

# LEARNing Together

OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF RUTGERS LEARN

WINTER 2026

## AI and the Future of Work



### NEW In-Person Advanced Union Certificates

July 2026: Advanced Grievance and Arbitration Handling

November 2026: Advanced Collective Bargaining

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Union Leadership Academy **ONLINE** Spring Courses:

Feb 5- March 12 : STRIKE! From History to Action

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Special thanks to Steve Flamisch, Director of Media Relations for keeping track of all our press. Newsletter designed by Djar Horn.  
Artwork credit: Cover Photo, pp 2, 4, & 6 Nina Horn-Scordo

# MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR



Greetings, LEARN community -

Happy New Year, and welcome to the Winter 2026 edition of Learning Together, the official newsletter of the Labor Education Action Research Network. In this edition, you will find a recap of some of our programs this past fall, including some of our custom trainings and our new advanced collective bargaining certificate. You'll also find important information about our upcoming classes and public programming for this spring.

The theme of this edition of the newsletter is Artificial Intelligence and work. Over the past few months, our PhD student, Kayleigh Truman, and I have served on the NJ AFL-CIO's AI committee, providing input for worker-centered priorities as AI use continues to grow in the workplace. The feature article in this newsletter, by Kayleigh, examines the potential implications of AI in the workplace for differently abled workers – a segment of the workforce that already faces significant barriers and discrimination in employment. We also highlight in this edition a recent survey report by SMLR faculty Helen Liu, Adrienne Eaton, and myself, which collected original data from NJ employers on their use of AI-based hiring systems.

We hope you find this information useful as we all find ways to adapt to the ever-changing landscape of technology and work. We also hope to see you in class again soon – don't be a stranger! Registration is open for all three certificate programs and the Union Leadership Academy (ULA) right now.

Onward!

Todd



## VETERAN DISCOUNT



The Labor Education Action Research Network (LEARN) at Rutgers University is **proud to honor our veterans and active-duty military personnel by offering a 10% discount on all classes and certificate programs**. To "LEARN" more about our course offerings, visit our Courses and Certificate Programs page. To register for classes and use the veteran discount, email [learn@work.rutgers.edu](mailto:learn@work.rutgers.edu) or call 848-932-9504.



# INSTRUCTOR SPOTLIGHT: Adrienne Eaton

Adrienne Eaton has been a faculty member in the Rutgers Labor Studies and Employment Relations department for well over three decades. Most recently, she served as Dean of the School of Management and Labor Relations, stepping down in August 2024. Before taking on that managerial role, she was actively involved in the faculty union, serving in various officer positions including President and co-chair of the negotiating committee for a few contract rounds.

Adrienne's faculty work has always been focused on research and teaching about unions and collective bargaining, primarily in the U.S. She's best known for her research on card check and neutrality agreements, the unionization of graduate student employees and labor-management partnership. She's testified about her research on union organizing through card check to a congressional committee and otherwise been involved in policy debates on that topic. Similarly, she's co-written letter briefs to the NLRB about her research on graduate students which has also been cited in NLRB decisions. She is currently involved in a new project surveying grad student workers at 4 private universities about their experience with unionization.

Her most recent work on labor-management partnerships has focused on healthcare. She's now extending some of that work in a project funded by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation looking at how labor organizations can build and use their power to help dismantle structural racism in the U.S. healthcare system and transform that system into one which is more human-centered and works for all of us.



## CUSTOM SHOP STEWARD TRAINING AND MORE

LEARN offers customized training programs for labor unions and joint training programs for labor and management. 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.

We are currently offering customized training on:  
Shop Steward  
Collective Bargaining  
Labor History

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



CWA 1037, with James Cooney and Akhila Naik



# Feature: AI Utilization, Disability, and Discrimination

by Kayleigh Truman

## Disabled Workers Fight a Rigged AI Based System

As of 2024, there are over 70 million disabled individuals in the United States, and only 22% are working, in any capacity. As artificial intelligence (AI) use and algorithmic management expand, disabled workers face new forms of discrimination; from hiring criteria and assessment metrics to potentially hazardous working conditions<sup>1</sup>. In this paper, I review some of the current issues faced by differently abled workers, including the heavily biased medical models of disability commonly used in AI and algorithmic management (AM) systems.

### Cautions of Artificial Intelligence

Without proper understanding of the limitations of AI tools, systematic inequities that already exist in our current social structure will be perpetuated and even exacerbated; unless human oversight and intentionality are built into AI training and implementation. Commonly called the “Black Box theory”, AI and computationally complicated systems tend to earn trust more readily than humans performing similar work<sup>2</sup>.



Without explanations of the system’s choices, the lack of understanding and/or knowledge of the system’s reasoning can lead to poorly applied and unaligned design choices that have a direct impact on all workers, with or without disabilities. At their core, AI and large language models (LLMs) are algorithmic systems that are trained using specific input; then utilized in various ways to complete a certain task or generate a certain output. This training material fundamentally changes how AI systems serve their designed functions. Thus, “AI systems model the world based on what’s in the data they’re given”<sup>3</sup>. If the training data is biased, or incorrect, the products of the AI’s algorithm will likely mimic and/or perpetuate those same systematic inequalities. This can be seen in everything from voice recognition issues on your phone to medical assessments on individuals with different skin colors<sup>4</sup>.



### Workplace Concerns

These issues are becoming even more of a concern as more workplaces rely on AI and automated employment decision tools (AEDTs) for hiring and promotion decisions. New York City passed one of the earliest laws regulating AEDTs which first went active in 2023. Here, most organizations using AEDTs must conduct bias audits annually, make the published reports publicly available and give



# Feature: AI Utilization, Disability, and Discrimination

by Kayleigh Truman

**"If wearable technological devices are given to workers to help them stay aware of exhaustion levels, would the technology label workers with chronic fatigue as lazy, or label those with kidney problems of taking too many water breaks?"**

notice to all applicants prior to AI utilization in the appraisal of a job application<sup>9</sup>. While this law makes great strides in regulation, and visibility of AI utilization outcomes, it is still highly limited, particularly when it comes to disabled workers. This provision only protects specific categories such as sex, ethnicity, and race. Disability as a protected attribute is explicitly not included. Disabled workers are already limited in their ability to hold current or potential employers accountable for discriminatory practices, but given the opaque understanding of AI and AEDTs, this leaves disabled workers even more susceptible to discrimination. While many commonly used AEDTs have their own selfdetermined accountability measures and bias mitigation techniques, most AIs are considered proprietary and thus cannot be publicly accessed or easily scrutinized by workers, management or the public<sup>10</sup>.

## Workplace Concerns for Disabled Workers

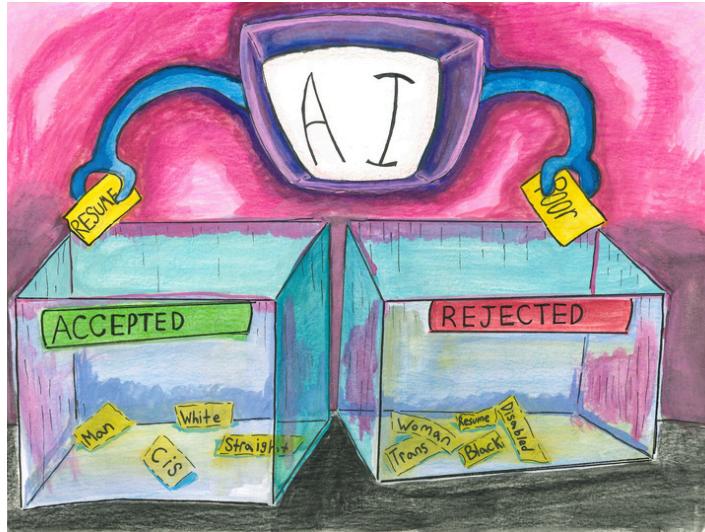
Even once hired, disabled employees are at the mercy of the AI systems in place. Something as simple as a walker or

wheelchair may create a potential hazard when AI is poorly trained or incorrectly implemented. Self-driving cars have been found to have trouble identifying even bicyclists as humans<sup>11</sup>, let alone individuals with walkers or wheelchairs<sup>12</sup>. This leads pedestrians and workers to have to pass a “reverse Turing-test;” meaning they must prove to the AI they are human to be treated as such, or they risk being misidentified entirely<sup>13</sup>. If autonomous automobiles, meant to directly interact with a variety of public conditions on the road, are unable to accurately identify people, the potential implication for workers is of dire concern. Can an AI system that’s developed to screen appropriate personal protective equipment on a construction site tell the difference between rated safety goggles and basic prescription glasses? If wearable technological devices are given to workers to help them stay aware of exhaustion levels, would the technology label workers with chronic fatigue as lazy, or label those with kidney problems of taking too many water breaks? Continuing still, these issues lead to the issue of privacy and disability disclosure. Workers commonly don’t disclose their disabilities out of fear of prejudice and rejection. Similar issues are occurring for other marginalized demographics. Trans workers are finding that poorly trained AI systems are outing them to their employers and potentially costing them their jobs<sup>14</sup>. Unilaterally implementing AI systems without an understanding of the symptoms or manifestation of disorders or living conditions, leaves swaths of workers in the precarious position of being systematically predisposed to failure.



# Shaping the Future of Recruitment: A Survey on AI-enabled Hiring Tools

Xiangmin (Helen) Liu, Adrienne Eaton, Todd E. Vachon  
and Yongfeng Zhang



**Background** Technological innovations have transformed the landscape of recruitment and hiring for both employers and employees in recent decades. The rise of online job boards like Monster.com in the 1990s enabled cost-effective digital job listings, leading to an expanded pool of candidates. As the ease of applying for multiple jobs resulted in a subsequent increase of applicants, employers began adopting applicant tracking software to manage job postings, organize resumes, and monitor candidate progress throughout the hiring process. Most recently, the integration of artificial intelligence (AI) and machine learning (ML) into recruitment has allowed businesses to harness complex algorithms and data-driven insights in talent acquisition decisions. Yet, the increasing reliance on these technologies raised concerns among employers, employees, and policymakers regarding data confidentiality and privacy, transparency and fairness in decision-making, and the potential adverse impacts on underrepresented groups.

**This study** AI in decision-making encompasses the application of algorithms and computational techniques to discern choices or forecast outcomes in complex situations. For this study, we focus on AI-driven hiring tools that utilize algorithms and computational methods from fields such as machine learning, artificial intelligence, statistical modeling, and algorithmic analytics. These tools aim to enhance or replace human decision-making in the hiring process, often referred to as predictive, robo, automated, or AI-powered hiring. Our definition excludes basic assistance tools like junk email filters, firewalls, antivirus programs, calculators, and spreadsheets that do not fundamentally alter human decision processes. Our research aims to explore how firms employ AI-enabled hiring technologies at critical stages of the recruitment and selection process. Between March and June 2023, our research team contacted a diverse group of business professionals involved in recruitment and hiring decisions. This group included CEOs, general managers, HR directors, hiring managers, talent acquisition experts, and recruiters from industries such as manufacturing, finance, pharmaceuticals, healthcare, retail, and transportation. The effort yielded 233 valid and complete survey responses on the current trends and perspectives on technology-driven hiring.

[Read the entire report here:](#)

# Shaping the Future of Recruitment: A Survey on AI-enabled Hiring Tools

Xiangmin (Helen) Liu, Adrienne Eaton, Todd E. Vachon and Yongfeng Zhang

“...respondents consistently express concerns regarding transparency, fairness, and algorithmic biases.”

**Concerns regarding AI-enabled Tools** We asked respondents to assess their concerns regarding risks and negative outcomes associated with using algorithmic hiring tools. The survey results are summarized in the chart below. Fairness in AI-enabled decision-making ensures that automated processes do not unfairly disadvantage specific individuals or groups based on attributes like gender, race, or socioeconomic status. 47% agreed that algorithmic hiring tools might lead to unfair outcomes, while 21% disagreed. 32% held a neutral view. Explainability involves offering explanations that clarify how algorithms reach conclusions or recommendations in a way humans can interpret. Explanations can vary (operational, logical, causal), be global (whole algorithm), or local (specific results), and take different forms (decision trees, histograms, images, text). 26% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that explainability is a concern, while 41% disagreed. 33% were neutral. Understandability pertains to providing clear information to job applicants about the decisionmaking process and the connection between their input and the AI-enabled hiring decision's output. 52% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that this is a concern, while 11% disagreed. 37% remained neutral.

**Conclusion** The recruitment landscape has undergone a significant transformation due to technological advancements. Our survey findings highlight the variations in adoption rates for AI-enabled tools throughout the recruitment process, covering proactive candidate sourcing, information collection, analysis, scoring and ranking, decision-making, and even bias auditing. While many organizations are leveraging AI to lower costs, improve efficiency, and enhance workforce diversity, respondents consistently express concerns regarding transparency, fairness, and algorithmic biases. These concerns underscore the importance of rigorous testing, validation, and refinement of the algorithmic models and computational methods employed by AI-enabled tools. As AI continues to play a pivotal role in the domain of employment decisions, stakeholders need to approach this landscape with caution. Employers, policymakers, and technology developers all have crucial roles in ensuring the responsible and effective integration of AI in recruitment practices. While the integration of AI may hold the promise of an efficient, diverse, and sophisticated hiring process, it is not without inherent technical and ethical limitations. Stakeholders must possess a profound understanding of its capacities, limitations, and ethical considerations to navigate this transformative terrain effectively.

[Read the entire report here:](#)

# The Labor Education Center:

Advanced Collective Bargaining  
Certificate (AC/BC) Program,  
"Strategy and Power"



PEF staff with Instructors Carla Katz and Jim Cooney for  
and Advanced Arbitration and Grievance Handling training



New Labor at home in the LEC



Greater NJ Coalition of Labor Union Women CLUW at LEC

Contact LaToshia Wells [latoshia@smlr.rutgers.edu](mailto:latoshia@smlr.rutgers.edu) to find out about reserving the LEC for your  
labor event or meeting

# What's On the Menu for 2026: Programming

Mark your calendars for an event like no other. Launch of the Tony Mazzocchi archive, oral history project, and conference at the Rutgers Labor Education Center. Occupational health and safety, just transition, the labor party, and radical unionism - these themes from Tony's work resonate now more than ever. Organized by Rutgers LEARN, the Labor Institute, SMLR, and family and friends of Tony. Save the date. Register below for more details forthcoming

Mark Your Calendars

## SAVE THE DATE

### TONY MAZZOCCHI CENTENNIAL CONFERENCE

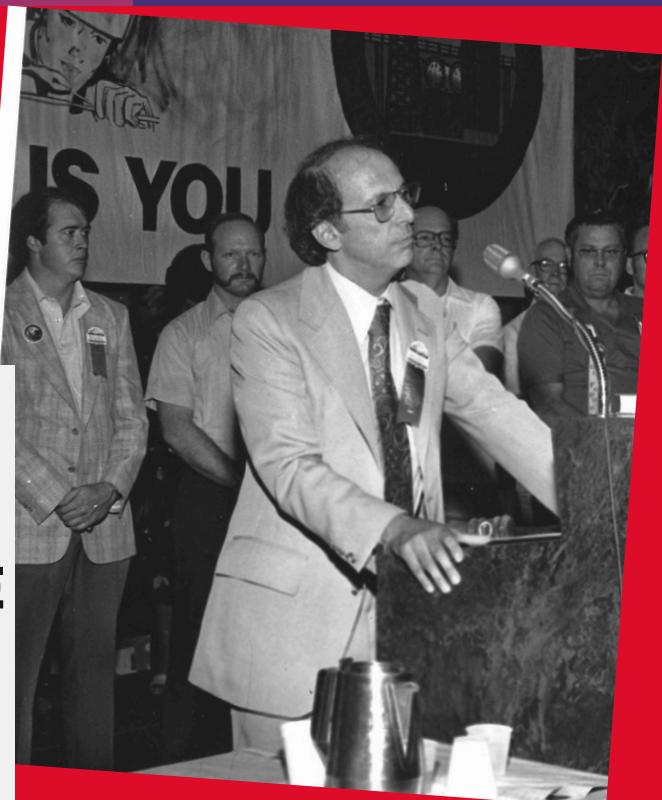
ARCHIVE LAUNCH AND CALL TO ACTION!

DATE

**JUNE 4-5, 2026**

LOCATION

RUTGERS UNIVERSITY  
LABOR ED CENTER  
NEW BRUNSWICK, NJ



### CONFIRMED SPEAKERS

Rose Ann DeMoro  
Les Leopold  
Kristina Mazzocchi  
Adolph Reed

More TBA Soon!



Interest Form

[bit.ly/tmcc6425](https://bit.ly/tmcc6425)

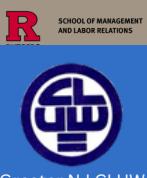
# What's On the Menu for 2026: Programming

## Celebration of Black Women in Labor

### Book talk with Danielle Phillips-Cunningham Panel discussion with historians and labor leaders Poetry, light refreshments and networking

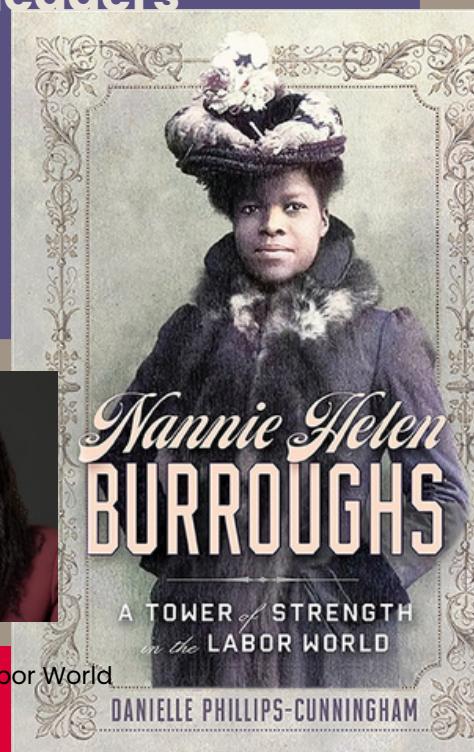
Rutgers LEARN and Greater NJ CLUW are excited to welcome esteemed Rutgers' historians Danielle Phillips-Cunningham, Naomi R. Williams and more for a program full of discussion, learning, creativity and networking. You can register for the free program today. We will update you soon with more details.

#### Co-Sponsors:



[REGISTER](#)

**March 7, 2026 10am-1pm**  
**In-person and online (10-11a only)**  
**Labor Education Center, New Brunswick**



Nannie Helen Burroughs: A Tower of Strength in the Labor World  
Georgetown University Press, 2025

### LEARN Lessons:

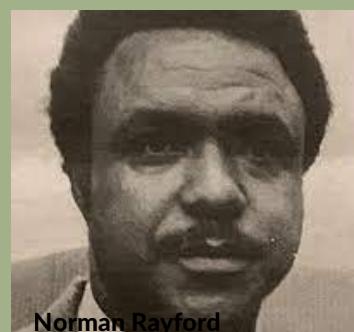
[WEBSITE](#)

### Black History Month and Women's History Month

"LEARN Lessons" is a collection of mini-lectures delivered by various experts on topics of importance to unions, labor relations professionals, health and safety advocates, and others working in the field of work and employment. We hope that you will find these video lectures helpful in your daily work.

Check out the 6 short video lectures covering labor history topics from Professors Will Brucher, Chris Hayes, Danielle Phillips-Cunningham, Francis Ryan, Dan Sidorick and Mike Slott. including:

- Paul Robeson and the Labor Movement
- Norman Rayford, 1199c organizer
- A. Philip Randolph, A fusion of labor and civil rights
- The history of unions excluding African Americans and the struggle for equal rights and participation.
- Seabrook Farm Strike in 1934
- Black Women's labor organizing outside of labor unions during the late 19th and early 20th centuries.



Norman Rayford



# What's On the Menu for 2026: Classes

**NEW!**

## Advanced Arbitration and Grievance Handling Certificate

**July 20-23, 2026**  
**New Brunswick, NJ**

In-person training for unions and worker organizations

### Interest Form

This course will cover grievance handling, arbitration preparation and presentation skills, and settlement negotiation.

Participants will learn

- strategies for drafting a strong grievance and resolving grievances at the lowest possible level.
- the arbitration process, including key stages such as case assessment, evidence gathering, legal strategy, direct/cross examination techniques, and procedural rules.
- strategies for negotiating settlements that serve the best interests of both workers and the organization.

The training will be interactive and include hands-on practice. Participants will work through role-playing exercises and realistic mock scenarios to reinforce learning and build confidence in applying these skills.

For more info about these programs email:

[LEARN@Work.Rutgers.edu](mailto:LEARN@Work.Rutgers.edu)

## SAVE THE DATE Advanced Collective Bargaining Certificate

**Late November, 2026**  
**New Brunswick, NJ**  
In-person training  
for unions and worker organizations

### Interest Form

Photos from our Advanced Collective Bargaining Certificate (AC/BC) Program, "Strategy and Power". Nov. 19-21, 2025



Ahmer Qadeer covered power and financial analysis, while sessions on mobilization, committee work, bargaining strategy, and legal context were led by Becky Givan, Danielle Newsome, Trina Scordo, Adrienne Eaton, and Steve Weissman. Chris Brooks of the UAW highlighted the Big 3 Strategy from the 2023 Stand Up Strike, and organizers from SEIU and CUPE shared powerful case studies from innovative bargaining campaigns.

# Spring 2026 Courses



## STRIKES!

**REGISTER** 

## FROM HISTORY TO ACTION



**February 5- March 12<sup>th</sup>, Thursdays**

**6pm-9pm EST      Online Only**

This course is a comprehensive review of workers' most fundamental right and exercise of power: the strike. We will study:

- Major strikes in history to learn lessons for our times
- Public and private sector labor laws related to strikes
- Internal and external conditions for a strike, campaign targets, strike duration, and other strategies
- Organizing a successful strike: preparing for a strike, structure tests and escalating actions, strike committees and funds
- Mechanics of running a strike.

**Instructors: Will Brucher and Guest Speakers including Jono Shaffer, Stephen Lerner and Chris Brooks, among others.**

Teaching Methods: case studies, small group exercises and expert presentation. These online only courses count toward the Union Leadership Academy Certificate and are open to all affiliated with a union or worker organization. Cost for a 6 week course is \$100.



## Certificate Info

For more than fifty years, the Union Leadership Academy (ULA) has provided an outstanding leadership development program for NJ union members and leaders. The curriculum is designed to equip emerging leaders with new knowledge and effective skills, which have advanced the leadership position of many graduates in their unions and in their communities. Classes are held in the evening in an online classroom.

### Certificate Requirements:

Complete six courses to receive the ULA Certificate. Attend at least five out of six class meetings per course. It usually takes two years to complete the certificate, but there is no time limit. We offer 4 courses a year, beginning in February, April, September and November. Enroll in individual courses at any time.

### Admission Requirements:

ULA classes are designed for union members, leaders, and staff. For HR professionals and integrated labor-management programs, please see our other certificate programs on the following pages.

### Cost:

The per-course registration fee is \$100. Contact LaToshia Wells latoshia@smlr.rutgers.edu if you need help registering.



All courses will be held on-line from 9:00 AM to 2:00 PM

## Labor and Employment Law

### BIAS, DISCRIMINATION AND HARASSMENT

Thursday, Jan. 22, 2026

**Akhila Naik, Esq., J.D., New York School of Law**

This course will cover the federal and New Jersey state laws prohibiting disability, gender, and race discrimination, and harassment. Topics will include legal definitions of disability, legal requirements of reasonable accommodation, what constitutes disparate treatments on the basis of gender and race, and other issues of special concern to union representatives.

### WORKPLACE INVESTIGATIONS & INTERVIEWS: OVERVIEW

Thursday, Feb. 19, 2026

**Carla Katz, Esq., J.D., Seton Hall University School of Law**

Workplace investigation 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.

### WORKERS COMPENSATION

Friday, Mar 27, 2026

**James Cooney, Esq., J.D., University of Miami School of Law**

Covers the New Jersey workers' compensation law, which provides cash and medical benefits to those disabled by work-related injuries and diseases.

[Register for Labor and Employment Law Classes HERE](#)

## Negotiation, Arbitration & Conflict Resolution

All courses will be held on-line from 9:00 AM to 2:00 PM

### INTEREST-BASED BARGAINING

Friday, Jan. 23, 2026

**William Dwyer, Former PSEG Labor Relations Manager, (current) Rutgers Instructor**

Mutual gains for all concerned in bargaining and grievance handling by identifying interests, exploring options and reaching win-win agreements through a tried and true joint problem-solving process.

### STRATEGIC GRIEVANCE HANDLING & CONTRACT ENFORCEMENT

Friday, Feb. 20, 2026

**William Dwyer, Former PSEG Labor Relations Manager, (current) Rutgers Instructor**

This class explores valuable methods and techniques to help ensure that negotiated contracts are successfully enforced and the hard-won gains at the bargaining table are honored and sustained.

### GRIEVANCE ARBITRATION I

Thursday, Mar. 19, 2026

**Joan Parker, Ph.D., Cornell School of Industrial and Labor Relations**

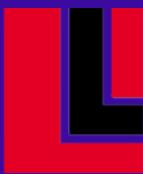
Major subjects discussed, preparing for arbitration, the hearing, presenting a case, standards for just cause, evidence, criteria for contract interpretation, remedies, the decision, and different systems.

### GRIEVANCE ARBITRATION II

Thursday, Apr. 9, 2026

**Joan Parker, Ph.D., Cornell School of Industrial and Labor Relations**

This sequence of two courses is designed to increase the practitioner's skills in preparing and presenting grievance arbitration cases. Students must complete the first in order to take the second.



All courses will be held on-line from 9:00 AM to 2:00 PM

# Public Sector Labor Relations

## PUBLIC SECTOR GRIEVANCE HANDLING & DISCIPLINE

**JOYCE KLEIN, J.D., University of Wisconsin Law School**

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

## SCOPE OF PUBLIC SECTOR NEGOTIATIONS

Thursday, Jan. 15, 2026

**CHRISTINE LUCARELLI-CARNEIRO, Esq., PERC General Counsel**

This course will address all aspects of scope of negotiations in NJ's public sector. It will trace legislative, judicial, and PERC developments that have affected the issues that can and must be the subjects of collective negotiations and grievance arbitration. Also, how PERC decides the scope in particular cases.

## GRIEVANCE ARBITRATION I

Thursday, Mar. 19, 2026

**JOAN PARKER, Ph.D., Cornell School of Industrial and Labor Relations**

Major subjects discussed: preparing for arbitration, the hearing, presenting a case, standards for just cause, evidence, criteria for contract interpretation, remedies, the decision, and different systems.

## GRIEVANCE ARBITRATION II

Thursday, Apr. 9, 2026

**JOAN PARKER, Ph.D., Cornell School of Industrial and Labor Relations**

This sequence of two courses is designed to increase the practitioner's skills in preparing and presenting grievance arbitration cases. Students must complete the first class in order to take the second.

## PUBLIC SECTOR CONTRACT INTERPRETATION

Friday, May 1, 2026

**STEVEN WEISSMAN, Esq., J.D., Rutgers (Newark) School of Law**

The meaning and enforceability of contract language negotiated under the N.J. Employer-Employee Relations Act has evolved over the last 40 years, and how court decisions, arbitrators' opinions, and PERC rulings served to establish a set of principles and guidelines for negotiating binding contract language in the public sector.

[Register for Public Sector Labor Relations Classes HERE](#)

### **Registration:**

The registration fee per class is \$300 (although certain classes may have an additional fee for special materials). Being a remote program, the topics covered here will be of interest to labor relations professionals across NJ as well as those from other states. *The Public Sector Certificate is for New Jersey only.* Pre-registration and payment are required to guarantee seats. Bulk rates are available. For online registration, we accept credit cards (Visa or MasterCard) and e-checks. If you cannot use this form of payment, please call 848-932-9504.

### **Certificate Requirements for each of the above certificates:**

Participants must complete six courses in any one of the above certificates to receive their Certificate of Completion in that Program.

While the programs begin in September, learners may enroll in individual courses at any time. LEARN offers many courses that fulfill the requirements for New Jersey's continuing legal education program, New Jersey Continuing Legal Education (NJCLE).

# What We Have Been Up To: Fall 2025

## Labor Education for Union Members and Leaders



Carla Katz leads FMBA leaders in collective bargaining simulation



Will Brucher and Djar Horn lead a Steward Training for Teamsters Local 877

### STRATEGIES FOR REVITALIZING LABOR

BOOK TALK WITH  
CEDRIC DE LEON AND  
ERIC BLANC

IN PERSON AND VIRTUAL

- ✓ September 12<sup>th</sup>, 2025  
12noon to 2pm
- ✓ Janice H Levin Building, 94  
Rockefeller Rd, Piscataway  
Room: Levin 003
- Register for Zoom



ERIC BLANC

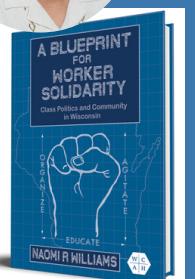
NAOMI R WILLIAMS  
Book Talk - October 21, 2025

Creating an  
effective  
working-class  
politics



October 21, 2025  
6pm - EST  
Register to join the  
discussion:  
<https://bit.ly/1021NW>

Get 30% off using promo code  
**F24UIP** at  
[www.press.illinois.edu](http://www.press.illinois.edu)  
(Offer good until June 30, 2026)



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Center for Innovation in Worker Organization  
School of Management and Labor Relations

## Book Talks and Reports

THE CENTER FOR WORKING CLASS POLITICS, THE LABOR INSTITUTE, RUTGERS LEARN, AND JACOBIN present:

**SHOULD WORKING-CLASS POLITICS MOVE BEYOND THE DEMOCRATIC PARTY?**

REPORT RELEASE

Sept. 30 7pm EST / 4pm PST

Opening Remarks by  
Shawn Fain,  
President, UAW

Read the Report

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RUTGERS-NEW BRUNSWICK  
Center for Innovation in Worker Organization  
School of Management and Labor Relations

# LEARN White Papers

To commemorate our 75th anniversary, in 2022, LEARN launched a white paper series titled “*A Better Tomorrow: Research & Reflections on the Past, Present, and Future of Workers.*” The contributions include original research, reflections from scholars and practitioners, and chapters from forthcoming books by LEARN-affiliated faculty, students, and friends.

## Overview of the White Paper Series and call for Submissions

Paper #7501 "From Mutual Destruction to Common Preservation" by Todd E. Vachon

Paper #7502 "Revaluing Work(ers) for Democracy and Sustainability" by Tobias Schulze-Cleven and Todd E. Vachon

Paper #7503 "Pop Culture and Class Conflict in the Marvel Cinematic Universe" by Steven Manicastri

Paper #7504 "What is Race?" by Les Leopold

Paper #7505 "Remembering Ernie: A Biography of Ernest DeMaio" by John Harrity

Paper # 7506 The Importance of Political Economy Education for Workers By Todd E. Vachon Rutgers LEARN

Paper # 7507 AI Utilization, Disability, and Discrimination by Kayleigh Truman

## Open Call for Submissions

The papers should be original research, reflections and can range from short essays of 2,000 words up to full length articles of 10,000 words. If you have an idea or a piece you would like considered for this series, please contact LEARN Director, Todd Vachon at [todd.vachon@rutgers.edu](mailto:todd.vachon@rutgers.edu) to submit a pitch or a fully written essay. You do not need to be a scholar or faculty to pitch an idea to us.

You can read the full call for papers as well as the first few white papers on the LEARN webpage, [here](#).

# Learn in the News

Will Brucher

[Кого увольняют из-за шатдауна?](#)

October 2, 2025

RTVI News, a Russian-speaking global news channel, interviews Will Brucher about the U.S. government shutdown and its effect on federal workers.

Jim Cooney

[Stephen Starr to face union-busting charges brought by the National Labor Relations Board](#)

December 3, 2025

The Philadelphia Inquirer writes about the union-busting allegations against a Philly-based steakhouse owner, quoting James M. Cooney.

[Employers have used E-Verify for years. ICE's arrest of a Maine police officer raises new questions](#)

August 29, 2025

The Associated Press interviews James M. Cooney about the controversy surrounding an online system that checks the immigration status of job applicants.

Rebecca Givan

[Mental health workers in Philadelphia unionize following changes in their workplace and patient care](#)

December 10, 2025

The Philadelphia Inquirer reports workers at Rogers Behavioral Health in West Philly have voted to form a union. Rebecca Kolins Givan is quoted.

[Museum organizing wave surging as met staff turn to union](#)

December 2, 2025

Law360 reports hundreds of workers at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City are seeking to join a union, quoting Rebecca Kolins Givan.

[Starbucks workers hold strike vote amid anger over pay and conditions](#)

October 31, 2025

The Guardian reports unionized baristas will vote on whether to strike for a fair contract. Rebecca Kolins Givan says, "It's clear that bargaining has stalled."

[VA cuts union contracts, including for nurses](#)

August 8, 2025

MedPage Today reports the U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs is terminating union contracts for most employees, quoting Rebecca Kolins Givan.

# Learn in the News

Todd Vachon

Starbucks workers kick off nationwide strike across 65 stores

November 25, 2025

The Highlander writes about the strike by Starbucks Workers United, quoting Todd Vachon of the Labor Education Action Research Network (LEARN).

Starbucks workers kick off 65-store US strike on company's busy Red Cup Day

November 13, 2025

The Associated Press reports thousands of Starbucks workers are going on strike, quoting Todd Vachon of the Labor Education Action Research Network (LEARN).

Starbucks union launches Red Cup Day strike at dozens of stores – including 10 in California

November 13, 2025

The Los Angeles Times reports baristas are demanding higher wages and better hours, quoting Todd Vachon of the Labor Education Action Research Network (LEARN).

Nationwide Starbucks strike includes workers at five Philadelphia locations

November 13, 2025

The Philadelphia Inquirer interviews Todd Vachon of the Labor Education Action Research Network (LEARN). He says the strike could hurt the company in the long run.

Bank worker organizing gains ground

October 23, 2025

Nonprofit Quarterly writes about the growth of union organizing in the finance industry, quoting Todd Vachon of the Labor Education Action Research Network (LEARN).

Unions find new members in growing climbing-gym industry

October 3, 2025

Law360 interviews Todd Vachon of the Labor Education Action Research Network (LEARN) about the growth of union organizing at indoor climbing gyms.

Despite shrinking union numbers, NJ labor groups have had recent bargaining success

August 30, 2025

The Record reports the labor movement is “alive and well in New Jersey,” quoting Todd Vachon of the Labor Education Action Research Network (LEARN).

# Learn in the News

Todd Vachon

## Labor Day weekend has arrived. What to know about the holiday

August 29, 2025

The Associated Press explores the “activist roots” of Labor Day, quoting Todd Vachon of the Labor Education Action Research Network (LEARN).

## Labor Day history and travel tips to know for 2025

August 25, 2025

NBC New York reports on the history of Labor Day, quoting Todd Vachon of the Labor Education Action Research Network (LEARN).

## A union push at JPMorgan reveals tensions inside America's largest bank

August 21, 2025

Barron's reports software developers and investment banking associates are organizing, quoting Todd Vachon of the Labor Education Action Research Network (LEARN).

## Unions 'wait and see' on elections as Trump upends labor arena

August 18, 2025

Bloomberg Law reports on the declining number of union elections in 2025, quoting Todd Vachon of the Labor Education Action Research Network (LEARN).

**Happy Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day**  
**January 19, 2026**

