

Solidarity for Chicago Teachers Union

Posted on June 25, 2012 by Rosemary Feurer

The Occupy Chicago Labor Working Group is morphing into a solidarity committee bringing labor and community organizations together in support of the CTU and its fight against the Emanuel administration.

See the below invitation to the meeting happening next Tuesday June 26, 6:30 p.m. at Grace Place in Chicago. I'll be co-chairing the meeting and we are expecting between 150-200 people representing unions across Chicago as well as various individuals seeking to get involved. As an organization of educators and labor historians this is a fight that LAWCHA should be a part of.

I think this meeting signifies an important development in the labor movement. Last year in Wisconsin showed labor's willingness to fight back, as have numerous other smaller fights here and there across the country. However, many of these fights, in the end, have been defeats. The significance of the CTU fight is that organizing is now taking place in order to figure out how to WIN. The Madison moment was a reaction. For what is shaping up to be the Chicago moment, labor is now preparing for a fight, not reacting to a body blow. Labor, not only in Chicago, but across the country sees the importance of the CTU's struggle. What happens to the 30,000 members of the CTU will have ramifications for either setting back or advancing the labor movement as a whole.

Steven Ashby has been involved in building this meeting and a non-academic member of LAWCHA who lives in Rogers Park has recently joined the Occupy Chicago Labor Working Group.

In Solidarity,
Tom Alter, *University of Illinois, Chicago*

Stand with Chicago Teachers

CTU Solidarity Committee Organizing Meeting

Tuesday, June 26

6:30 p.m.

Grace Place, 637 South Dearborn

The Labor Working Group, which brought together the Chicago Occupy movement and unions throughout city, would like to invite you and representatives from your union, school, or community group to a city-wide organizing meeting. The goal of this meeting is to develop a solidarity committee in support of the Chicago Teachers Union (CTU) in their ongoing struggle for good schools and a decent contract. The proposed committee will enable union and community groups to coordinate solidarity activities throughout the summer and fall in order to maximize our impact.

Since he came into office, Rahm Emanuel and his appointee, CPS CEO Jean Claude Brizard, have conducted a non-stop attack on CTU in an attempt to break the union and destroy public education.

It's now equally clear that the teachers are fed up and ready to fight back! The massive rally of teachers and union allies on May 23 through downtown Chicago, as well as the recent nearly unanimous strike authorization vote taken throughout the over 600 public schools, raises our hopes that if we fight, we can win, both in Chicago and around this country.

The outcome of the CTU struggle will have local and national ramifications for the fight against austerity, the defense of public education, and the future of the labor movement. Now is the time for us to stand together!

Please join us on Tuesday, June 26, 6:30 p.m. at Grace Place, 637 S. Dearborn. Contact union.taskforce.occupychi@gmail.com to RSVP to this invitation and if you need more information. We look forward to seeing you there!

In solidarity,
Occupy Chicago Labor Working Group
union.taskforce.occupychi@gmail.com

Author



Rosemary Feurer

Rosemary Feurer is Professor of History at Northern Illinois University. She is the author of *Radical Unionism in the Midwest, 1900-1950*, among other books and essays. She is working on *The Illinois Mine Wars, 1860-1940* and a new biography of Mary Harris "Mother" Jones.