

Building Political and Legislative Power

PEOPLE, Activism Give Us Edge



(Photo by Tessa Berg)

Wisconsin members cheer for Democratic gubernatorial candidate Mary Burke.

What does political power look like? That was the question at the center of Tuesday's special program, Building Political and Legislative Power. The answer, said activists engaged in AFSCME battles to preserve pension security, prevent "paycheck deception" and elect worker-friendly legislators, is member commitment and activism.

A home care provider when she joined the union, keynote speaker Sec.-Treas. Laura Reyes said taking that first step toward solidarity with other providers made a huge difference in her life. "When I found my UDW sisters and brothers, I was literally saved," she said, referring to United Domestic Workers of America/AFSCME Local 3930. "We have all made that same choice! When I did, my life began to change."

She said "we must lead others" to our union "so they too can lead, and benefit from employment possibilities unhindered by those who oppose our policies. Unlimited by those who oppose our goals of equality, and unrestricted by those who stand in the way of decency for all American workers. As we help them, they in turn empower us, and together we achieve justice for every working American family across this great nation."

One way to gain that justice, she said, is by supporting AFSCME's political action program, PEOPLE. She called it "our solution to getting out the vote and electing the right politicians" such as Florida gubernatorial candidate Charlie Crist and Wisconsin gubernatorial candidate Mary Burke, both of whom later addressed the delegates.

Florida Council 79 Pres. Jeanette Wynn, also an International vice president, introduced Crist as "the people's governor." Crist, Florida's governor from 2007-2011, is seeking AFSCME's help to defeat Gov. Rick Scott, whom he described as "out of touch" with the middle class.

"When I was governor before, it was never about right versus left," Crist said. "It was about right versus

wrong. That's why I refused to lower retirement programs for state employees," and also why he vetoed bills that would have cut benefits for teachers and eliminated tenure.

In Wisconsin, Burke is running this year to unseat Gov. Scott Walker, who signed legislation in 2011 that revoked the collective bargaining rights of 200,000 Wisconsin public service employees, including more than 60,000 AFSCME members. As she stood before the Convention, more than 100 Wisconsin AFSCME members surrounded her and cheered.



Sec.-Treas. Laura Reyes

of Council 76 fought efforts to suppress the vote of young people, the elderly, people living in rural areas and those with disabilities in a brazen effort to skew the election toward anti-worker candidates.

"We knew we had to stand up," said Josette Jaramillo, a member of Local 1335 (Council 76) in Pueblo. "Instead of waiting for them to turn us away at the polls, we spearheaded a statewide coalition including the League of Women Voters and the bipartisan county clerks' association. We won expansion of voting rights! Our right to vote will not be taken away!"

Activists representing Florida Council 79, Ohio Council 8, Oregon Council 75, Maryland Council 3, Massachusetts Council 93, Missouri Council 72, New Jersey NUHCE/AFSCME Local 1199J and Rhode Island Council 94 also told of their own successes.

"I'm fighting for people who are making the minimum wage," Burke said. "I'm fighting for women who don't want politicians messing with our health care decisions ... and I am fighting for home care, health care and child care workers to ensure that they have a voice. And I am fighting for workers who were disrespected with the loss of collective bargaining."

Activists from several states addressed the Convention, describing how their councils and locals won political fights thanks to the power of committed members. In Colorado, members

HIGHLIGHTS

CHILD CARE

7 a.m. – 1 hour after rally, McCormick Place North, Level One, Rooms N126-N129

SECTOR CAUCUSES

7:30 – 9:30 a.m.

BOOTHS

8 a.m. – until 1 hour after the General Session (closed during General Session)

McCormick Place North, Level Three, Hall B:

Cyber Dome, Learning Lounge, Pin Trading Post and Affiliate, AFSCME Advantage, Generations United, Information, Labor History, Organizing, PEOPLE, PEOPLE Q+A, Video and Wellness.

CONVENTION RECONVENES

10 a.m., McCormick Place North, Level Three, Hall B

Program: External Organizing for Growth

Speaker: Tom Perez, U.S. Secretary of Labor

Speaker: Ramogi Huma, founder and president, National College Players Association

AA Meeting

6 – 9 p.m., Hyatt Regency Chicago Hotel, Picasso Room

RESOLUTIONS

Delegates passed a variety of resolutions on Tuesday, including Income Inequality in America (41); Pension Protection (92); Protecting the Voting Rights Act (55); Limiting Political Spending by Corporations (15); Opposition to the ALEC Education and Local Government Agenda (42, combined with 57); Support U.S. Postal Workers: Boycott Staples (51); Creating PEOPLE Champions – Building a Stronger PEOPLE Program in a Time of Crisis (34); and Education and Leadership Development for the Power to Win (70).

RALLY TODAY!

Don't forget to wear your AFSCME T-shirts and comfortable walking shoes for the rally today to support Chicago cab drivers as they try to organize with Council 31. Shuttles to the rally will begin immediately after the close of session, and return you to the hotels after the rally.

We Have Our Talented Finalists

The finalists are set for AFSCME’s Got Talent, a karaoke competition that will be held in the Grand Ballroom (S-100) after the Thursday Convention recess. General admission is free, but you can reserve seats up front for \$10 at the AGT stage. There will be a cash bar and free snacks. And remember to bring some PEOPLE dollars so you can vote for your favorite contestant! **The AGT finalists are:**

- **Jack Campbell**, Local 1771 (PA Council 13)
- **Reuben E. Simmons Jr.**, CSEA Local 1000 (NY)
- **Jennifer Weekes-Osinowo**, Local 562 (CT Council 4)
- **Jenny Hallas Foster**, Local 3141 (MN Council 5)
- **Jeff Balch**, Local 1891 (IL Council 31)
- **Karen Powers**, Local 114 (WA Council 2)
- **James Adkins**, OCSEA Local 11 (OH)
- **Charles DellaRocco**, Local 749 (CT Council 4)
- **Wanda Wullschlegler**, Local 2620 (CA Council 57)
- **Heather Wolf & Becki Raffay**, Local 2051 (IA Council 61)
- **Cheryl Stephens**, Local 3947 (CA Council 36)
- **Nitsa Gomez Jimenez**, Local 3889 (PR Council 95)
- **Erika Aleman**, Local 3135 (OR Council 75)

Thursday is PEOPLE T-Shirt day!

PEOPLE Award Winners

Congratulations to the eight affiliates honored yesterday for reaching and exceeding the PEOPLE MVP Power to Win goal. It was the second time for four of the affiliates, who continue to climb well beyond the 10 percent MVP membership threshold. Illinois Council 31, Iowa Council 61, Texas Local 1624 and Ohio OCSEA Local 11 all received the PEOPLE awards at the 2012 Convention and repeated their achievement again this year. Council 31 leads all affiliates with 25 percent MVP membership. First-time winners include California Local 1902, California Local 1199 (UNAC/UHCP), Pennsylvania District Council 85 (Council 13) and Texas Local 59.

This Is No Lounge Act

At the Interactive Learning Lounge, you’re exposed to new ideas, better ways of doing things, more effective techniques and information to help you become a better AFSCME activist. Stop by today and expand your mind! It’s at McCormick Place North, Level Three, Hall B.

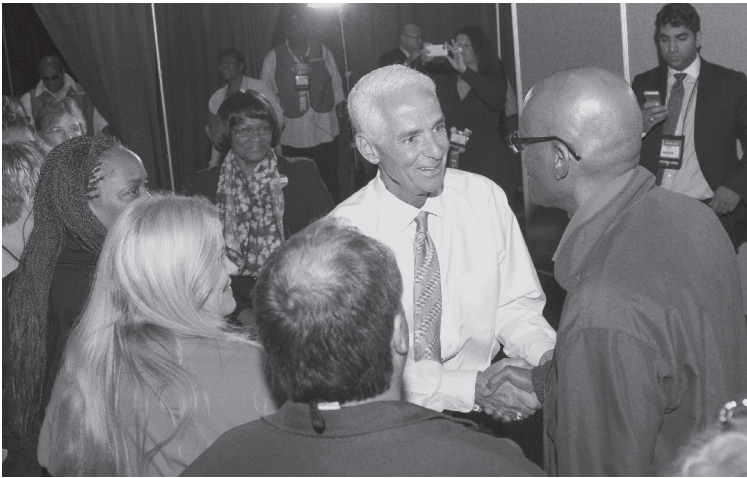
Here is today’s schedule:

- 8:00 AM Relax with Guided Meditation
- 8:30 AM The Harris v. Quinn Decision: What Was It All About?
- 9:00 AM Balancing a Local Union Checkbook

Tuesday’s Winners!

Tuesday’s AFSCME Advantage winner is **Michael Walker, Ohio Local 217 (Council 8)**. Stop by the booth today because Wednesday is your last chance to win!

The winner of Tuesday’s Cyber Dome raffle is **Sean Reeves, New Mexico Local 3422 (Council 18)**. Stop by the Cyber Dome to send a message by finding an Action Ambassador, and sign up for the next raffle drawing.



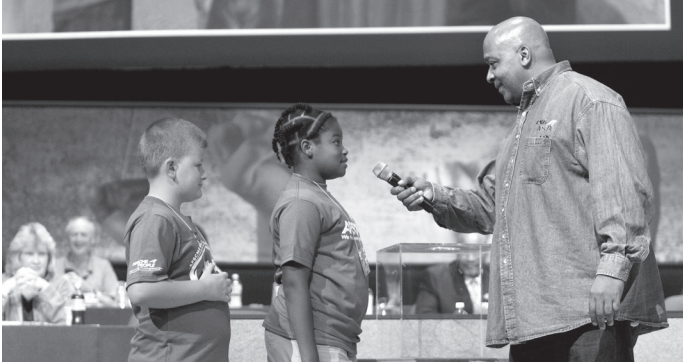
Florida Democratic gubernatorial candidate Charlie Crist meets with members of AFSCME’s Florida delegation after addressing the Convention.



Delegate holds sign that expresses why Wisconsin union members support Mary Burke for governor.



Second City entertains with a spoof about the “Two-headed Koch Brothers Monster,” foiled by AFSCME.



Michael Patterson of CSEA/Local 1000, emcee of the AFSCME’s Got Talent Program, gets help from Mickaela Flood and Max Loxton, whose parents are with Local 2921, Washington DC, and Local 496, Michigan Council 25, respectively.



DC 37 delegates cheer Exec. Dir. and IVP Lillian Roberts as she receives a Lifetime Achievement Award.



Tim Uliasz of Local 1199 (left), Julie Barnett of Council 85, Rocky Jolly of OCSEA Local 11, and Marty Hathaway of Council 61 on stage during the People Awards Program.

(Photos by Tessa Berg and Khalid Naji-Allah)

IVP Lillian Roberts: Living Legend

In recognition of a career spent fighting for the rights of working women and men in New York and Illinois, AFSCME on Tuesday honored International Vice Pres. Lillian Roberts with the AFSCME Lifetime Achievement Award.

Roberts, executive director of District Council 37, New York City’s largest public employee union, is serving her fifth term in that capacity. She also serves as vice president of the New York State AFL-CIO, vice president of the New York City Central Labor Council, and is co-chair of the Municipal Labor Committee.

President Saunders called Roberts “a friend, a colleague and a mentor to me personally and to countless others. Over and over again, she has stood up and fought for the hard-working people of New York City. Whether it’s for a fair contract, or against an outsourcing scheme, whether it’s getting members into affordable housing, or fighting harsh budget cuts – this sister has never, ever backed down.”

When she moved from Chicago to New York to join DC 37, she said, “all I cared about was the dignity of work, and I knew that I needed a union so I wouldn’t have to kiss somebody’s behind.”

That, she said, “is why we have a union. It’s the only force that you have that gives you the dignity. This union is the greatest in the world. It’s your mouthpiece for justice.”



DC 37 Exec. Dir. and International Vice Pres. Lillian Roberts receives the AFSCME Lifetime Achievement Award.

(Photo by Khalid Naji-Allah)

Stay Well, AFSCME! You need heart to stand in Solidarity with your sisters and brothers, so step on over to the Wellness Booth to get your free blood pressure screening. You can even learn about maintaining a healthy heart and ways to manage your blood pressure. Nurses from AFSCME United Nurses of America (UNA) are waiting for you today from 8 a.m. until one hour after close of the general session. Meet them at McCormick Place North, Level Three, Hall B.