

The Retiree **ADVOCATE**

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

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December 2020

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Join Us for Our Winter Membership Meeting Thursday, December 17, 1:00 p.m.

Please join us for PSARA's winter membership meeting, Thursday, December 17, at 1:00 p.m.

This meeting will be held via Zoom in the interests of the health and safety of our members. If you receive regular emails from PSARA, you'll get the Zoom link in your email. All you have to do is click the link, and you'll be in the meeting. Nothing could be easier.

This year there won't be a potluck, of course, since we're meeting remotely. So feel free to sit in your most relaxing chair with a pizza and your favorite beverage, and enjoy the meeting in the comfort – and safety – of your home.

We won't be lonely, though, because we'll see each other virtually at least, till it's safe to visit in person once again.

This year's meeting will be especially important because we'll be voting on new PSARA Bylaws to bring all our rules up to date.

We'll also be approving our Legislative Agenda for 2021. A copy of the draft agenda is on Page 6.

And we'll be electing officers and Executive Board members. And of course, we plan to have guest speakers and reports from our committees. Who knows, we might even sing a song or two.

Please RSVP to organizer@psara.org to let us know you're coming. You'll be emailed a copy of the proposed new Bylaws so you'll know what we're voting on.

See you on December 17.

***Bob Cratchit: I say,
Tim, we've finally
voted out old Mr.
Scrooge...***

***Tiny Tim: God bless
us, everyone!***



Help Our Work Thrive

By Robby Stern and Karen Richter

As the end of 2020 approaches, many of us consider making donations as part of our holiday tradition. We do what our financial circumstances allow us to do. If you are making end-of-year donations, please consider the PSARA Education Fund. You can make your donation either by mailing a check to the PSARA Education Fund, 321 16th Ave. S, Seattle, 98144, or by going to our website, www.psara.org and donating to the PSARA Education Fund.

The pandemic combined with the Republican attacks on Social Security, Medicare, climate justice, and basic human decency necessitate that the Education Fund creatively expand our communication capability. Our goal is to educate our community and the public about what is happening that they may not be seeing in the media and online. The *Retiree Advocate*, along with providing organizational information, frequently offers an alternative analysis of what needs to be done to make our economy and our country more equitable. A commitment to progressive values combined with dedication to do the work guide the editor, Mike Andrew, and our group of volunteers.

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The Retiree ADVOCATE

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We Remember Tony Lee

PSARA member and veteran activist Tony Lee passed away on November 12 after a long battle with Primary Lateral Sclerosis. As we remember Tony, we also send our sympathies and warm wishes to Angie Bartels.

Tony was the retired advocacy director for Solid Ground, which he joined in 1995, when the organization was called the Fremont Public Association. He continued to work there until his retirement in 2014.

Under Tony's leadership, Solid Ground became a founding member of the Statewide Poverty Action Network and a leading voice on welfare reform, food security, affordable housing, and the achievement gap in education.

From 2014 through 2018, Tony continued to serve as Solid Ground's and Poverty Action's Senior Fellow.

As former State House Speaker, former Executive Director of Solid Ground, and fellow PSARA member Frank Chopp described him, "Tony Lee [was] the conscience of Washington State when it comes to helping poor people."

In addition to his work with Solid Ground, Tony served many other community organizations including:

- Board President and Co-founder of the Equity in Education Coalition
- Co-chair of the King County Chapter of the Asian Pacific Islander Coalition
- Steering committee member of Front and Centered
- Founding member of the Asian-Pacific Islander Coalition of Washington
- Advocate for the Washington Association of Churches and Catholic Archdiocese

For his lifetime of activism, Tony was honored with the Seattle Human Services Coalition's Lifetime Achievement Award, the Goldmark Award for leadership in social justice from the Washington Legal Foundation, and the love of all his fellow activists.

Tony's name will live on at the Tony Lee Apartments, the Low Income Housing Institute's new low-income housing facility, located in the Lake City Way Village.

The apartments will provide housing for low-wage workers making minimum wage and those on a pension or disability. The residences are also combined with an early learning center to help children from low-income families get off to a good start in school.



Tony Lee



The 2020 Elections

By Jeff Johnson

Seven out of 10 likely Republicans voters believe Joe Biden's victory was suspect because of election fraud, (Vox/Data for Progress Poll 11/18). Forty-four percent of all likely voters thought so too. Unbelievable. In Trumpian rhetoric "an election like the country has never seen."

The Play

Trump began undermining the election process on election day 2016. And he has never stopped. He claims to have won the popular vote in 2016 despite Hilary Clinton winning three million more votes than him. His rationale: subtracting fraudulent votes, he was the winner.

Trump can't conceive ever losing, never mind graciously accepting defeat. He will likely never concede the election to Joe Biden, despite Biden receiving six million more popular votes than him and winning the electoral vote with the same margin that Trump won with in 2016.

Trump's niece, Mary Trump, told CNN on November 18, "Donald has never been in a situation he couldn't cheat, lie, steal, or buy his way out of."

And he has tried – increased voter suppression, crippling the post office, removing ballot boxes in key states, claiming vote-by-mail ballots, unlike absentee ballots, were inherently fraudulent, encouraging intimidation at the polls, challenging vote counts in counties with a majority of voters of color in battleground states, and inciting his followers to believe that the election process, and for that matter all the fundamental institutions of our democracy, is and are broken.

While he has not succeeded in reversing the election results at this writing he has, nonetheless, received over 73 million votes – the second highest

vote total of any candidate running for President of the United States.

Whatever Trump does next he is unlikely to release his stranglehold on the Republican Party. It is his party now with all the craziness that that entails - racism, anti-worker/anti-climate/anti-immigrant/anti-LGBTQ policies, authoritarianism, a blind eye to COVID-19 death, rejecting a democratic transition of power, and refusing to help bring our economy and communities back from the brink.

His vision of a white America of the 1950s is helping him raise a war chest of money along with an army of sycophants who hold sway over Republican politicians at both the state and federal level. Twenty-three states now have all three chambers controlled by Republicans.

Regardless of whether the Democrats win the two US Senate seats in Georgia's special election on January 5, we are facing challenges that deny the reality of COVID-19, climate change, white supremacy, inequality, and racism, as well as the legitimacy of our democratic institutions.

It's time for a paradigm shift.

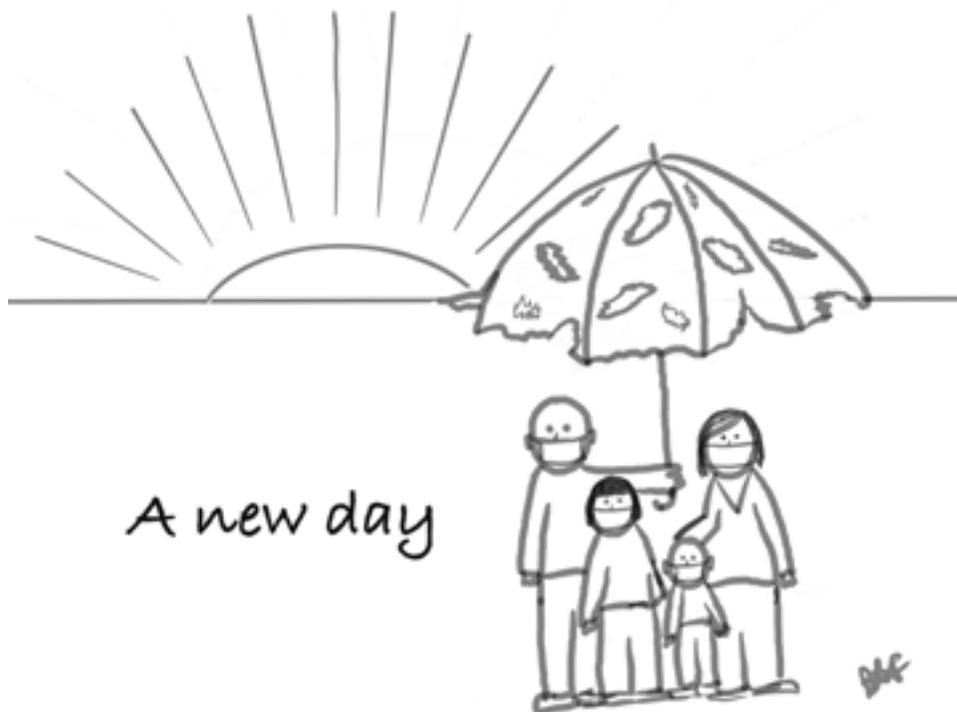
What are the Numbers?

Drawing on the exit polls from Edison Research (done for CNN, CBS, NBC, ABC, and the *Washington Post* – compliments of Mike Davis) the Biden/Harris victory is due to voters of color. Put in technical terms, people of color saved all of our asses.

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The Barbed Wire

By Barbara Flye



Celebrating Three Generations of Filipino Labor Leaders

By Cindy Domingo, reprinted from *The Stand*

The first Filipinos came to the United States in 1587 on a Spanish galleon ship landing in what is now Morro Bay in California. However, it would not be until after the Philippine-American War, the first US war abroad at the turn of the 20th Century, that Filipinos began coming to the US in large numbers.

Over the last 100 years, Filipinos have played an important role in the US economy, contributing significantly to the agricultural, salmon canning, hotel and restaurant industries and, since the 1960s, the healthcare industry. During World War II, Filipino servicemen, both in the US Army and Philippine Scouts, courageously fought on the front lines in the Philippines, playing an important role in the US winning the war in Asia.

This largely unknown history is why October was declared Filipino American History Month in 2009, and as we close this celebration, I'd like to briefly highlight three generations of labor leaders who have contributed to the development of the US labor movement.

The first generation of Filipino trade unionists became leaders in the multiracial organizing of migratory workers in the agricultural sector and the salmon canning industry from the 1920s through the 1960s. Larry Itliong, Philip Vera Cruz, Chris Mensalves, Sr. and Pete Velasco were the leaders who helped to form the Alaska Cannery Workers Union Local 37, now affiliated with the Inlandboatmen's Union and the United Farm Workers.

As documented in the film by Marissa Aroy, *The Delano Manongs: Forgotten Heroes of the United Farm Workers*, Larry Itliong led Filipino grape pickers organized under the Agricultural Workers Organizing Committee on strike on Sept. 8, 1965. One week later, after Itliong made a plea to the Mexican farm laborers, Cesar Chavez and his National Farm Workers Association joined the Filipinos on the picket lines and eventually the two labor organiza-

tions merged to form the United Farm Workers (UFW). It took five years and a successful national grape boycott to bring the grape growers to negotiate a contract with the UFW. The militant and leading role of Filipinos in the well-known '60s grape strike has long been overshadowed by Chavez and his Mexican rank-and-file members.

It was the second generation of Filipino American labor activists and historians who brought to light the history of the manongs. (Manongs is a term of respect for the older generation.)

Silme Domingo and Gene Viernes were the sons of the first generation of manongs, working side-by-side with their fathers in the Alaska canneries. They represented a new generation of cannery workers who were college-educated, but went to Alaska to earn quick money for school. Politicized by the civil rights movement, Vietnam War and student protests, students like Domingo and Viernes took on the oppressive and antiquated system in the canneries that was likened to the segregation and discrimination of the plantation economy in the South by the late US Supreme Court Justice Harry Blackmun. Together, Domingo and Viernes and others including Nemesio Domingo, Jr., the eldest Domingo brother, filed three companion class-action lawsuits against the canning industry, successfully winning two of the largest monetary amounts of that time for migratory workers and ending segregation in the mess, housing and employment practices in the Alaska canneries.

However, Silme Domingo and Gene Viernes would pay with their lives when they sought to build solidarity between workers in the ILWU and workers in the Philippines who were facing repression under the Philippine dictator Ferdinand Marcos – a principal they had learned from Chris Mensalves, Sr and others in the ILWU from the manong generation.

On June 1, 1981, Domingo and Viernes were assassinated in their offices in Seattle's Pioneer Square in broad daylight. Eight years later, under the leadership of the Committee for Justice for Domingo and Viernes, deposed Ferdinand and Imelda Marcos were found liable for the murders and were ordered to pay the families \$23.5 million. (Learn more by watching *One Generation's Time: The Legacy of Silme Domingo and Gene Viernes* or reading *Summary Execution: The Seattle Assassinations of Silme Domingo and Gene Viernes*.)

Today, a new generation of Filipino labor leaders, organizers and rank-and-file members are carrying out the role of organizing Filipinos in the labor movement. Since the 1965 US immigration reforms, Filipinos have become the second largest Asian American grouping in the US and the largest population of Filipinos outside of the Philippines. Filipinos are prominent in the leadership and ranks of SEIU, UNITE HERE, AFSCME, ILWU and the Asian Pacific American Labor Alliance (APALA) Chapters and National Board.

The COVID-19 pandemic has cast an important light on the Filipino healthcare workers including nurses, doctors and environmental service workers. Recent statistics show that Filipino nurses represent 4% of the nurses in the US but represent 31.5% of the 205 COVID-19 deaths. In California, about 20% of nurses identify as Filipino and account for nearly 70% of COVID-19 related deaths. With such disproportionate numbers of deaths for nurses alone, the Filipino community and the labor movement must come together to demand protection of these frontline workers in the healthcare industry as well as in hospitality and public service.

Cindy Domingo is a member of PSARA and on the leadership committee of Seattle APALA (Asian Pacific American Labor Alliance).

My Election Week

By Larry Gossett

The first results I listened to occurred late Tuesday night and early Wednesday morning (November 4th). I was shocked and surprisingly angry because the votes were favoring Trump at that time. I was pulling hard for the Biden-Harris team because of my confidence in them being able to bring people together in our country.

Never has a President been so successful at dividing and denigrating people more effectively than Trump has done during his four-year term. I believe Biden could unify and not divide our country. Biden is what the doctor ordered at this historic juncture.

This is why I got so sick and fearful at 3:00 a.m. on Wednesday morning, when I started hearing ceremonial music on CNN, announcing that coming into one of the huge gathering halls inside the White House was Donald Trump.

He started making what I thought was a victory speech. I really got weak and sad when I heard him exclaim, "I am 300,000 votes ahead of Biden in Michigan, 500,000 in front of him in Pennsylvania. And I am killing him in Florida -- there is no way he can catch me without cheating!" I was horrified when he then calmly whispered, "The vote counting should stop now!" Then I heard myself hollering at my wife, "Rhonda...what is going on with this nut, Rhonda--I am going to bed!"

I had not been this upset about an early election result since September, 1993--during the primaries of my own run for a seat on the King County Council. I remembered that I was trailing two of my four opponents in that race early in the evening, and I prematurely thought I had lost. But suddenly, my campaign manager, Krystin Joy, rushed up to me and said, "Larry, it is very early in the voting, relax it will be okay." She was right. I ended up winning that race by 11:00 p.m.

Now, back to this year's Presidential race. When I woke up late Wednesday



Larry Gossett

morning, I was told by my wife that "sunlight had begun to shine" on the Biden/Harris campaign. It was just like what the TV pollsters had said was likely to happen. Biden surpassed or was catching up to Trump in the crucial battleground states of Wisconsin, Michigan, and Pennsylvania. Rhonda forcefully reminded me, "These are the three most crucial states, Larry, for Biden to win because Trump had won all three against Hillary Clinton in 2016." All I could think to do was take a deep breath and say, "right on!"

Rhonda and I kept our eyes glued to CNN and MSNBC for many hours on Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday. And with each passing day things were looking better and better for Joe Biden and Kamala Harris. TV newscasters kept the focus on the battleground states.

As time marched on, I became particularly excited by what was being said by these announcers, and that was how crucial the Black vote was becoming in this 2020 Presidential election. Wednesday night the TV broadcaster described what happened in Wisconsin. He said results just came in from tens of thousands of voters who reside in North Milwaukee's Black precincts. Over 90 percent of them voted for Joe Biden.

The next day television telecasters said that an avalanche of votes over-

whelmed election headquarter workers in Michigan, as hundreds of thousands of ballots poured in from Black neighborhoods from all over Detroit, Flint, and Pontiac. Eighty-five to ninety percent of the votes were for Joe Biden. Next thing said was that Michigan could now be put in the Biden column.

On Friday and Saturday the focus was on Pennsylvania. From Black westside and northside Philadelphia neighborhoods, slowly and methodically huge numbers of black votes were counted in the column for Biden. The same process was occurring simultaneously in Pittsburgh Black communities. Biden caught up to Trump's huge original vote leads late on Friday and by Saturday morning it was announced that Biden took Pennsylvania, which put him at 270 and the Electoral College victor.

Icing on the electoral cake occurred when, because of the democratic reshaping of the electorate in Arizona and Nevada, Biden received a strategic lift from the powerful and quite numerous Latinx voters, making them the final two states he carried. He did win Georgia by a slim 14,000 margin, but a recount was required. Should Biden carry Georgia he will end up with 306 electoral votes to Trump's 232. He will win the exact number of Electoral College votes as Trump did in 2016.

Finally, Biden was really right on time, when at the beginning of his acceptance speech for the Presidency of the United States he gave the Black community a great shoutout when he said, "Black people had my back and I am going to have their back."

Biden got 89 percent of the Black vote, 70 percent of Latinx, 68 percent of Asian and Pacific Islanders, and 64 percent of Indigenous peoples. Biden only got 43 percent of white voters.

Larry Gossett is a retired ML King County Council member and a member of PSARA's Executive Board.



**Puget
Sound
Advocates For
Retirement
Action**

PSARA 2021 Legislative Agenda

PPSARA opposes cuts to programs that provide vital services to seniors, children and low- and moderate-income families. We support efforts to pass progressive revenue measures that achieve the goal of funding education and protecting the essential social service programs.

Health Care

PSARA believes that comprehensive, affordable health care is a fundamental human right. We will support legislation that furthers the goal of universal health care coverage in Washington and advances racial and immigrant justice. We support efforts to lower the cost of all health care including prescription drugs.

Housing & Homelessness

PSARA supports keeping people in their homes and preventing an increase in homelessness, money for affordable housing, increases in case management and other services to transition from homelessness into permanent housing, and the repeal of the 1981 law that prohibits cities from enacting rent control. PSARA supports allocation of \$240 million of the Washington Housing Trust Fund from the Capital Budget to provide a much larger stock of low-income housing for the growing population of seniors and low-income people.

Climate Justice

PSARA supports the Federal Green New Deal and all state efforts to achieve environmental justice to counter the disastrous effects of climate change. PSARA supports legislation to lower greenhouse gas emissions from transportation and housing, and to repair the harm of past and ongoing environmental degradation. We support all efforts to achieve environmental justice.

Workers' Rights

PSARA supports a Bill of Rights for home health care workers.

Fiscal Reform

PSARA supports efforts to create a State Investment Trust (State Bank).

PSARA supports the elimination of tax exemptions that do not have a demonstrated public benefit and a sunset clause.

PSARA supports requiring the legislature to adopt a transparent budget listing tax exemptions and their impact on the budget.

Meet PSARA's New Lobbyist, Nancy Sapiro

An Interview

By Mike Andrew

Meet Nancy Sapiro, PSARA's new lobbyist. Our veteran lobbyist and PSARA member, Pam Crone, retired this year after representing our organization for many legislative sessions.

Nancy will fit right in with PSARA, however, since she has worked with Pam "walking the marbled halls," as she puts it, since 2012.

"I've been involved with the legislative process for years," Nancy explained. "I worked with what is now Legal Voice but was the Northwest Women's Law Center doing legislative work. Pam was the lobbyist. She was the boots on the ground, and I worked with her on a daily basis providing the info, analysis, and support. When I moved on from that work, Pam asked me if I wanted to come aboard as a lobbyist. And I did."

"I'm a Midwesterner, from Wisconsin originally," she told me, "part owner of an 80-year-old family business in Green Bay."

So you're a Packers fan?

"Oh my God, yes! I bleed Green and Gold. In fact, I made it clear to my children – who were born here in Washington – that they must not be Seahawks fans."

What attracted you to lobbying?

"I'm an attorney, I worked as a public defender, I handled criminal, and juvenile, and child abuse cases.

"But doing that, I felt a bit like a rat on a wheel. I'd try to help my clients one on one, but I felt like I was beating my head against the wall. With each client the same issues kept coming up. I saw my clients had systemic issues. I recognized how great the societal needs are – so I decided I needed to work to change things on a systemic level.

"Then the next iteration was going down to Olympia making change. It's slow, but possible. And it's really cool when you've done something.

"It can feel intimidating, but really the legislators are so accessible. Anybody can make an appointment and see their representatives. I love to see that in action!"

What systemic change are you most proud of?

"I was part of the team that brought in paid family and medical leave in 2017.

"It took weeks and weeks of negotiating, but a lot of factors came together, and we were able to do it. People from both sides of the aisle, business and labor organizations, truly negotiated and compromised, and we passed what was then the best paid leave act in the country.

"It was such an honor to be part of that."

What do you foresee in the 2021 legislative session?

"Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, things don't look too positive on the economic front. We've been told the legislature will focus on the budget – the impact of COVID-19 – and police accountability issues. And legislators will be looking at all of their work through a racial equity lens.

"We all have other issues, but I just don't know how much bandwidth the legislature has to deal with them.

"It will be a virtual session, so there will be new opportunities to engage, but it will be much more complicated. People who have never testified because it's hard for them to take time off of work and travel in Olympia, will be able to do it now. That's a huge positive citizen engagement.



Nancy Sapiro

"But how will they manage a one-hour hearing if 600 people sign up?

"It will be hard to pass a lot of legislation with all the logistical challenges of a virtual session. And so much of what we do is face-to-face interaction. It's just impromptu meetings in the hall. That's how we get the work done."

How serious is the budget deficit?

"It's serious. And the legislature has to pass a balanced budget. The situation may not be as bad as we once thought, but there will still be a serious budgetary hole.

"So how do we fill it? Cuts? New revenue? And if it's revenue, will it be progressive revenue?

"There will be a new revenue forecast in coming weeks. Then we'll know how dire things are. After that, people will have to come to the table in an honest and serious way and see what we can do."

Washington State Budget

We Need a Bottom-Up Recovery. Now.

By Michael Righi

There is a hole in Washington State's budget. Maybe Mitch McConnell will have a change of heart and support the Heroes Act. Passed by the House, that would send billions of federal dollars to support state and local governments and programs.

Maybe McConnell and the Republican Party (and some Democrats, for that matter) will stop pretending that they care about federal budget deficits. They don't worry when passing tax cuts for the wealthy and corporations. Remember, the federal government (not the states) can borrow right now, almost for free, and create all the money needed to help the economy.

Maybe Jeff Bezos will fill the hole. It is only a few billion dollars, after all, and during the pandemic his wealth has grown about \$70 billion. While he's at it, he can reinstate hazard pay for Amazon workers. Last month, Amazon reported quarterly profits up almost 200 percent.

Let's Get Real

None of that is remotely likely, you're right. Let's be clear: the "economy" is still in terrible shape. Nationally, we are down 11 million jobs since February. Another 15 million workers have endured pay and hours cuts, or have dropped out of the labor force, probably to care for family in this horribly mismanaged coronavirus crisis.

The burden of this crisis has fallen most on low-wage workers – often women and workers of color. Surveys show that 11 percent of families have not had enough to eat in the last seven days – the figure is 19 percent for families of color. Clearly it is not over, things may even get worse, as states fumblingly restrict activities.

Historically, recessions have begun in manufacturing and spread to low-wage workers. This one started there, and



Michael Righi

needs even more of the usual solutions: major increases in safety net programs, and more federal resources to struggling state and local governments. Enough one-shot deals like the CARES Act, which helped with unemployment support but also got loaded down with billions of tax cuts for the wealthy. We need long-term bottom-up policies for justice.

Washington State

The state budget is, of course, losing business and occupation, and sales, tax revenue. Ironically, not as much as feared. Why? Since low-wage workers are losing jobs and higher-wage workers are at home with their computers, spending has not fallen as much as it might have.

But there is an upcoming state budget shortfall, variously estimated between \$2 to \$4 billion over the next biennium. After the 2008-09 Great Recession, Washington State cut a variety of programs, from childcare support and college tuition to home health care, to balance the budget. What a stupid way to deal with a damaged economy. And remember, the bankers who caused that recession got off scot-free.

Of the approximately 200,000 jobs lost in Washington since the beginning of the pandemic, 55,000 have been in state and local governments, because they are already cutting back. What to do instead?

First, be clear that we need more investment, and I do not mean roads (OK, bridges). We need lower tuition for all kids to attend colleges, public health infrastructure to store and track vaccines, climate upgrading for homes and public buildings. The list is extensive; you can add to it. We can make sure these investments are equitable, taking into account that pandemic and climate and economic crises have burdened Washingtonians very unequally.

Revenue

Then, where to get the money? There is one more "maybe" – Joe Biden has throughout his career been an austerity freak. He has negotiated budget cuts with Republicans throughout his vice presidency. Maybe, in a clear time of crisis, he can be made to support state-led investments and income support.

If not, and even if he does, we need to raise money in-state, by reforming our regressive 19th-Century tax system. (Yes, I mean 19th; the 20th Century saw the invention and spread of progressive taxation. Until Reagan and Thatcher, anyway.)

John Burbank, of the Economic Opportunity Institute, spoke to PSARA's legislative meeting the other day. He has ideas. Washington's wealthy are making billions. A one percent tax on wealth over a billion dollars would raise \$4.4 billion. Their wealth is based on public investments in the first place – roads and infrastructure, educated workers, public research, courts and laws.

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Happy New Year!

Jared Kushner's Real Estate Company Set to Evict Hundreds of Tenants January 1

By Mike Andrew

Westminster Management, a real estate management company controlled by Trump son-in-law Jared Kushner, wants to evict hundreds of tenants who are unable to pay rent because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Westminster manages over 17,000 apartments in five states – New York, New Jersey, Maryland, Virginia, and Tennessee.

According to the *Washington Post*, Kushner's company has submitted hundreds of eviction filings in court targeting tenants with past-due rent during the pandemic.

A federal eviction moratorium is in effect through December 31, and state provisions are also in effect, but Westminster – like other landlords – is getting all their paperwork in order so evictions can proceed immediately when the moratoriums expire.

Many of the Westminster tenants facing eviction live on low- or middle-incomes in modest apartments in the Baltimore area. Some of them told *The Washington Post* they fell behind on rent after losing jobs or wages because of the pandemic.

Many of those facing eviction are also Black, and their situation was highlighted by comments Kushner made on Fox News. Kushner said on the air that Trump wants to help Black people but that they have to “want to be successful” for his policies to work.

When he joined his father-in-law in the White House, Kushner resigned from his family's business but maintained ownership in Westminster, which paid him \$1.65 million in 2019, according to his government disclosure form.

Westminster has a history of sleazy business practices. In fact, Maryland Attorney General Brian Frosh sued the company in 2019 for its management practices, charging that Westminster collects illegitimate fees for applications and evictions, and illegally claims tenants' security deposits. Kushner's



An eviction: personal property tossed out on the sidewalk.

representatives have called the suit politically motivated and are fighting the charges.

Westminster is hardly the only company moving to evict tenants despite the pandemic. Housing experts have been warning for months that as Americans' stimulus benefits run dry and eviction moratoriums expire, backlogs in eviction cases may be leading to a surge in renters being forced from their homes, particularly at the end of the year when the federal moratorium ends.

Princeton University's Eviction Lab, which tracks evictions in 24 cities, found that landlords there have filed for 92,619 evictions during the pandemic. Eviction Lab's Alieza Durana said that the lack of federal data made comparing time frames difficult but that whoever is elected president will face “increasing numbers of people at risk of eviction, particularly among marginalized communities.”

Another research and advocacy group, the Private Equity Stakeholder Project, found that corporate landlords have filed more than 10,000 eviction notices in five states -- Arizona, Florida, Georgia, Tennessee, and Texas -- since September.

Data from past years suggests that evictions have a disproportionate impact on BIPOC communities. From 2012 to 2016, Black renters had evictions filed against them by landlords at nearly twice the rate of white renters, according to Eviction Lab data.

Even with the moratoriums in place, tenants and advocates say landlords can effectively bully some families out of their properties without a formal eviction taking place.

Experts say they see far more “constructive evictions” -- cases in which people leave because they are pressured over missed rent and don't know their rights.

“This is the warning shot -- do you want to have your stuff just thrown out on the street, or do you want to just go?” said Georgetown University law professor Adam J. Levitin.

“I suspect in many cases landlords are hoping to move people out without having to go through the actual formal eviction.”

Help Our Work Thrive

Continued from Page 1

The Ed Fund supported a significant number of presentations in 2020 focused on the attacks on Social Security and Medicare and the need to preserve and expand these social insurance programs. A new webinar on climate justice and just transition was developed, and the Sunrise Movement joined PSARA in the initial presentation. We need to expand the outreach of these existing informational programs and develop new webinars that speak to specific demographic groups. In addition, we want to continue educating elected officials on issues related to retirement security and the need to expand Social Security and Medicare.

Social Security and Medicare are overwhelmingly popular with the vast majority of people in our country. We are determined to demonstrate the intersection between the preservation and expansion of Social Security and Medicare, and issues of race, class, and keeping the earth fit for human habitation. We are dedicated to sponsoring educational programs to counter the hatred and ignorance that has been unleashed by Trump and his allies.

We now have a new president and vice president, although as of this writing Donald Trump has not conceded. Shockingly, over 70 million voters cast their ballots for Donald Trump. There is so much work to do to build a solid progressive majority. We can help make that happen.

Continuing to expand our work and our creative outreach in 2021 is something we owe not only to ourselves but to our children, grandchildren, and generations to follow.

Please consider an end-of-year contribution to PSARA Education Fund. Thank you for your support!

Robby is the President and Karen the Vice President of the PSARA Education Fund.

We Need Single Payer

Tune: Erie Canal. New Lyrics by Lou Truskoff



Health care is a human right we say
We need single payer and we need it today
The insurance companies wanna have it their way
So we need single payer and we need it today
They've pulled some fast ones in their day
Co-pays, deductibles we have to pay
But we'll fight every inch of the way
'Cause we need single payer and we need it today
Low cost, everybody's in
Nobody's out because that would be a sin
And you'll always know your neighbors, are healthy as can be
When we have single payer, for you and for me.

Washington State Budget

Continued from Page 8

Taxing corporations based on the excess income they pay employees over, say, \$250,000 would raise another half billion. How about a capital gains tax, or ending estate tax loopholes. An income tax on millionaires and above would, yes, wind up in court, but we have to start the process.

None of those taxes would slow spending or hurt the economy. High incomes are "saved" (put into stocks and bonds). The programs that tax money financed could provide crucial services, replenish incomes, and create jobs. The rich would then truly become "job-creators."

Michael Righi is a member of the Retiree Advocate editorial board and a retired economics professor.

The 2020 Elections

Continued from Page 3

Despite a decade of Republican voter suppression efforts and the deadly COVID-19 pandemic, voters of color increased their share of the national vote to one-third, and they voted 72% for Biden/Harris.

Black women were the heroines! They led the way for Biden/Harris at 90%, while Latino women came in at 69%. Black men voted 79% for Biden/Harris, while Latino men came in at 59%.

Trump got the majority of the white vote. Whites voted for Trump at the same percentage as they did in 2016 – 57%. However, white women increased their share of votes for Trump from 52% to 55% between 2016 and 2020, and white men decreased their share of votes for Trump from 62% to 61%.

Interestingly, lower- and moderate-income voters preferred Biden/Harris by about 57%, and predictably higher-income voters (above \$100,000 a year) preferred Trump by about 54%.

While 60% of the ballots cast were by voters over the age of 45, the under-30 vote increased their turnout from 42% in 2016 to 53% in 2020. According to Senator Bernie Sanders, Biden/Harris won 90% of the young Black vote in Georgia and 62% of the young white vote in that state. This is extraordinary and gives me hope for the future.

Better demographic data will become available over the next several weeks and months after all states have certified their elections, allowing us to do a deep dive analysis of the election results.

The Real Margin of Victory

Mike Davis (professor, author, truck driver) estimates Biden's true margin of victory at 256,000 votes. Why? Because in our anti-democratic electoral college system, Biden's slim lead in only five states gave him the margin of victory to pick up the 73 electoral college votes he needed to win the election.

At present, Biden leads Trump in Pennsylvania by 0.9%, in Michigan by 2.6%, in Wisconsin by 0.9%, in Georgia by 0.3%, and by 0.3% in Arizona.

This razor-thin margin, however, did not, with few exceptions, carry over to down ballot victories. Congressional House Democrats now have a smaller majority – though it is important to note that progressive democrats won their elections, and the losses were to blue dog Democrats. A precarious and moderate working majority in the US Senate hinges on Democrats winning the two US Senate seats in Georgia. And for the discernable future Trump's brand of right-wing populism remains a challenge.

Trump's daughter-in-law Lara Trump is considering running for the open senate seat in 2022 in North Carolina being vacated by Senator Richard Burr.

Moving Forward

America remains deeply divided. Mainstream Democrats have not addressed economic insecurity in a way in which tens of millions of workers can

tangibly feel, and trust. And so, the political needle has not moved very much.

But existing progressive popular movements have begun to move the dial. The House Congressional Caucus has two new members with the victories of Jamaal Bowman (NY) and Cori Bush (St. Louis).

Organizing efforts by Justice Democrats, Stacey Abrams' Fair Fight, Black Lives Matter, DSA, the Working Families Party, Living United for Change in Arizona (LUCHA), and scores of local environmental justice and indigenous organizations, and some progressive unions, are beginning to move the dial.

But real solutions will depend on dramatically increasing this type of organizing, redefining the common good, and making massive community investments that create family-sustaining jobs with a lens that prioritizes an equitable, just, and sustainable transition.

Jeff Johnson is a retired President of the Washington State Labor Council and a member of PSARA's Executive Board.

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

For the health and safety of our members, all PSARA events will be virtual until further notice. For the Zoom links, email organizer@PSARA.org

PSARA Climate and Environmental Justice Committee: 10 a.m. – 11:30 a.m., Thursday, December 3.

PSARA Government Relations Committee: Noon – 1:30 p.m., Thursday, December 3.

PSARA Education Committee: 2 p.m., Tuesday, December 8.

PSARA Southend Committee: 1:00 – 2:30 p.m., Thursday, December 10. This month: Presentation by the King County Sheriff's Office.

PSARA Fundraising Committee: 11:00 a.m. - Noon, Monday, December 14.

PSARA Race and Gender Equity Committee: 11 a.m.– Noon, Thursday, December 17.

PSARA Membership Meeting: 1:00 p.m., Thursday, December 17. Election of officers and Board members, Bylaws revision, 2021 Legislative Agenda. See Page 1 for details.

Stacey Abrams



"We must use words to uplift and include. We can use our words to fight back against oppression and hate. But we must also channel our words into action."