

RECLAIMING NOV. 6–7, 2009 • WASHINGTON, DC OUR WAGES NATIONAL EMPLOYMENT LAW PROJECT

A Conference on Organizing, Public Policy and Workers' Rights

Conference Agenda

At the University of the District of Columbia School of Law
(see map at end for building locations)

Friday, November 6th

8:00 – 9:00 **Breakfast & Registration – Auditorium, Building 46 East**

9:00 – 9:30 **Welcome**
Auditorium Christine Owens, National Employment Law Project (NELP)

Keynote Address
Congresswoman Lynn Woolsey, Chairwoman, Subcommittee on Workforce Protections,
House of Representatives Committee on Education & Labor

9:30 – 11:00 **Plenary: Community and Government Partnerships for Just Pay**
Auditorium
Across the country, worker advocates are partnering with public agencies like state and federal departments of labor, state Attorneys General, and local prosecutors around wage enforcement. These innovative collaborations have resulted in the recovery of unpaid wages for workers and strong cease-and-desist orders to employers. Panelists will describe examples of joint efforts in California, Illinois, New York and elsewhere, and will lead a discussion of how to leverage public resources and on-the-ground know-how.

Chris Williams, Working Hands Legal Clinic
Henry Huerta, CLEAN Carwash Campaign
Terri Gerstein, New York State Department of Labor
Jennifer Gordon, Fordham Law School

Moderator: Cathy Ruckelshaus, NELP

11:00 – 11:15 **Break**

11:15 – 12:45
Auditorium

Plenary: Wage Justice Goes National – Challenges and Opportunities for Worker Centers

Worker centers are going national, creating networks of member organizations and turning their eyes to federal reform. What does a national strategy around wage enforcement look like for a movement that is grounded in local grassroots organizing? Hear from leaders of five networks as they discuss different strategies for going to scale with the fight for wage justice.

Ai-jen Poo, Domestic Workers United
Chris Newman, National Day Laborer Organizing Network
Saru Jayaraman, Restaurant Opportunities Centers United
Javaid Tariq, New York Taxi Workers Alliance
Kim Bobo, Interfaith Worker Justice

Moderator: Christine Owens, NELP

12:45 – 2:00
Windows Lounge
Building 38

Lunch (provided) – CONFERENCE MOVES TO LAW SCHOOL (BUILDINGS 38 + 39)

2:00 – 3:30

Concurrent Panels 1

Room 201
Building 39

Federal Enforcement: A New Sheriff is in Town

When Secretary Solis was sworn in, she put low-road employers on notice that there was a “new sheriff in town” and that their tactics would no longer be tolerated. Panelists will share their thoughts on how the new Administration can re-invigorate the US DOL’s enforcement of wage and hour laws. Panelists will discuss best practices in state enforcement of wage and hour laws, DOL’s practices and priorities, and ideas for new reforms.

Jonathan Kronheim, U.S. Department of Labor
Catherine Ruckelshaus, NELP
Joanne Goldstein, Office of the Attorney General, Massachusetts
David Weil, Boston University School of Management

Moderator: Judy Conti, NELP

Windows Lounge
Building 38

Balancing Immigration and Labor Law Enforcement in the Workplace

How should the new Administration balance enforcement of immigration law with the need to more aggressively enforce hard-won workplace rights? Join our panelists in a discussion of the current government practices, the role of federal agencies in protecting victims of severe labor abuse, and new policies that can recalibrate this balance.

Jennifer Rosenbaum, New Orleans Workers’ Center for Racial Justice
Esther Olavarria, U.S. Department of Homeland Security
Anna Park, U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission
Deborah Greenfield, U.S. Department of Labor

Moderator: Rebecca Smith, NELP

3:30 – 3:45

Break

3:45 – 5:15

Concurrent Panels 2Room 201
Building 39**It's All About the Industry: How Sectors Shape Organizing and Policy Strategies**

Industries have a profound effect on violations of minimum wage, overtime, and other employment and labor laws. Changing how employers behave means understanding the economic structure of sectors. Panelists will discuss the impact of industries on organizing and policy strategies with examples from retail, janitorial work, warehousing logistics, and home health care and child care.

Lilia Garcia, Maintenance Cooperation Trust Fund
 Andrew Friedman, Make the Road New York
 Nick Allen, Change to Win
 Peggie Smith, University of Iowa College of Law

Moderator: Annette Bernhardt, NELP

Windows
Lounge
Building 38**Hot Topics in Wage Justice Litigation**

Leading litigators bringing groundbreaking wage and hour cases will discuss new developments for worker advocates – including tipped employee rules, special issues for undocumented workers enforcing their wage and hour rights, and recent rulings in home care, building security, and related service industries, to name a few. Panelists will also describe federal legislative developments in the wage and hour field, and will engage in a discussion around other hot topics raised by the audience.

Justin Swartz, Outten & Golden LLP
 Janet Herold, SEIU
 Marni Willenson, Cross Law Firm
 Celine McNicholas, United States House Committee on Education and Labor

Moderator: Mary Bauer, Southern Poverty Law Center

6:00 – 8:00

Evening Reception – Hosted by NELP, open bar!Omni
Shoreham
Hotel,
Palladian
Ballroom

The Omni hotel is two stops from UDC. Take the Red Line to the Woodley Park-Zoo/Adams Morgan stop. The hotel is located one block from the Metro. Once you have exited the Metro via the escalators, go to the right and down the stairs. Go to the left and walk to Calvert St (1 block). Cross the street and take a right. The hotel will be on your left hand side. The address is 2500 Calvert Street NW (at Connecticut Avenue).

Saturday, November 7th8:00 – 9:00 **Breakfast – Windows Lounge, Building 38**9:00 – 10:30 **Concurrent Workshops 1**Room 201
Building 39**Connecting Research to Organizing and Wage Enforcement Campaigns**

Research doesn't have to be disempowering; it can help make the case for change, and bring the lives and voices of workers into the policy arena. Join with other participants to discuss different models for integrating research into organizing and wage enforcement campaigns.

Nik Theodore, Center for Urban Economic Development
Emily Timm, Workers Defense Project
Minsu Longiaru, Restaurant Opportunities Center of Michigan
Lupe Gamboa, Oxfam America

Facilitator: Annette Bernhardt, NELP

Room 205
Building 39**Beyond Unpaid Wages: Innovative Strategies in the Fight for Workers' Rights**

Just as "where there is smoke, there is fire," where there are wage and hour violations, there are usually other workplace violations as well. This discussion will include some of the country's most creative advocates who have taken on and won workplace justice campaigns that go beyond unpaid wages. Their stories will be the jumping-off point for a discussion about creative worker-driven strategies.

Luis Larin and Armando Tema, United Workers
Matthew Sirolly, Wage Justice Center
Cleve Williams, Cincinnati Interfaith Workers Center

Facilitator: Ted Smukler, Interfaith Worker Justice

Windows
Lounge
Building 38**Workers' Rights and Immigration Reform**

Worker centers' members are among the communities most affected by upcoming comprehensive immigration reform. What do members need in immigration reform? What negative provisions will they need to anticipate? How will worker centers engage in the broader debate?

Chris Newman, National Day Laborer Organizing Network
Daniel Castellanos, Alliance of Guestworkers for Dignity
Ai-jen Poo, Domestic Workers United
Tyler Moran, National Immigration Law Center

Facilitator: Rebecca Smith, NELP

10:30 – 10:45 **Break**

10:45 – 12:15 Concurrent Workshops 2

Windows
Lounge
Building 38

Private Litigation in the Union and Worker Center Context

Private litigation is a powerful tool for unions and worker centers in organizing campaigns as well as in the advancement of individual workers' rights. Join panelists in discussing how to navigate complicated issues that may arise in the course of such litigation, including differing organizing and litigation strategies, ethical issues, and potential conflicts.

Audrey Richardson, Greater Boston Legal Services
Saru Jayaraman, Restaurant Opportunities Centers United
Bill Lurye, AFL-CIO

Facilitator: Justin Swartz, Outten & Golden LLP

Room 201
Building 39

Organizing Together: Partnerships between Unions and Worker Centers

Recent collaborations between unions, worker centers and their national networks signal hope for more effective organizing outside conventional campaign models. Panelists at this workshop will discuss the strengths and challenges of several ongoing initiatives, including partnerships initiated by the National Day Laborer Organizing Network and its member groups, and joint projects between the Laborers International Union of North America and El Centro del Inmigrante in the New York area, among others.

Ed Ott, Murphy Institute for Worker Education and Labor Studies, CUNY
Sarahi Uribe, National Day Laborer Organizing Network
Gonzalo Mercado, El Centro del Inmigrante
Dave Johnson, Laborers Eastern Region Organizing Fund

Facilitator: Victor Narro, UCLA Downtown Labor Center

Room 205
Building 39

Protecting Victims of Labor Trafficking

Since 2000, T and U visas have been available for victims of serious labor trafficking under the landmark Trafficking Victims Protection Act. Practitioners will discuss the nuts and bolts of applying for these visas as well as their implications in worker center campaigns.

Kristin Graunke, Southern Poverty Law Center
Spring Miller, Southern Migrant Legal Services

Facilitator: Hillary Ronen, La Raza Centro Legal

12:15 – 1:45**Lunch (provided) and Lunch Plenary**

Windows
Lounge
Building 38

Bringing Wage Justice Into the Larger Progressive Agenda

All of us want to get to greater scale and impact – but too often, we still end up working in silos when it comes to concrete campaigns and policies. What will it take to bring wage justice into the larger progressive arena? Hear from our three panelists as they stretch beyond specific issues and constituencies to imagine a truly integrated agenda for change.

Rinku Sen, Applied Research Center
Ed Ott, Murphy Institute for Worker Education and Labor Studies, CUNY
Sarita Gupta, Jobs with Justice

Moderator: Annette Bernhardt, NELP

1:45 – 2:00

Break

2:00 – 3:30

Participant-Organized Meetings

Windows
Lounge
Building 38

Strategy Meeting on Regional U.S. DOLs in the Southeast

For states in which the U.S. DOL is the only alternative for wage enforcement, does it make sense to build a regional strategy? What would that strategy look like? What pressures can be brought to bear on U.S. DOL regional offices, either in conjunction with or separate from national strategies? What other partners can we bring to the table? Organized by the Pro Bono Project, Oxfam America and NELP.

Room 201
Building 39

Developing a National Legal Support Network for Worker Centers

As worker centers grow around the country, they encounter new geographic regions in which the legal community is not familiar with them, as well as new legal issues that involve the intersection of many different practice areas, including employment, labor, criminal, civil rights, immigration, and more. Come to this session to help develop a legal support network to allow private non-profit and for-profit attorneys around the country to learn and share with one another about meeting the legal needs of worker centers nationwide. Organized by ROC-United.

Room 205
Building 39

Capacity Building: Balancing Advocacy with Fundraising for Worker Centers and Non-Profit Coalitions

Making significant change requires building strong, innovative, and sustainable organizations. In this session, we'll learn about the approach one group has taken in four key areas – attorneys' fees and *cy pres* funds; health insurance; social entrepreneurship & cooperatives; and membership – and then discuss the pros, cons, alternatives, and how-to's. Organized by the Florida Immigrant Advocacy Coalition.

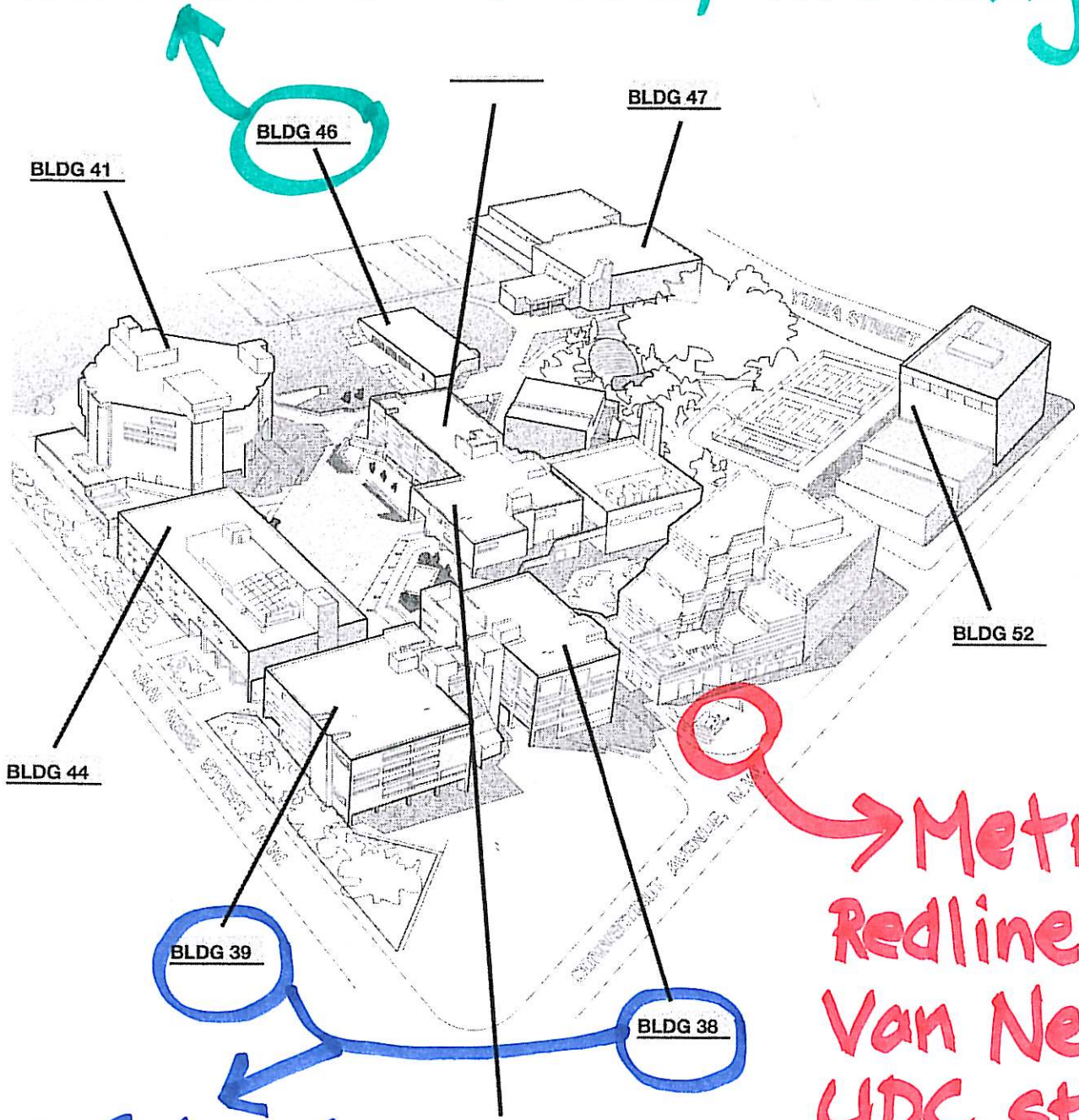
3:30

Conference ends

NELP would like to thank the following foundations for their generous support of this conference: the Annie E. Casey Foundation, the Ford Foundation, the General Service Foundation, the Public Welfare Foundation, and the Solidago Foundation.

UDC Campus Map

Auditorium - Friday morning



Metro
Redline
Van Ness -
UDC stop

Law School:
Friday afternoon +
all day Saturday