

Central Labor Council Network

Purpose

The purpose of "networking" Central Labor Councils in Central and South-Central New York is to share resources between labor councils; primarily, the hiring of a staff person to coordinate regional labor activities and collectively pursue the AFL-CIO "Union Cities" goals: (1) Organizing to Change, Changing to Organize (2) Mobilizing Against Anti-Union Employers (3) Building Political Power and Community Coalitions (4) Promoting Economic Growth, Protecting Our Communities (5) Educating Union Members in Pocketbook Economics (6) Generating Support for the Right to Organize (7) Making Sure Our Leadership Mirrors Faces of Our Membership (8) Encouraging All Local Unions to Increase Their Membership.

Recognizing that small labor councils do not have the staffing resources to coordinate area labor activities, a "network" would, collectively, provide the necessary staff resources to build the solidarity and effectiveness of each member labor council while maintaining the individuality and leadership autonomy of each council.

Shared Staff Responsibilities

Solidarity/Mobilization

Build a database of local unions, representatives and activists for use in building a "street heat mobilization machine;" monitoring local/regional labor related issues; strategic planning of labor activities; notification and mobilization of activists through expansion and/or duplication of the Labor Coalition's "Labor Alert" network to all participating labor councils. Collectivized support of contract campaigns including demonstrations, rallies, picketing and handbilling.

Organizing/ Increasing Membership

Work with member locals to consolidate organizing efforts throughout the region. Provide organizing services including education and mobilization efforts for internal and external drives. Target non-union establishments, share contacts at these facilities garnered through friends, relatives and supporters, and develop an organizing "map" for the area.

Political Action

Monitor local/regional/national labor legislative and political issues as well as the voting records of elected officials. Initiate a candidate endorsement/accountability project which places the AFL-CIO's 1998 "Right to Organize" commitment as a top priority. Distribute the information to member locals. Provide a clearinghouse for political action resources and campaigns.

Education

Assess the educational needs of member councils and locals; acquire, develop and provide the necessary educational seminars using local and regional sources. Develop a database of local trainers.

Health and Safety

Education of member unions in Occupational Health and Safety issues, including outreach programs to the non-union environment. Develop/maintain a database of health and safety related programs.

Information and Referral

Provide information and direction on labor related issues utilizing local and regional resources to organized and unorganized workers.

Build Membership Base

Organize to involve all unions in the geographical areas covered by the member labor councils in the activities of the "network." Encourage and expect local unions to join in the process of rebuilding the area labor movement.

Network Commitment

Information commitment

Each council would be responsible for providing the initial information for database construction including member locals, representatives and activists. Provide available information on community resources, political action issues and elected officials/candidates.

Financial commitment

Provide a portion of a staff members salary and benefits. A proposal to the National AFL-CIO seeks additional funding for this position for a pilot period of three years, reducing initial costs to the councils.

Education commitment

Assist in the assessment of educational needs of local unions.

Network Implementation Timeline

The tremendous potential of a "network" of shared resources calls for a vigorous effort to implement this proposal. The following is a proposed timeline for implementation:

Oct. - Nov. 1997	Preliminary proposal and amendments
Nov. - Dec. 1997	CLC decisions on proposal; finalize proposal
Jan. - Feb. 1998	Implement "network"; hire staff