Strengthening the Path to Employment

partnerships Chicago Jobs Council Annual Report 2001



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About CJC

Founded in 1981, the Chicago Jobs Council (CJC) is an organization that works with its members to ensure access to employment and career advancement opportunities for people in poverty. With 18 original members, CJC has grown to include 100 community-based organizations, civic groups, businesses and individuals. CJC and its members are committed to helping disadvantaged Chicagoans gain access to the education and training they need to enter the labor market, retain family-supporting employment, and pursue sustainable careers.

CJC pursues its mission through advocacy, applied research, public education and capacity-building initiatives focused on influencing the development or reform of public policies and programs. Our efforts are grounded in the perspectives of our members, who contribute their expertise as direct service practitioners, advocates, researchers and employers. CJC's work is also guided by the results of demonstration projects that test innovative solutions to pressing employment problems. By organizing members and other interested parties around workforce development, welfare reform, economic and community development issues, CJC fosters dialogue and cooperative strategies that effect change.

Dear Friends,



The Chicago Jobs Council is an organization whose mission is to ensure access to employment and career advancement opportunities for people in poverty.

This past year has been truly memorable. After a smashing celebration of CJC's 20th Anniversary, with hundreds of friends and supporters in attendance, our life changed a bit. Staff shared memories, packed up our files and computers, and prepared to move our offices. By mid July, we were settling into space we now share with Nonprofit Financial Center and the Chicago Community Loan Fund. With these two new partners, we form the Center for Nonprofit Support, Advocacy and Finance. Our new location provides our staff space that matches their high-level performance and maximizes our shared expertise for nonprofit organizations in Chicago.

A few months later, our world changed even more with the tragic events of September 11th. We know none of us will ever be the same. Our sense of community has grown. With the unwavering partnership of our board, our members and our funders, we have been able to stay the course and strengthen the path to employment for low-income families.

Community-based organizations played a pivotal role in addressing the economic and employment challenges that followed. Through relationships with local residents, and partnerships with government and business, they remained a viable resource for the unemployed who need support and work that sustains their families.

Today, we operate in an environment where uncertainty remains the norm and partnerships are critical. As I write, Congress debates the reauthorization of Temporary Assistance to Needy Families (TANF) with the reauthorization of the Workforce Investment Act (WIA) on the horizon. The outcome of these deliberations will have a significant impact on our collective ability to move disadvantaged families toward some semblance of self-sufficiency. Meanwhile, Illinois faces a billion-plus-budget deficit that could cripple the state's capacity to provide human services to those same families. Through our local and national partnerships, CJC is working to ensure that the concerns and needs of those families are clearly heard.

In an era of changing policies, declining resources and growing needs, our collective work — that of CJC, our members, partners and affiliates — is not easy. But as you will see in the following pages, partnerships have helped us better serve low-income families through advocacy, applied research and public education. Thanks to all who have partnered with us to pave the way to greater opportunities for people in poverty.

Sincerely,

But & Worland

Robert E. Wordlaw Executive Director

Partnerships have been the cornerstone of the Chicago Jobs Council, an organization established and grown by those who share our mission. This year, we have had the privilege of partnering with:

Annie E. Casey Foundation

Chicago Initiatives for Healthy Families & Fathers

North Lawndale Employment Network

State Agenda for Community Economic Development (SACED)

The Workforce Alliance

Work, Welfare, and Families / Midwest Partners

CJC staff are also proud to have worked as advisors and affiliates of:

Action for New Priorities

Chicago Area Partners

Chicago Metropolis 2020

Chicago Workforce Board: Continuous Improvement & Accountability Committee, Employer Demand Committee and Service Delivery Integration Committee

Emergency Campaign For A Fair Budget

Financial Links for Low-Income People (FLLIP)

Governor's Commission on the Status of Women

Grand Boulevard Federation

Illinois Workforce Board: Entry Level Skills Upgrade Task Force, Evaluation & Accountability Committee, and Ex Offender Employability Task Force

Project JOBS

Public Benefits Hotline Steering Committee

The Welfare to Work Partnership/Chicago BizLink

In addition, CJC staff have been active on numerous community-based organizations' boards.

Partnerships to Reform Welfare

We know from our members and partners that many families moving from welfare to work struggle to meet living costs, access work supports and find satisfying jobs. As the economy slowed, those recently hired were the first fired. Others found themselves with reduced hours and wages. And those with significant employment barriers lost hope of new opportunities. For the most successful job seeker, the path to employment began with education and training.





Welfare-to-Work Group Issues & Actions

CJC and its Welfare-to-Work Group members are committed to advocating with policymakers to move beyond caseload reduction and transform welfare into an anti-poverty program. With that in mind, we focused much of our advocacy efforts on the reauthorization of Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) — legislation that will be renewed by September 2002. Having developed recommendations for reauthorization with our members, we made great strides in advancing those ideas, as we:

 Shared recommendations with key legislators: Representatives Rod Blagojevich, Danny Davis, Jesse Jackson, Jr. and Jan Schakowsky.

- Provided written testimony to two key governing bodies: the US House Committee on Education and the Workforce, and US Department of Health and Human Services.
- Collaborated with Work, Welfare and Families, National Center on Poverty Law, Women Employed and our other advocacy partners to formulate state and regional strategies for TANF reauthorization.
- Generated welfare reform coverage in the *Chicago Sun-Times*, the *Chicago Tribune*, *Streetwise*, and WTTW's "Chicago Tonight."

"I receive \$300 and I have to pay \$400 in rent. I have worked before. Sometimes I cannot buy things for my daughters. Sometimes when they are sick, I can't pay for medication. If I don't pay the rent, I lose my apartment. Some medications the medical card doesn't cover. Sometimes I don't have enough money for food. Right now, I have not received Food Stamps for a month. I don't have any food at my house. I was feeding my baby only with water and sugar because I didn't have milk at home. . . . A lot of people have been affected that they have lost everything. They are starving without any benefits. It is affecting the families. Kids are without medications."

Ralle, a TANF recipient of two-and-a-half years and mother of three children

Key Partnerships

Illinois is one of the states that led the nation in moving people off the welfare rolls and presumably into work. But the prevailing "work first" strategy quickly moved people into jobs without the necessary skills or education to succeed. For advocates, this begs the question, "are working people still poor?"

In search of answers, many researchers distilled the experiences of countless TANF participants into hard data: striking percentages, telling bar graphs and instructive pie charts. CJC and its members believe that people contending with poverty must not be lost in the welfare debate.

As a result, we embarked upon a collaborative research effort that would give voice to the people behind the numbers. CJC partnered with nearly 20 community-based organizations to convene focus groups with their clients and collect household budget surveys of welfare participants. These partners also shared their expertise to interpret the myriad income-support programs and helped assess the real-life impact of reduced assistance. The result: provocative reports that illustrate welfare as welfare participants know it.

You See What I'm Saying? offers a largely unedited look at the lives of 31 current and former welfare participants. As Congress debates welfare, this report brings them closer to the people whose lives their decisions will impact.

In Paychecks & Poverty, four case studies illustrate how Chicago's welfare-to-work families live on "bare bone" budgets despite full-time employment and/or income supports. Ms. Johnson, for example, works fulltime at \$8 per hour — a wage slightly higher than the national average for welfare leavers but 41% below The Self-Sufficiency Standard for Illinois. At the end of each month she has \$58 left to cover medical, school, transportation and grocery expenses for her 11-year-old child and herself. That's assuming she would use her Earned Income Tax Credit to pay for basic needs rather than invest it in a car or an education.

Both reports lay out recommendations we developed with our members for moving families out of poverty and into self-sustaining work. We created tools that community groups can use to leverage these stories in their own advocacy efforts and in community-building initiatives with concerned stakeholders.

In addition to sharing our reports with legislators, we developed a *Guide for Illinois Legislators* with our working group members. This guide rates welfare bills for their potential to produce programs that enable TANF recipients to get the education or training they need to secure and advance in work, and to reduce poverty in Illinois.



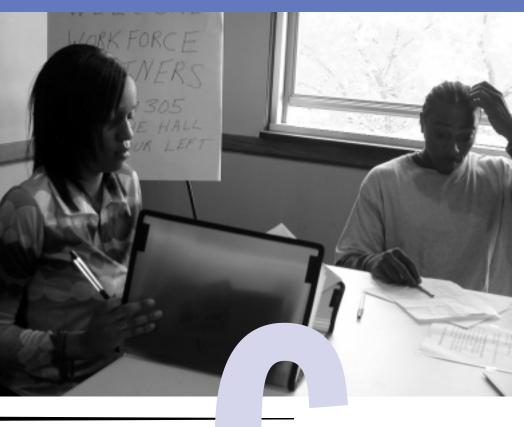
The Road Ahead

As we move forward in our welfare advocacy, we know many challenges lie ahead. By working with our members and partners, we are confident that our collective voice will help strengthen opportunities for people in poverty.



Partnerships to Strengthen Workforce Policy & Practice





Chicago's workforce development system is a network of public agencies and community-based providers that is difficult for many job seekers to navigate. To continue building the system, CJC partners with workforce stakeholders to identify new strategies that can lead to better service integration and expanded access to skills training for disadvantaged job seekers.

Workforce Development Group Issues and Actions

Career advancement issues are topof-mind for many practitioners as they address public policy challenges and move their clients into family suporting jobs. In search of innovations, CJC and its Workforce Development Group members explored service delivery models and designed a two-part information series to better understand the entrylevel job market. Our collaborative efforts informed 75 practitioners who investigated the structure of entrylevel jobs and discussed real applications of researchers' work.

But, not all working group issues are derived from policy prescriptions. Our recent work on race and employment emerged from the experiences of our members. Having heard their concerns about racial tensions in the field, we:

- Brought together local and national experts to share their knowledge on race and employment, and began a structured dialogue with our members.
- Analyzed an extensive body of research on the relationship between race/ethnicity and employment opportunity as well as public benefit access.

We also partnered with the Annie E Casey Foundation and the North Lawndale Employment Network to host Taking the Initiative on Jobs and Race. This Jobs Initiative conference engaged practitioners around the issues of race, ethnicity and cultural competence in workforce development.

"Community-based organizations are critical to making Chicago a vibrant and diverse city that works. We leverage the expertise of many community groups through Mayor Daley's WorkNet Chicago, our network of organizations that helps us bring employment opportunities to more Chicagoans. By partnering with agencies such as Chicago Jobs Council and its many member organizations, we ensure that our system is strong and we are able to shape policies that ensure greater access to quality programs."

Jackie Edens, Commissioner, Mayors Office of Workforce Development

Key Partnerships

In recent years, CJC was influential in shaping Chicago's Workforce Investment Act (WIA) program and invested resources in monitoring its implementation. Through one-on-one meetings with local WIA affiliate agencies, we developed recommendations to improve the system and began advancing them with the Mayors Office of Workforce Development (MOWD).

CJC partnered with MOWD and CAEL, who serves as the WIA training assessment review agency, to help increase the number of better trained job seekers. Together, we designed a WIA Training Fair where staff from One Stop Centers and affiliates learned more about WIA-certified training programs. Anticipating federal funding cuts in training, we also partnered with MOWD in a call for stable WIA funding — resources that are critical to strengthening the skilled workforce Chicago needs to remain competitive. Since then, the number of individuals receiving skills training under WIA has risen steadily with unchanged funding levels.

CJC's partnership with The Workforce Alliance (TWA), a national alliance of service providers and advocates that CJC helped establish, is key to facilitating change at the federal level. While lawmakers debated strategies to stimulate the economy, CJC worked with TWA to educate legislators about economic stimulus proposals that would benefit low-skilled workers affected by the economic downturn. We also worked with TWA to promote effective workforce development models through meetings with congressional staff and



influential policymakers, including the US Department of Labor's Employment and Training Administration.

We also helped convene our TWA partners in a cross-country conference call to help prepare for WIA reauthorization. As a result, we shared our testimony — shaped by feedback from our partners and our members — at a recent Department of Labor listening session. These conversations will jumpstart our local-level advocacy.

Mapping the Future

Looking ahead, CJC will organize an advisory council to develop advocacy strategies as these reauthorization debates begin. We also will convene our members on key program issues including career advancement, and race and employment. Our goal is to pave the way for disadvantaged job seekers to move into and up in Chicago's labor market.



Partnerships that Build Capacity



In today's challenging policy and economic environment, many employment and training providers find themselves at a crossroads — particularly as WIA maps out service delivery for both job seekers and businesses. To help providers move forward, CJC continued its capacity-building efforts to help them develop responses to operational, programmatic and system-wide issues.

The WIA Leader Circle

As we all can attest, changing the way you do business is by no means an easy or quick feat. It often requires a working partnership between a trusted advisor and the organization's leaders who prefer an exchange of ideas rather than a report with recommendations they don't have the staff or resources to implement. Likewise, changing external systems requires both time and a trusting partnership of committed leaders.



In response to those challenges, CJC convened a WIA Leader Circle — a capacity building network for community leaders who share a common interest: improving Chicago's workforce delivery system by developing action-plans for strengthening their own programs as well as the broader community. We were pleased to have worked over the course of six months with executives from four organizations:

- Asian Human Services: Kapila Wewegama, Program Director
- Community Assistance Programs: Sheryl Holman, Chief Executive Officer
- Southeast Chicago Development Commission: Lynne Cunningham, President & CEO, and Ted Stalnos, Vice President of Workforce Development
- YMCA Alliance: Marcia Medema, Director of Alternative Learning Strategies

Our Circle members shared with one another their substantive knowledge and expertise. They used their practical advice, and support from our WorkFund Initiative, to resolve realworld challenges that ranged from financial management to new curriculum development to employer engagement strategies.

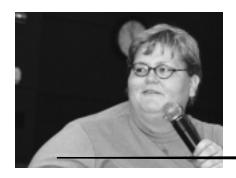




Key Partnerships

Our Circle members talked about the real pressure that the recession and the dwindling number of entry-level jobs was having on their clients and programs. These conversations helped crystallize a key observation: the most significant gap in workforce capacitybuilding lies in frontline staff development. As a result, we worked with our Circle members and Metro Chicago Information Center (MCIC) to develop an intensive research effort to assess challenges facing local job developers — the people upon whose shoulders the interests of job-seekers, employers, policymakers, funders and advocates rests.





Over the course of five months, we partnered with MCIC to interview key workforce leaders and conduct a focus group with experienced frontline staff of employment providers. We also surveyed a broad number of local job developers. Among the key findings highlighted in our research summary Capacity Building for Chicago Job Development:

- Job developers feel a significant gap in labor market information trend information that points to local growth industries and highlights their entry-level jobs including skill requirements and wages.
- Job developers believe that training and communications will improve their performance and increase their credibility with employers.

As one job developer noted, "the hardest thing is to hear 'no' all day from employers and then to find out that the one interview you successfully set up for that day didn't happen because the client didn't show up."

Strategies for Moving Forward

Given the interest in the latest labor market information, we worked with the Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago whose senior staff updated local job developers on Chicago's labor economy at a Job Development Briefing. There, we also shared our recommendations for building the capacity of local job development.

Based on what we heard from job developers, CJC is exploring short-term opportunities to provide regular updates on local economic and employment trends, and workshops that feature promising practices and practical techniques. We will also promote networking opportunities with job developers and potential business partners.

Over the long-term, CJC is committed to convening workforce stakeholders to launch a capacity-building institute that offers job developers professional education. Our goal is to help advance the field, and improve opportunities for disadvantaged job seekers and local business.

Partnerships that Provide Strength in Numbers

As for other nonprofit organizations, this year proved to be financially challenging for the Chicago Jobs Council. But despite the recession, our financial partners remained consistent in their support of our efforts. We are thankful for the investments our funders have made in this vital work:

Field Foundation of Illinois
John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation
Joyce Foundation
Lloyd A. Fry Foundation
Northern Trust Company
Polk Bros. Foundation
Richard H. Driehaus Foundation
Rockefeller Foundation
Sara Lee Foundation
Tribune Foundation
United Way Chicago
Woods Fund of Chicago
WPWR-TV Channel 50 Foundation

Chicago Community Trust

Given the rising cost of business and the growing demand for our work, CJC's Board of Directors voted to increase membership dues for the first time in 10 years. As careful stewards of this and other income, we plan to use these funds to enhance our services by offering a special interest series, quarterly member meetings, and valuable research that can be applied to both public policies and employment programs.

In FY 2002, our projected income is \$700,000. Foundation and corporate grants provide 90% of this year's income. CJC's earned income generates 2% while membership dues and investment income comprise the remaining 8%.

Total expenses for this fiscal year are estimated at \$680,000, of which 85% is allocated to programs and services, 8% to administration and 7% to fundraising.

CJC and its supporters are committed to ensuring greater opportunities for disadvantaged job seekers and to facilitating the skilled and diverse workforce our communities need to thrive. With an eye to the future, CJC is convening a Development Committee that will report to our Board of Directors and explore new revenue-generating strategies that can help sustain our work.

Our work would not be possible without the tremendous contributions of all our members: more than 100 community-based organizations, civic groups, individuals, and working group participants. We are grateful for the dedication of our Membership Committee whose recommendations ensure diversity among our members. Together, we develop and act on cooperative strategies that create greater economic opportunities for people in poverty. Thank you for your support and participation.

Organizational Members

Albany Park Community Center, Inc.
Alternative Schools Network
Association House of Chicago
Bethel New Life
Chicago Community Loan Fund
Council for Adult and Experiential Lo

Council for Adult and Experiential Learning (CAEL) CANDO

Central States SER
Chicago Area Project
Chicago Christian Ind

Chicago Christian Industrial League

Chicago Jobs Corps

Chicago Lighthouse for People Who Are Blind or

Visually Impaired Chicago Women in Trades

Chicagoland Business Partners

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Chicagoland Chamber of Commerce

Chinese American Service League

City Colleges of Chicago

Community Assistance Programs

Corporation for Supportive Housing

Elam Davies Social Service Center/

Fourth Presbyterian Church

Employment Resource Center

Erie Neighborhood House

Goodwill Industries of Metropolitan Chicago, Inc.

Grand Boulevard Federation

Greater North-Pulaski Development Corporation

Greater West Town Project

Healthcare Consortium of Illinois

Heartland Alliance/Chicago Connections

Housing Resource Center of Hull House Association Humboldt Park Economic Development Corporation

i.c. stars

IAM CARES

Illinois Caucus for Adolescent Health

Inspiration Cafe

Jane Addams Resource Corporation

Jewish Federation of Metropolitan Chicago

Lakefront SRO Corporation

League of Women Voters of Chicago

LEED Council, Inc.

Local Initiatives Support Corporation

National Center on Poverty Law

New Moms, Inc.

Nonprofit Financial Center

North Lawndale Employment Network

OAI, Inc.

Ounce of Prevention Fund/Kids PEPP

Polish American Association

Project JOBS

Protestants for the Common Good

Pyramid Partnership, Inc.

Safer Foundation

Southeast Chicago Development Commission

Southwest Women Working Together

STRIVE/Chicago Employment Service

Suburban Job Link Corp.

The CARA Program

The Neighborhood Technology Resource Center

The SSI Coalition

The Welfare to Work Partnership/Chicago BizLink

University of Illinois at Chicago Urban

Transportation Center

Women Employed Institute

Women's Self-Employment Project

Woodlawn Development Associates

YMCA Alliance

Individual Members

Evelyn Brodkin

Patricia DeJean

Mimi Gilpin

Dr. Kirk Harris

Henry Jackson

Nancy Johnstone

Paul Kleppner

Marcia Liebrecht

Kathleen Petefish

varineen Ferensi

Pratibha Shenoy

Sandra Watson-Smith

Marta White

Betty Willhoite

Dr. Creg Williams



Working Group Participants

Earl Agyarquah, Asian Human Services
Sue Augustus, The SSI Coalition
Keith Bailey, City Colleges of Chicago
Meegan Bassett, Bethel New Life
Matt Blakely, McCormick Tribune Foundation
Nancy Brandt, Protestants for the Common Good
Joyce Brewer, Abraham Lincoln Center
Juanona Brewster, YMCA Alliance
Sharon Bush, Women Employed Institute
Martha Caldero, Catholic Charities
Rosie Carter, OAI, Inc.
Katie Castern, Work, Welfare and Families
Lekeeta Charley, Chicago Christian Industrial
League

Cesare Christian, Project JOBS

Jerome Collins, TASC, Inc.

Theresa Connell, STRIVE/Chicago Employment
Service

David Disabato, Safer Foundation

Meagan Downey, Emergency Fund for Needy People
Erika Dudley, STRIVE/Chicago Employment Service
Ryan Eggert, CANDO/State Agenda for Community
Economic Development

Dane Eggertson, Illinois Department of Corrections
Frank Fama, Regional Manufacturing Training
Collaborative

Bob Fittin, Southwest Women Working Together
Janis Frenchak, LaSalle Bank
Carolyn Fuqua, University of Chicago/SSA
Betty Gibson, Jane Addams Resource Corporation *
Mimi Gilpin, League of Women Voters of Chicago
Margie Gonwa, LEED Council, Inc.
Jocelyn Graf, University of Illinois at
Chicago (Chicago Labor Education Program

Chicago/Chicago Labor Education Program

Joyce Grangent, Corporation for Supportive Housing
Collette Grant, STRIVE/Chicago Employment Service
Jesse Green, Sinai Community Institute
Dianne Gregoire, Lakeside Community Committee
Jacob Grillot, The Employment Project
Gina Guillemette, Ounce of Prevention Fund/Kids PEPP
Deborah Harrington, The Woods Fund of Chicago
Maureen Hellwig, Policy Research Action Group
Angela Henderson, Organization of the NorthEast

Sheryl Holman, Community Assistance Programs **Lacinda Hummel,** Illinois Caucus for Adolescent Health *

Nancy Isaac, Lakefront SRO Corporation
Charles Jackson, Chicago Job Corps
Jayne Jackson, Employment Resource Center
Priya Jhawar, Mayor's Office of Workforce
Development

Ray Jones, Bethel New Life
Reginald Jones, The Inner Voice, Inc.
Pamela Jones, Heartland Alliance/Chicago
Connections

Linda Kaiser, Chicago Workforce Board **Richard Kaye,** Illinois Department of Employment Security

Jennifer King, Women Employed Institute
Jeffrey Klesner, Heartland Alliance/
Families Building Community
Bill Koll, McCormick Tribune Foundation

Ricky Lam, Chinese American Service League
Alona Lerman, North Lawndale Employment
Network

Diane Lund, Illinois Community College Board
Jack MacLennan, US Department of Labor
Rachel Maddalone, Chicago Legal Advocacy for

Incarcerated Mothers

Carol Mardis, North Center for Independent Living

Maurice Martin, Access Living

Tony Martin. Centers for New Horizons

Margie Matthews, Project Match

Maura McCauley, Heartland Alliance/Families Building Community

Carol McDermott, Centers for New Horizons

Cassandra McKay, University of Illinois at

Chicago/Jane Addams School of Social Work

Maggie Meade, Catholic Charities

Marcia Medema, YMCA Alliance

Angelique Miller, Heartland Alliance/

Mid-America Institute on Poverty

Sherri Moses, Illinois Department of Employment Security

Samuela Perez, Chicago Commons Employment Training Center

Wendy Pollack, National Center on Poverty Law Stephanie Porter, Employment Resource Center Arletha Posey, Community Mental Health Council Lorri Powe, Heartland Alliance/Transitional Community Service Jobs

Lowell Rice, Greater North Pulaski Development Corporation

Samantha Robinson, Chicago Interfaith Committee on Worker Issues

Phyllis Russell, Work, Welfare and Families Amy Rynell, Heartland Alliance/Mid-America Institute on Poverty

John Shrago, Association House of Chicago/ Graphics Futures Greg Sills, Chicago Community Loan Fund

Sacella Smith, Youth Job Center of Evanston
Lois Snyder, League of Women Voters of Chicago
Stephanie Sommers, Sommers Consulting
Shannon Stewart, The Employment Project *
Steve Sullivan, The CARA Program
Laurel Taylor-Dudley, Chicago Area Project *
Pamela Thomas, North Lawndale Employment

Katarina Thoren, University of Chicago/School of Social Service Administration

Betti Torrier, The Employment Project **Stacy Travis,** New Moms, Inc.

Natatia Trotter, Southwest Women Working Together Elaine Waxman, University of Chicago/SSA
Lea Weems, North Lawndale Employment Network
Kapila Wewegama, Asian Human Services
Betty Willhoite, League of Women Voters of Chicago
Barbara Williams, The Inner Voice, Inc.
Jenny Wittner, Women Employed Institute
Terra Wohlrabe Riseman, Lakefront SRO
Corporation

Helena Worthen, University of Illinois at Chicago/Chicago Labor Education Program

Note: Although we take the utmost care in preparing these lists, it is possible that a name was omitted or misspelled. If you notice an error, please bring it to the attention of CJC staff and we will make a correction at the earliest opportunity.

Special thanks to Chicago Women in Trades for sharing the lead image on page two.

Photography by John Brooks, and Olga Lopez. Design by Robert Barnes Design.

^{*} working group chairs



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