

specific organizing institutes to address the needs of new activists.

ACTION: CWA will incorporate training on how to mentor new leaders into existing leadership education programs.

CONCLUSION: The Next Generation Committee has spent the past few months researching existing programs at CWA and developing our recommendations. Because we did not begin until March, 2010, we feel that we need more time to complete our work. In particular, some Districts have already sent out Next Generation type surveys and we believe that undertaking something similar at the International level would enlighten us to new members' ideas and make them aware of CWA's intention to broaden its scope and commitment to cultivating new leaders and activists.

ACTION: The Next Generation committee will

set up a web page to serve as a clearing house for information. The Next Generation committee will also create a toolkit which will provide educational materials for locals to use with new members and examples of Next Generation Committees to serve as models for locals.

ACTION: The Next Generation Committee will conduct a survey of newer members to identify what would motivate them to become involved.

ACTION: CWA will establish a Next Generation SIF in order to fund the survey, scholarships, and related outreach efforts.

ACTION: The Next Generation Committee will complete its work within the next 12 months and transition ongoing activities to locals and the appropriate district and national staff. The Committee will present a final report on its work to the 2011 National Convention.



Respectfully submitted, Next Generation Committee Members:

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Report of the CWA Next Generation Committee to the 72nd Annual Convention



**Communications Workers of America
June 26-28, 2010
Washington, D.C.**

CWA's 2009 Convention passed a resolution establishing the Next Generation Committee.

The Committee began work in March, 2010, met twice in Washington, D.C., and held several conference calls to research the challenges facing our union and to discuss how best to address these issues.

The Committee found that with the challenges facing our union there is an increasing need for members to assume leadership roles - in organizing, legislative-political, and Strategic Industry Fund work. Many of today's leaders have provided years of service to our union and have developed unique expertise. It is imperative that these leaders mentor, engage, support, and nurture new activists to ensure that our union not only survives but thrives.

The resolution establishing the Next Generation Committee directed the committee to address the following issues.

ISSUE: Changes in worker mobility and service longevity that have occurred in the past decade due to the job market and what this means for the way that the union operates.

FACTS: As traditional workplaces are dismantled, managers often fill the gaps with independent contractors and other workers that traditionally have not been represented by a union. The federal GAO estimates that freelancers, temps, day laborers and other contingent workers now make up a third of the U.S. workforce.

Meanwhile, union representation has sunk to a mere 12.3 percent overall and only 7.2 percent in the private sector – even though at least half of young workers think they would be better off with unions (AFL-CIO's Lost Decade report).

These same young workers are often the first in line for layoffs and other job cuts; to survive, many turn to temporary or freelance jobs to survive the gap between full-time positions. Combined, these realities call for a new way of thinking: organizing workers, not unionizing employers.

Federal law currently prevents organizing or bargaining on behalf of freelancers and other self-employed people. Still, information-sharing, solidarity and pooling of resources can measurably improve working conditions, in both the short-term and over the decades to come. And freelance unions eventually could become a platform to lobby for overturning the federal exemption that robs independent contractors of organizing and collective bargaining power.

Not only will freelance organizing help create younger and newer union activists, including students, it also will help address changes in worker mobility and service longevity that have occurred in the past decade due to the job market and what this means for the way the union operates.

In addition to freelancers, many young workers move frequently between employers in the same industry. For example, a call center worker may begin work at AT&T Mobility, then work at T-Mobile. CWA currently has programs such as WashTech, TU(T-Mobile), Alliance@IBM and the Association of Passenger Service Agents that serve employee groups. Expanding these models will lay the foundation for long-term organizing at employers in industries in which CWA already has expertise.

ACTION: CWA will create and expand programs to serve workers who are not connected to traditional bargaining units. These programs will provide networking opportunities, access to professional training and support through CWA/NETT, and a forum for shared political action, while promoting the health, safety and economic well-being of workers. CWA will also explore existing and new models for offering portable benefits and support to independent members. Ideally this moves us toward a system where union membership and benefits stay with the independent member as he or she moves from job to job.

ISSUE: New organizing and mobilizing opportunities for the union through social networking (Twitter, Facebook, MySpace, blogs, texting, and other online networks and new media).

FACTS: With its recent website redesign, CWA has

taken steps to deepen its online engagement with its membership. CWA has also established a presence on Facebook and Twitter.

These tools are important for reaching all members, and particularly younger members. The Pew Internet and American Life Project found that 47% of U.S. adults use social networking sites and that Facebook is by far the most popular of these sites (73% of social networking users have Facebook accounts). Almost three-quarters of young adults aged 18-30 use social networking sites while only 39% of adults over 30 use them. These results are similar to those from a CWA survey of AT&T Mobility members, which found that 49% of Mobility members use Facebook regularly or occasionally.

ACTION: CWA will continue to expand its use of online and social networking tools to communicate and stay connected with membership and to build its list of member e-mail addresses. In addition, as part of an online toolkit established and maintained by the union, CWA will provide local leaders and membership with training resources and guidelines that will help their locals benefit from using this new technology.

ISSUE: Getting the word out to future officers and activists about the union's resources and opportunities on training, mentoring and communications. These include but are not limited to organizing institutes, leadership schools, higher-education programs, and the Minority Leadership Institute. Recruiting and training of younger and newer activists for CWA's expanded organizing programs.

FACTS: Currently, the CWA's Leadership Schools are structured by the Districts, who develop the curriculum and facilitate the logistics. The curriculum is typically top-notch, involving many accredited higher education institutions as partners and teachers. We have identified issues in accessibility - members are not often aware of the program. Some Locals cannot afford to send anyone. A standardization of the application process may be helpful, especially in light of the strong reputation of the programs. SIF monies or scholarships could be utilized to enhance affordability.

CWA's Organizing Institutes are currently delivered by Districts as well. The OIs have become increasingly more specific to certain industries and while that is appropriate for some Sectors it may bar the participation of new members who may benefit from a more generalized program. This broader scope in terms of organizing training and its importance will foster leadership. Several times CWA has led the way with "young worker" OIs. This is a model for U.S. labor and should continue. A consideration as to the role of technology in organizing should be included in the curriculum as we believe new members and potential members respond better, at least initially, to social networking type communications as opposed to some of the traditional organizing methods. The curriculum can provide insight about organizing and technology that can be brought back to the Locals for use in training, websites, etc.

The Minority Leadership Institute is a prestigious honor requiring selection by the national. Continuing the recent initiative to disseminate the goals and successes of the program will inspire new activists.

The AFL-CIO's Organizing Institute, with leadership from CWA, offers a training and placement program that matches individuals who want to be organizers with a three-day training course, as well as campaign-specific organizing training tailored to a specific union. They also open their program up to both union and non-union members. This open approach to recruitment might also be useful.

ACTION: CWA will establish scholarships for one person per eligible district and sector to participate in CWA's Organizing Institute and one person per eligible district and sector to participate in Leadership School each year. CWA will also create a member internship program to support the work of committees at the National Convention. These scholarships and internships will be for new activists who have not attended similar programs or the National Convention in the past. CWA will expand communications to encourage local participation for new leaders in training programs.

ACTION: CWA will continue Next Generation