfair treatment or discrimination) in a number of settings

Black History Month was created in 1926 in the United States by Carter G. Woodson and the Association for the Study of Negro Life. The second week of February was named, "Negro History Week." The second week was chosen because of two men who influenced the black population; Frederick Douglas and Abraham Lincoln. Several other significant dates in February followed for years to come, leading us to what we now call "Black History Month." NAACP was born, blacks were granted voting rights, first black U.S. senator was elected, civil rights movements began across the nation, and many more milestones made history to be recognized throughout the month of February.

In the past, the struggle was for blacks to gain freedom, equality, and civil rights. The same struggle continues today, but our LGBT community is now part of the fight in our state.

After months of long debates in Indiana on civil rights for LGBT community rights, the bill passed the Senate. Several supporters stood strong on this issue, and today all prevailed. Senate Bill 344 passed the committee on Wednesday, January 27, 2016. This bill is to... (Cont' on next page)

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protect sexual orientation, however, would only order a legislative study committee regarding transgender issues. This is called the, "LGB minus T," problem in Indiana. The bill would also allow exemptions for religious organizations and small businesses. This bill would repeal the Religious Freedom Restoration Act as it stands today, and order a "fix." This fix still stands short of providing full rights to nondiscrimination for the LGBT community.

Civil Rights ordinances in the state will stand as the way they existed until December 31, 2015. Any ordinance passed January 1, 2016 or after, which offers more protections than state law, would be negated.

The bill is now headed to full Senate. Civil rights supporters should help correct this by contacting Indiana's Governor, Mike Pence. Phone: (317) 232-4567 (Office)

"It takes no compromise to give people their rights...it takes no money to respect the individual. It takes no political deal to give people freedom. It takes no survey to remove repression."

Harvey Milk

"You don't have to be a man to fight for freedom. All you have to do is to be an intelligent human being."

Malcolm X

Michigan - Water Crisis in Flint

By Merlin Milton

When the government fails, the people will organize, mobilize, and rise! In the heart of Michigan, the city of Flint is currently on showcase due to the poor decisions made by government officials to save costs on the infrastructure required to provide a basic human right. . . WATER! They chose to re-direct water from the Flint River instead of Lake Huron without proper treatment facilities and by using outdated, rusted lead pipes. It has caused lead poisoning, hair loss, and numerous other medical conditions to an estimated 100,000 people where a majority of the city is African American and impoverished.

Once word got out to our members, there was a call for action! CWAers and many activists stormed the capital protesting at Governor Snyder's State of the Union address demanding accountability and correction. CWA didn't stop there. Water campaigns are being organized all over. To name a few:

IUE-CWA Local 717 in Warren -Water for Flint

CWA Local 4034 in collaboration with United Way of Genesee County

<http://cwa4034.org/how-to-get-involved-flint-mi-water-cris.../>

CWA local 4004 and Detroit Area Dads PTA

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In 2016, we should not be dealing with third world conditions in the United States of America! Our citizens should not be forced to drink tainted water from the only source that is supposed to be safe and reliable! Let's make sure we hold all those responsible by voting them out of office! We deserve better!

In the spirit of Martin Luther King and the Poor People campaign, this too we shall overcome!

Ohio -

Public Sector Struggles

By Kevin Kee

Privatization efforts at The Ohio State University are well underway after leasing out the Parking Facilities at the University for 50 years. The University is now accepting Bids for lease of the McCracken Power Plant and its Energy Resources for 50 years, affecting members at CWA Local 4501 and other administrative staff. The University is also outsourcing Management and HR duties at the OSU Wexner Medical Center to Cottrell and to Goodwill Industry at Newark Campus, once again affecting CWA members. We must be aware and fight back these attacks on Labor and the Buckeye Community because as The Ohio State University goes, so does the rest of the State. Other Universities are sure to follow. We must stop this trend and attacks on the Working Class right here. The Nation is watching. Ohio State has stated nationally they are creating the fundraising model of the 21st century for other Universities to follow. We cannot afford to lose this battle. The Secretary of State's Office is also outsourcing jobs to non-profits. They outsourced 8 jobs from the Call-Central to the Cleveland Sight for the Blind, attempting to show that smaller government can work. Paying these employees

medium wages and destroying the tax base in Ohio will negatively affect the Buckeye Community and the public services they count on. A lot of these changes will take a toll on minority communities because of being so disadvantaged when it comes to the public services they hugely rely on. Just think about Detroit and what's happening in Flint, MI. These are some of the same things they went through and tried to prevent. Why be forced to travel down that same road? This is how they got into the tragic situation they now face. We cannot afford to see our state devastated, Ohio! Stand with us and help. Contact your elected officials to make your voice be heard.



SO CALLED "RIGHT TO WORK" and your livelihood



- Workers in So Called "right to work" states take home \$5300 less per year than workers in labor security states? Your spouse probably works, too, so that's \$10,600 less that you will take home on average. **That is the right to work for less.**
- Workers' insurance will suffer with loss of protections, and **you and your family will suffer.** In So Called "right to work" states 28% more people lack health insurance.
- **Retirement and other benefits evaporate** (vacation, sick leave; just think of all the things you have to lose) as companies run away from their obligations in So Called "right to work" states?
- And, perhaps worse of all, **management unchecked** in the safety arena **is stripping workers' protections.** Accidents are far more frequent and workplace deaths are up 46% in So Called "right to work" states.



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