

IOWA AFL-CIO NEWS



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October 2019

Iowans Declare September Labor Union Appreciation Month

More than 65 elected officials, organizations, and businesses support the effort to make September Labor Union Appreciation Month at thankunion.com

Des Moines, Iowa

-- Iowans are speaking out in support of recognizing September as Labor Union Appreciation Month. More than sixty elected officials, organizations, and businesses have signed on to the effort at ThankAUnion.com.

A proclamation recognizing September as Labor Union Appreciation Month will be requested from the office of Governor Kim Reynolds, as well as from cities and counties across the state. Supporters of Labor Union Appreciation Month will also attend events and share information about the important role labor unions have had and continue to have in Iowa and across the country.

"We know that public support for labor unions is strong, and that's because workers everywhere want some dignity and respect on the job," said Danny Homan, President of AFSCME Council 61. "At the end of the day, that's what we're here fighting for every day."

"Labor unions have been an avenue to the middle class for millions of Americans for many years," said Senator Amanda Ragan. "That is one

of the reasons I believe they are important to our country."

"I'm very thankful for the opportunities than union membership has



Hawkeye Area Labor Council Executive Director Rick Moyle accepts the Labor Union Appreciation Month proclamation from the City of Cedar Rapids.

provided three generations of my family and families all across Iowa. There has never been a time in our country's history that more unions and more union jobs were more needed in our workforce. Unions are why we have a middle class in this country," said Senator Claire Celsi.

"As an educator, every school district I've taught in (four states, four districts) has had a strong Union," said Representative Art Staed. "The welfare of students and teachers in their learning/working place was always the priority. Strong unions build safe, healthy, and equitable work environments."

"Every month should be Labor Union Appreciation Month, just as every day is really Labor Day," said Mike Owen, executive director of the nonpartisan Iowa Policy Project. "People work every day, and we all depend on that. We will only truly demonstrate our appreciation when we use public policy to make sure everyone is paid adequately, that they are paid what they are owed, they are protected on the job, that their families have health care, and that they have an opportunity for a secure retirement."

"Labor unions are regularly the unsung heroes in our country," said Matt

Sinovic, executive director of Progress Iowa. "They fight for working families to have better pay and better lives, and every one of us benefits, because we all have higher wages, safer workplaces, and more quality of life as a result. If you like having paid sick leave, vacation days, or things as basic as child labor laws, you should thank a union. And if you want working families to have a seat at the table when it comes to determining the future of our state and country, you should support labor unions."

The Polk County Supervisors and the Sioux City and Cedar Rapids City Councils signed off on proclamations recognizing September as Labor Union Appreciation Month.

The plan is to keep this going and build a movement to make every September, Labor Appreciation Month.

PARTNER ORGANIZATIONS, ELECTED OFFICIALS AND BUSINESSES

- AFSCME Council 61
- APWU Waterloo Local 451
- Black Hawk Union Assembly
- Central Iowa Neighbors
- Citizens for a Healthy Iowa
- GPS Impact
- Greenwood Media Services
- Hawkeye Area Labor Council, AFL-CIO
- Hedberg & Boulton, P.C.
- Indivisible Iowa
- Interfaith Alliance of Iowa
- Iowa Alliance for Retired Americans
- Iowa Citizen Action Network
- Iowa Coalition Against Domestic Violence
- Iowa Federation of Labor, AFL-CIO
- Iowa Main Street Alliance
- Iowa Policy Project
- Iowa Postal Workers Union
- Iowa River Labor Coalition
- Iowa Safe Schools

- Iowa State Education Association
- Iowa Voices
- I Work & Play
- Josh Mandelbaum, Des Moines City Council
- Midvale Pinacotheca
- North Iowa Nine Labor Assembly
- One Iowa
- One Voice Message & Media
- Pinpoint Digital
- Planned Parenthood Voters of Iowa
- Progress Iowa
- Rep. Marti Anderson
- Rep. Karin Derry
- Rep. Molly Donahue
- Rep. Tracy Ehlert
- Rep. Chris Hall
- Rep. Chuck Isenhardt
- Rep. Jennifer Konfrst
- Rep. Bob Kressig
- Rep. Monica Kurth
- Rep. Vicki Lensing
- Rep. Mary Mascher
- Rep. Heather Matson
- Rep. Amy Nielsen
- Rep. Todd Prichard
- Rep. Art Staed
- Rep. Sharon Steckman
- Rep. Beth Wessel-Kroeschell
- Rep. Mary Wolfe
- Ben Rogers, Linn County Supervisor
- Rush & Nicholson
- Sen. Joe Bolkcom
- Sen. Claire Celsi
- Sen. Eric Giddens
- Sen. Rob Hogg
- Sen. Pam Jochum
- Sen. Kevin Kinney
- Sen. Janet Petersen
- Sen. Amanda Ragan
- Sen. Jackie Smith
- Sen. Zach Wahls
- Smith & McElwain
- South Central Iowa Federation of Labor, AFL-CIO
- Rod Sullivan, Johnson County Supervisor
- Tax March Iowa
- Teamsters Local 238
- Tri-City Building & Construction Trades Council
- Stacey Walker, Linn County Supervisor
- Working America, the community affiliate of the AFL-CIO

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Making Our Endorsements Meaningful

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2020 Caucuses Are Coming

By Julianne Frosolone,
IFL Political Director

The hot summer weather has faded, the first day of autumn has passed, and before we know it, the Iowa caucuses will be upon us. On Monday, February 3rd, Iowans will gather in every precinct across the state to discuss their presidential preferences and conduct party business.

The Iowa Democratic and Republican parties will release caucus locations a few months before caucus night. Remember, your caucus site is unique to your address, so be sure to double check before heading out the door.

In order to participate, you need to be registered to vote at your current address. It's ideal to do this

ahead of time, but you can register on caucus night if necessary. Each caucus starts at the same time across the state, and you'll need to be in line no later than 7:00 pm sharp. Everyone who is in line by that time will be allowed to enter and begin the registration process.

The caucus officially opens after registration, and once a leader is elected, the number of eligible caucus-goers present is announced. This number plays a crucial role in determining candidate viability later in the process. Next, you will hear from presidential candidate surrogates, each vying for your support. From this point on, the Democratic and Republican caucus processes are completely different. Democrats form presidential "preference groups" and Republicans utilize a paper ballot voting system. Here's a brief overview of each party's caucus process.

Republicans vote for their preferred presidential candidate on paper ballots. The votes are counted and recorded, and delegates are

awarded based on the total counts. Democrats express their presidential candidate preference by forming "preference groups." Each preference group needs to have a certain number of people in order to elect delegates. This term is called "viability," and it's based on the number of eligible caucus-goers and the number of delegates assigned to your precinct. Non-viable candidate groups, which can include "uncommitted," must either join viable groups or come together to form their own viable group.

Each preference group is awarded delegates proportionally, based on the number of caucus-goers in their group. The delegates elected by both the Democrats and Republicans on caucus night will move forward in the County, District, State, and ultimately, National Convention process.

To increase caucus accessibility, the Iowa Democratic Party will be holding Satellite Caucuses. These locations are meant to accommodate people who are unable to at-

tend their normal caucus. Site examples include union halls, factories, or nursing homes. The deadline for application is November 18th and the template will be posted on the Iowa Democratic Party website with more information.

It's crucial that union members attend their caucuses, regardless of their party preference. A high turnout of union members on caucus night will help ensure worker-friendly candidates get the most delegates in Iowa and remind caucus-goers and reporters that workers' issues are high priority. And, electing our members to the party central committees means that we can ensure union members are included in party decision-making. As the saying goes, "If you don't have a seat at the table, you're probably on the menu."

If you have any questions about the caucus, would like a training for your members, or need help with a Satellite Caucus application, please don't hesitate to reach out.

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The "R" Word

By Mike Owen

Not all "R" words are the same. If you dare say "recession," you'd better whisper it, or you'll be blamed for starting one. But if you say "recovery," nobody bats an eye.

They should. We hear about "recovery" or a "strong" or even "booming" economy when most of us would have trouble finding any of those terms apply in our own lives or those of many folks we know, at least under current circumstances. And that's a full 10 years after the last recession — you know, the big one, the "Great Recession," which ran from December 2007 to June 2009.

In the intervening "recovery" months and years since 2009, Iowa has experienced continuing challenges in family security, which is not surprising given its slow growth in jobs and wages.

Our Iowa Policy Project research through these years has demonstrated these trends, yet we still hear the same spin from those who for political reasons want to claim all is well. And because they are not acknowledging weaknesses and inequities in Iowa's economy, they are not addressing them, and it makes it harder for others to do so as well.

So, if this is a "recovery," why doesn't it feel like it?

- **One in 5 working households in Iowa, on average, fall short of meeting a bare-bones, basic-needs household budget on their earnings alone, as we show in our latest Cost of Living in Iowa report. For single-parent households, the share is a staggering 3 of 5 working households. (Find the report, released Sept. 24, at www.iowapolicyproject.org.)**

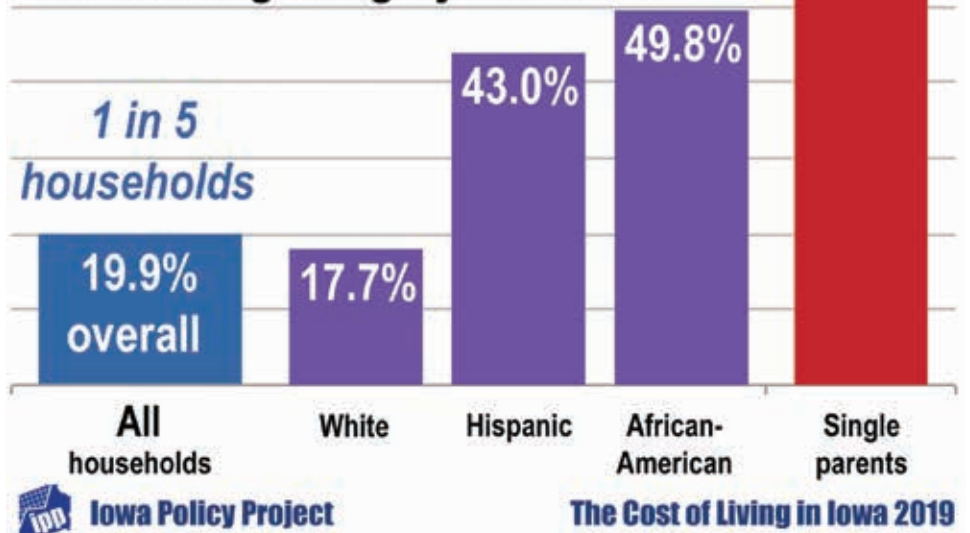
- Yes, Iowa's unemployment

rate is low — at 2.5 percent — but payroll (or nonfarm) jobs are about 40,000 below where they would be had job growth kept up with population growth since the start of the

Since 1979, wage growth has been hoarded by the highest earners." (See StateOfWorkingIowa.org, under the "Wages" tab.)

We can bring you this kind of sol-

Cost of Living in Iowa 2019 Who is not getting by on income



Great Recession. Job growth so far in 2019 has averaged a miniscule 200 per month in a state with nearly 1.6 million jobs. (See our monthly Iowa JobWatch report on our website.)

- **Long a low-wage state, Iowa is staying inside its box.** As Colin Gordon notes in our latest State of Working Iowa report, "Our decade of 'recovery' has not challenged persistent wage stagnation, declining job quality, and rising insecurity and inequality in the Iowa economy." Over a decade, the state median wage has grown by only 4.4 percent. Meanwhile, high earners have seen double or triple that, on average. Gordon notes the pattern since 2009 "echoes the long-term trend of growing inequality.

id data because Iowa labor unions and individuals have stepped up to support the work. IPP staff members have been able to develop and share expertise and insights to all. **Please consider a substantial contribution in 2019, from your union organization and, if you can, personally as well.**

Thank you for your support in getting our work, and Iowa working family issues, on the table in the Statehouse. Contact me at mikeowen@iowapolicyproject.org if you would like to have an IPP presentation at your local or a community forum in the coming months.

Mike Owen is executive director of the nonpartisan Iowa Policy Project in Iowa City.

The Secretary-Treasurer's Notes . . .

Making Our Endorsements Meaningful



**IFL Secretary-Treasurer
Charlie Wishman**

Too often, labor unions and organizations confuse writing a check to a candidate with having a political program. While that's helpful for a candidate, if they don't understand where that money is coming from, it's not very impactful. And, by where that money is coming from, we don't just mean what local or labor organization – the check obviously says that. What we mean is that this endorsement and anything that comes with it comes from the sweat and struggle of the members that make up the Iowa Federation of Labor.

We've heard from many of you that you don't think that a lot of candidates understand that, or perhaps they do but only in an abstract way.

Because of that and for many reasons we've heard expressed all across this state, delegates to the 63rd Iowa AFL-CIO Convention unanimously approved Resolution #5.

Resolution #5 of the 63rd Annual Convention of the Iowa Federation of Labor resolved that:

1) "All candidates for offices

subject to endorsement by the Iowa Federation of Labor, AFL-CIO be required, as a condition of endorsement, to attend candidate academies to be educated on issues important to working families and complete the relevant questionnaire; and

2) That a copy of this resolution be attached to every questionnaire given to candidates."

To comply with this, the Iowa Federation of Labor will hold "candidate academies" or short classes to give a brief but concise overview of issues most important to labor across all sectors, and why we care about them. One main goal of the Federation in these academies are to involve affiliates. While we have a good guess of what our affiliates want candidates to know about them and their members, we won't presume to do that. So, we will be working with affiliate unions to ensure that their priorities are reflected in this labor candidate academy, and it will be in their own words.

Another important goal of these classes is to create connections between candidates and their local labor chapters and members. While we are currently working out the schedules for these informational classes, when they are announced please make yourself available!

I recently spoke to someone who

ran for U.S. Congress, and they agreed that this is a very good idea

on their own. A candidate should know they can reach out to us or an



affiliate to understand more and should at least have a "Labor 101" understanding of what they say they are supporting. Additionally, many candidates haven't had to vote on our pro-active agenda yet, because the political make-up of the state legislature, and the US Congress for that matter, doesn't lend itself to that yet.

This is going to be a big shift in how we approach our endorsements, but it is long overdue. In the short term it will be a change, but it is one that will make our

relationships with people we vote to endorse stronger and more meaningful in the long run for labor in Iowa.

because once they were running for that office, they didn't know a lot of terms or ideas on labor and felt they had to do a lot of research

Iowa ARA Honors Midge Slater

The attendees at the 2019 Iowa ARA Conference honored Iowa Alliance for Retired Americans President, Midge Slater for her years of work with the organization

Midge Slater (retired CWA) has been the president of the Iowa Alliance for Retired Americans for over the past two years. Prior to that she was the nation-wide organizer in Iowa for five years.

Slater stepped down as president, and Mike McCarthy (retired AFSCME) was appointed to fill out the term. The Iowa ARA will hold elections next year.

The Iowa Federation stated "On behalf of the officers and affiliates of the Iowa Federation of Labor, AFL-CIO, we can't thank Midge Slater enough for everything she has done to build the Iowa Alliance for Retired Americans. Whether she was serving in a role of a staff person or as

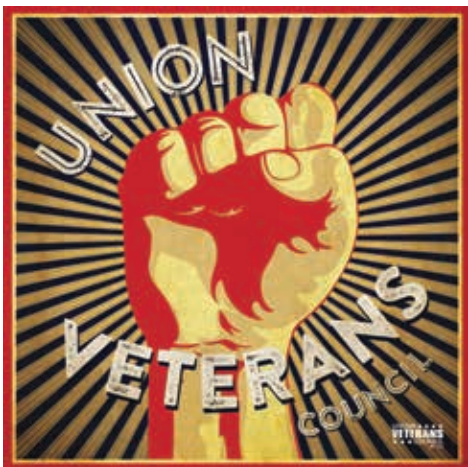
President, Midge has been an advocate for seniors and their families and Iowa is a better place because of all she has done. While Midge isn't going away and still will advocate for seniors and the working class, we appreciate everything she's done to help build this important organization for seniors through the years."

The ARA is fights to make the voice of all seniors and retirees heard loud and clear. We exist for today's retirees AND for those who want to retire SOMEDAY. They EDUCATE - MOTIVATE- ACTIVATE seniors to make a difference through activism, challenging the powers that be and advancing public policy that protects the health and economic security of older Americans.

Interested in being a part of the Iowa Alliance for Retired Americans, send an email to: iowa.alliance@gmail.com.

Help Build The Iowa Chapter Of The Union Veterans Council

The Union Veterans Council brings working-class veterans together to speak out on the issues that impact us most, especially the



need for good jobs and a strong, fully funded and staffed VA.

Additionally, we hold private enterprise and elected officials accountable for their words and actions.

We believe wholeheartedly that the ability for someone to self-identify as "pro-veteran" isn't determined by what lapel pin they don or what catchphrase they employ; veterans face real issues that require real actions—constructive actions that lead to positive solutions.

At the Union Veterans Council, we fight every day for those who have fought for us.

The Iowa Federation of Labor is working on building our own chapter of the Veterans Council, in Iowa. The IFL is working with the Union Veterans Council through a Facebook Page, Iowa Union Veterans Council.

If you would like to help build the Iowa chapter or get more involved with the Union Veterans Council, call Lance Coles: 515-262-9571 or lance@iowaafclcio.org.



photo by Charlie Wishman

Iowa Voter Information

Who Can Register To Vote In Iowa

To register to vote in the State of Iowa, an individual must meet the following qualifications:

- Be a United States Citizen
- Be a Iowa resident
- Be at least 17½ years old (must be 18 years old by election day to vote)

You cannot register to vote if:

- You are a convicted felon (unless your voting rights have been restored)
- You are judged mentally incompetent to vote by a court
- You claim the right to vote in any other place

The Minimum Age To Register To Vote Is 17½: You must be at least 17½ to register.

The Minimum Age To Vote Is 18: must be 18 years old by election day to vote

Voter Identification Requirements In Iowa

Iowa has a Non-strict voter identification law

Iowa requires voters to present some form of identification before casting their vote. Voters without acceptable identification must vote on a provisional ballot and also take additional steps after Election Day for it to be counted.

The following documents are acceptable forms of identification,

- Iowa driver's license
- Iowa nonoperator's identification card
- U.S. passport
- U.S. military card
- Veteran's identification card
- A current and signed voter identification card

Iowa Poll Opening and Closing Times 7:00 AM-9:00 PM

For Primary and General Elections, the polls will be open from 7 a.m. to 9 p.m. statewide. For other elections, please contact your county auditor for the polling place hours.

For City/School Elections, the polls will be open from 7:00 a.m. until 8:00 p.m.

If you have concerns or questions about your polling place or voter registration please contact your county auditor.

If you have moved to Iowa from another state or to a different county in Iowa, pre-register to vote in your new county 10 days before general elections and 11 days before all other elections. If you miss the pre-registration deadline, Election Day Registration is available.

Don't Be Fooled Again!

By Jay Smith & Dennis McElwain

In the last several weeks, the United States House of Representatives opened an impeachment inquiry into the President. Unlike the last impeachment process, which dealt with the personal actions of President Clinton, the current process is an inquiry into whether the President sought political assistance from a foreign nation in exchange for the United States providing funding to the nation to defend itself against Russia. During the last several weeks, if you have consumed any news, it seems that on a daily basis there is more information, which should be damning, that comes out into the public sphere.

And, as a result, the question has become – are we at the tipping point where the country will come together to rid itself of the disastrous experiment that is the Trump Presidency?

For the Labor Movement, however, while this question is an important question, it should not be our focus. Rather, our focus needs to be on educating workers on not only the failures of the Trump Presidency, but rather, the all-out attack by the Trump Administration on working people. The key to ridding ourselves of Trump and his anti-

worker agenda is not betting big on impeachment, especially given the current make-up of the United States Senate, led by Majority Leader McConnell. Rather, the key is to

ridding ourselves of this disastrous administration is by ensuring that whomever is the Democratic nominee in 2020 is able to win the Electoral College. And, that includes winning Iowa.

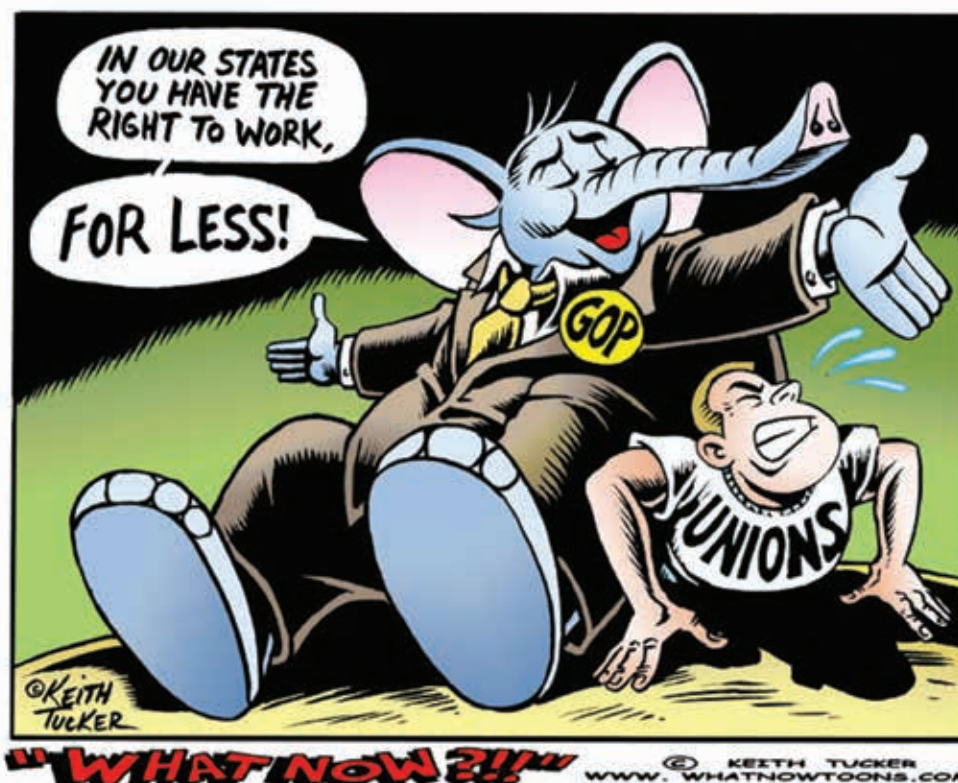
While the impeachment inquiry

is important for the rule of law, the underlying fact is that the Trump Presidency has been a disaster for working people. For example, despite the President's many decla-

rations that American businesses would not close plants and send work overseas, American businesses continue to do so. Instead of enjoying a labor friendly National Labor Relations Board (NLRB), the current NLRB attacks unions and

routinely issues rulings that are anti-labor. The current Labor Secretary is none other than the son of the late Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia, who was no friend to Labor. Despite many attempts at having an "infrastructure week" to discuss how to re-build our infrastructure, there has been no legislation. There has been no increase to the federal minimum wage. The Administration has sought to roll back several rules aimed at protecting workers. The Administration has made it harder for federal sector workers to organize and bargain. The list of attacks is endless.

In turn, while the media continues to be transfixed by the shiny new object that is the impeachment inquiry, it is critical for the Labor Movement to continue to focus on the only thing that ensures we rid ourselves of this circus that is the Trump Administration, and that is – educating and mobilizing our members to vote for the Labor Friendly candidates up and down the ticket in November 2020. This is the only way to guarantee success. We must not do this simply for our own survival, but for the survival of our Republic as we know it. It is that critical, and the Labor Movement has to take the lead in this endeavor. We can't be fooled again.



VOTE NOVEMBER 5th

Iowa Federation Of Labor 2019 Election Endorsements

AREA LABOR FEDERATION ENDORSEMENTS

Great River Area Labor Federation

NAME	OFFICE	WARD/DISTRICT
Mike Matson	Davenport Mayor	At-Large
Diana Broderson (LiUNA HH)	Muscatine Mayor	At-Large
Kirk Edwards	Muscatine City Council	Ward 5
Daniel Salazar	Muscatine City Council	At-Large
John Dabeet (NEA)	Muscatine School Board	At-Large
Karen Cooney	Muscatine School Board	At-Large
Danny Schuur (NEA)	Muscatine School Board	At-Large
Ricky Teed	Muscatine School Board	At-Large
Jeff Osborne	Muscatine School Board	At-Large

Hawkeye Area Labor Council

NAME	OFFICE	WARD/DISTRICT
Pauline Taylor	Iowa City City Council	District A
John Thomas	Iowa City City Council	District C
Megan Alter	Iowa City City Council	At-Large
Janice Weiner	Iowa City City Council	At-Large
RaQuishia Harrington	North Liberty City Council	At-Large
Charlie Eastham	Iowa City School Board	At-Large
Bruce McConnell (IBT HH)	Marshalltown City Council	At-Large
Steve Soddors (IBT)	State Center Mayor	At-Large
Jan McGinnis (NEA)	Marshalltown School Board	At-Large
Jonathan Grieder (NEA)	Waterloo City Council	Ward 2
Dave Boesen (IAFF)	Waterloo City Council	At-Large
Nate Gruber	Cedar Falls School Board	At-Large
Cory Vaupel (NEA)	Center Point City Council	At-Large
Scott Olson	Cedar Rapids City Council	District 4
Pat Loeffler (UBC)	Cedar Rapids City Council	At-Large
Ann Poe	Cedar Rapids City Council	At-Large
David Tominsky	Cedar Rapids School Board	District 1
Dexter Mershbrock (NALC)	Cedar Rapids School Board	District 4
Cindy Garlock (NEA)	Cedar Rapids School Board	At-Large
LaSheila Yates	Linn-Mar School Board	At-Large

South Central Iowa Federation of Labor

NAME	OFFICE	WARD/DISTRICT
Jeff Perry	Ankeny City Council	At-Large
Susan Judkins	Clive City Council	At-Large
Frank Cownie	Des Moines Mayor	At-Large
Skip Moore (LiUNA)	Des Moines City Council	Ward 2
Suresh Reddy	Johnston City Council	At-Large
Scott Syroka	Johnston City Council	At-Large
Bridget Carberry Montgomery	Urbandale City Council	At-Large
Lawrence McBurney	Urbandale City Council	At-Large
Matt Blake	Urbandale City Council	At-Large
Rebecca Haroldson	Urbandale City Council	At-Large
Erin Cubit	West Des Moines City Council	Ward 2
Ryan Crane	West Des Moines City Council	At-Large
Heather Anderson	Des Moines School Board	District 1
Kelli Soyer	Des Moines School Board	At-Large
Ben Murry (USW)	Madrid School Board	At-Large
Jeff Clark (IBEW)	Bloomfield City Council	At-Large

Western Iowa Labor Federation

NAME	OFFICE	WARD/DISTRICT
Neven Conrad	Fort Dodge City Council	At-Large
Bob Scott (UBC)	Sioux City Mayor	At-Large
Rick Scott	Lawton-Bronson School Board	At-Large
Glenn Hurst	Minden Mayor	At-Large
Jill Shudak	Council Bluffs School Board	At-Large

Lessons From Labor History: The Keokuk Teachers Strike

Next year, 2020, marks the fiftieth anniversary of the Keokuk teachers strike, a dramatic event that left a lasting legacy for Keokuk and the state of Iowa. Now—perhaps more than ever—that legacy is worth remembering and reconsidering, especially in light of the Iowa legislature's recent attacks on Iowa's public schools, public-sector collective bargaining rights, and workers as a whole.

In September 1969, when Keokuk teachers, represented by the Keokuk Education Association (KEA), began negotiations with the school district's board of directors, Iowa did not have a law governing collective negotiations for public employees. The Iowa State Education Association (ISEA) had proposed a series of bills, but they applied only to certified school district employees (overwhelmingly teachers) and placed negotiations within the context of the education profession, not broader labor law.

Although no negotiations bill had passed the legislature, ISEA's proposed legislation had provided a framework within which some Iowa teachers had negotiated with school boards during the 1960s. While some administrators and board members saw negotiations as a means by which to establish orderly and fair conditions within the education profession, teachers

believed that it was both their right and professional obligation to use negotiations to improve wages and working conditions as well as the quality of education in their communities.

Before 1969, negotiations in Keokuk had gone relatively smoothly. For decades, the city's boards of directors had worked to improve Keokuk's education system to lure outside investment. Hiring and retaining highly qualified teachers was critical to their success, and they

represented a giant step backward. Between years two and ten of employment, teacher pay would increase each year along tracks corresponding to education level, much as before. Between years ten and twenty-five, however, *all* pay increases came from merit pay *at the discretion of administrators*. Between years twenty-five and forty, teacher pay would gradually *decrease* for all education levels, eventually compressing into a single, static pay scale after year forty. Leland was

opponents. In Iowa, the Keokuk strike helped to move ISEA away from district-only "professional" negotiations toward collective bargaining for all public employees. By 1974, this move, combined with broader labor support and the fear of copycat strikes, pushed legislators to pass the Public Employment Relations Act (PERA).

At the time of the legislative debate over what would become PERA, workers were divided over public-sector strikes. For some

workers, arbitration was an acceptable or even preferred process for resolving deadlocked negotiations. Others felt that giving up strikes meant giving up

crucial leverage. During the debate, pro-collective bargaining legislators and their labor supporters ended up accepting a very strong anti-strike clause in return for crucial votes. At the time, most supporters of collective bargaining believed that it was an acceptable trade off for all the positive aspects of the bill. Of course, in 2017, when anti-labor legislators revised the act, they greatly weakened the arbitration process but retained the anti-strike clause, with its potentially crippling provisions.

Given this turn of events, what use then is the Keokuk story? The strike is a reminder that effective collective action can take many forms, develop over long periods of time, and necessitate diverse community alliances. Teachers' success in the strike was possible only after years of internal organizing, and, even then, only with a community coalition that teachers and their allies developed over the course of weeks preceding the strike. And, while the Keokuk strike helped to transform the ISEA into a powerful vehicle for rank-and-file teacher empowerment, the 1974 collective bargaining law and the strong contracts that came out of it were the result of more than the law itself. They took thousands of small acts of collective action over decades by workers and their allies in communities all across the state.

Now, as we look toward the future, the Keokuk strike reminds us that Iowa workers can—and have—come together in ways that have improved conditions for all Iowans. But such changes require collective action in all its forms—especially the everyday acts of solidarity that often go unrecorded by historians. Only through such acts can we build the innumerable local movements and alliances that will be necessary to create an Iowa that truly works for all working people.



recognized teachers' importance through negotiations. Teachers (especially women) still struggled with low pay and discriminatory working conditions, but they had been able to use negotiations to make slow but steady improvements over time.

Sometime during the late 1960s, however, the Keokuk board, which was dominated by local business leaders, made the decision to roll back this process, and teacher pay in particular. Although we don't have enough evidence to establish exactly how and why they came to this decision, it was made in the context of a new and highly controversial school funding law, which significantly increased state aid for public education, effectively establishing the basis for the mixed funding model that we have today.

Since the 1940s, ISEA had been lobbying for a significant increase in state aid but had been defeated in the legislature. By the late 1960s, a new political coalition made passage of greatly increased state funding aid possible, but it also produced a political backlash at the state and local level. In Keokuk, this backlash came to a head during the 1969-70 negotiations. Although the negotiations had begun largely uneventfully, they quickly took a turn for the worse.

The district's new superintendent, Robert Leland, spearheaded an aggressive posture. The centerpiece of Leland's plan was what the teachers came to describe as the "Rainbow" pay schedule. The existing schedule provided for pay grades corresponding to levels of education and seniority with some additional "merit" pay. Teachers had fought long and hard for such a system because it put some checks on rampant favoritism and gender discrimination by boards and administrators.

For teachers, the Rainbow sched-

ule represented a giant step backward. Between years two and ten of employment, teacher pay would increase each year along tracks corresponding to education level, much as before. Between years ten and twenty-five, however, *all* pay increases came from merit pay *at the discretion of administrators*. Between years twenty-five and forty, teacher pay would gradually *decrease* for all education levels, eventually compressing into a single, static pay scale after year forty. Leland was

open about the Rainbow schedule's purpose: to reduce overall costs, in part by incentivizing early retirement. Not surprisingly, the KEA rejected the Rainbow schedule. The two sides agreed to a mediator, but, when the mediator returned a report that advised against the Rainbow schedule as extreme and unnecessary, Leland and the board ignored the report and announced their intention to move forward with their own proposals (which they were empowered to do under Iowa law). Facing such threatening and unilateral changes, Keokuk teachers voted to strike. They were joined by the district's custodial staff, who were also engaged in deadlocked negotiations with the board. Both groups of workers were strengthened by a committee of community supporters made up of civil rights activists, private-sector union members, and faith leaders.

The board immediately secured an injunction finding that the KEA was in violation of Iowa law. After several days in which the board attempted to keep the schools operating, the judge who had issued the injunction cited the KEA's primary leadership for contempt of court and ordered their arrest. Unexpectedly, the image of teachers being taken to jail further strengthened community support and broke the board's resolve. Meeting overnight in the jail, the board and KEA leaders negotiated a compromise agreement, one that did *not* include the Rainbow schedule.

Looking back from 2019, the Keokuk strike carries several possible lessons. On the one hand, it is a reminder of the power of strikes. As we have seen in places like West Virginia, Oklahoma, and elsewhere, work stoppages of various kinds can have a powerful effect on workers' sense of themselves and their allies, as well as on their



★ Around The AFLs ★

GRALF GREAT RIVER AREA LABOR FEDERATION

Currently, the Great River Area Labor Federation is working on endorsements for local city council and school board elections in November. Each chapter hosted their own Labor Day events this past September and none were cancelled due to the rain. We have hosted numerous events with the Labor Center and have two upcoming events: Stewards Training Class in Keokuk, Iowa on Saturday, October 26th and Union's Roles in Combating Harassment and Discrimination in Rock Island, Illinois on Saturday, November 16th.

HALC HAWKEYE AREA LABOR COUNCIL

Fans for Sudan



A letter to the Iowa City Federation brought fans to Sudan.

This project was the creation of the 11 year old son of Mazahir Satih, Iowa City Council member and organizer for the Center for Worker Justice.

He came up with the idea on his own, and sent letters to the Iowa City Federation, Teamsters and Carpenters. "We were so impressed" said Greg Hearn, President of the Iowa City Federation Assembly. "It is heartwarming and encouraging to see the young people take the lead."

Our Community – Our Future

The HALC held a workshop in Marshalltown, which is a new chapter for the HALC. The workshop was designed to help build unity and to advance workers rights in Marshalltown.

In July the Cedar Rapids/Iowa City Building trades held their annual Solidarity Motorcycle Ride and raised almost \$20,000 for Eastern Iowa Honor Flights.

In August we held our annual golf tournament and raised over \$8,000 for Eastern Iowa Honor Flights.

In October the HALC host the

2nd Annual Pancake Breakfast for United Way of East Central Iowa, hoping to raise over \$1,500.

SCIFL SOUTH CENTRAL IOWA FEDERATION OF LABOR

Cradling New Life Golf Tournament

It is hard to believe it has been exactly one month since our 5th Annual Golf Tournament. In what seems like it could be a record July for the amount of families we have had referred to us, we would like to thank each and every one of you who donated, volunteered, golfed and showed your support. We would like to give a VERY SPECIAL THANK YOU to IBEW LOCAL 55 for their unwavering support this year and every year. This year they donated an extremely generous amount of \$10,000 which allowed us to incur no expense for the golf

mission of the Foundation, supported by IUPAT members and their employers, is to provide our youth with the resources they need to live the fulfilling life they deserve. "Our hope is to lessen some of the everyday stressors like the financial responsibilities placed on parents and students in our communities, by providing new school supplies" said JD Fitch, Business Manager of IUPAT District Council 81. "The men and women of the IUPAT are happy to help, and we are all humbled by the opportunities we are afforded through our PATCH Programs. We strongly believe, as a community-based organization, that we must invest in our communities and the future of the children within them by partnering with schools like Richard T. Castro Elementary and others all over the United States and Canada." We would like to recognize Lt Gov. Primavera, Denver District 3 City Councilwoman Torres, Dr. Robert Villareal and the Staff of Richard T. Castro Elementary for helping us in making this happen.

The Central Iowa Building and Construction Trades Council and Union Sportsmen's Alliance held a Youth Archery event at the Union Labor Park in Des Moines.

Solidarity for Soldiers

USW Local 310L member Chris Tague helped raise over five vehicle loads of donations for the Des Moines Homeless Stand Down.

WILF WESTERN IOWA LABOR FEDERATION

The WILF co-hosted a PRIDE event with allied groups in Sioux City and Council Bluffs.

A legislative forum was hosted by the WILF in Council Bluffs. Reps

Mary Ann Hanusa, Rep Charlie McConkey and Sen Dan Dawson attended the legislative forum.

The WILF hosted a City Council and School Board forum in Council Bluffs and held a golf and bags tournament to raise funds for COPE to support local endorsed candidates.

IOWA AREA LABOR FEDERATION CONTACTS

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SCIFL South Central Iowa Federation of Labor

President – Mark Cooper.
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WILF Western Iowa Labor Federation

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What Is The MLPA?

Midwest Labor Press Association (MLPA) was supported by Iowa Labor when the delegates at the Iowa Federation of Labor convention voted to pass a resolution to promote labor press.

The resolution asked the Iowa Federation of Labor (IFL) and its



affiliates to support the MLPA and participate in their annual education conference.

"This is a great organization," said Ken Sagar, President of the Iowa Federation of Labor. "And we, the labor movement, need to do more to support and build up the Midwest Labor Press Association."

The MLPA is comprised of union

members from: Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kentucky, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Ohio and Wisconsin.

The objective of the MLPA, a not-for-profit organization, is to increase the effectiveness of the Labor Press in the Midwest Region of the United States and Canada, as a communication medium in support of the goals of the Labor Movement.

The IFL and MLPA are working on a process where State Federations could make all locals in their state, members of the MLPA.

The MLPA annual conference was recently held in Dubuque, Iowa, where the IFL received four journalism awards. IFL Communication director, Lance Coles was also awarded the organizations Eugene Debs award.

For more information about the MLPA, go to their Facebook page.

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This 8 – 12 week program, recognized by the United States Department of Labor, will prepare you to qualify for a Registered Apprenticeship Program in construction or advanced manufacturing by providing you with education, hands-on learning opportunities, interview skills, connections to apprenticeship training programs, and other necessary support. Once you become a registered apprentice, the program will continue to provide support to help you succeed in your registered apprenticeship.

Contact Paul Iversen, Pre-Apprenticeship Program Coordinator, at 319-335-4080 or paul-iversen@uiowa.edu for more information.

First session scheduled to begin in September 2019.



THE UNIVERSITY OF IOWA
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Advantages You'll Gain from the University of Iowa Labor Center Quality Pre-Apprenticeship Program

A Certificate of Completion recognized by our program partners, and

- An OSHA-10 Certificate
- First Aid and CPR Training
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- Preparation assistance for the National Career Readiness Certificate (NCRC) Test required by many registered apprentice programs
- NCRC certification upon passing the NCRC test (separately administered)
- Assistance in applying for registered apprenticeship programs that interest you
- Hands-on experience in one or more trades to test your interests and abilities
- Support in successfully completing your registered apprenticeship program

Trades partnering with our program include:

- Carpenters
- Bricklayers
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- Heat and Frost Insulators
- Ironworkers
- Sheet Metal Workers
- with more programs being added regularly