



ANDREA E. BROOKS, NVP
WOMEN'S & FAIR PRACTICES DEPARTMENT

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We have told you that “The Best Is Yet to Come.” We have pointed out that “it is our turn” if we only believed and acted on that belief. Well you did, and you did it in record numbers. I want to congratulate you, and thank you, for your unity, for your incredible work, for your fortitude, and for your undying spirit. Everyone should be proud of what we accomplished, but we should also keep in mind that last fall’s election was the start, not the finish.

Now, we’ve got to get out there and make sure we don’t blow it.

That means three things:


One, we must not let up one bit; in our effort, our energy, or our enthusiasm.

Two, we must take advantage of our window of opportunity before it slams shut. We cannot wait to take action on issues that were neglected during the old regime and we cannot wait to energize and mobilize our members for the legislative battles that lie ahead.

Finally, we must take the unity we built last fall and make it even

stronger with everyone working together in our one great union. Sisters and brothers, if we keep working as one, we can, and we will, achieve the change we need.

We will be calling on you to help us reach our goals in every area. We have to make our presence felt in our AFL-CIO Central Labor bodies and in our AFL-CIO State Federations. We must ask co-workers to join our union in record numbers so we can show our unity to management, Congress, and the current and future administrations. We are asking you to make your voices heard like never before because this great opportunity that we have worked for is right here and right now.

We must seize the moment to implement our Core Values as adopted at our great Leadership Conference in Chicago. Those were not empty words but powerful ones. We have reprinted these core values in this edition of our newsletter. We have accepted the assignment to work on the “Unity Inclusion” platforms. We know that only when we walk the walk of this important platform can we fully achieve our greatest goals. 

AFGE's 2007 Legislative Conference and Civil Rights Luncheon



(Left to Right) NVP Brooks and Newsweek columnist, Eleanor Clift. D.C. City Councilmember At-Large, Kwame Brown. Director of Outreach, D.C. Vote, Eugene Kinlow.

At the 2007 Legislative Conference and Civil Rights Luncheon attendees were reminded that “The Best is Yet to Come! We’re on the Right Path to Victory.” The Workers’ Rights Caucus and Civil Rights Luncheon have always been great opportunities for AFGE activists to address key issues impacting the civil, human, women, and workers’ rights community. This year we had activists turn out in record numbers; close to 100 people participated in the Workers’ Rights Caucus and over 450 tickets were sold for the Civil Rights Luncheon.

The Workers’ Rights Caucus featured a panel discussion entitled, “DC Government’s The Right to Vote: Next Steps, How Can Labor Help.” Panelists were D.C. City Councilmember At-Large, Kwame Brown; President of AFL-CIO D.C. Metro Council, Joslyn Williams; Director of Outreach, D.C. Vote, Eugene Kinlow; and AFGE NVP District 14, Dwight Bowman. The discussion was moderated by NVP Brooks. The focus of the discussion was how Labor could help D.C. government gain a congressional vote. The panelists also spoke about next steps and how important it is for the Labor Movement to unite around this issue.

After an informative discussion with D.C. Vote, NVP Brooks submitted a resolution to the National Executive Council (NEC) to affiliate with D.C. Vote. The resolution passed unanimously.

The Civil Rights Luncheon featured keynote speaker, Eleanor Clift, a columnist for Newsweek. Clift spoke to an attentive audience about the current political climate that is in Congress. Clift encouraged members to pay attention to their local congressman and hold them accountable to making sure that they are working for our rights. The luncheon was also twice entertained with musical selections by Victor Davis, president of Local 3283.

The Workers’ Rights Caucus and Civil Rights Luncheon were successful in delivering the message that “We’re on the Right Path to Victory.” We must continue to promote our commitment towards building a country that values workers’ rights. We must continue the theme of “The Best is Yet to Come.”

Mark Your Calendar

Equal Pay Day - **April 24**

Workers Memorial Day - **April 28**

Asian Pacific American Heritage Month - **May**

International Workers’ Day - **May 1**

Coalition of Black Trade Unionist (CBTU)
National Convention, Chicago, IL - **May 23-28**

Gay Pride Month - **June**

Skin Cancer Awareness Month - **June**

WFP Training Dates

2nd District Coordinator/EEO Institute,
North Falmouth, MA - **May 28 – June 1**

12th District Coordinator/EEO Institute,
San Diego, CA - **June 6 – 8**

7th District Coordinator/EEO Institute,
Delevan, WI - **June 11 – 15**

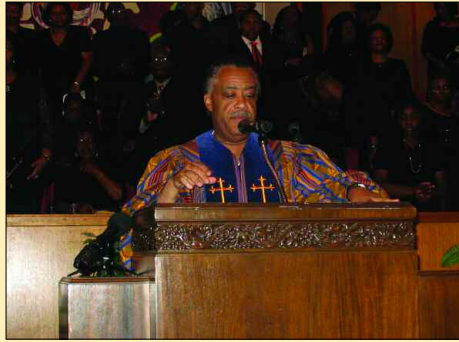
6th District Coordinator/EEO Institute,
Indianapolis, IN - **July 16 – 20**

MLK Holiday Observance

This year's theme at the AFL-CIO Martin Luther King Jr. Holiday Observance held in Houston, Tex. was "Unions and Communities, Support Justice for Workers". This theme embodies the bond between labor and the community, the same bond that Martin Luther King Jr. saw between labor and the civil rights movement. While labor protects the rights of the working family through workers rights issues, an obvious natural ally is the civil rights movement which also protects the working family. Dr. King understood this connection and how much more powerful labor and the civil rights movement are when the two groups work together. On the day of his tragic death, he was encouraging the work of labor by supporting the issues of the sanitation workers in Memphis, Tenn.

We are proud to announce that AFGE had a huge presence at the MLK Holiday Observance. In attendance were all three National Officers; President John Gage, National Secretary-Treasurer J. David Cox, and National Vice President for Women and Fair Practices Andrea E. Brooks. Several members of the National Executive Council (NEC), the Human Rights Committee (HRC), as well as several Local presidents and members were also present at this year's observance. AFGE truly did show great support for labor and the community, honoring the work and legacy of Dr. King.

The week long events of the MLK Holiday Observance was an opportunity to remember and reflect on the way labor and the civil rights movement have worked together to better the conditions of the working family, and how we must continue to remain united. Activities included workshops with topics such as "Attacks on Voting Rights"



Reverend Al Sharpton.



Members of the Human Rights Committee.

"Human progress is neither automatic nor inevitable...Every step toward the goal of justice requires sacrifice, suffering, and struggle; the tireless exertions and passionate concern of dedicated individuals."

— Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

and "Current Development on Civil Rights".

A community service outreach day was also part of the festivities. Participants from various unions provided services to the community by planting flowers at the Martin Luther King Jr. Preschool or painting houses for residents in Houston. Transportation, lunch, and items used in the community service projects were all donated by the affiliated unions of the AFL-CIO.

A Sunday morning worship service was held at the Fifth Ward Missionary Baptist Church in Houston. A truly inspiring sermon was given by the Reverend Pastor Al Sharpton to more than 500 worshippers. That evening, the AFL-CIO awards dinner honored the hard work of labor activist throughout the state of Texas. Awards were presented for community service, government service, labor, and religion. The keynote address was given by the Democratic U.S. Rep. Sheila Jackson Lee (TX-18) who delivered an inspirational speech reminding labor that they are the "voice for the voiceless" and that labor must follow the road map that Dr. King has left us.

The activities ended with a labor breakfast and a parade honoring the legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. As the affiliated unions marched together under the banner of labor, we were presented with an opportunity to reflect on the struggle and the unity necessary to combat those who seek to harm the rights of the working family. Dr. King believed that together we can accomplish anything. Labor activists, civil rights and community leaders must remain engaged in the struggle for justice despite constant attacks. AFGE members can be proud of their leaders who demonstrated their support and unity with the community.

Get Active!

Coordinators Support Transportation Security Officers

AFGE has launched a very intensified campaign to begin actively recruiting airport screeners, or Transportation Security Officers (TSOs), after the U.S. House of Representatives and U.S. Senate both passed amendments that would allow TSOs to have collective bargaining rights.

More than 3,000 airport screeners without the aforementioned collective bargaining rights have joined AFGE to receive representation assistance as well as to take advantage of the union member benefits offered by Union Plus. Local Women's and

Fair Practices Coordinators are asked to help spread the word at airports in the areas which they live and work. "It is a matter of fairness for these American workers who are protecting the flying public," said National Vice President of Women's and Fair Practices Andrea Brooks. The TSOs work near, and in some cases with, border patrol agents, custom agents, and immigration agents, all of whom have collective bargaining rights.

For more information please go visit AFGE's website www.afge.org or the TSO website www.tsa.gov.

Get Active!

EQUAL PAY DAY

Each year, the National Committee on Pay Equity (NCPE) organizes the national observance of Equal Pay Day to raise awareness about unfair pay for women and people of color in America. Equal Pay Day is observed in April to indicate how far into each year a woman must work to earn as much as a man earned in the previous year. Tuesday symbolizes the day when women's wages catch up to men's wages from the previous week. This year's Equal Pay Day will take place on Tuesday, April 24th.

Working families in America continue to endure shortcomings because of continued pay inequalities for working women. It is the goal of the Women's and Fair Practices Departments to continue to revisit this injustice until true pay equality is achieved. It is also our goal to educate our members on the issues of equal pay as it impacts D.C. and federal government.

Many people believe that this is primarily a minority women's issue. However, unequal pay not only affects all women, but it also affects minority men and men who work in women dominated fields. According to the U.S. Census Bureau, women on average earn only 77 cents for every dollar earned by a man. Yet, the disparity is even greater for minorities. For example, African-American women make only 66 cents, Latin-American women make 55 cents, and Asian-American women make 80 cents for every dollar earned by their male

counterparts. Even though the pay is higher for Asian-Americans, many are discriminated against because of language barriers and differences in their educational advancement. Minority men and men in women dominated career fields are also faced with pay bias in the workplace, African-American men still tend to make 48 percent less than their Caucasian counterparts.

The right of employees to earn equal pay and be free from discrimination should be enforced by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC). However, due to downsizing and the reorganization of this agency, the opportunity to review these cases effectively has become a growing concern. By raising awareness among women and minorities on Equal Pay Day, we can arm them with the necessary tools to effectively challenge the inadequacies of the EEOC on this subject.

All Local Coordinators are asked to become involved on Equal Pay Day by planning events, distributing literature, organizing informational meetings, or simply wearing red to symbolize how far women and minorities are "in the red" with their pay. To find out more about this campaign partnership with the National Committee on Pay Equity visit AFGE's website www.afge.org, the "What's New Section" on the Women's and Fair Practices page, or www.pay-equity.org.

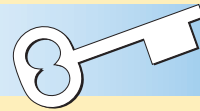
VOLUNTEERS

In order to be successful AFGE is taking the steps to build its volunteer base. If you would like to volunteer to do phone banking, election protection, registering voters, or just helping out where needed, we need you to contact the National Office at 202-639-6417 and request that a volunteer card be sent to you. This card can be returned to the Women's and Fair Practices Departments by mail or fax, 202-639-4107, or you can give the card to one of your District's National Organizers or National Representative who will make sure we receive it. Remember we are just beginning, we need everyone to make the difference!!



The image shows a volunteer card from AFGE. At the top, it says "AFGE I want to get active" and "I'll volunteer" with a checkbox. Below that, it says "Send me action news" with a checkbox and the website "www.AFGE.org". The card contains several rows of checkboxes for personal information: "Local #", "First Name", "Last Name", "Last 4 Digits of Social Security #", "AFGE Member?", "Home Address", "City", "State", "Zip", "Home Phone", "Work Phone", "Fax", "Agency", "Home E-Mail", and "Work E-Mail". At the bottom, it lists "Good Pay", "Fair Benefits", and "Retirement Security" and identifies the organization as the "American Federation of Government Employees, AFL-CIO" with contact information: "Fax to 202-639-6492 or Mail to AFGE".

Conflict Resolution



At the 35th National AFGE Convention the body proposed and adopted an Internal Policy Resolution Program to resolve internal disputes within AFGE. The Women's and Fair Practices Departments were charged with developing and implementing this program with the help of the General Counsels Office. The program was passed and adopted at the 36th National AFGE Convention as the Conflict Resolution Program this past August. Below we have provided you with steps on how to access the program and situations that would be appropriate and inappropriate for conflict resolution.

GOAL

- The primary goal of the Conflict Resolution Program is to make available a process that will assist in the resolution of conflict among members, and between members and Local leadership.

SITUATIONS APPROPRIATE FOR CONFLICT RESOLUTION

- Issues among members and between members and Local leadership that involve differences of opinion related to ideas, roles/responsibilities, and work styles are appropriate for conflict resolution. Situations dealing with transitions of leadership, mistrust, and lack of inclusion are also deemed appropriate.

Examples

- Unclear roles and responsibilities between the leadership, including the Chief Steward, President, and Executive Board;
- Transitions between leadership – particularly when a partial “new slate” is elected;
- Refusal of elected board members to follow the desires of the membership. For example, when votes are not carried out;
- Dealing with feelings of discrimination within the Board and between the Board and members (related to race and gender); and
- Issues of trust between members and stewards. For example, when a steward talks to a supervisor without the consent of a member.

SITUATIONS NOT APPROPRIATE FOR CONFLICT RESOLUTION

- **Situations listed below in which formal charges may be filed, as outlined in Article XXIII, Section 2 of the AFGE Constitution are deemed inappropriate for conflict resolution prior to and after the filing of formal charges:**
- Advocating, encouraging, or attempting to bring about secession from the federation of any Local or of any member or group of members. Penalty for conviction under this sub-paragraph shall be expulsion;
- Working in the interest of, or becoming a member of, the Communist Party or any other organization which advocates the overthrow of the democratic form of government under which our members live. Penalty for conviction under this sub-para graph shall be expulsion; and
- Once a trial has commenced; that is, once the Chair of the Trial Committee officially “opens” the trial, the Conflict Resolution Program will not be afforded to the parties.

REFERRAL MECHANISMS

- **Agreement of the parties:** The parties may voluntarily agree to participate in the Conflict Resolution Program by contacting their District Coordinator, National Representative, and/or National Vice President, who in turn will contact the Conflict Resolution Program administered by the Women's and Fair Practices Departments.
- **Referrals:** Referrals to the Conflict Resolution Program may be made by the authorized National Vice President, District Coordinator, National Representative, or Investigation & Trial Committees.

For more information on the Conflict Resolution Program, or how to seek assistance with a conflict in your Local or District, please contact:

**Sherri Bracey
Program Manager
in the Women's and Fair Practices Departments
by phone 202-639-4117 or email sbracey@afge.org.**

AFGE's Core Values

- AFGE is a Community of workers dedicated to improving the quality of life for all America;
- It is our right to Justice, Equality, and Dignity;
- We must be Accountable to our members and the public we serve;
- We Adapt to succeed in our changing environment;
- We determine our future through Collective Action;
- Democratic Decision Making is the cornerstone of AFGE;
- Diversity and Inclusion are reflected throughout AFGE;
- Fairness, Integrity, Honesty, and Service guide our path; and
- Solidarity Forever

I'm a Coordinator

A new section has been added to the Equalizer to provide our Local, Council, and Regional Coordinators with quick tips on how to be successful in your position. We encourage all Coordinators to participate in the Local Coordinators training offered throughout the various districts in order to gain an in depth understanding of your role and responsibilities.

TIP # 001

There are four levels to the Coordinator structure: District Coordinators who work on the district level; Local Coordinators who work on the local level; Council Coordinators who work on the council level; and Regional Coordinators who work within the Bureau of Prisons. Every one of the coordinators work to educate, mobilize, and engage our members in the Human Rights Program.

Get Active! WORKERS MEMORIAL DAY

In 1970, Congress passed the Occupational Safety and Health Act, promising every worker the right to a safe job. The intention was to ensure that employers provide their workers with an environment free from dangers to their safety and health. Three decades later, the toll of workplace injuries, illnesses, and death remain enormous. Each year, thousands of workers are killed, and millions more are injured or contaminated because of their jobs. In 2005 alone, more than 4.2 million workers were injured on the job, 5,702 were killed due to hazards on the job, and another 50,000 died due to occupational contaminants.

On April 28, 2007, the labor movement will once again observe Workers Memorial Day to remember those who have been killed or injured on the job and to renew the fight for strong safety and health protections. The theme of this year's Workers

Memorial Day is "Good Jobs. Safe Jobs. It's Time". The National Vice President for Women's and Fair Practices would like all Local coordinators to participate in the events hosted by the AFL-CIO around the country, or organize your own event or program to honor these men and women who have suffered due to unsafe working conditions.

American workers are in need of a course of action that puts workers, not employers, first; and protects their safety and health, not corporate interests. Please join us on this day of remembrance and resolve by participating in a scheduled event or planning one in your Local to continue fighting for the promise of safe jobs for all workers. To find out more information on Workers Memorial Day visit AFGE's website www.afge.org, the "What's New Section" on the Women's and Fair Practices page, or the AFL-CIO website at www.aflcio.org.

Save the Date!



The Women's and Fair Practices Departments
present

2007 Human Rights Training Conference

August 20-24, 2007

Hyatt Regency Chicago

151 East Wacker Drive, Chicago, IL 60601, Phone: (312) 565-1234

The Human Rights Training Conference is AFGE's premier training program offering courses such as Equal Employment Opportunity, Coordinator Training, and Financial Officers Training, among other courses.



Hotel reservations may be made directly with the hotel by calling (800) 233-1234.
Please watch our Website (www.afge.org) for detailed training registration.

AFGE-Women's and Fair Practices Departments

80F Street, Northwest, Washington, DC 20001

(202) 639-6417

(202) 639-4107-fax

www.afge.org

For questions regarding the HRT, please contact Caniesha Washington at washic@afge.org.

HEALTH SMART "Cervical Cancer Prevention"



Many of our members are faced with numerous health care issues everyday. One of the biggest issues facing women today is cervical cancer. We have partnered with the Coalition of Labor Union Women (CLUW), an AFL-CIO constituency group, to raise the awareness of this issue. It is one of the most common cancers that affect women's reproductive organs. There is a critical need to raise women's awareness, through education, of new prevention methods.

We are committed to educating our members on the causes and means of preventing cervical cancer. Through education, vaccination, and Pap test screening, women have the ability to significantly reduce their incidence of cervical cancer. Although the death rate has decreased greatly over the last 40 years, every year more than 10,000 women in the United States are diagnosed with invasive cervical cancer, and nearly 4,000 ultimately die from it. The need to empower women through education of this disease and making prevention methods accessible is paramount.

THE FOLLOWING ARE A FEW FACTS THAT CLUW HAS ESTABLISHED ABOUT CERVICAL CANCER:

- Cervical cancer is almost always caused by a common virus, human papillomavirus (HPV), which disproportionately infects a larger percentage of African-American women;
- Most women will have HPV at some point in their lives, but few will develop cervical cancer. In fact, most women who get HPV will get rid of the virus through their body's normal healing process;
- An HPV infection that persists for several years puts a woman at a greater risk for cervical cancer;
- Screening for cervical cancer can be done by your doctor using just a Pap test if you are younger than 30, or a Pap and HPV test if you are 30 or older.
- The HPV test is now approved by the FDA for regular screening in women ages 30 and older; and
- In addition, an HPV vaccine is now available for girls and women ages 9-16. Although the vaccine will help prevent many HPV infections, screening is still needed to prevent cervical cancer.

To find out more information on how to get involved in this awareness campaign, order literature to hand out in your Local, or to partner with a local chapter of CLUW to build awareness in your Local or community, please visit the "What's New" section of the Women's and Fair Practices section of the AFGE website www.afge.org or visit the CLUW website www.cluw.org.

Now You're In The Know

USEFUL WEBSITES FOR YOU TO USE

AFGE Women's and Fair Practices

www.afge.org

Information at your fingertips! The WFP site notes important information about the two departments, the Human Rights Committee, and the many special projects we take on. This is a great resource for members and coordinators who want to learn more about how their Local can make use of our services.

UnionBlog

www.unionblog.com

As the Internet becomes the fastest way to communicate to large audiences, AFGE's award-winning blog (short for "web log") hosts daily observations and discussions of union issues for members and federal and D.C. government employees. Members are WFP MESSAGE BOARD.

WFP Message Board

The EEO Advocate is Back!

The Women's and Fair Practices EEO Advocate is the premiere newsletter for legal minds. The EEO Advocate explores topics such as new trends in EEO claims, discrimination cases that have set legal precedent, and information on how to file an EEO Claim. Please look out for the EEO Advocate!!



Tell Us Your Story!

The Women's and Fair Practices Departments would love to highlight your Local, member, or coordinator who has been moving issues on civil, human, women, and/or workers' rights. Please remember to send your stories of accomplishments to our office! Just think your Local's accomplishments may be a beacon of light for someone else.

AFGE, AFL-CIO State Federation and CLC Tracking Form

In an effort to continue to form strong coalitions with our State Federations and Central Labor Councils (CLC) we are asking all officers and delegates of these bodies, who are members of AFGE to fill out an AFGE AFL-CIO State Federation and CLC Tracking Form. This will allow AFGE to build up its contact network with regard to these organizations. Forms can be downloaded from the AFGE website Women's and Fair Practices "What's New" section, www.afge.org. Or you can call the Women's and Fair Practices Department @ 202-639-6417 and request a form.

Please direct all messages, feedback, and/or comments about the Equalizer to washic@afge.org.

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Women's/Fair Practices Departments
80 F Street, NW
Washington, DC 20001
www.afge.org

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