

CLUW NEWS

A PUBLICATION OF THE COALITION
OF LABOR UNION WOMEN

may/june 2005

CLUW supports 'Wake-Up Wal-Mart' Campaign

"Wal-Mart's values are not America's values," says CLUW President Susan Phillips. With the retail giant dragging down the pay and benefits of women workers, CLUW is joining in the **Wake-Up Wal-Mart campaign** launched by UFCW.

The community-based effort is designed to bring public attention to the anti-worker, anti-union practices of the nation's largest private-sector employer. Wal-Mart's business model has depended on lowering wages, pressuring suppliers to ship jobs overseas, shifting health care costs onto American taxpayers, and asking communities to

give more than \$1 billion in subsidies.

"All across America, consumers and taxpayers are waking up to the high cost of Wal-Mart's poverty wages, reliance on taxpayer funded state health care programs and devastating impact on communities," says Phillips, a UFCW vice president. "It's time for Wal-Mart to wake up and start doing what's right for its employees, our families, and our country."

The CLUW president notes that more than three out of every five Wal-Mart employees are women, and women control 90 percent of all consumer dollars spent in the U.S. "We have tremendous

power because we control both sides of the cash register, as cashiers and as customers. If we join hands across the cash register, we can change the economic future for women in America."

Learn the truth about Wal-Mart's record. Visit www.wakeupwalmart.com, where current and former Wal-Mart employees share their experiences. The site's "Take Action" center also offers a tool to help CLUW members Adopt-A-Store and form community coalitions around individual Wal-Mart locations across the country. In addition, a web log of comments is updated daily at blog.wakeupwalmart.com.

July 14

Elections of union and chapter delegates/alternates must be held no later than this date.

Convention resolutions and amendments to the constitution must be postmarked and sent to the CLUW National Office by this date.

You must be a regular member in good standing by this date to run or vote for the 2005-2009 National Executive Board.

August 14

Signed Convention Delegate/Alternate Credentials are due back to the CLUW National Office.

Convention Registration Forms are due back to the CLUW Treasurer. (Form on page 6 and at www.cluw.org/convention05/Registration.pdf)

The number of delegates/alternates a union is entitled to elect to the 2005-2009 NEB will be determined by membership counts on this date.

August 21

Hotel reservation cut-off date. **Reservations can be made by calling the Marriott at 800-352-0831 (group name: Coalition of Labor Union Women) or by booking online from the link on www.cluw.org.**

2005 CONVENTION CUT-OFF DATES

September 14

13th Biennial Convention opens (see page 6).

Visit www.cluw.org for convention

news. There you'll find In Memoriam, Journal Ad, Resolution and Union Delegate/Alternate Nomination Forms and a list of Union Election Coordinators. Information on airline reservations, shuttle transportation, hotel information and Detroit attractions is also available there.

www.cluw.org



Union
Women
**Building the
Movement**

13th Biennial Convention
Detroit • September 14-17, 2005

Coalition of Labor Union Women



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Wal-Mart's War on Women



Susan L. Phillips, CLUW National President

Retail is the industry of the 21st Century. One out of every five new jobs is in retail. The largest private employer in the U.S. is a retailer—Wal-Mart—which employs about one million workers who work in nearly 4,000 stores across the country. Last year, Wal-Mart had about \$260 billion in sales.

The fastest growing occupation in America is cashiers—and the vast majority of cashiers are women. Cashier jobs shape workplaces all over the country, in terms of the wages and benefits paid to people in the retail industry. Cashier or retail jobs are the leading source of employment for non-college educated women in the U.S.

The majority of women in this country are up against a glass ceiling at work—and that's a fight we must continue to fight to end gender discrimination. But millions of women are working on a sinking wage and benefits floor. Women in retail today find themselves earning less and with fewer benefits than a generation ago. The average hourly retail wage—around \$9.00 an hour—leaves workers and their families on the brink of poverty.

Fewer than half of retail workers have access to employer health insurance plans and the majority of workers lack secure pension benefits. There's a simple reason why the future is so stark for workers in the retail industry. The industry giant—Wal-Mart—is dragging down industry standards.

Wal-Mart deepens the country's health care crisis by selling health insurance to its associates—a plan that is so expensive and restrictive that fewer than two in five of the company's workers participate in it.

More than two thirds of Wal-Mart workers are women. And Wal-Mart treats them dismally. Last year, the courts certified what potentially could be the largest wage discrimination suit in history involving more than a million current and former Wal-Mart women workers. The suit charges the company with failing to provide equal assignments, promotions, training, and pay, and retaliates against those who complain about these practices.

Women hold only one-third of management positions—compared with 56 percent of management positions among Wal-Mart's top 20 competitors. The suit points out that men are disproportionately assigned to some departments, such as furniture, electronics, hardware, and sporting goods—while women are concentrated in departments such as customer service, cosmetics, housewares, toys, fabrics, and clothes. The suit currently is pending.

Wal-Mart is waging a war on workers—not just its own workers, but all workers—and all women—in America. Women have a direct stake in what happens with Wal-Mart, and also have an opportunity to make their voices heard—with their voices and their dollars.

**Women in retail today
find themselves
earning less and with
fewer benefits than
a generation ago.**

■ FOCUS ON WOMEN'S HEALTH

CLUW LAUNCHES NEW CERVICAL CANCER PREVENTION PROGRAM

Cervical Cancer Prevention Works (CCPW) is CLUW's new cervical cancer awareness project. Its mission is to empower union women by providing them with information on how to prevent this deadly disease. It begins where Working Women ROCC! (Reaching Out against Cervical Cancer) left off at the end of 2004. CLUW is collaborating on CCPW with Digene, the company which makes the only FDA-approved test for HPV (the virus that causes 99 percent of cervical cancer cases) for women 30 and over.

Cervical cancer needlessly strikes 10,520 women in the United States each year, and is second only to breast cancer in the number of women it affects worldwide. Yet, it is the only cancer for which we know the exact cause—HPV. Therefore, it is the first cancer that can be eliminated if we know how to prevent it and use the resources available to us.



For more information about CCPW and information on how to prevent cervical cancer, see: <http://www.cluw.org/cervcancer.html>. You can also contact Carolyn J. Jacobson, director, Cervical Cancer Prevention Works, 202-223-8360 ext. 4, cjacobson@cluw.org.

A partner in the effort to eliminate cervical cancer is Women in Government (WIG), a non-profit, bi-partisan organization of women state legislators. WIG's project, Challenge to Eliminate Cervical Cancer, promotes actions to improve states' cervical cancer prevention rates through legislation to ensure that women and physicians are educated about cervical cancer and the virus that causes it, and that they have access to the most advanced, FDA-approved screening technologies—including the HPV (human papillomavirus) test—regardless of their socioeconomic status. See: <http://www.womeningovernment.org/prevention/>.

MARYLAND, NEW MEXICO MANDATE INSURERS TO COVER HPV TESTING

Maryland and New Mexico recently passed laws requiring insurance companies to provide coverage for a human papillomavirus (HPV) screening at the testing intervals outlined in the recommendations for cervical cytology screening developed by the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists. The NM law went into effect on June 17 and the MD law takes effect on Oct. 31, 2005. The other state that has a similar mandate is North Carolina.

In 2005 there has been legislative activity on cervical cancer prevention in 40 states—19 having introduced legislation/resolutions and 21 having enacted legislation/resolutions. To check how your state is doing, see: <http://www.womeningovernment.org/prevention/documents/WIGmapApril05.pdf>

Like contraceptive equity, self-insured/self-funded plans are exempt from this law.

For more information on cervical cancer prevention and on HPV, see: <http://www.cluw.org/cervcancer.html>.

ARKANSAS WINS CONTRACEPTIVE EQUITY

A new Arkansas law takes effect August 12, 2005 requiring health plans that already cover prescriptions to provide FDA-approved prescription contraception. The law exempts religious employers that meet IRS non-profit requirements and primarily employ and serve persons who share the religious tenets of the employer. The law does not apply to coverage for abortions, abortifacients, or emergency contraception. Self-insured/self-funded plans are not covered.

CLUW President Susan Phillips noted that 38 states still don't have contraceptive equity. "We hope CLUW members continue to fight for it and remind their labor federations that the national AFL-CIO supports this legislation. Special thanks to State Rep. Lindsley Smith, an AFSCME member, who was a leader in the fight for passage in Arkansas."

To check if your state has a contraceptive equity law, see: <http://www.cluw.org/contraceptive-laws.html>.

CLUW NEB member Vickie Cheek (IAM) and the health & safety committee at Northwest Airlines in Baltimore organized and ran a health fair at the company's office on May 18. Above, Vickie discusses the CCPW project and CLUW with two co-workers.



LOCAL NEWS

Philadelphia

Speaking to the Labor Coalition for Community Action's April 13 Town Hall Meeting on "Workers United for a Stronger Labor Movement," CLUW chapter President Kathy Black told the audience, "The organized voice of and for working women is absolutely essential to achieving growth" of the labor movement. "As long as we have economic disparities between men and women, and power disparities in leadership, we will need the organized power for women that CLUW represents."



Greater Georgia

Greater Georgia CLUW chapter members Jane Donohue (l.) and Nancy Wood handed out leaflets in support of UNITE HERE's campaign for higher wages and benefits for hotel workers. They are pictured at the Peachtree Westin in Atlanta, May 1, with UNITE HERE's Alex Bonick.



At Philadelphia CLUW's annual Working Women's Awareness Week Award Ceremony honoring leaders in the fight for justice and equality for women in the workplace, Betty Flanagan, 82, was named Union Woman of the Year. Flanagan, president of AFSCME DC47 Retirees Chapter and vice chair of AFSCME's national retirees program, is flanked by Steve Regenstein, director of the AFSCME retirees program, and CLUW member Tom Cronin, president of DC47. CLUW Chapter President Kathy Black reports the June 1 event, attended by close to 150, raised more than \$5,000 and collected dozens of children's books for the chapter's Messages from Mom program.

New York

Eleanor Bailey, New York CLUW state vice president, was elected to the Riverbay Board of Directors, which oversees the operation of Co-op City, the world's largest cooperative community.

Millie Hall (OPEIU), Metro-Detroit CLUW chapter president, received a Michigan Women's Political Caucus Millie Award on May 9 for her efforts on behalf of Michigan women. Pictured with Hall is Maryann Mahaffey (AFT), right, president of the Detroit City Council and a member of Metro-Detroit CLUW.



Metro Detroit

Chapter Vice President Joyce Pearson retired recently after many years of service to CLUW and 40 years with SEIU, during which she worked as a nurse's aide, union steward, organizer, and business representative.



CLUW and CWA, in conjunction with the AFL-CIO, held a tribute dinner June 2 in Washington, DC for former National CLUW President Gloria T. Johnson (below) to recognize her 50-plus years of dedicated service to labor, women and civil rights. Inset: Gloria with husband David at the tribute dinner.



At Metro DC CLUW's annual Gloria T. Johnson awards luncheon on May 15, AFL-CIO Executive Vice President Linda Chavez-Thompson accepted the award for her efforts to "break the glass ceiling." Pictured from left: Past CLUW President Gloria T. Johnson, Chavez-Thompson, CLUW President Susan L. Phillips, and past CLUW President Joyce D. Miller.



Miss America 1992 Carolyn Sapp (c.) poses in front of giant Mother's Day card at Wal-Mart protest rally in Dayton. With her are National CLUW President Susan Phillips (second from r.), GMV Chapter President Leslie Smith (r.) and other CLUW members who belong to UFCW Local 1099.



▲ CLUW's Twin Cities chapter in Minnesota participated in the Aids Project Walk on May 15, raising more than \$1,500. Pictured (front row): Kera Peterson, chapter vice president; Lynn Larkin-Wright, secretary; Betsy Hunter, treasurer; (second row) Lonna-Jean Schmidt, state VP; and Andrea Yevuta (new chapter president).

The CLUW NEB Auction, held June 4 during the National Executive Board meeting in Washington, raised \$3,100. Pictured is Dolores Wasmund, Illinois CLUW state vice president, with gifts for her granddaughter. Thanks to all contributors and participants for supporting CLUW. ▶

Greater Miami Valley

The GMV (Dayton, Ohio) Chapter of CLUW participated in a Mother's Day Rally against Wal-Mart organized by UFCW Local 1099. Leslie Smith, president of GMV CLUW, reports that seven busloads of union supporters went to Wal-Mart May 4 to protest the company's anti-worker policies and to discourage customers from buying Mother's Day gifts there. Holding placards that read "Love Mom, Not Wal-Mart," hundreds—including Miss America 1992—signed a huge Mother's Day card to corporate headquarters.

Genesee County

Genesee County CLUW participated in a "Women Taking Charge of Their Health Destiny" Fair in Flint, Michigan on May 14.



CLUW members in Washington, DC rallied at a Capitol Hill press event announcing the introduction of the Paycheck Fairness Act by Sen. Hillary Clinton in the Senate and Rep. Rosa DeLauro in the House. The legislation would put enforcement teeth into the Equal Pay Act, the 1963 law that bars wage discrimination on the basis of sex. The rally was held on April 19 to recognize Equal Pay Day, marking how far into the year a woman must work to earn as much as a man earned in the previous year.

SUMMER SCHOOLS FOR UNION WOMEN

Four schools for union women are being held this summer in various locations around the country. Info: www.cluw.org/links.html#summer.

LCCA, AFL-CIO TO HOLD NATIONAL SUMMIT ON DIVERSITY

Union members are encouraged to attend the National Summit on Diversity in Our Union Movement, to be held July 23 in Chicago prior to the 2005 AFL-CIO Convention.

The summit is being convened by the AFL-CIO and the Labor Coalition for Community Action, a coalition of six AFL-CIO constituency groups (APALA, APRI, CBTU, CLUW, LCLAA and PAW), to explore how to build on the tremendous diversity of labor's membership by reflecting that diversity in its leadership bodies, in its political and organizing efforts, and in its support for organizations and issues that advance civil, human and women's rights.

Those attending the National Summit on Diversity are also encouraged to register for and attend the "Building Power for Working Families Conference" which continues in Chicago on July 24.

For more information, see www.aflcio.org/conference.

CONVENTION UPDATE



Coalition of Labor Union Women

Thirteenth Biennial Convention Registration Form

Registration Fee \$150 Retirees \$75 Students \$50

Please type or print clearly

Last name First name

Address

City, State, Zip

Telephone (please include area code)

E-mail address

International Union Affiliation Local Union Affiliation #

National Executive Board Position (for members of the CLUW National Executive Board only)

I will need child care for _____ children, ages _____ for _____ days.
of # of

Please list special requirements, if any

Check here if you would like to share a room.

Please return this registration form by August 14, 2005 to:

Judy Beard, National Treasurer
Coalition of Labor Union Women
1925 K Street NW, Suite 402
Washington, DC 20006
attn: Yvonne Cohen

Please make checks payable to the Coalition of Labor Union Women

The registration fee covers attendance to the convention, a ticket to the Gala Reception, a Convention Kit, educational materials and workshops (to be announced).

Pre-Registration Cancellation Refund Policy

Requests for CLUW Convention Registration refunds must be received in writing via fax or mail by the close of business Tuesday, September 6, 2005. No requests for refunds will be processed after that date. Fax or mail CLUW Convention refund requests to: Carol Rosenblatt at the National CLUW Office fax # (202) 776-0537. Do not send refund requests to the Marriott Renaissance Hotel.

Please photocopy this form for your records before submitting

This is not a delegate credential form. This form only registers you to attend the convention. Delegate credential forms will be mailed to all elected delegates after July 14, 2005. However, you are encouraged to register for the convention prior to the outcome of the delegate selection process.

Visit www.cluw.org for Convention updates!

CONVENTION HIGHLIGHTS

Wednesday, September 14:

- Wal-Mart Program

Thursday, September 15:

- Nominations of Natl Officers
- Panel on Social Security

Friday, September 16:

- Union Caucuses
- Award Presentations: Joyce D. Miller Chapter Recruitment Award, Clara Day Award, Mother Jones Award
- Issues Workshops and Roundtables
- Elections of National Officers
- Panel: Organizing Programs Involving Women

Saturday, September 17:

- Gala Reception in honor of Gloria T. Johnson

Invited Guest Speakers (partial list):

- Sen. Debbie Stabenow
- Rep. John Conyers
- Gov. Jennifer M. Granholm
- Hon. Maryann Mahaffey, Pres. Detroit City Council
- Hon. Martha G. Scott, Michigan Senate
- Ron Gettelfinger, Pres. UAW
- Nancy Wohlforth, Sec.-Treas. OPEIU
- Linda Chavez-Thompson, Exec. V.P. AFL-CIO

THANK YOU

CLUW wishes to thank the following supporting (\$75) and sustaining (\$150) members. (Contributing members will be recognized in the next issue.) To become a special member of CLUW, please make your check payable to CLUW and mail to CLUW National Treasurer Judy Beard, 1925 K St. NW, #402, Washington, DC 20006. Your contribution will help empower women through the labor movement.

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HEALTH TIP from the CLUW Women's Health Committee: CAMPAIGN FOR SAFE PERSONAL CARE PRODUCTS

Are women exposed to toxins by using personal care products? Indeed we are, according to the Environmental Working Group, a Washington advocacy organization, which says the average American woman uses 12 personal care products daily including soap, shampoo, sunscreen, lotion, nail polish, and cosmetics. Women are also frequently exposed to hazardous chemicals in the workplace. Exposure to personal care products may interact with workplace exposures and can increase our risk of cancer and birth defects.

Concern was raised in 2000 when the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention found that all 289 persons tested had high levels of phthalates, industrial chemicals known to damage the liver, kidney and reproductive systems, in their bodies. Phthalates are commonly used in many types of cosmetics and have been found in nearly three-fourths of perfumes, hair gels and sprays, deodorants and lotions, and other personal products. Unlike drugs, personal care products are not subject to FDA approval and the FDA does not test their ingredients for safety. Manufacturers are not required to list all ingredients on their labels.

The European Union has demanded safer cosmetics and personal care products. European legislation required all companies in the EU to phase out the use of dangerous chemicals by September 2004. Revlon, Procter & Gamble, Unilever, and Colgate Palmolive are some of the companies that create the same brands of perfumes, soaps, nail polish, shaving cream, etc. for both European and U.S. markets. They are reformulating their products for the European market to make them safer, but originally planned no changes for products they sell in the U.S.

The grassroots Campaign for Safe Cosmetics (www.safecosmetics.org) is asking U.S. companies to sign a pledge that cosmetic and personal care products sold in the U.S. will meet the standards set by Europe and thus be free of chemicals known or suspected to cause cancer, mutation or birth defects. Alberto Culver, Sara Lee, Gillette, and many smaller companies already have signed this pledge.

To sign the petition, visit <http://action.safecosmetics.org/petition>. Also contact www.breastcancerfund.org for more information, or write to 2107 O'Farrell Street, San Francisco, CA 94115-3419.

—Helen Ramirez-Odell, RN

IN MEMORIAM

Barbara Van Blake

With great sadness CLUW reports the death of Barbara Van Blake, former CLUW vice president and AFT director of human rights, on April 1. Barbara was a pioneer in helping the AFT become a prominent voice on behalf of those in need and was tireless in her advocacy for human rights and respect for all. In 2003 she was awarded CLUW's Mary McCloud Bethune Award for her lifetime commitment to women, workers and civil rights.



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CLUW Membership Application

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Enclosed are my CLUW dues for one year.

\$30 \$15 (retiree)

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Signature _____

Send to: Judy Beard, CLUW Treasurer, c/o CLUW
1925 K Street, NW, #402
Washington, DC 20006

clip and send!

■ NEB HIGHLIGHTS: BOARD ENDORSES LOBBY DAY, AUG. 26

At its June meeting in Washington, DC, the CLUW National Executive Board called upon its chapters to lobby on their home turf on August 26 (Women's Equality Day) to support the passage of the Employee Free Choice Act. Tiffany Heath of the AFL-CIO's Voice@Work campaign stressed that the Act would guarantee employee free choice through democratic majority sign-up procedures, would facilitate initial labor agreements through mediation and arbitration and would institute meaningful remedies against employer coercion. Contact your chapter president for information and consult www.cluw.org.

Kate Snyder of Voices for Working Families addressed the concerns of women in the current Social Security debate, stating that Social Security is 70% of the total income of widowed, divorced or never-married women 65

and older. The Labor Coalition for Community Action (LCCA) is working in concert with Voices to educate the community about Social Security. LCCA President Gloria Johnson discussed the July 23rd National Summit on Diversity that is being sponsored by the AFL-CIO and LCCA (see p. 5) and said that LCCA is conducting a series of regional town hall meetings on this subject.

Rachna Choudhry of the AFL-CIO's Civil, Human and Women's Rights Department stated the Department of Labor announced it will make changes to the Family and Medical Leave Act, but didn't say when it would release these changes or what they'd look like.

CLUW along with many other organizations has sent a letter to DOL urging it to provide more solutions to help workers balance work and family—not cut FMLA. Since FMLA passed in 1993, more than 50 million working people—half of them men—have been able to

take time off to bond with new babies, care for seriously ill family members or recover from their own illnesses, but the FMLA does not cover all workers, and the leave is unpaid.

The AFL-CIO wants to use stories on FMLA leave to put a personal perspective on the campaign to save FMLA. If you would like to share your story, please e-mail this information to workingwomen@aflcio.org.

Lastly, Buffy Wicks discussed UFCW's Wake-Up Wal-Mart Campaign (see p. 1 for more details). CLUW will be featuring a Wal-Mart program during our upcoming convention.

The NEB's business meeting included a discussion of the financial needs of CLUW. The delegates endorsed the submission of a resolution to the convention that would increase CLUW dues and add categories (such as lifetime membership) that would bring in more revenue.



Coalition of Labor Union Women

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