

WVPH Quarterly Issues and Programs List

January - March, 2020

Core of the Matter is locally produced.

Issue: What challenges are affecting workers in the community?

In 2018, union members accounted for 14.9 percent of wage and salary workers in New Jersey, compared with national average of 10.5 percent. In addition, other organizational models like workers centers are becoming increasingly important in helping workers.

Core of the Matter 1/17/20: The New Tech Resistance: A Forum on Tech Worker Organizing - 4:00pm (2 hours)

Naomi Klein, Gloria Steinem Chair in Media, Culture and Feminist Studies at Rutgers University, and Todd Wolfson, Associate Professor of Journalism and Media Studies at Rutgers University and Co-Director of the Rutgers Media, Inequality and Change Center, moderated a panel with the leading organizers of The New Tech Resistance, including Reynalda Cruz, an organizer with New Labor's New Brunswick center, Biju Mathew, Secretary of the National Taxi Workers Alliance (AFLCIO), Ben Tarnoff, a columnist for the Guardian, and Stephanie Parker, one of the lead organizers of the Google Walkout in 2018.

Issue: How will Rutgers change with the selection of a new president?

Rutgers announced that Jonathan Holloway, former Master at Yale University and current Provost at Northwestern University, will become the next president of Rutgers. Holloway will be the first Black president at Rutgers in the 254 year history of the university. A scholar with a PhD in history, Holloway's research has centered around post-emancipation U.S. history, with a focus on social and intellectual history. In 2013, he published his second book, *Jim Crow Wisdom: Memory and Identity in Black America since 1940*.

Core of the Matter 1/24/20: Black Students Speak on Jonathan Holloway - 11:00 AM (1.25 hours)

Many people are commending this announcement, seeing it as a long-overdue correction in a university where issues around diversity, equity, and inclusion have historically been ignored, minimized, or outright denied. Holloway's intellectual and leadership experience indicate the potential for a significant departure from the previous era, but what could those changes be, and how will the first Black president at Rutgers address ongoing issues for Black students and faculty members at the university? James Boyle and Thevuni Athalage discuss these issues with Sydni Collins, secretary of Black Lives Matter Rutgers and a junior at the New Brunswick campus, Jada Agree, the chair of Black Lives Matter and a junior at Rutgers, and Bryan Matthew, the high school outreach co-chair for the Rutgers NAACP and a senior at Rutgers.

Issue: What issues are students and parents facing within local public education systems?

While New Jersey consistently ranks in the top 5 states for public education, many school districts still have inadequate facilities.

Core of the Matter 1/31/19: New Brunswick January Board of Education Meeting - 11:00 AM (1 hour)

James Boyle discusses the recent New Brunswick Board of Education meeting, where parents and community members spoke out against the possible sale of the Lincoln Annex School.

Core of the Matter 2/21/2020: Public Education in New Brunswick - 11:00 AM (1 hour)

Community members are working to protect the Lincoln Annex School in New Brunswick, which is at risk of being sold to Robert Wood Johnson in order to expand the Rutgers Cancer Institute. If the plan goes through, students could be relocated to a warehouse school outside of the fifth and sixth wards. The construction of Redshaw School was also discussed, where students were put in the warehouse school for nearly 10 years while the new facility faced significant delays in construction. For years, parents throughout the city have been working to ensure that school facilities in New Brunswick have adequate air conditioning, which remains an ongoing problem. Parents in Unidos por Escuelas Dignas have put pressure on the Board of Education to retrofit school buildings with air conditioning, and they've made major strides in making sure that New Brunswick kids have access to comfortable and healthy learning environments. Today we are joined by Jenifer Garcia, a Rutgers student and an alumna of the New Brunswick School system. Jennifer spent time in the warehouse school while Redshaw was under construction. We are also joined by Yolanda Moncada, president and founder Unidos por Escuelas Dignas, who has helped get the group off the ground and is an active member of the new coalition to defend the Lincoln Annex.

Issue: How are grassroots homeless organizations responding to legal changes, as well as the dramatic growth of homelessness in NJ and across the country?

Between 2019 and 2020, the number of homeless people in the U.S. increased by 2.7 percent.

Core of the Matter 2/14/20: Homelessness Crisis - 12:00 PM (1 hour)

Recent amendments to the Code Blue law in New Jersey changed the temperature and weather condition threshold to trigger a Code Blue Alert. Instead of below 25 degrees without precipitation and below 32 degrees with precipitation, the amendment to the law now requires all counties to call Code Blue when temperatures fall below 32 degrees, regardless of precipitation. However, the amendments provided no funding to account for the increased use of shelters. James Boyle discusses these legal changes with Walter Herres, founder and executive director of Supporting the Homeless Innovatively Loving Others (SHILO), a grassroots homeless organization based in New Brunswick. A formerly homeless person himself, Herres has built an organization that utilizes a unique organizing model, blending human rights advocacy, public and mental health support, interfaith engagement, person-centered case management, and direct, on-the-ground outreach and intake.

Issue: How is the COVID-19 pandemic affecting our community?

According to the World Health Organization, COVID-19 is the infectious disease caused by the most recently discovered coronavirus. Coronaviruses are a large family of viruses which may cause illness in animals or humans. In humans, several coronaviruses are known to cause respiratory infections ranging from the common cold to more severe diseases such as Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS) and Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS).

Democracy Now! 3/14/2020 - 5:00 AM (1 hour)

Amy Goodman, Steven Goodman, associate dean at Stanford Medical School, and Justin Lessler, associate professor at the Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health, discussed measures people can take to limit their exposure to the coronavirus and protect their communities. They also discussed problems with access to coronavirus testing, and how other countries have responded to this crisis.

Democracy Now! 3/19/2020 - 5:00 AM (1 hour)

Amy Goodman and Ro Khanna, Democratic congressman from California and member of the House Committee on Oversight and Reform, discussed the economic effects of the pandemic and what Congress plans to do in response. Vanita Gupta, president and CEO of the Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights, joined them to discuss concerns about the effect of the coronavirus outbreak on the upcoming presidential election. Amy Goodman, Saru Jayaraman, co-founder of the Restaurant Opportunities Centers United, president of One Fair Wage and the director of the Food Labor Research Center at the University of California, Berkeley, and Damani Varnado, a New York City restaurant worker who was laid off due to COVID-19, discussed the effects of COVID-19 on the restaurant industry, servers, bartenders, and kitchen staff.

Democracy Now! 3/24/2020 - 5:00 AM (1 hour)

Amy Goodman, John Sandweg, former acting director of ICE, and Angelica Salas, executive director of the Coalition for Humane Immigrant Rights of Los Angeles, discuss concerns about the more than 37,000 people held in immigrant detention centers and private jails that contract with ICE, where it is nearly impossible for them to avoid close contact to stop the spread of the coronavirus. Amy Goodman and Dr. Leana Wen, emergency physician and public health professor at George Washington University, discussed the lack of protective supplies in hospitals and coronavirus tests that many hospitals are facing.

Democracy Now! 3/28/2020 - 5:00 AM (1 hour)

Amy Goodman and Congressmember Ilhan Omar of Minnesota discussed the \$2 trillion emergency relief package to address the economic crisis caused by the pandemic and the government's response to the pandemic. She continued the discussion with Matt Stoler, research director at the American Economic Liberties Project. She discussed the effect of the stay-at-home orders on domestic violence survivors with Katie Ray-Jones, CEO of the National Domestic Violence Hotline and loveisrespect.

Issue: How is our community adapting to climate change?

According to the UN, climate change is likely to increase river salinity leading to shortages of drinking water and irrigation, and significant changes in the aquatic ecosystems.

Core of the Matter 3/6/20: Migrant Workers and Climate Change - 11:00 AM (2 hours)

Naomi Klein, Gloria Steinem Chair in Media, Culture and Feminist Studies at Rutgers University, moderated a discussion with Maxine Burkett, Saket Soni, Maria Rodriguez, and Patrice Lawrence – four leaders whose work sits at the crucial intersection of migrant justice and climate justice.