

# LEARNiNg TOGETHER

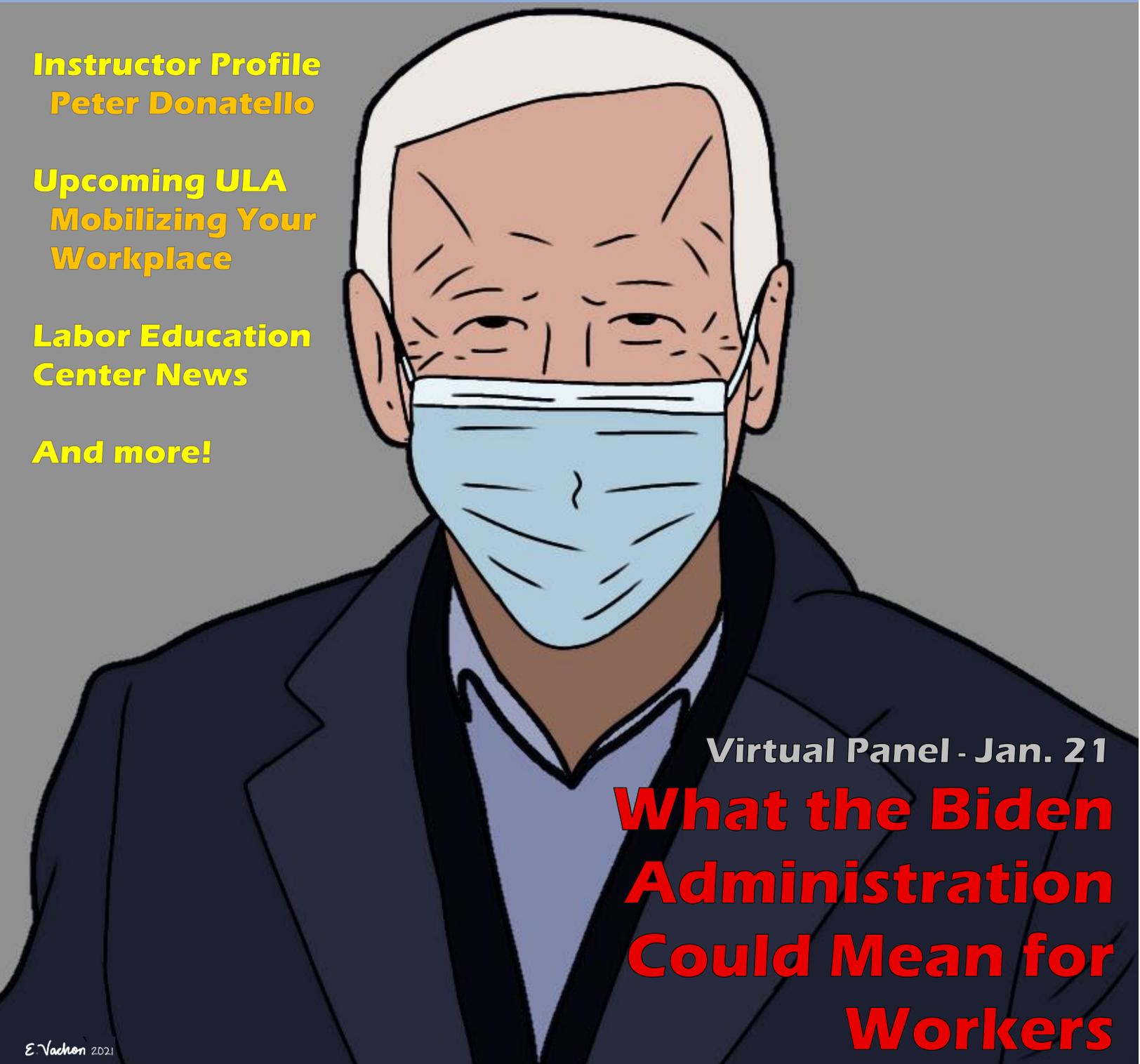
Winter 2021

**Instructor Profile**  
**Peter Donatello**

**Upcoming ULA**  
**Mobilizing Your**  
**Workplace**

**Labor Education**  
**Center News**

**And more!**



Virtual Panel - Jan. 21

**What the Biden**  
**Administration**  
**Could Mean for**  
**Workers**

E. Vachon 2021

**Official Newsletter of the Labor Education Action Research Network**

## Message from the Faculty Coordinator



Greetings, friends and colleagues:

Welcome to the Winter Newsletter.

To say the past year (or even the past couple weeks) has been a challenging time is a wild understatement. From the ongoing public health crisis to the massive economic hardship it has caused to the attack on our democracy, working people have paid a tremendous price during this time. More than half a million New Jerseyans have been infected by the virus which has taken the lives of some 20,000 of our friends and family members. The official unemployment rate remains around 10% in the state. Both of these statistics are disproportionate among our neighbors that were least well-off before the crises hit.

However, as difficult as this time has been, this is not the first time we as a state and as a nation have faced major hardships. Many of the struggles for justice underway currently have been being waged in various forms for over a century. A common theme in these moments of challenge is the power of community—the power of collective voice, cooperation, and action. By coming together and sharing challenges and helping each other to collectively solve our shared problems, we can all make a difference for each other, for our members or constituents, and for our communities. As President Lincoln said in a message to Congress just one month before issuing the Emancipation Proclamation: “We can succeed only by concert. It is not ‘can *any* of us imagine better?’ but, ‘can we *all* do better?’ The dogmas of the quiet past are inadequate to the stormy present. The occasion is piled high with difficulty, and we must rise -- with the occasion.”

As the labor extension program in the School of Management and Labor Relations, we are proud to play our small part by helping to facilitate dialogue and present educational opportunities to further the cause of creating a healthy, safe, sustainable and shared prosperity. In the coming year, we will continue to offer programming to help further this cause and hope you will continue to join us.

As always, my office door is always open, and I’d love to hear from you. Of course, it’s a virtual office at the moment, but nonetheless, feel free to drop me a line anytime with ideas you might have for new LEARN programming, any questions you have about our current offerings, or just to say “hi.” You can also [like us on Facebook](#) and [follow us on Twitter](#) to stay up to date with all of our programs. I look forward to talking soon.

In Solidarity,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Todd Vachon".

Todd Vachon  
Faculty Coordinator  
Rutgers LEARN

## Message from the Program Coordinator



Warm winter greetings friends and colleagues!

As the days grow longer and we experience more daylight time, I wish you days filled with appreciation and beauty for nature and life.

Please contact me to enroll in your next class. Inner commitment to your own excellence is the greatest gift.

Judy Lugo,  
Program Coordinator, Rutgers LEARN

## LABOR EDUCATION CENTER NEWS

### Remote Learning to Continue throughout the Spring

Rutgers is continuing with remote education throughout the spring semester. This directive applies to all LEARN programming as well. Although many of our programs are offered “off campus,” they are still Rutgers programs and must comply with the remote learning plan.

Maintaining the safety of our students, faculty, and staff is of the utmost importance. This means we must remain remote for the time being. LEARN faculty and staff have done a fantastic job to provide the best possible remote learning experience this past fall and will continue to do so in the coming months. We are optimistic that the learning we undertake together during this time will make for a stronger program in years to come and provide exciting new versatility to our programs when we are able to return to in-person education.

### Eugene McElroy, Carey Library Associate, Retires after 36 Years of Service to SMLR

Congratulations to Carey Library Associate, Eugene McElroy on his retirement at the end of 2020.

Eugene has been a fixture in the Labor Education Center. He is the face you would see when you entered the Carey Library for the past 36 years. It's hard to imagine the LEC and the library without him. But we are thankful to have had his smiling face, great knowledge of local history, and keen insight into current events (and sports!) all these years. We wish him all the best on the next leg of his journey, which will include spending more time with family, and hopefully travelling once the conditions allow for it.

If you have not already seen it, we highly recommend his wonderful [History of Labor Education at Rutgers University, 1931-1981](#)



# SOME RECENT PROGRAMS

## COVID-19 Weekly Updates: Saving Lives, Protecting Workers



Co-Sponsored by: NJ-WEC, Rutgers L.E.A.R.N., and Jersey Renews

The Covid Update Weekly Webinar has been running for 44 weeks, dating back to the start of the Covid-19 Pandemic in March. In this weekly series, we hear from and talk with public health experts, government officials, medical personnel, legal experts, front-line workers, and worker representatives about the latest developments in the fight against COVID-19. The series is sponsored by WEC, Rutgers LEARN, and Jersey Renews and airs on Tuesday mornings @ 10am via Webex.

Weekly attendance has steadily been between 100-200 participants, with over 400 participating in some episodes. Previous guests have included Dr. David Michaels, former Director of OSHA, Peg Seminario, past Director of Health & Safety for the AFL-CO, Deborah Cornavaca, Deputy Chief of Staff of Outreach for Governor Murphy, Robert Asaro-Angelo, Commissioner, NJ Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Chris Neuwirth, Assistant Commissioner, NJ Department of Health, Steve Kaplan, Deputy Regional Administrator, US-DOL, OSHA, as well as many frontline workers and worker representatives from healthcare, education, transportation, manufacturing, construction, warehousing, facilities, property services, and other industries.

Find a complete list of past episodes, link to the next episode, and related resources [here](#).

## Union Leadership Academy – Collective Bargaining



In Collaboration with the International Union of Operating Engineers, Local 68, a Union Leadership Academy (ULA) on Collective Bargaining was offered for union members and leaders across the state. The course, which began last spring, was interrupted by the pandemic, but was completed online this past fall. Students from a variety of industries came together for six weeks and

learned the basics of the collective bargaining process, from start to finish. Instructor Pete Donatello led students through virtual bargaining simulations via zoom to wrap out this course.

## Union Leadership Academy – Employment Law

The ULA continued this fall with a 6-week class on Employment Law, held on Tuesday evenings from October 6 - November 10. The course was instructed by attorney William Schimmel, with the law firm of Weissman & Mintz, LLC. This class, which had 30 students from more than a dozen different workplaces,



provided students with a foundational understanding of the laws that protect workers, govern their ability to shape their working conditions, and how these laws are enforced by government agencies at the state and federal level, including through OSHA and PERC.

## Instructor Profile: Peter Donatello



Peter Donatello is the Executive Manager for the North East District of the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service (FMCS) in the Woodbridge, NJ District Office.

Prior to joining FMCS, Mr. Donatello worked with the United Food & Commercial Workers Union Local 342-50, and International Leather Goods, Plastics and Novelty Workers Union.

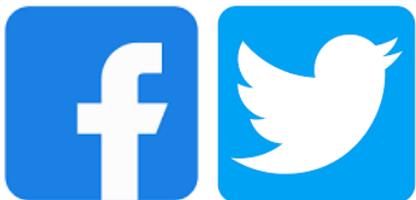
Mr. Donatello was chosen as the lead mediator in FMCS TAGS programs for the Iron Workers Construction Industry and the Bergen County (NJ) Emergency Management Terrorism Task Force. He has been involved in dispute mediation in a wide array of industries, including health care and manufacturing, and in several high-profile cases including MLB, NFLRA, Westchester County Bus strike, and the USMX-NYSA & ILA East Coast Gulf Ports negotiations.

He also assisted with the design of the New York City Police Department, Department of Community Affairs Mediation Training Program and served as lead mediator in Peer Mediation Training at Cumberland County (NJ) Regional High School.

Mr. Donatello has served as an adjunct Professor at Rutgers University School of Management and Labor Relations in New Brunswick, NJ and regularly teaches Union Leadership Academy classes for LEARN, including the recent course on Collective Bargaining.

## Stay Up to Date with LEARN Programs

**Please “Like” LEARN on Facebook and “Follow” us on Twitter!**



Every day you will find new, interesting reads, information about upcoming programs and courses, and links to valuable information.

[Please “LIKE” LEARN on Facebook](#)

[And follow @LearnRutgers on Twitter](#)

You can also learn about all of our programs via the [LEARN website](#) or by contacting LEARN program coordinator, Judy Lugo at [learn@work.rutgers.edu](mailto:learn@work.rutgers.edu) or via phone at: (848) 932-9504

# What the Biden Administration Could Mean for Workers

## A Virtual Panel

**January 21<sup>st</sup> @3:00pm**

With the inauguration of a new Presidential administration comes a new set of policy priorities, the appointment of a new cabinet, and staffing changes throughout the executive branch. These changes, including in the Department of Labor, the National Labor Relations Board, and OSHA, can and often do have a profound impact on workplaces and workers. With the marked rise of partisan polarization in recent decades, these shifts have only grown in magnitude, especially when transitioning between presidential administrations of different political parties.

To discuss what a Biden administration could mean for workers, we have assembled a panel of experts from the Rutgers School of Management and Labor Relations to offer some insight into six key areas: Workplace Health & Safety, Employee Ownership, Racial Justice, Labor Standards Enforcement, Organizing and Employment Relations, and Care Work. Program will be moderated by LEARN Faculty Coordinator, Todd E. Vachon

To join the conversation at **3:00pm on January 21, 2021**, the first day of the new administration, please [CLICK HERE TO REGISTER](#).

### Speakers Include (in alphabetical order):



**Amy Bahruth** has been a safety and health specialist and educator for over 30 years. She is an associate director in the Health Issues Division at the American Federation of Teachers in Washington, DC, where she has trained hundreds of members and developed curricula on bullying, workplace violence, emergency preparedness, and indoor environmental quality. Since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, Amy has worked to develop guidelines for the safe-reopening of schools and other workplace settings, including higher education. Amy has been a part-time lecturer since 1997 in the School of Management and Labor Relations where she teaches courses on OSHA and internships in LSER/LER.

**Joseph Blasi** is the J. Robert Beyster Distinguished Professor and Director of the Institute for the Study of Employee Ownership and Profit Sharing at the School of Management and Labor Relations at Rutgers University. His work includes economic sociology, social and economic history, and public policy, particularly focused on the issue of capital shares, namely, broad-based employee stock ownership, profit sharing, gain sharing, and stock options. He is has been a member of the School of Historical Studies and the School of Social Science at the the Institute for Advanced Study in Princeton, New Jersey and is a former Senior Fellow of The Aspen Institute. Professor Blasi has written thirteen books including *The Citizen's Share: Reducing Inequality in the 21st Century* (Yale University Press, 2013, with Richard Freeman and Douglas Kruse).





**Sheri Davis** is the Associate Director of the Center for Innovation in Worker Organization and the Senior Program Director for WILL Empower within the School of Management and Labor Relations at Rutgers University. She previously served as the Director for the Westside Communities Alliance in the Ivan Allen College of Liberal Arts at Georgia Tech. Davis also worked with SEIU District 82, Justice for Janitors Campaign, as a Union Representative for university workers as well as a Grievance and Arbitrations Coordinator. She successfully led collective bargaining campaigns at George Washington University and Howard University and served as a Steering Committee member for DC Jobs with Justice.

**Janice Fine** is Professor of Labor Studies and Employment Relations at the School of Management and Labor Relations, Rutgers University and Director of Research and Strategy at the Center for Innovation in Worker Organization (CIWO). Fine researches worker organizations, historical and contemporary debates within labor movements regarding immigration, labor standards enforcement, privatization and government oversight. She works across the country with government agencies and organizations to research labor violations in their jurisdictions and implement innovative labor standards enforcement strategies including partnerships between government agencies and organizations. Prior to becoming a professor at Rutgers, she worked as a community, labor, coalition and political organizer for over twenty years.



**Rebecca Givan** is an associate professor of Labor Studies and Employment Relations in the School of Management and Labor Relations at Rutgers, the State University of New Jersey. She has published widely on employment relations in health care, comparative welfare states and labor studies in journals such as *Social Forces*, *ILR Review*, and *British Journal of Industrial Relations*. Her recent books include *The Challenge to Change: Reforming Health Care on the Front Line in the United States and the United Kingdom* (2016, Cornell University Press) and *Striking for the Common Good*, with Amy Schragger Lang (2020, University of Michigan Press).

**Yana Rodgers** is a Professor of Labor Studies and Employment Relations and Women's and Gender Studies, at Rutgers University. She also serves as Faculty Director of the Center for Women and Work at Rutgers University. Yana specializes in using quantitative methods and large data sets to conduct research on women's health, labor market status, and well-being. She has worked regularly as a consultant for the World Bank, the United Nations, and the Asian Development Bank, and she was President of the International Association for Feminist Economics. She currently serves as an Associate Editor with the journals *World Development* and *Feminist Economics*.



This event is sponsored by Rutgers LEARN, the Center for Innovation in Worker Organization, and the Center for Women and Work in the School of Management and Labor Relations at Rutgers University



**Labor Education Action Research Network (LEARN)**

**Center for Innovation in Worker Organization (CIWO)**

**Center for Women and Work (CWW)**

# SOME UPCOMING LEARN CLASSES

## UNION LEADERSHIP ACADEMY

### ULA Course: The Power in a Union – Mobilizing Your Workplace



Tuesday Evenings | Feb 16 - Mar 23 | 5:30-8:30pm

REGISTER: <https://tinyurl.com/y3ceyauz>

This online class will focus on internal union organizing, including member-to-member communication, intentional education, and membership mobilization to realize the strength of the union. Discussions will focus on how unions can "unionize" their members to support the values and goals of the union and the labor movement broadly. In addition to offering tried and true strategies and skills for member mobilization, this class will also be highly engaging, participatory, and fun! Register Today!

Instructor: Todd E. Vachon, PhD., Faculty Coordinator of Rutgers LEARN

## CERTIFICATE PROGRAM CLASSES

### NACR Certificate Class: Conflict Resolution at the Workplace

Thursday, February 11 at 9:00am

REGISTER: <https://lnkd.in/dc3Yvh8>

This course looks at different models of labor-management relations and surveys ways to reduce dysfunctional conflict at the workplace and at the bargaining table.

This course counts toward the Negotiation, Arbitration, and Conflict Resolution Certificate (NACR) and meets NJ Mandatory Continuing Legal Education (MCLE) requirements (6 hours) and is eligible for Continuing Education Units (0.5 CEUs)

Instructor: Professor Saul Rubinstein, PhD., Rutgers School of Management and Labor Relations



## PSLR Certificate Class: Public Sector Grievance Handling and Discipline

Friday, January 22 at 9:00am

REGISTER: <https://tinyurl.com/y3v8zhsr>

This course will examine the grievance procedure, employee and employer rights and responsibilities, standards of just cause and their application to real life cases, and the burden of proof. Participants will discuss how to resolve grievances at the lowest level and will be given a brief overview of the arbitration hearing process.



This class contributes toward completion of the Rutgers LEARN Public Sector Labor Relations Certificate (PSLR) and meets NJ Mandatory Continuing Legal Education (MCLE) requirements (6 hours) and is eligible for Continuing Education Units (0.5 CEUs)

Instructor: Joyce Klein, Esq., J.D.

## LEL Certificate Class: Workplace Investigations & Interviews: Overview



Thursday, February 26 at 9:00am

REGISTER: <https://tinyurl.com/y4kz2wg8>

Workplace investigations and interviews as a whole, including an overview of issues and the law related to the field from an experienced local union president and accomplished labor lawyer.

This class contributes toward completion of the Rutgers LEARN Labor and Employment Law Certificate (LEL) and meets NJ Mandatory Continuing Legal Education (MCLE) requirements (6 hours) and is eligible for Continuing Education Units (0.5 CEUs)

Instructor: Carla Katz, Esq. J.D., Rutgers School of Management and Labor Relations

**THE FULL CATALOGUE CAN BE VIEWED ON THE LEARN WEBSITE**

<https://smlr.rutgers.edu/content/courses-and-certificate-programs>

## LEARN Open Enrollment Classes and Public Events Calendar – Spring 2021

### JANUARY

- 5 - [COVID Weekly Update](#) w/ LEARN & NJ WEC
- 12 - [COVID Weekly Update](#) w/ LEARN & NJ WEC
- 15 - [LEL CERTIFICATE](#): Bias, Harassment & Discrimination
- 19 - [COVID Weekly Update](#) w/ LEARN & NJ WEC
- 21 - [WEBINAR](#): What a Biden Admin Means for Workers
- 22 - [PSLR CERTIFICATE](#): Public Sector Grievance Handling
- 26 - [COVID Weekly Update](#) w/ LEARN & NJ WEC
- 27 - [LABOR STUDIES](#) Certificate Program (at capacity)

### FEBRUARY

- 2 - [COVID Weekly Update](#) w/ LEARN & NJ WEC
- 4 - [LABOR STUDIES](#) Certificate Program (at capacity)
- 9 - [COVID Weekly Update](#) w/ LEARN & NJ WEC
- 11 - [LABOR STUDIES](#) Certificate Program (at capacity)
- 11 - [NACR CERTIFICATE](#): Conflict Resolution at Work
- 16 - [COVID Weekly Update](#) w/ LEARN & NJ WEC
- 17 - [ULA: The Power in a Union](#) - Mobilizing Workplace
- 18 - [LABOR STUDIES](#) Certificate Program (at capacity)
- 23 - [COVID Weekly Update](#) w/ LEARN & NJ WEC
- 24 - [ULA: The Power in a Union](#) - Mobilizing Workplace
- 25 - [LABOR STUDIES](#) Certificate Program (at capacity)
- 25 - [LEL CERTIFICATE](#): Work Investigations & Interviews
- 26 - [PSLR CERTIFICATE](#): Scope of Pub Sect Negotiations
- ?? - [FILM SCREENING](#): *9 to 5 – Making of a Movement*

### MARCH

- ? - [BOOK TALK](#): *Striking for Common Good* by R. [Givan](#)
- 2 - [COVID Weekly Update](#) w/ LEARN & NJ WEC
- 3 - [ULA: The Power in a Union](#) - Mobilizing Workplace
- 4 - [LABOR STUDIES](#) Certificate Program (at capacity)

- 10 - [ULA: The Power in a Union](#) - Mobilizing Workplace
- 11 - [LABOR STUDIES](#) Certificate Program (at capacity)
- 11 - [NACR CERTIFICATE](#): Grievance Arbitration I
- 16 - [COVID Weekly Update](#) w/ LEARN & NJ WEC
- 17 - [ULA: The Power in a Union](#) - Mobilizing Workplace
- 18 - [LABOR STUDIES](#) Certificate Program (at capacity)
- 19 - [PSLR CERTIFICATE](#): Pub Sect Contract Interpretation
- 23 - [COVID Weekly Update](#) w/ LEARN & NJ WEC
- 24 - [ULA: The Power in a Union](#) - Mobilizing Workplace
- 25 - [LEL CERTIFICATE](#): Workers' Compensation
- 30 - [COVID Weekly Update](#) w/ LEARN & NJ WEC
- 31 - [ULA: Workplace Health and Safety](#) (at capacity)
- ?? - [FILM SCREENING](#): *Coded Bias*

### APRIL

- ? [BOOK TALK](#): *J. Brecher's Strike!* at 50–Symposium
- 6 - [COVID Weekly Update](#) w/ LEARN & NJ WEC
- 7 - [ULA: Workplace Health and Safety](#) (at capacity)
- 13 - [COVID Weekly Update](#) w/ LEARN & NJ WEC
- 14 - [ULA: Workplace Health and Safety](#) (at capacity)
- 15 - [NACR CERTIFICATE](#): Grievance Arbitration II
- 20 - [COVID Weekly Update](#) w/ LEARN & NJ WEC
- 21 - [ULA: Workplace Health and Safety](#) (at capacity)
- 27 - [COVID Weekly Update](#) w/ LEARN & NJ WEC
- 28 - [ULA: Workplace Health and Safety](#) (at capacity)

### MAY

- 4 - [COVID Weekly Update](#) w/ Rutgers LEARN & NJ WEC
- 5 - [ULA: Workplace Health and Safety](#) (filled to capacity)
- 13 - [NACR CERTIFICATE](#): Grievance Mediation

## ASK ABOUT OUR CUSTOM TRAININGS

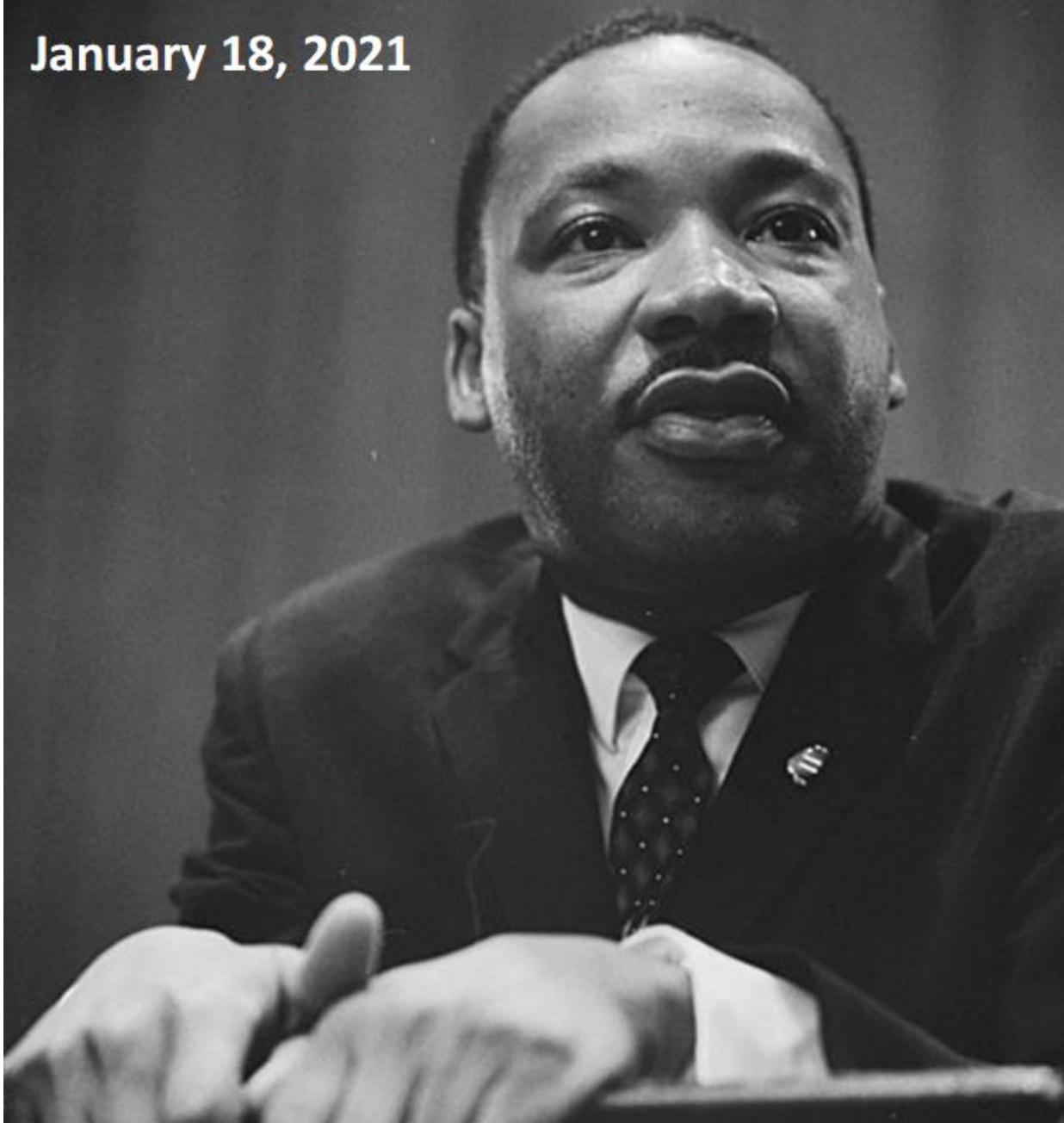
Any topic, anytime, anywhere...

LEARN offers customized training programs for labor unions and joint training programs for labor and management. The customized training programs begin with consultation sessions with our faculty members, in which they learn and assess your needs. After understanding your particular needs, we design the curriculum specifically to meet your needs and deliver the programs at times and in locations convenient to your organization.

For more information, email [learn@work.rutgers.edu](mailto:learn@work.rutgers.edu) or call (848) 932-9504

**Happy Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day**

**January 18, 2021**



**"To save man from the morass of propaganda, in my opinion, is one of the chief aims of education. Education must enable one to sift and weigh evidence, to discern the true from the false, the real from the unreal, and the facts from the fiction."**

**Martin Luther King, Jr., The Purpose of Education (1947)**

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