

Admission: \$30.00

Students FREE

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The First State Capitol

1413 Eoff Street

Wheeling, West Virginia 26003

Tickets:



Solidarity
Equality
Democracy



Raise your fist!

Sponsors:

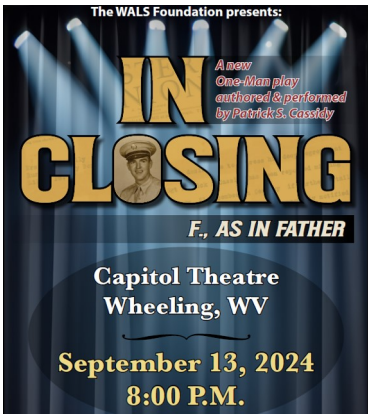
Ohio County Public Library; UAW International;
UAW Region 8.



Join us for our Pre-Symposium Musical
Event on Friday 8/30 @ 7 pm
Featuring the Pittsburgh Labor Choir!



And on Sept. 13 WALS President Pat Cassidy's New 1-Man Play!



Get tickets at
Wesbanco Arena
Box Office
Call
304-233-7000
or Scan:



WALS ~ OUR LOCATION

The WALS Foundation is based out of the First State Capitol building at 15th and Eoff streets in Wheeling, which housed the first government of West Virginia, established on June 20, 1863.

WALS ~ OUR MISSION

The Wheeling Academy of Law and Science Foundation (WALS) is a non-profit established to promote educational programming in the areas of education, employment, labor history, human rights, energy, and the environment; and to promote local economic opportunity, employment, and job creation in our city and region.

REUTHER-WHEELING LIBRARY & LABOR ARCHIVE

The WALS Foundation maintains a library and archives as a research and study center on the life, times, and thought of Wheeling's native son, labor leader and human rights activist, Walter P. Reuther. The archive collects, preserves, digitizes and makes accessible, material related to the life and work of Reuther and to the history of organized labor and the working class in Wheeling and the Upper Ohio Valley region.

What is the JOBS FIRST AGENDA?

One of primary initiatives of the WALS Foundation is called the "Jobs First Agenda," which seeks to create a new narrative based on fairness, not ideology; and on scientific facts, not partisan politics.

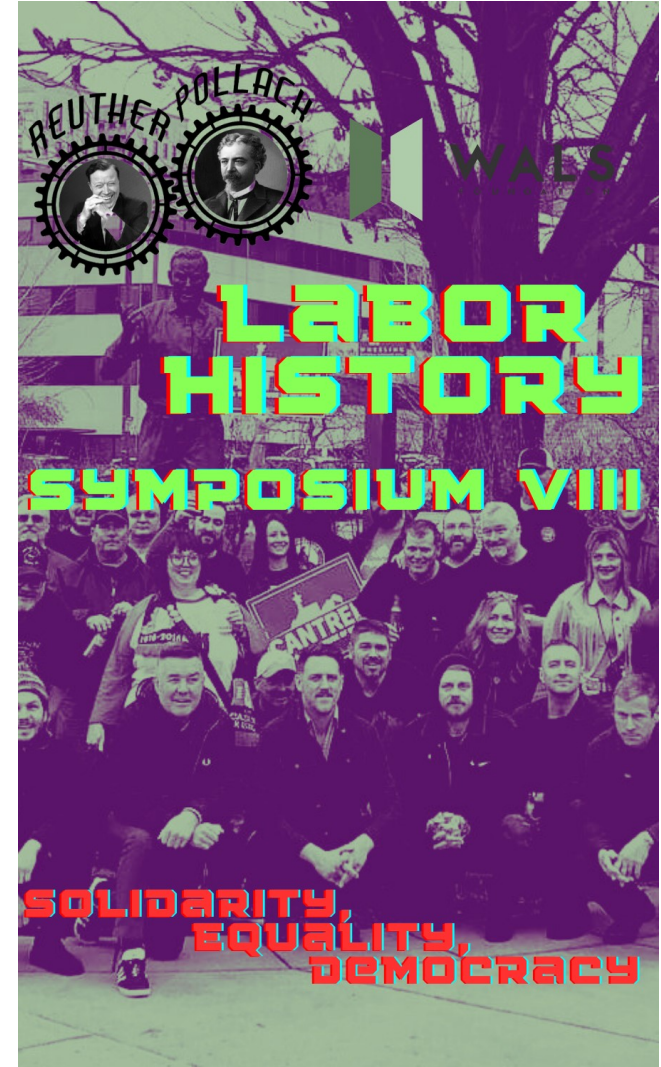
Top Ten Features of the Jobs First Agenda

- 1) Amend the U.S. Constitution to guarantee living wage jobs, free universal health care; and free public education through college.
- 2) Change state employment laws to require good faith and fair dealing in all employment relationships, and re-introduce empathy in our courts of law.
- 3) Abrogate the King's law of "employment at will" to provide job security based on the doctrine of good faith and fair dealing.
- 4) Make the government the employer of last resort, rebuilding the national Infrastructure like the Civilian Conservation Corps.
- 5) Change to a green, new energy economy in response to the existential threat of climate change, and offer more jobs in the process.
- 6) Reform tax code using incentivized rates and deductions as a reward for hiring employees at a living wage; eliminate favorable rates for corporations.
- 7) Implement a living wage through reformed collective bargaining by allowing every employee to choose or decline a labor union or professional association at the time of hiring in the private sector.
- 8) Abrogate the King's law of "Sovereign Immunity" by making the government accountable for making employment easy.
- 9) Broaden the scope of fiduciary duty laws to include avoidance of harm to the workforce; to the community; and to the environment.
- 10) Implement all future laws and policies based on the Jobs First Agenda, to restore America as the leader of the free world in values.

For more visit: walswheelingcommentaries.com
And walswheeling.org



and the Reuther-Wheeling Library
& Labor History Archive present:



August 31, 2024

SYMPOSIUM SCHEDULE

SATURDAY, August 31, 2024

An annual symposium focused on regional labor history.

Solidarity, Equality, and Democracy

Doors Open: 9:30 am

Registration & *Continental Breakfast*

10:00 am - J. Albert Mann

“Shift Happens: The History of Labor in the United States”

11:00 am - Hamilton Nolan

“The Hammer: Power, Inequality, and the Struggle for the Soul of Labor”

12 pm - Lunch Break:

- ◆ Lunch provided
- ◆ Reuther Birthday Celebration
- ◆ Walking Tour to the Reuther & Pollack monuments led by Dr. Hal Gorby

2:00 pm - Lou Martin

“The New Labor Movement in Appalachia in the 1930s”

3:00 pm - Kira Yeversky & Tom Hoffman

“The Union’s Inspiration: Solidarity Through Singing Past and Present”

SPEAKER BIOS & ABSTRACTS



J. Albert Mann is a disability activist and an award-winning author for young people. She has an MFA from Vermont College of Fine Arts in Writing for Children and Young Adults and is the Partner Liaison for the WNDB Internship Grant Committee. Her work has won the Massachusetts Book Award Honor, received a Disability Visibility Grant, named both a Bank Street

Best Book and a BCCB Blue Ribbon Book, and was selected for IBBY’s Outstanding Books for Young People with Disabilities.

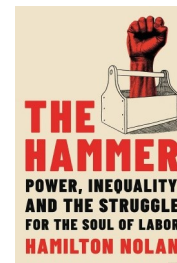
Abstract: SHIFT HAPPENS sets out to historically contextualize labor history for young people. The book takes a linear approach, covering colonization, slavery, industrialization, the two Red Scares, economic depressions, and neoliberalism. Incorporating pre-existing hierarchies and giving

rise to new ones, U.S. capitalism develops a “pyramid of oppression,” through which colonizers, landowners, and corporations divide and conquer. By ranking workers according to race and sex, the ruling class pits workers against each other, with higher ranked workers punching down rather than fighting for the health, wealth, and safety of all. Over the past four centuries, solidarity within the working class has been the most successful tool in subverting this pyramid, and thus promoting a more just and equitable society. The story of working class people in the U.S. is an invitation to critically examine the power structures of our nation. J. Albert Mann will speak on the importance of understanding history as intersectional and interconnected, embracing complexity in historical study and debate, and centering civic competence and responsibility.



lives in Brooklyn.

Abstract: Inequality is the single biggest crisis plaguing America. Organized labor is the single strongest tool to fix it. But unions have been on the decline for more than 50 years. Now, we sit at a moment of historic opportunity for the revival of labor power in America. Will we be able to take advantage, or will we let this moment pass us by?



Tom Hoffman spent most of his professional life organizing. His first gig was organizing seniors to stand up to utility company rate requests. He did 26 years working for the Service Employees International Union. In 2011 he switched to organizing for the environmental movement. He retired in 2020 and is now working to organize a Pennsylvania Chapter of Third Act which he lovingly refers to as the “Geriatric Sunrise Movement”. He credits hearing Peter Yarrow sing “I Don’t Want Your Millions Mister” in 1969 with setting him on a career of activism. The music has always been a constant companion since then.

Kira Yeversky got her start in organized labor in 2019, when she organized a union with her coworkers at the Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh. After two years of bargaining for a first contract—and worker protections during a global pandemic—she took a job with the United Steelworkers organizing department where she continues the fight for workers’ rights.

She has been singing for her whole life, and singing with the Pittsburgh Labor Choir since early 2023.



Abstract: Music has been part of the labor movement from the beginning. With organized labor on the rise, singing continues to play a vital role. From picket lines to protests, rallies to riots, music documents historic moments and ties the struggles of past workers to our ongoing fights for justice. Our ancestors in the movement left a lot of valuable tools (songs) lying around for us to pick up. In this talk we will discuss—and sing—labor songs from throughout history, paying particular attention to how we can adapt those tools for the fights of today and tomorrow. We will explore how music creates solidarity and empowers communities across generations.



Lou Martin is one of the founders of the West Virginia Mine Wars Museum and an associate professor of history at Chatham University. He is also an honorary member of UMW Local 1440 in Matewan and a member of the organizing committee for Chatham Faculty United, an AFT affiliate.

He is the author of *Smokestacks in the Hills: Rural-Industrial Workers in West Virginia* and co-editor of the *West Virginia History: A Journal of Regional Studies*. Currently, he is working on a book for WVU Press about social movements in Appalachia from the Mine Wars through the movement to end mountaintop removal.

Abstract: In the years after the Battle of Blair Mountain, the labor movement in Appalachia and the United States was in retreat. In the late 1920s, from the textile mills of southern Appalachia to the steel mills of the Ohio Valley, workers began to organize a new labor movement. This is one of the social movements I am writing about for my current book project. Rather than focus on organizational leaders and strategies, I try to capture grassroots perspectives, retelling this history through the experiences of individuals who lived the events. This chapter opens with the experiences of a woman who left her family farm in the mountains of western North Carolina to work in a textile mill and becoming involved in an early campaign of this new labor movement, and it ends with a steelworker who was the son of Polish immigrants and went to work at Wheeling Steel at the age of 15. Following years of struggle against powerful forces, industrial workers got a much needed-boost from the labor reforms of the New Deal, but the new laws would have been meaningless without the countless battles fought—some won, some lost—by workers in and around the re-

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