

# 2013 New York City Labor Notes

# Troublemakers School

May 18, 9:00 am - 4:00 pm ♦ High School for Health Professions

8:30 am-9:00 am Registration (coffee and light snacks)

Opening Plenary 9:00 am-10:00 am

**Julie Semente**, intensive care nurse, on the New York State Nurses Association's effort to save Brooklyn's Long Island College Hospital  
**Lawrence Hendrickson**, Cablevision technician, on CWA's struggle for a first contract at Cablevision  
**Mark Brenner**, Labor Notes



Morning Workshops: 10:15 am-12:00 pm (see over for details)

1. Beating Apathy
2. Roots of the Public Sector Budget Crisis
3. Just Cause: How to Win Discipline Cases
4. Lessons from New York Labor History
5. Dealing with Difficult Supervisors
6. Strategies to Raise Wages for Low-Wage Workers



12:00 pm-1:30 pm Lunch (provided, in the plenary room/cafeteria)

Afternoon Workshops: 1:30 pm-3:15 pm (see over for details)

1. Legal Rights on the Job and in the Union
2. Secrets of a Successful Organizer
3. An Organizing Approach to Health and Safety
4. Building Effective Labor-Community Alliances
5. After Bloomberg: A Union Agenda for New York
6. Using Direct Action to Get Results



Closing Plenary 3:15 pm-4:00 pm

**Julie Cavanagh**, Movement of Rank and File Educators (MORE), United Federation of Teachers  
**Nate Rasmussen**, Chicago Teachers Union, on their strike last fall and continuing action and civil disobedience to rescue public education.



**Social Hour** at O'Hanlons, 349 E. 14th St., between 1st and 2nd Aves., near 1st.



# Workshops

## MORNING 10:15 am-12:00 pm

### 1. Beating Apathy

Are you beating your head against the wall trying to get other workers involved? Hear success stories from workers who turned their workplaces around. Learn practical strategies for engaging your co-workers, taking action, and getting results.

*Christa Peters, labor educator*

### 2. Roots of the Public Sector Budget Crisis

States are swimming in red ink, and politicians across the spectrum are putting public services on the chopping block. Unionized teachers, bus drivers, and librarians are the new public enemy number one. Workshop will explain how state and local budgets got to be such a mess, why politicians are slashing and burning instead of reversing a generation of tax cuts, and what public sector unions need to do to get out of this bind.

*Mark Brenner, Labor Notes*

### 3. Just Cause: How to Win Discipline Cases

Employers are taking advantage of the economy to terminate and suspend workers without regard to just cause or due process. This workshop will help you prepare and present grievance and arbitration cases, raising defenses such as disparate treatment, lax enforcement, and double jeopardy.

*Robert M. Schwartz, labor lawyer and author of Just Cause: A Union Guide to Winning Discipline Cases.*

### 4. Lessons from New York Labor History

This workshop will examine several cases of working class agitation and upsurge in New York City's past, drawing economic and organizing lessons for today's labor movement.

*Josh Freeman, CUNY, author of Working-Class New York*

### 5. Dealing with Difficult Supervisors

This workshop will review proven strategies to get even the most overbearing boss to back off, and how to effectively counter stalling, stonewalling, intimidation, sidetracking, and broken promises. Facilitators will review how to get results with—and sometimes without—the formal grievance procedure, including using member mobilization.

*Ken Margolies, Cornell University*

*Sandy Pope, President, Teamsters Local 805*

### 6. Strategies to Raise Wages for Low-Wage Workers

Hear from organizers using new tactics together with old-fashioned organizing to win higher pay for fast food, carwash, and retail workers. See how unions and community groups are recovering wages from thieving bosses, bringing collective bargaining to unorganized workplaces, and making strategic use of legislation and policy.

*Representative, Retail Action Project*

*Alex Han, Stand Up Chicago*

*Eliseo Villafana, Wash New York*

## AFTERNOON 1:30 pm - 3:15 pm

### 1. Legal Rights on the Job and in the Union

What workplace organizing activities are protected under the law? What are my rights if the boss calls me into the office? How can I make my grievances stronger? What legal rights does a union steward have to defend co-workers? What can and can't I say on the internet about my boss or my job? What can I do if my union isn't backing me up?

*Julian Gonzalez, labor attorney*

### 2. Secrets of a Successful Organizer

How do you get your co-workers to join you in building union strength? Learn proven strategies that get more members involved. Map your workplace; develop a winning plan of action with your co-workers; and craft different kinds of activity to maximize participation in the union.

*Nicholas Bedell, Education Director, TWU Local 100*

### 3. An Organizing Approach to Health and Safety

Union and non-union workers alike can approach health and safety problems from an organizing perspective. What are hazards? How are they connected to other workplace issues? This workshop will look at examples of campaigns that have taken on health and safety issues and gotten results.

*David Pratt, NY Committee for Occupational Safety and Health*

### 4. Building Effective Labor-Community Alliances

Hear how unions and community groups are banding together to protect services and build sustainable alliances. This panel will discuss how to make union-community connections a two-way street and cement ties at the grassroots as well as leader-to-leader.

*Nate Rasmussen, Chicago Teachers Union*

*Hilary Klein and Amador Rivas, Make the Road New York*

*Clarence Paterson, TWU Local 100*

### 5. After Bloomberg: A Union Agenda for New York

New York is a union town, but after 12 years under a billionaire mayor it doesn't always feel like it. Several New York union leaders will reflect on the challenges of the Bloomberg era, and discuss what the local labor movement should be doing to steer the city in a different direction.

*Ed Ott, Murphy Institute, CUNY*

*Marvin Holland, Director, Political and Community Action*

*Department, TWU Local 100*

*Juldy Sheridan-Gonzalez, VP, New York State Nurses Association*

### 6. Using Direct Action to Get Results

This panel will cover the ups and downs of direct action tactics, working with community supporters, and the legal dos and don'ts that any serious activist should be aware of before taking the fight to the next level.

*Julian Tysh, Teamsters Local 814*

*Representative, CWA, Cablevision*

*Mahoma Lopez, Hot and Crusty Workers Association*