

The Retiree **ADVOCATE**

The Monthly Publication of
PSARA EDUCATION FUND
"Uniting Generations for a Secure Future"

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April 2020

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GiveBIG Challenge

By Robby Stern and Karen Richter

On March 10, the Fundraising Committee found it necessary to cancel the screening of, "The Power to Heal," over concern for the health of our members and the general public. More cancellations are very likely. The public health crisis will take a bite out of the revenue PSARA and the PSARA Education Fund need to continue our education and advocacy work. The goal we have established for the GiveBIG campaign in 2020 is \$30,000. The cancellation of public gatherings makes GiveBIG even more important.

The COVID-19 crisis and the ensuing "shock" to the American people and US economy have provided the Trump Administration and Wall Street the opportunity to make a serious effort to fulfill their dream. Trump is proposing to eliminate the Social Security payroll tax to stimulate the economy. The resulting under-funding of the Social Security Trust Fund will lead to a political offensive to cut Social Security and/or privatize or partially privatize.

The PSARA Education Fund and PSARA sponsor educational forums on "Making Retirement Security Real for Everyone," "Medicare for All -- Why We Need It Now," and "Time for a Green New Deal." Prior to passage of the Long-Term Care Trust Act (LTCTA) by the Washington Legislature, we presented multiple educational workshops on the long-term care crisis in a number of legislative districts and how the LTCTA would help. We are now in the process of developing workshops about "Women and Social Security" and "People of Color and Social Security." These workshops make a difference!



Your GiveBig donations will help us continue to bring you important educational events like our recent forum on the history of Seattle's Black Panther Party chapter. From left to right are Garry Owens, Michael Tagawa, Larry Gossett, Vanetta Molson, Na'eem Shareef, and Mark Cook, all former BPP members and now PSARA members. At right is moderator Robby Stern. (Photo: Garet Munger)

We all must respond with a powerful voice to attacks on retirement justice. The education work and the advocacy that will be required in 2020 from all of us is very important.

The annual cost of producing and distributing *The Retiree Advocate* annually is \$21,000. Additionally GiveBIG funds will help cover the costs of educational outreach work - approximately \$50,000+ in 2020.

In this critical election year we will continue educating on retirement policy issues. We will compare and contrast the positions of candidates on retirement security and retirement justice issues. We anticipate having to use some of our reserves for this work. We must try to minimize the depletion of these reserves.

To further our GiveBIG financial goal of \$30,000, the PSARA Executive Board and the PSARA Education Fund Board have pledged to donate \$15,195 col-

lectively. Thirty-five members of the two Executive Boards are challenging PSARA members to match the sum of the pledges of the two Executive Boards.

The Boards have demonstrated their commitment to the long-term financial viability of the PSARA Education Fund. *The Advocate* is a unique publication frequently providing information not found in other progressive communication outlets. The Education Fund sponsors community education on retirement justice issues in an expanding area of Western Washington. These presentations build support for policies impacting the ability of seniors and future seniors to live with dignity, respect, and financial security.

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Congratulations to Ruth Egger



Ruth Egger

Ruth Egger, who took the lead for PSARA in advocating for the 2019 passage of the Washington Long-Term Care Trust Act (LTCTA), has been appointed by Governor Inslee to the Washington State Long-Term Services and Supports Trust Commission. The commission was created by the LTCTA, and charged with making recommendations to state agencies or to the legislature related to long-term care and services.

Ruth is uniquely qualified for the position. Besides being a career social worker, Ruth also cares for her parents, both in their 90s. Although she and her parents can't benefit directly from the LTCTA, her personal experience as a caregiver and her professional

experience motivated her to advocate for the legislation. She personally testified in support of the bill in 2018 and 2019 and was quoted in news coverage locally and nationally.

PSARA Lobby Day



Some of the PSARA crew at our Lobby Day. From left, Jim Grayson, Anne Kroeker, Jessica Bonebright, Pam Lux, Tom Lux. Photo courtesy of Jim Grayson.

Some Reflections From Rep. Jayapal

Submitted by Robby Stern

I want to share with you an excerpt from a Facebook post by Rep. Pramila Jayapal. The post also explains details of the "Families First Coronavirus Response Act." The entire post is very worthwhile reading. I am so proud to have Pramila representing the 7th Congressional District (although I recently moved into the 9th District). She also Co-chairs the Congressional Progressive Caucus and is a long-time PSARA member.

This is an incredibly difficult time for so many in our community, and I am so very grateful to all the public health workers, the teachers, the first responders, the garbage collectors, the government employees and so many more. I am also especially grateful to my own district and DC staff team, who have been unbelievably compassionate, dedicated problem solvers, listening to our constituents who call in with issues and anxieties and doing all they can to help—despite their own stresses of personal situations and challenges. They are truly amazing.

This crisis is showcasing what happens when we disinvest in basic government infrastructure, including public health or education; when we have allowed profits and greed to take over entire systems, including health care; when we have structures that have institutionalized racism and left so many behind. Perhaps most of all, it showcases the problems with a me-first instead of a we-first society, a society that has failed to recognize how deeply interconnected we are and that our lopsided systems that favor the wealthiest also hurt everyone. The hard thing is that it is going to get worse before it gets better, and we need to prepare for that.

But it also is a moment where we get to reclaim the best of who we are as human beings and to radically rethink what society should look like. As we practice physical distancing (I prefer that term to social distancing) and work to weather this time of crisis, take time to take care of yourself and each other. Go for walks.

Meditate and bring back awareness to this present moment. Seek joy in small things. Go into the street or on your porch, turn up the music or sing and dance like we are seeing in Italy—maybe others will join you (with appropriate distance, of course). Preserve meaningful contact: Use FaceTime or other video methods to look at people instead of just talking on the phone. Reach out to your elderly neighbors or pregnant women or new moms and dads or those with disabilities and see if they need grocery drops or other assistance. Share what you have; there is probably always someone who has less. Breathe in generosity, love and abundance, and breathe out anxiety, fear and scarcity. Tell the people you love that you love them and watch it fill you up as well. Seek mental health counseling without any shame.

Ask for help of any kind if you need it. Thank the service workers and artists and mail delivery people and all the immigrants and other unseen workers who keep things going. Suspend judgments and blaming. Practice compassion—for yourself and others.



Rep. Pramila Jayapal

This is a chance to be who we genuinely are as human beings, to recognize that our personal actions affect everyone and our lives are inextricably intertwined. This is a chance to see light where there is dark; to see strength emerging in this very moment of crisis. We are strong and resilient. We will weather this together, with open hearts and all the sadnesses and joys that those open hearts allow us to feel.

Sending out love and justice to everyone.

Rep. Pramila Jayapal represents Washington State's 7th District in Congress. She is a member of PSARA.

Earth Day at 50

By Bobby Righi

Do you remember where you were on April 22, 1970, 50 years ago on the first Earth Day Celebration? I was with tens of thousands of others on 5th Avenue in New York City. We were used to marching in the streets – against the Vietnam War, in support of the Black Panthers, and in support of the struggles in African countries against their colonizers. We went regularly, young children in tow.

I have to confess that on that first Earth Day, I felt it was a distraction from all of the life and death struggles happening at the time. My group, the "Committee of Returned Volunteers," a nationwide organization of ex-Peace Corps and other volunteers, went to Rockefeller Plaza to take part in the Earth Day celebration, but we wanted to educate people about the wars for liberation happening all over the globe. We were surprised to see so many office workers and corporate executives taking part. This crowd represented a broad range of politics.

Participation across the country was around 20 million people. They were brought out by the book *Silent Spring*, by the fires in the Cuyahoga River, oil spills off the California coast, and a feeling that we were destroying the earth we all depend on. The outcomes of this mobilization included the passage of the Clean Air Act, Clean Water Act, the Endangered Species Act, the establishment of the EPA and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, the banning of DDT, the removal of lead from gasoline, and the passage of the Toxic Substances Control Act and the Marine Mammal Protection Act.

So it was a really big deal, not a distraction. The laws passed have saved thousands of lives, though they did not prevent placing communities of color next to spewing refineries and highways, causing deadly health problems and high rates of childhood illnesses for these communities. The effects of systemic racism show up even when we try to do the right thing.

Since the 80's all of these laws have been under attack. The Trump administration refuses to acknowledge science about the environment, climate change, health and pandemics, and anything else that does not agree with him. The EPA is now using phony science to allow the use of toxic chemicals in our air and water, a tactic taken directly from the fossil fuel industry to declare climate change a hoax.

This year's Earth Day is not a distraction! PSARA has been planning to join Sunrise in a march, but Earth Day 2020 will be observed under the restrictions

of the COVID-19 pandemic. Around the world youth and others are planning a digital response. Not as satisfying as gathering together in the streets as we did 50 years ago, but important to do in the midst of a worldwide crisis that is just a taste of what is to come with climate change. Find out more at <https://www.earthday.org/>

Bobby Righi is Co-Chair of PSARA's Climate and Environmental Justice Committee.

The Barbed Wire

By Barbara Flye



Pandemic: Mirror of a Sick System

By Mike Andrew

Sometimes a global crisis can do some good – if only because it highlights how absurd the pre-crisis state of affairs really was. The COVID-19 pandemic may be that kind of crisis.

The Trump administration has earned plenty of criticism for its incompetent handling of the pandemic, its lack of seriousness, its preposterous press conferences, and its rejection of basic science.

All of that is true, but none of it gets to the root of the problem.

The first thing to note is that in an age of global trade and global travel, rapidly spreading virus infections have become commonplace. After all, we've already had H1N1, SARS, and MERS.

One of the tasks of a rational public health system would be to cope with such epidemics when they break out. The US public health system has been a singular failure in that regard.

But the problem is not bad management alone. The US is facing a public health crisis because it's trying to cope with a virus pandemic with a for-profit healthcare system.

Let's look at some examples.

Early diagnosis can be crucial in controlling the spread of an infectious disease, and there are tests that can diagnose COVID-19 infections.

But until the Family First Corona Virus Relief Act provided for free testing, individual Americans were on the hook for the cost of tests.

According to the *Miami Herald*, a Miami man who returned from China in February reported to his doctor with symptoms of corona virus infection. He ultimately was billed \$3,200 for various tests – none of which were specific to COVID-19 by the way.

After his case hit the media, his insurance company issued a press release saying it would graciously pick up some of the tab, even though they hadn't preapproved the testing. In the

end, the insurance company said, the man wouldn't have to pay more than \$1,200.

Nice guys.

Now there will be federal money to pay for testing, but it costs up to \$300 just to walk into a doctor's office and ask for a test, and that is not covered by emergency funding. A trip to an emergency room could cost more than \$700.

On top of that, everybody knows that people who test positive will be quarantined for at least 14 days. The *New York Times* featured the story of a man and his daughter who were billed almost \$4,000 for federally ordered medical isolation - \$2,600 of it just for the ambulance to take them to the hospital where they were quarantined.

The man had insurance while he was working in China, but the insurance company would not pay for his expenses in the US. He had to turn to the crowd-funding site GoFundMe to raise money for his medical bills.

Obviously, the fear of being swamped with medical bills is a powerful disincentive for people to seek early diagnosis and treatment, but if they don't do so, they risk spreading the virus to people in their families and social circles. After all, people can carry the virus for more than 14 days before they become symptomatic.

Of course, some people – particularly people fortunate enough to be union members – may have very good health insurance. But even the very best employer-provided health insurance depends on being employed.



There are entire industries that depend on face-to-face contact with customers – travel, hospitality and food service, retail. The social distancing required to prevent the spread of viruses also prevents these industries from doing business.

Ironically, the Nevada Culinary Workers Union, which little more than a month ago was handing out brochures opposing Medicare For All, allegedly because it would "take away" the insurance program its members bargained for, is now facing up to 90 percent unemployment among its members.

The union is now negotiating with casinos for an extension of health benefits, but the most generous extension being mentioned is only one month. After that, their members are on their own till they get rehired.

This situation illustrates how misleading schemes like "Building on Obamacare" or "Medicare for all who want it" really are.

As long as healthcare is tied to private insurance companies "building on Obamacare" will mean healthcare is still bought and sold like a commodity rather than being organized as a common good. And as long as that is the case, "all who want it" will mean "all who can afford it."

Statement from Pass the Federal Green New Deal!

*This open letter has been sent to Washington State's Congressional delegation.
This is the first public act of the Pass the Federal Green New Deal coalition.*

Pass the Federal Green New Deal!

Members of the Congressional delegation who have cosponsored the Federal Green New Deal:

Rep. Pramila Jayapal (D-7)
Rep. Adam Smith (D-9)

Participating organizations:

350 Eastside

350 Everett

350 Seattle

350 Spokane

350 Tacoma

350 Wenatchee

Earthcare Not Warfare

FUSE Washington

Kadima

National Writer's Union
[UAW 1981] Washington
Chapter

Pride At Work

PSARA [Puget Sound Advocates for Retirement Action]

SEIU 775NW

South Seattle Climate Action
Network

Sunrise Seattle

UAW 4121

Unitarian Universalist Association

Contact: gndcoalition.wa@gmail.com

Don't exacerbate the climate crisis while addressing COVID-19; rather, let's build a healthy future for all.

Pass the Federal Green New Deal! Coalition commends the commitment of our elected leaders from WA State to move quickly to address the suffering from COVID 19 and the response necessary to contain it. However, COVID-19 has shined a light on the vulnerabilities that people in our communities face every day and has made those even worse.

We are advocates of the Green New Deal as a way to not only address the climate crisis, but to also substantially address the inequities and failings of our current economic system. Many American families cannot afford health care, struggle to pay the rent and have enough food, and meet basic needs.

We must go forward not back. In light of the urgent need to address both the climate crisis and the devastating effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, we ask that you immediately reject two aspects of President Trump's pandemic proposals: the oil industry bailout, and the payroll tax cut. A bailout of the oil industry will benefit CEOs, not working people, while contributing to growing climate disasters. Now is the perfect time to instead champion a just transition to clean energy, as the Green New Deal proposes. The payroll tax will gut Social Security and Medicare two vital programs for all Americans.

We also need to immediately put into action other demands of the Green New Deal. A payment to everyone who needs it is a good first step but this crisis is projected to last for a year or more. We need stronger solutions including:

- A Universal Basic Income so people can work or stay home if necessary and pay their living expenses; in the long run a Federal Jobs Guarantee.
- Universal health care.
- Investment in a clean energy infrastructure that will put millions of people to work.

These policies would help ameliorate the present crisis while at the same time leave the country in a much stronger position to address the next crisis.

We are asking you, our congressional representatives and senators, to introduce legislation that addresses both the current pandemic and the climate crisis, at the level required.

Let's Transform the Economy, Not Restore It

The Coronavirus Recession

By Michael Righi

Bring on the "helicopter money." It's a welter of competing proposals at the moment -- \$1,000 or \$2,000 or even more per person, once or twice or as long as the crisis continues, half a trillion or a couple trillion dollars. Do it, and do it fast. Folks shut out of work need to make their rent and utilities. Don't worry about it going to people who do not need it, we can tax it back when the crisis recedes. Many need the help.

And don't worry about where the money is going to come from. (If you have read my articles in the past, you are familiar with this song, just skip ahead.) Washington State cannot do this, but the federal government can borrow the funds. Interest rates on Treasury bonds are near zero, it is free money.

Trump wasted a couple trillion dollars of borrowing with his tax cut, when the only crisis was that his 1% corporate friends were not wealthy enough. But this is a genuine emergency, and it is what government is for, to help people and to prop up the economy with fiscal policy when a recession hits.

We have a recession, for sure. The Economic Policy Institute predicts three million lost jobs, which would mainly hit low-wage service and gig-economy workers. But now auto plants are closing, and three million may be low. Be clear we are not talking about the stock market here (has Trump stopped talking about it?); a recession is about the jobs and incomes of the 90% of us who own next to nothing in "the markets."

So, yes, a shower of cash is needed. And certainly paid sick leave, for all who are locked down or do not want to infect their neighbors. But not sick leave with carve-outs for large employers like McDonald's and Amazon, or that amounts to only a week or two, or that ends when the coronavirus pandemic does. We need sick leave for all, permanently. We don't want to go back to

where we were, we need to come out of this mess with the economy we want.

The Last Crisis

This is not like the 2008 financial crisis. That was caused by irresponsible speculation deep within the financial system. The country's central bank, the Federal Reserve, bailed out the banks by buying up bad bank loans and driving interest rates down close to zero. That was monetary policy -- the Federal Reserve Bank acting to keep private banks afloat. The Fed could have helped homeowners keep their homes. But they chose not to. The Fed is once again, over the last few weeks, pouring a couple trillion dollars into financial markets to float corporations and pump up the stock market to save Trump's ass.

Payments to individuals and safety-net spending and infrastructure programs are fiscal policy, carried out by the federal government (the "feds," not the Fed). Fiscal policy is about spending and programs and Main Street, monetary policy is mostly about Wall Street. The two can certainly work together in a crisis -- the Fed can buy the bonds the government sells to finance government spending. That's what Republicans and deficit-hawk Democrats like Biden whine about. And it is exactly what we need now.

We have, hopefully, learned some things from the 2008 crash. Banks and car companies were bailed out, with no consequences. No jail time for bankers, no limits on CEO pay, no requirements to invest in electric cars. We could have started to transform the economy to meet the climate crisis; we did not.

The Fed has continued a policy of low interest rates since 2008, flooding the economy with money. This money has poured into corporate coffers and into stock markets. Corporations have paid dividends and bought back their own shares, further driving up stock



Michael Righi

prices and making the 1% even wealthier. Cheap money has also flowed into shale oil and tar sands and natural gas fracking industries, keeping them alive and happily pumping CO2 into our air.

Meanwhile, governments across the world, and the essential programs we all need, have been disastrously cut back. Our economic and political elites have learned nothing, they just want a return to what they call "normal." I don't think so.

Bailouts

I suspect corporate D.C. lobbyists are not practicing social distancing. They are all over legislators, looking for bailouts. The airlines want \$50 billion. Over the last few years, airlines have spent \$45 billion on share buybacks, and paid executives \$750 million. Ninety-six percent of their profits went to their owners. Trump has already used crisis funds to buy oil and prop up the profits of that industry.

We don't want "strings" attached to bailout money, we need ropes and chains. No bailout money unless all

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Bargaining for the Common Good, Part II

By Jeff Johnson, reprinted from *International Union Rights*, Volume 26, Issue 4, 2019

Aligning values towards just transition

While on the steps of the Capitol in Alabama in 1965, Dr Martin Luther King was asked, 'Are the efforts of the civil rights movement working?' He replied, 'The arc of the moral universe is long, but it bends towards justice.' After passage of the Civil Rights Act and Voting Rights Act, Dr King's work transitioned towards creating a peoples' movement – a movement of black, white, immigrant, union and non-union workers, young and old to create a vision of racial, economic, and social justice and to organise around this vision.

Bargaining for the common good

Today we must add climate justice to the mix. But the point is, today with an economic paradigm that has brought us to the brink of extinction and where so many have so little, we have an opportunity as labour, communities of colour, immigrants, indigenous people, and those of other movements to come together and create a vision of a truly 'just' transition, one based on equity of income, wealth, voice, and power, one that can achieve the significant and deep changes necessary to prevent the worst effects of climate disaster and inequality.

We need to start with aligning values. When the labour movement talks about just transition it's about creating good family wage jobs for workers who will lose their fossil fuel-based jobs in the transition to a clean renewable energy economy.

Environmentalists talk about a just transition in terms of lowering carbon emissions and the price of clean renewable energy while protecting clean water, air, forests and the ocean. Environmental justice communities usually talk about a just transition by investing in 'fence line' communities, those communities most negatively impacted by carbon pollution, so that

those historically left behind by the economy have access to decent jobs in the clean energy economy, don't suffer negative cost impacts from the transition to clean energy, and gain improved health outcomes. In Indian Country, just transition is all of the above as well as concern for the physical, spiritual, and cultural healing process from centuries of genocide, land theft, white Christian supremacy and colonial oppression.

Aligning these values is about building trust across movements and sharing leadership. The best way for labour to represent their current and future members is by joining the climate justice movement and making demands for a just transition at every level, from the streets to the bargaining table to the legislative floors of cities, counties, states, and the Federal Government.

In 2018, Washington State had a ballot initiative (Washington Carbon Emissions Fee and Revenue Allocation Initiative, I-1631) that aligned these values while hastening the transition to clean renewable energy economy, lowering carbon emissions, improving health outcomes, creating tens of thousands of family wage jobs with high quality labour standards, and giving voice to communities of colour, indigenous peoples, trade unions, environmentalists and civil society. I-1631 would have empowered those most affected by carbon pollution and climate change to make investment decisions for over a billion dollars a year in clean energy, clean water and air, and healthy forests. At the same time a 'Just Transition Fund' would have provided for the retention of wages, health care, and pension benefits for dislocated fossil fuel workers, protecting the standards of living of thousands of workers and the tax revenue base of impacted communities.

In Spring of 2019, the Governor of Colorado signed a bill authorising a 'Just Transition Office', after Colorado AFL-CIO Leader Dennis Dougherty,



Jeff Johnson

working with the Peoples' Climate Movement, pulled together a coalition of community, unions, faith, youth, and environmental groups to organize around equitable responses to climate change. The Just Transition Office, working with the Coalition board and others, is to develop a plan by summer of 2020 and funding of dislocated workers and communities will begin by 2025. The coalition fought for the provision of wage differential benefits for coal workers so that for a period of time the difference between what they had been earning and their new, likely lower, earnings would be replaced through the Just Transition Office.

In October of 2019 the Maine State AFL-CIO – under the leadership of president Cynthia Phinney – passed a Convention Resolution 'to Address the Climate Crisis and Inequality Crisis and Create Union Jobs'. The Resolution addresses the need to expand collective bargaining, pass the PRO Act, create a fair and equitable Just Transition, and 'to provide union career opportunities for Maine workers and invest in working class, rural, people of color, and indigenous communities historically disproportionately impacted by pollution, environmental injustice, and economic insecurity'.

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Black Workers: Labor's Bedrock and Future

If we are in true solidarity with everyone in our movement, we all win

By April Sims, reprinted from *The Stand*

Black History Month has offered us the opportunity to lift up the significant role Black Americans have played in this country from before its founding. This is a complex history, both painful and joyful, but one that is important to honor. Black history is American history; it is also Labor history.

Black working people have been pivotal in advancing the cause of organized labor for generations. A. Phillip Randolph's work forming the Negro American Labor Council played a central role in one of the landmark civil rights actions of the era, the 1963 March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom. The involvement of Black unionists in this action built the pressure needed to push the AFL-CIO to support the 1964 Civil Rights Act.

Black working people are the bedrock of organized labor, and are poised to play an even greater role in our movement as it becomes more and more diverse. For one, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, Black workers are now unionized at a higher rate than any other ethnic group (13.2% union, versus 10.8% and 9.2% for white and Latinx workers, respectively).

Broadly, the demographics of the labor movement are changing. Per the Economic Policy Institute (EPI), the working class — defined as working people without degrees — makes up 66 percent of the total workforce. EPI estimates that the working class will be majority-minority by 2032, 11 years before the total population of the U.S. becomes so. If we look at just members of the working class aged 25-34, this group of workers will be majority-minority in 2021.

But while more and more Black working people are joining the labor movement, increased representation doesn't automatically translate into greater job security for Black folks.



April Sims

The impacts of 250 years of slavery, decades of discriminatory employment practices, and more than 40 years of anti-worker policies cannot be erased solely by more Black folks joining the labor movement. Systematic disenfranchisement of Black workers carries a toll that persists, even when individual Black workers are organized and have access to resources.

Recent research conducted by the Economic Opportunity Institute (EOI) with Black women eligible for Paid Family & Medical Leave (PFML) illustrates this point. In listening sessions led by EOI, participants aired their concerns with utilizing PFML. Per EOI, "as Black women, many felt that their employers and coworkers were more likely to suspect them of being 'lazy' and to retaliate against them if they took the full length of leave they might need."

And when working people are under attack, often Black workers bear the brunt of these attacks. We saw this

recently in the aftermath of the Unfair Labor Practice strike undertaken by workers at Providence Hospitals; workers who were denied access to their job sites after the strike were predominantly those in environmental, food, and hospitality services, jobs held largely by Black and Brown working people.

The unequal treatment Black workers continue to suffer should concern us all. Solidarity with all working people is fundamental to our movement. Moreover, our fates as working people are tied together, across race, ethnicity, geography, and sector. Data from the EPI shows that when the pay of Black, Indigenous and People of Color (BIPOC)

decreases, there is no increase in pay for white workers. Similarly, when white workers' pay decreases, there is no increase in pay for BIPOC workers. When one of us loses, we all lose; our fortunes as working people are fundamentally entwined.

2020 is a momentous year. We have unprecedented opportunities to fight for working people, to lift up candidates that will represent our interests. We know that our movement is the bulwark between working people and the forces that seek to enslave the human soul, as the Washington State Labor Council's Constitution declares. But to fulfill this laudable ideal, we must truly be in solidarity with all members of our movement, supporting the growing ranks that will fight for all of us.

April Sims is Secretary-Treasurer of the Washington State Labor Council (WSLC) and a member of PSARA. The Stand is WSLC's online newspaper.

Support Frontline Workers Now!!

Healthcare Workers

Healthcare workers are desperately in need of masks and other Personal Protection Equipment (PPE). We know dental offices, construction companies, and others use these types of masks. Please reach out to everyone you know and ask them to donate what they have to keep our healthcare workers and our communities as safe as possible. Post widely on social media too!

To donate, go to:
www.suppliessaveliveswa.org/

Demand that the Federal Government send vital PPE equipment to Washington State! We are at the front of the curve in the Covid19 pandemic in the USA. Until we can get PPE production up and running, materials need to be sent immediately to hospitals throughout WA.

To sign the petition, go to: <https://secure.everyaction.com/cFZXm9oZWEqUsTDoOpecxw2>

Grocery & Pharmacy Workers

You know that grocery and pharmacy workers are putting their own health at risk feeding and caring for us. Unfortunately, they are not designated as "emergency personnel" so they are not able to access childcare support, which is vital for many of them being able to continue to do their jobs. Please reach out to Washington State electeds and tell them to support grocery and pharmacy workers as emergency personnel deserving of appreciation, and even more important, state support for childcare.

To send a message, go to: https://secure.everyaction.com/1ArKsePf90CcezcXaa2_rA2



Dishonor Roll

While frontline workers were struggling to find PPEs and to secure childcare for their families, the following US Senators voted against the Families First Corona Virus Relief Act, designed to help with paid family and medical leave and free COVID-19 testing:

- Marsha Blackburn (R-TN);
- James Inhofe (R-OK);
- Ron Johnson (R-WI);
- James Lankford (R-OK);
- Mike Lee (R-UT);
- Rand Paul (R-KY);
- Ben Sasse (R-NE);
- Tim Scott (R-SC).

In addition, two Senators are being accused of insider trading because they sold off millions of dollars worth of their personal stock portfolios after a confidential Senate Intelligence Committee briefing on the COVID-19 threat:

- Richard Burr (R-NC), \$1.7 million worth of stock;
- Kelly Loeffler (R-GA), \$3 million.

GiveBig Challenge

Continued from Page 1

If 300 members donate \$50 or more during GiveBig, the challenge from PSARA's leaders will be matched. Together we would take an important step in achieving the revenue needed for our work.

GiveBIG Day is May 6. Early online giving for GiveBig Day starts on April 22. Donations can be made by going to <https://www.givebigwa.org/psara-education-fund> Also beginning April 22, you can go to <https://www.givebigwa.org/> and enter the PSARA Education Fund. Donations will be processed on May 6 and donors will receive a confirmation receipt.

Another option is to write a check to the PSARA Education Fund any time between now and May 6. Write in the memo line, GiveBig, so we know it is to help match the challenge. Mail your check to the PSARA Education Fund, 321 16th Ave. S., Seattle, 98144. This option saves the PSARA Ed Fund a small percentage processing fee charged for each online donation.

Robby Stern is President of the PSARA Education Fund and a PSARA Executive Board member. Karen Richter is Vice President of the PSARA Education Fund, Membership Vice President of PSARA, and Chair of the PSARA Fundraising Committee.

Bargaining for the Common Good

Continued from Page 8

The labour movement can try to go it alone – and lose. Or we can become part of a wider movement to change the rules of the game and develop a vision of a just transition for the benefit of all people. Time is not on our side. We need to act with great urgency and sense of purpose.

Jeff Johnson is a retired President of the Washington State Labor Council and a member of PSARA. Part I of this article was featured in the March Retiree Advocate.

Let's Transform the Economy

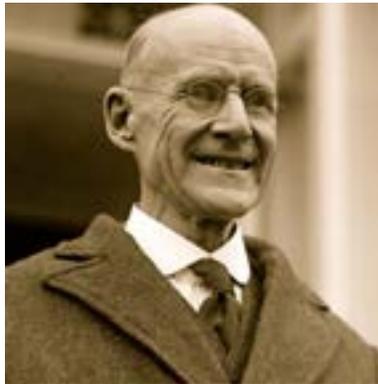
Continued from Page 8

workers are kept on (in the case of airlines that would also mean the low-wage workers handling bags, running wheelchairs, and cleaning planes). No money should go to CEO pay and none to stock buybacks – no buybacks ever, permanently. No money unless airlines commit to clear carbon-footprint-lowering goals and investments. The rules must change.

In particular, the oil industry must not be bailed out. The coronavirus crisis is an opportunity to build a more robust society, and a big part of doing that is to avert climate disaster. This is a chance to reset the economy, to pour job-creating funds into green investments, not prop up dying industries. Oilfield workers have to be protected, and other jobs created in clean energy. This will take planning; it will not solve our short-term recession, but youth and many others have created a momentum for a Green New Deal. We cannot waste it.

Michael Righi is a retired economics professor and a member of the Retiree Advocate Editorial Board.

Prophetic Words



“Only the very ignorant and foolish believe that a president who has surrounded himself with Wall Street darlings as cabinet ministers has any serious designs on the trusts.”

Eugene Debs

To Renew or Donate

PSARA Education Fund

321 16th Avenue S, Seattle WA 98144

- Basic contribution: \$20
- Limited income/living lightly: \$15 or whatever you can afford
- Supporting: \$50 New contributor
- Sponsoring: \$100 or more Renewing contributor

Name (Please print): _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Meetings and Events

Please note: We're concerned about the health and safety of all our members and their families. Therefore, the following regularly scheduled meetings may be cancelled or rescheduled as online meetings due to COVID-19 precautions. For up-to-date information on PSARA meetings, email organizer@psara.org

First Tuesday Vigil with Seattle Anti-War Coalition: *Cancelled, other actions are being considered.*

West Seattle Hot Topics for Seniors & Senior Wannabes: *Cancelled, check here for next month's meeting.*

PSARA Climate and Environmental Justice Committee: 10 a.m. – 11:30 a.m., Thursday, April 2, Washington State Labor Council office, 321 16th Ave. S, Seattle.

PSARA Government Relations Committee: Noon – 1:30 p.m., Thursday, April 2, Washington State Labor Council office, 321 16th Ave. S.

PSARA Southend Committee: *Cancelled, check here for next month's meeting.*

PSARA Fundraising Committee: 11:00 a.m. - Noon, Monday, April 13, Washington State Labor Council office, 321 16th Ave. S, Seattle.

PSARA Education Committee: 2 p.m., Tuesday, April 14, Washington State Labor Council office, 321 16th Ave. S, Seattle.

PSARA Race and Gender Equity Committee: 11 a.m.–Noon, Thursday, April 16, Washington State Labor Council office, 321 16th Ave. S, Seattle.

PSARA Executive Board: 12:30 p.m. – 3 p.m., Thursday, April 16, Washington State Labor Council office, 321 16th Ave. S, Seattle.