

FSW Function Report

Name and Title: Michelle Alaimo, Grievance Co Chair

PHEW; Public, Healthcare & Education Workers Conference

Orlando Florida March 16-19, 2017:

CWA Strong is the latest CWA movement with the Forward Together Campaign. Strong push that locals cannot get the job done without all members participating by moving forward together not one at a time. We must realize the past is in the past, learn from what we need to and let the other things go! Need to focus on the future of labor not only in the USA but across the globe.

Union, non- union people, Democrats and Republicans need to ban together and fight then GOP on the Affordable Health Care Act changes they are trying to implement. I personally feel the current ACA does need changes and improvements but not what the Republicans have come up with. With the new proposed changes a million health care workers could lose their jobs, Americans will have less coverage at higher costs. Why do Gov't representatives get FREE health care while the people who elected them have to suffer. We all need to join the fight to save jobs and lives!

Fredricks(Janus) is on the horizon of becoming a reality. FSW needs to train and teach members what this means and why it is important to pay dues to the local. CWA has offered to come to locals to train Eboards and Stewards we need to take advantage of this. The attack on Public Unions is strong and CWA intends on being tough , fighting this latest battle and winning!

ORGANIZE ORGANIZE ORGANIZE need I say more. Organize to take back American jobs and American pride. That is the only committee that FSW no longer has and it is the most important. CWA is hopeful all locals will sign up at least 10 % of non members in their local. For FSW that should not be hard as we currently only have 15 people that have not signed membership cards.

UPTE has offered to send Lisa Kermish to any local for FREE to help with an organizing campaign this also should be taken advantage of.

I was able to attend 3 Workshops:

- 1. Organizing- I came back with lots of plans and look forward to implementing what I can with the help of our members.**
- 2. Tools to Resolve Conflict in our union and our workplace- This one was not so helpful but I did comeback with information on having difficult conversations that I think will be very useful.**

- 3. Race Right Wing populism and Organized Labor- This was more of a very informative history lesson. It showed how the past is relating to the current views and issues in America today. Bill Fletcher, racial justice activist was phenominal.**

Author and Co- Founder of the Labor Institute, Les Leopold, spoke and signed books. I have heard him speak in the past, he is very knowledgeable about finances, money and uses lots of charts. Usually he bores me because that is not my cup of tea but this time I tried really hard to pay attention and am glad I did. Since 1947 Productivity has increased and for 30 years so did wages but since the late '70's productivity is still going up and American wages are either staying level or decreasing. American's have accepted that if you want higher education you must go in debt. We are the only free world county that does not offer FREE education after high school. That's just crazy! Public Sector across the US is overworked and understaffed. We know that just working here in Monroe County. He spoke of needing a unified movement and suggested we sign up at runawayinequality.org.

We had a PHERN meeting on one of our lunch breaks, it was nice to see the faces of the people from our monthly conference calls. Discussion was around what can be done when/if we lose payroll deduction. Brooks Sunkett's office is looking into creating yet another data pass to track members and non-members since ORION is not very useful and the new CWA system will not come out for another year or so. There is SIF money out there all locals have to do is write a grant proposal for what is needed. Public Sector (hopefully an oversight) does not have a member on the RMC board, a constitutional amendment will be written and submitted at Convention is August 2017. Discussion about updating wording on membership cards, will contact IUE to discuss possible changes and any legal issues.

Would you recommend FSW attendance at this function in the future? Over the last 14 years or so I have attended different conferences I still truly believe that PHEW and PHERN conferences need to be attended so FSW is on top of what is happening in the public sector world not just locally but in other CWA areas. This has been by far the best conference I have attended. For the context of the conference, workshops and information/tools I am able to bring back to FSW 81381!
