



Labor Fax

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PAID FAMILY LEAVE

The New Jersey State AFL-CIO, in conjunction with the New Jersey Partnership for Working Families, successfully lobbied for the release of Paid Family Leave legislation from the Senate Labor Committee earlier this month. Sponsored by Senator Stephen Sweeney (D-4) and Senator Barbara Buono (D-18), this bill extends the current Temporary Disability Insurance program by allowing workers to take up to 12 weeks of leave to care for a sick family member or newborn/adopted child.

FAIR DAY'S PAY

Three pieces of legislation clarifying and extending certain sections of the New Jersey Prevailing Wage Act are currently making their way through the New Jersey Legislature with the support of the New Jersey State AFL-CIO.

* **A-3890** (Egan/Van Drew/Moriariy)- clarifies that the prevailing wage must be paid on projects on publicly owned land being leased to a private entity.

* **S-2247** (Sweeney/Congilio)- closes a loophole and reinforces the Legislature's intent to extend prevailing wage requirements to projects which receive financial assistance through the "Business Employment and Incentive Program" (BEIP).

* **S-2458** (Madden) which prohibits debarred contractors from using new business entities to circumvent prevailing wage requirements and provides for suspension of contractor's registration who violate this law.

WILD WOMEN

The 4th annual Women in Leadership Development (WILD) Conference will be held March 23-24, 2006. Following a Friday evening welcome reception and dinner in honor of Clara Allen at the Labor Education Center, Conference attendees will spend Saturday participating in panel discussions on issues such as building and shaping the labor movement and mobilizing around issues related to immigration and organizing workers at a time when the NLRB has consistently unveiled anti-worker decisions. For more information about this conference contact Laurel Brennan, Secretary-Treasurer at 609-989-8730.

NO SWEAT

New Jersey Commissioner of Labor and Workforce Development David Socolow testified earlier this month before the United State Senate Sub-Committee on Interstate Commerce, Trade and Tourism on our state's initiatives to prevent abusive sweatshop labor conditions. "We must not turn a blind eye to sweatshop abuses elsewhere that we would tolerate in our own backyard," stated Commissioner Socolow during his testimony. To read the full text of Commissioner Socolow's testimony please visit www.njafICIO.org

BUILDING NEVER STOPS

By Charles Wovkanech & Laurel Brennan

The opening months of 2007 have brought a flurry of organizing activity to the labor movement here in New Jersey. As you'll see on the following pages, thousands of workers across the State are exercising their right to form a union, and we are proud to join in their efforts.

The diversity among these workers is noticeable, and we are finding more and more that those from every walk of life: college professionals, municipal employees and nurses are fighting for their voice on the job.

Throughout our history the labor movement has strived to improve the lives of all workers and has remained at the forefront of many of the important social issues of the day.

It is fitting therefore that in February, recognized nationally as Black History Month, and in the midst of an aggressive and contentious organizing drive at Rutgers University, we invoked the memory of President Abraham Lincoln and his words that 'those who deny freedom to others, deserve it not for themselves; and, under a just God, can not long retain it,' and joined with a bipartisan panel of lawmakers, clergy, staff and students in support of nearly 3,000 RU employees fighting to form their own union.

All of this, of course is occurring at the same time that the labor movement nationwide is engaged in one of its most aggressive lobbying campaigns ever in support of the Employee Free Choice Act. The political efforts of working families led to overwhelming victories of our endorsed candidates in November, and put us in a position to secure passage of this critical legislation which will go a long way towards restoring the rights of workers which for too long have been denied through threats, intimidation and coercion.

We look forward to adding this new law, complimentary to our own state's card check law, to our organizing toolkit and utilizing it to further our efforts to grow the labor movement.



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Labor Fax
APEX Award

- NJ State AFL-CIO: The Voice for Working Families in New Jersey -

ORGANIZING CORNER

The first weeks of 2007 have seen the New Jersey State AFL-CIO and many of our affiliates working actively and aggressively toward building the labor movement.

Following are a few of the highlights:

URA-AFT– Nearly 3,000 Administrative, Professional and Supervisory staff at Rutgers University are currently among the last remaining workers at the State University without union protections. At the urging of Governor Jon Corzine and several of our state's top lawmakers, President McCormick signed a neutrality agreement on January 25. In the weeks following the agreement several elected officials including Governor Corzine, Senator Mendez, and Congressmen Frank Pallone and Chris Smith have participated in forums supporting these workers' in their efforts to form a union.

AFSCME LOCAL 2303A– On January 30 the 180 Atlantic City Municipal Employees who are members of AFSCME Local 2303A fought back against an independent union known for its history of raiding, and voted overwhelmingly to continued to be represented by their current union.

HPAE– Also on January 30 the NLRB rejected the appeal filed by South Jersey Healthcare against the nurses' vote to form a union. This decision mirrored an earlier one by an Administrative Law Judge who ruled that even after counting the unopened ballots the results of the election would not change.

CWA LOCAL 1012– 109 members of the CWA 1012 in Absecon have affiliated with the New Jersey State AFL-CIO.

428 AND COUNTING

With the elections of Steven Holmes, CWA 1034, in Jackson, and Tony Ciasca, IBEW 94, in Burlington, as Fire Commissioners, the number of rank-and-file union members elected to public office through the New Jersey State AFL-CIO Labor Candidates Program is now 428.

OSHEP CONFERENCE A SUCCESS!

More than 100 participants attended the 2007 Occupational Safety and Health Education Conference on January 16, 2007 and took part in workshop sessions on a variety of the topics including Pandemic Flu, Workplace Violence, Ergonomics, Workers Compensation, OSHA's Enforcement and Cooperative Programs, and Emergency Response. Commissioner David Socolow, New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development and Lou Ricca, Deputy Regional Administrator for OSHA Region II addressed the participants during a morning plenary session and emphasized the importance of partnerships between workers and employers while encouraging attendees to bring the information they learned back to their respective memberships. Presenters included representative of OSHA, New Jersey Business Force, New Jersey Office of Homeland Security and Preparedness and several other key organizations.

Upcoming Events

March 7-9, 2007	Security Preparedness and Awareness T-T-T Course Rutgers University New Brunswick
March 10, 2007	Non-Partisan/School Board Labor Candidates Seminar Trenton
March 15-16, 2007	New Jersey Apprenticeship Conference Bally's Atlantic City
March 23-24, 2007	WILD Conference Labor Education Center New Brunswick
April 24-26, 2007	LEAP Training Labor Education Center New Brunswick
May 15, 2007	Retirees Committee Eldercare Conference UAW Region 9 Edison
June 12-13, 2007	Legislative/COPE Endorsement Conference Borgata Hotel & Casino

LANE KIRKLAND CENTER DEDICATED

Earlier this month labor leaders from across the country joined together in Silver Spring, Maryland to officially dedicate the National Labor College's new 72,000 square foot meeting and learning facility. This event marked the culmination of a campus-wide building and refurbishment campaign begun in 2003. This center, named after the late labor leader who served as the President of the AFL-CIO from 1979-1995 and was a forceful advocate for the power of labor education, will allow the National Labor College to significantly expand its enrollment and attract more unions and labor allies to the all-union campus.

CUSTOMIZED TRAINING GRANTS

Local unions and employers can obtain funds for employee training programs through the New Jersey Department of Labor and Workforce Development Customized Training Grants. Funds for training are available to upgrade skills of new or current employees. Resources are also available for employers moving to or expanding in New Jersey. Grants awarded require approval by the employer and local union. For information, please contact Employment and Training Coordinator John Bicsko at 609-989-8730.