

# THE EQUALIZER



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WOMENS & FAIR PRACTICES DEPARTMENT

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Civil Rights... Worker Rights... Human Rights... Same Struggle.

What does that mean?

It means that the struggle for middle-class America... is the same as the struggle for civil rights.

It means that the struggle for equality... is the same as the struggle for workers' rights.

It means that the struggle for equal education... is the same as the struggle for human rights.

This year's Human Rights Training participants understood this first hand after spending a week of intensive training classes to continue the fight for a better America. Whether you have played a role in the civil rights movement, the workers' rights movement, or the human rights' movement, we have all fought and battled for the same thing... a better America.

An America where the government is seen as the model employer and Americans are proud to support Federal and D.C. government workers.

An America where everyone has the opportunity to be represented by a union without reprisal and where the Employee Free Choice

Act is supported.

An America where employees are treated equally on the job and discrimination is eliminated.

An America where TSA employees have bargaining rights and are represented by AFGE.

The question is how do we reach this America?

We must continue to take action and participate in the 2008 elections like we never have before!

We must ensure that in November 2008, we elect a leader who will support our issues: the issues of women... working families... minorities... the disabled... discrimination in any shape, size or color... A leader who will ensure that the federal government sets the standard of employment for the United States.

We must have people in place in our Locals to mobilize and educate our members around the election. These people are your Local Women's and Fair Practices Coordinators. It is part of their role and responsibility to work on legislative and political issues. If you don't have Local Coordinators

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## Civil Rights, Human Rights, Workers' Rights...Same Struggle, continued...


in your Local, I urge you to elect or appoint a Coordinator and see that they are trained for this fight.

We all must take action! We can not wait or believe that our neighbor will participate so that we won't have to!

If we don't take action our voices will be weakened... but...if all of us take action together...there will be no one in this country that won't be able to hear the voice of working America.

So whether you are a part of the civil rights movement,

the workers' rights movement, or the human rights movement, we are all of one voice...enduring the same struggle...fighting the same enemy...for a better America.

To win this fight brothers and sisters, you...and I mean each one of us...must participate in 2008! Make sure you are ready. Be sure to join me again at AFGE's 2008 Human Rights Training Conference. To those who participated in Chicago, thank you for your continued support and making this Human Rights Training one of the most successful. 



### Mark Your Calendar

#### November

Lung Cancer Awareness Month  
 AIDS Awareness Month  
 National American Indian Heritage Month

National Veteran's Administration Council (NVAC), Hawaii  
 - **November 12**

#### December

National Black Caucus of State Legislators (NBCSL) Conference, Little Rock, AR  
 - **December 12**

### WFP Training Dates

6th District Coordinator/EEO Institute and Work Life, Cleveland, OH - **October 15-19**

# AFGE's 2007 Human Rights Training Conference

*"I loved the diversity and getting to meet and network with new people. Also, all my life I've been trying to figure out where I belong and now I know it's with AFGE!!"*

The Women's and Fair Practices Departments hosted AFGE's 2007 Human Rights Training Conference in Chicago, Ill. this past August. 500 AFGE members came together for a week of union training, networking and development. The theme chosen for this year's conference, "Human Rights, Civil Rights, Workers' Rights... Same Struggle", was chosen to teach our members that we are all the same in our fight for a better America.

*"I was honored to be a part of this. I gained a lot of knowledge that I'm going to take back and use. Go AFGE!!!"*

The classes that were offered at this year's Human Rights Training included Basic, Intermediate and Advanced EEO; Basic and Advanced Stewards; Financial Officers; Affirmative Employment Plan; D.C. Track; Conflict Resolution; Coordinator Boot Camp; and Collective Bargaining. The instructors at this year's training possessed a wide range of union knowledge, excitement and experience.

*"I learned a lot about rules that I didn't know. I also learned ways to approach issues better and handle it in different ways."*

In addition to the daily training classes, AFGE members had the opportunity to attend a welcome reception, plenary session, seminar sessions and an evening banquet. 7th District National Vice President Dorothy James, National Women's Advisory Coordinator Pam Martin and National Fair Practice Affirmative Action Coordinator Earl Tucker, welcomed



conference participants to Chicago at the Monday night welcome reception. The Wednesday morning plenary session featured a special broadcast of AFGE's radio show, Inside Government. Participants also heard from political analyst, David Bradley on what's at stake in this country.

*"Excellent classes! The conference as a whole was excellent. The WFP staff members carried off everything without a hitch."*

There were several like-minded organizations that came to support AFGE and engage our members: the Coalition of Black Trade Unionists (CBTU), Pride at Work (PAW), AFGE's Hispanic Coalition (HISCO), Colonial Life Insurance, the Law Enforcement Steering Committee. Several members were also able to attend a presentation of AFGE's Case Tracking System.

*"Thank you AFGE, I really learned more than I thought I would. This experience was great!"*

We are proud to announce that the members attending this year's conference set a new AFGE-PAC record for any AFGE event; the Legislative/Political Organizers collected over \$40,000. This year's conference brought in 127 new PAC contributors, 36 upgraded contributors and 18 renewed contributors. Thanks goes to Bob Nicklas, Director of the Political Action Committee (PAC), and the Legislative/Political Organizers who attended the conference.

This conference was a huge success for the Departments. The Women's and Fair Practices Departments have been a constant voice for women and minorities in AFGE and it was a privilege to educate and empower our members to be advocates for change. The message that we all win when we work together for a better

America, no matter the struggle, was delivered.

# AFGE'S DISABILITY MEETING

AFGE has found that many of our disabled members working in the federal and D.C. government have increasingly been denied reasonable accommodations. They have been ignored and discriminated against due to their disabilities and their objections and concerns have been openly disregarded.

In response to this growing problem, AFGE's Women's and Fair Practices Departments have decided to mount a full campaign to draw attention to the discrimination and unfair treatment that employees with disabilities have been suffering. The absence of adequate agency policies and practices to comply with the employer's legal responsibility to accommodate employees with disabilities has to be fixed.

On June 29, 2007, AFGE held the kick-off disability meeting to discuss the obstacles that face our disabled members and begin



planning the campaign to put a stop to these issues. The meeting was attended by National officers, Local Presidents, devout AFGE Activists and disabled AFGE members. Testimony was given from the attendees regarding unfair, unlawful and discriminatory agency practices. Discussions centered around steps to be taken in four key areas: Legislative/Political; Organizing/Mobilizing; Education and Representation; and Communication and Public Relations, to create workable solutions to the problems that were identified.

The Women's and Fair Practices Departments produced a comprehensive list of proposed next steps to begin this vital campaign. AFGE and the Women's and Fair Practices Departments will take action. We are dedicated to this effort of eliminating discrimination in the government workforce for our disabled brothers and sisters.

## The 60th Anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights

This year's International Human Rights Day will be celebrated on December 10, 2007. International Human Rights Day is celebrated on December 10 every year because it commemorates the day in 1948 that the United Nations General Assembly adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. We celebrate International Human Rights day to make all people aware of their fundamental human rights and to create awareness of the people who are still deprived of them.

The 60th Anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 2008 is fast approaching. The commemorative year will kick off on December 10, 2007, Human Rights Day, and will extend through 2008's celebration. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights was the first global proclamation for human rights. This document outlines the view of the United Nation's General Assembly on the human rights guaranteed to all people across the world. The United Nation's Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) is building an effort to mark this milestone in the history of global freedom.

The commemoration message is that the Universal Declaration of Human Rights is a living document that can continue to inform and inspire the struggle for rights and freedoms around the world. It is an expression of

two main values of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights: universality and justice.

In a time where working families struggle, demand job stability, are being denied the right to organize, denied fair treatment, and denied decent working conditions we must continue to support efforts to promote justice and freedom. Local Coordinators are asked to become involved in the 60th Anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights starting on this year's International Human Rights Day celebration, December 10, 2007, by planning and attending events, distributing educational materials or organizing informational meetings to continue fighting for the promise of equal rights for all.

A website to complement the Universal Declaration of Human Rights 60th Anniversary campaign will be launched on December 10, 2007. [www.KnowYourRights2008.org](http://www.KnowYourRights2008.org) will be a website of ideas about how to mark the anniversary and a source of information about the Universal Declaration. Visitors to the site will be invited to provide details of their special events, publications, illustrations, educational activities, performances, music and any other means they plan on using to mark the anniversary. To find out more information visit the Women's and Fair Practices website, <http://wfp.afge.org>.

# SALARIED AND PROFESSIONAL WOMEN: RELEVANT STATISTICS

## A NEW FACT SHEET

### FROM THE DEPARTMENT FOR PROFESSIONAL EMPLOYEES, AFL-CIO

The Department for Professional Employee's new fact sheet, *Salaried and Professional Women: Relevant Statistics*, provides information about the wage gap and the union wage advantage for professional and other women; women's educational attainment; the employment distribution of men and women within professional and other occupations; and the changing American family.

This fact sheet shows that the wage gap between sexes still plagues the American workforce. In 2004, median annual earnings for full-time year-round workers demonstrate that women earned just 76.5 percent as much as men. Out of 19 Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) countries, the United States has the largest gender earnings gap, save for Austria and Switzerland.

In 2006, median weekly earnings for women were 80.8 percent those of men. For most women of color, the earnings gap was even larger; African American women earned just 70 cents for every dollar earned by men in 2006 and Hispanic and Latina women earned just 59 cents for every dollar men earned. Only Asian American women's earnings were closer to parity with men's; in 2006, they earned 94 percent that of all men. However, they earned 79 percent as much as Asian American men.

This relevant fact sheet also shows the financial value of union membership for professional women and other women. For example, Union preschool and kindergarten teachers earned 56.7 percent more than their non-union counterparts, while for elementary and middle school teachers, the union wage advantage was 34.6 percent. In 2006, union librarians earned almost 29 percent more than their non-union counterparts, while union social workers and counselors earned 27 percent and 26.4 percent more, respectively.

Today, over 6.7 million working women are union members and 7.5 million are represented by unions.

Many of the unions organizing in industries dominated by women, such as education and government, have consistently shown much higher win rates than those unions organizing in industries with fewer women members. The union difference is quite apparent when you look at the median weekly wages in predominantly female and consequently lesser paid occupations.

Union women and men are more likely than non-union workers to have health and pension benefits, and to receive paid holidays and vacations, and life and disability insurance.

- In 2006, 43.6 percent of all union members were women, up from 19 percent in 1962.
- In 2006, union women earned weekly wages that were almost 24 percent more than non-union women. Thus, union membership narrows the gender wage gap.

The differences are even more marked for African American and Hispanic or Latina women:

- The median weekly earnings of African American union women were almost 26 percent more than their nonunion counterparts.
- Hispanic and Latina women who were union members had median weekly earnings that were more than 30 percent higher than their nonunion counterparts.

**For more information on the Department for Professional Employee's new fact sheet, "Salaried and Professional Women: Relevant Statistics" please visit the Women's and Fair Practices website, <http://wfp.afge.org>, or contact, Caniesha Washington, Program Specialist in the Women's and Fair Practices Departments by phone, 202-639-6417 or email [washic@afge.org](mailto:washic@afge.org).**

# I'm a Coordinator

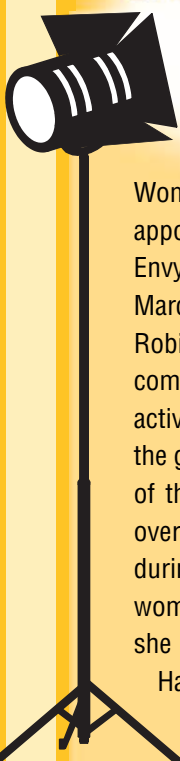
This section of the Equalizer provides our Local, Council and Regional Coordinators with quick tips on how to be successful in their position. We encourage all Coordinators to participate in the Coordinators training offered throughout the various districts in order to gain an in depth understanding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

## TIP # 003

The Coordinator is a position validated by its inclusion in the AFGE Constitution. Article XVII, Section 3, states "All newly established local, council, and national steering-type committees shall include in their proposed bylaws, constitution, articles, or articles of operation, the positions and duties of both Women and Fair Practice Coordinators". Women's and Fair Practice Coordinators are positions deemed necessary by the Federation. Coordinators are vital in our effort to educate, mobilize, and engage our members.

# SPOTLIGHT ADDITION

## COORDINATORS AT WORK



Women's history month started out with a bang. The newly appointed Women's/Fair Practice Coordinator for Local 987, Envy Palmore, met with her committee members Saturday, March 10, at the famous Chef Audrey Bistro in Warner Robins, Georgia, where she talked about her plans for the coming year and her hope to get the women of her Local actively involved. Sadie, Holt an icon in Warner Robins was the guest speaker for the event. Sadie the current President of the National America Rosie Association gave a historic overview of what it was like to step into traditional men jobs during World War II. She also talked about the struggle for women's rights. After Sadie Holt's encouraging message, she was presented flowers and a gift from WFP. Donna Harris, past Women's/Fair Practices Coordinator, was presented a crystal clock for her dedication to AFGE's Women's and Fair Practices Departments.



First row from right to left: Women's/Fair Practice Coordinator Local 987 Ms. Envy Palmore, Sadie Holt with flowers, and Donna Harris with clock. Back row LaBrenda Jones, Cheryl Thomas, Jeanette McElhaney, Norita Horne, Gail Rogers, and Mary Sanders.

# AFL-CIO MLK Celebration!



"I have a DREAM..."

Since 2008 is the 40th anniversary of the Memphis Sanitation Workers Strike and Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s final campaign, the celebration will be held in Memphis, Tenn., January 17-21, 2008.

In Memphis, the labor movement will come together to remember Dr. King and the sanitation workers strike. We will join with our allies at the observance to advance the agenda for civil and workers' rights and to carry on Dr. King's legacy through a program of education and community service.

The Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday Observance weekend will begin on Thursday, January 17. Friday, January 18 will be a day of commemoration and reflection on the Memphis Sanitation Workers strike. Saturday will be dedicated to community service. You are encouraged to bring working attire, as several restoration projects are planned.

The hotel for the 2008 AFL-CIO Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday Observance is the Memphis Hilton Hotel on 939 Ridge Lake Boulevard. Participants should make reservations directly with the hotel at (901) 684-6664.

The conference registration fee is \$150. This fee includes conference attendance, the labor breakfast, awards dinner and all conference materials.

AFGE would like to continue to have a huge attendance at the MLK Holiday Observance. If a member of your Local is interested in attending, please visit the Women's and Fair Practices Departments website, <http://wfp.afge.org>, for more information or contact, Caniesha Washington, Program Specialist in the Women's and Fair Practices Departments by phone, 202-639-6417 or email [washic@afge.org](mailto:washic@afge.org).

## VOLUNTEERS

In order to be successful AFGE is taking the steps to build its volunteer base. If you would like to volunteer, we need you to complete a volunteer card. This card can be returned to the Women's and Fair Practices Departments by mail or fax, 202-639-4107. You can give the card to one of your District's National Organizers or National Representatives, who will make sure we receive it. Remember we are just beginning; we need everyone to make the difference!!

## "ENOUGH IS ENOUGH": FREE THE JENA 6

The Women's and Fair Practices Departments participated in a rally of solidarity on Wednesday, September 20. A Call to Action (ACT-A) presented a "Free the Jena 6" rally on Upper Senate Park at the U.S. Capitol in Washington D.C. They urged supporters, through e-mail and radio broadcasts, to wear black and come out for a peaceful rally against the injustices in Jena, Louisiana.

People of all ages, colors and ethnicities came to the rally in support of the Jena 6. Many people carried around homemade signs and wore t-shirts stating, "Free Jena 6".

ACT-A put together an inspiring program with exciting speakers, poets, singers, children's groups and like-minded organizations. All of the speakers at the rally were supporting the fight for Justice and equality. This rally was not



to foster mistrust among different races; but to battle against the injustices that are allowed to continue in our country.

The mission for the Jena "6" Rally is change. Everyone should believe that their voice and involvement in their community could make all the difference in world. We need to work together to rescue children, redeem families, and restore the connection between families and communities.



The Women's and Fair Practices Departments were proud to attend this rally and show our support for justice and equality. To find out more information about the Jena 6 visit the Women's and Fair Practices website, <http://wfp.afge.org>, or contact, Caniesha Washington, Program Specialist in the Women's and Fair Practices Departments by phone, 202-639-6417 or email [washic@afge.org](mailto:washic@afge.org).

# Now You're In The Know

## USEFUL WEBSITES FOR YOU TO USE

### AFGE Women's and Fair Practices

[www.afge.org](http://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](http://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 invited not only to post entries for others to see, they are also called to reply to messages left by AFGE leaders and activists. The blog serves as a great opportunity to learn what is going on at AFGE throughout the country and to voice your support of your fellow D.C. and federal government employees.

# WFP Message Board



## Check Out the New Look of the Website!!

The Women's and Fair Practices Departments along with the Communications Departments have revamped the look of the WFP website at <http://wfp.afge.org>. What do you think? Please write to us at [washic@afge.org](mailto:washic@afge.org) and let us know how you like it.

## The EEO Advocate!

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's 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](http://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](mailto:washic@afge.org).*

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