



FEDERATION OF SOCIAL WORKERS IUE-CWA 81381 AFL-CIO

FSW Function Report

Name and Title: LaTonya Wilcox – FSW Grievance Co-Chair

Name and nature of event/function (i.e. District 1 Conference, Steward Training at ILR, etc.):

CWA 2023 Minority Leadership Institute University of Iowa, Iowa Memorial Union, Iowa City, IA

Dates attended: October 29, 2023 - November 3, 2023

What was the purpose/goal of the function?

I was selected to attend the Minority Leadership Institute (MLI) for a rigorous week of training in leadership development, legislative and political advocacy, mobilization, grievance handling, labor economics, labor law and communications. We also learned how to analyze systems of economic, racial and gender based oppression and how to build collective power through transformative organizing. At The end of the program I am responsible for developing an action plan into ongoing work at the local and district level. During this week we were able to engage with CWA/IUE-CWA leadership from President Cummings, President Kennebrew, Secretary Treasurer Salaam, Chief of Staff Sylvia Ramos, CWA Executive Board and At-Large Members, Local politicians and community organizers. We had presentations from the CWA Health and Safety Director, Staff Reps from the CWA Campaign Leads and Staff Rep and from the University of Iowa Labor Center Education Staff. This is the 40th Year of MLI which began in 1983.

What did you learn and/or what significant information was shared at the function?

From the moment I arrived at the University of Iowa we registered and after dinner we started training. President Kennebrew was in attendance and he and the Human Rights Director presented the overview of the program and the University of Iowa educators began with the Topic of Values and that guide our Movement. We were also assigned a group task for a 3 minute presentation. My group had to put together a video presentation on union activism for day 3,

The 2nd day Elise Bryant Executive Director of the Labor Heritage Foundation and CLUW presented on Effective Speaking and Writing for Union Activists followed by an in person presentation by President Claude Cumming Jr. who was apart of the first MLI. He not only did the presentation; he also spent a lot of time with us in the Q & A our work room and afterwards in the hospitality room. There was a town hall meeting with local Iowa City Minority leadership. Fiery panelists, all women of color, one from Somalia, one of African American Descent and one who identifies as being Queer.



FEDERATION OF SOCIAL WORKERS IUE-CWA 81381 AFL-CIO

On the third day Maurice Washington - President of the CWA Minority Caucus presented the history of the Minority Caucus and how it started as a direct result from the Caucus. He also discussed how the at-Large Diversity Seats came about for mobilizing actions of the Minority Caucus at 2006 CWA National Convention. There was another town hall meeting with Organized Labor-Community Coalitions. After the meeting we broke up into teams and had to meet with each panelist to convince them to support a union rally. The goal was to understand their issues, overcome obstacles such as language barriers to find common issues and build a coalition. The 2nd panel was with the Executive Board and at-Large Diversity Seats for Paths, Obstacles, Strategies, and Developing Leadership fishbowl session. My team's presentation went very well.

Day four theme was Organizing for Power. UOI education staff discussed the foundation of organizing. Will O'Neal CWA Srs. Communications Coordinator discussed social media tools and restrictions and assisted in helping to get set up with helpful apps. Nell Geiser CWA of Director Research walked us through how to obtain information and using them as a resource. Timmia Wiley CWA Campaign Lead discussed taking action on Gender Justice and Guillermo Morales from the Labor Center discussed Building a Diverse Inclusive Union.

Day 5 Micki Siegal de Hernandez CWA Deputy Director Health and Safety discussed Occupational Safety which dealt with the mental health component and steps to recognize and how to work policy into labor contracts. Following was the CWA Legislative Priorities and Effective Lobbying. Ty Marino and Elena Lopez illustrated and interacted with us using lobbying like ordering a pizza. Sylvia Ramos CWA Chief of Staff also met with us and had a round table discussion with us and told her story of her involvement in the labor movement. We also had to do final public speaking presentations and concluded with a graduation ceremony.

How is what you learned relevant to FSW?

The training I received will benefit all of our committees and stewards. I was provided with a binder and reference tool kits to aid in building a more functional union. The connections that I made will also be beneficial in accessing information and support for our executive board as well. I would like to help develop stronger interaction with our constituency groups and assist membership in being more engaged in our labor movement. As the National CWA Women's Chair in want help build a better platform for growth in women's committees. I am so honored to have been selected and extremely honored to be a graduate of the Class of 2023 on the 40th Anniversary of the Minority Leadership Institute.