

### TRACK 3: REBUILDING OUR SOCIAL CONTRACT

**Goal:** To define action steps that would strengthen worker representation and labor standards that “fit” today’s economy and would promote equity and prosperity within it.

#### Objectives

- To familiarize participants with examples of new models of worker representation and approaches to raising wages, benefits, and other labor standards tailored to today’s economy
- To stimulate strategic thinking about how new models of worker representation might apply in other industries and occupations
- To catalyze community planning and organizing to lift low-wage workers to self-sufficiency
- To catalyze or strengthen several PA “new model” organizing efforts and to encourage recognition of these examples as adding up to a new paradigm of unionism

#### Possible Action Steps

- Commit to additional dialogue about launching a worker center in Pennsylvania
- Commit to additional dialogue to establish a Professional Employer Organization in PA
- Agree to launch a “strategic repositioning” project to define a high road union vision in several industries and then to organize based on that model
- Stimulate further dialogue in one PA region to form a Working Families Partnership and fight for a model “community benefits agreement”
- Commit to advocacy to advance the policy and practice recommendations of the PathWaysPA Working Poor Families project

### JUNE 1

#### Workshop Session 1: 10:45 a.m. – 12:15 p.m.

##### **Pennsylvania High Road Child Care Unionism**

**Moderator:** Diane Topakian, Service Employees International Union (SEIU) PA State Council

**Panelists:** Bonnie Caldwell, Keystone Family Child Care Association; Denise Dowell, American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees (AFSCME); Catherine Poneris, Service Employees International Union

In the last few years, early childhood education (ECE) has gone from being a field that unions had no interest in organizing on a broad scale to one in which AFSCME and SEIU have major organizing efforts in 15 states. This workshop will tell the story of the take-off of child-care organizing. It will show how ECE professionals shaped the organizing strategy. These leaders created a model that other professionals in the field increasingly embrace as *their* vehicle for obtaining the public resources needed to achieve a positive vision – quality jobs and quality education – that honors teachers’ commitment to children.

#### Workshop Session 2: 1:15 – 2:45 p.m.

##### **Can Worker Centers Block the Low Road and Pave the High Road in Pennsylvania?**

**Moderator:** Sandi Vito, Department of Labor & Industry

**Panelists:** Alexis Buss, South Street Workers’ Union; Saru Jayaraman, ROC-NY; Luis Tlaseca, CATA/The Farmworker Support Committee

Across the U.S., worker centers have been formed to protect the rights of immigrant and other workers in low-wage labor markets. This workshop will feature the Restaurant Opportunities Center of New York (ROC-NY). ROC-NY is an immigrant workers' center focused on organizing immigrant restaurant workers all over New York City. ROC-NY has organized workers to win workplace justice campaigns

and launch their own cooperatively-owned restaurant. This example will be a platform for discussing the potential of worker centers in PA.

**Workshop Session 3: 3:00 – 4:30 p.m.**

**From One Example to a New Labor Movement**

Moderator: Eric Parker, Wisconsin Regional Training Partnership (WRTP)

Panelists: Carla Insinga, AFSCME; Jesse Wilderman, SEIU

Eric Parker will describe how unions in PA and Wisconsin are exploring “professional employer organizations” (PEOs) to organize workers at scattered worksites. Most of the workshop will discuss innovative approaches to organizing. What are PA unions doing to adapt their organizing to today’s industries, jobs, and workers? Could elements of the child-care union model (see Workshop Session 1 in this track) and/or a PEO help unions organize in all of direct care, in health care, among office workers, small manufacturers, or in trucking? Should unions “reposition” themselves as promoting the high road in the new economy, bargaining for training, and supporting workers’ commitment to consumers and to quality? Is there a need to expand space within and across unions for strategic thinking about new organizing models?

**JUNE 2**

**Workshop Session 4: 9:00 – 10:30 a.m.**

**Achieving Living Wages and Community Benefits from Economic Growth**

Moderator: Chris Rupnow, PSEA

Panelists: Carol Goetzl, PathWaysPA; Wilson Goode, Jr., Philadelphia City Council; Gwen Mills, Connecticut Center for a New Economy

Despite economic and productivity growth, many PA workers and families have low wages and incomes. After an overview of the economic realities of low-income workers and families, this workshop will focus on how to move toward self-sufficiency in the next decade. It will include a short primer on PA’s county-level family self-sufficiency standards. It will then feature one bargaining example (PSEA education support professionals) and one policy example (a Philadelphia city council ordinance) in which movement towards self-sufficiency has taken place in PA. Gwen Mills will describe how a new organizing approach – “community benefits agreements” (CBAs) – that won living-wage jobs and other community benefits when a new hospital was developed in New Haven, CT. Which PA communities might use CBAs to ensure that workers and neighborhoods benefit from new development? What other policy, organizing, and community processes might achieve living wage and self sufficiency more broadly?

**Workshop Session 5: 10:45 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.**

***What Did You Learn? How Will You Apply It?***

Facilitator: Eric Parker, WRTP

**General Session 3: 11:30 a.m. – 12:15 p.m.**

**Report Back from Workshop 5 – Group Discussion of New Rules for a New PA Economic Game**