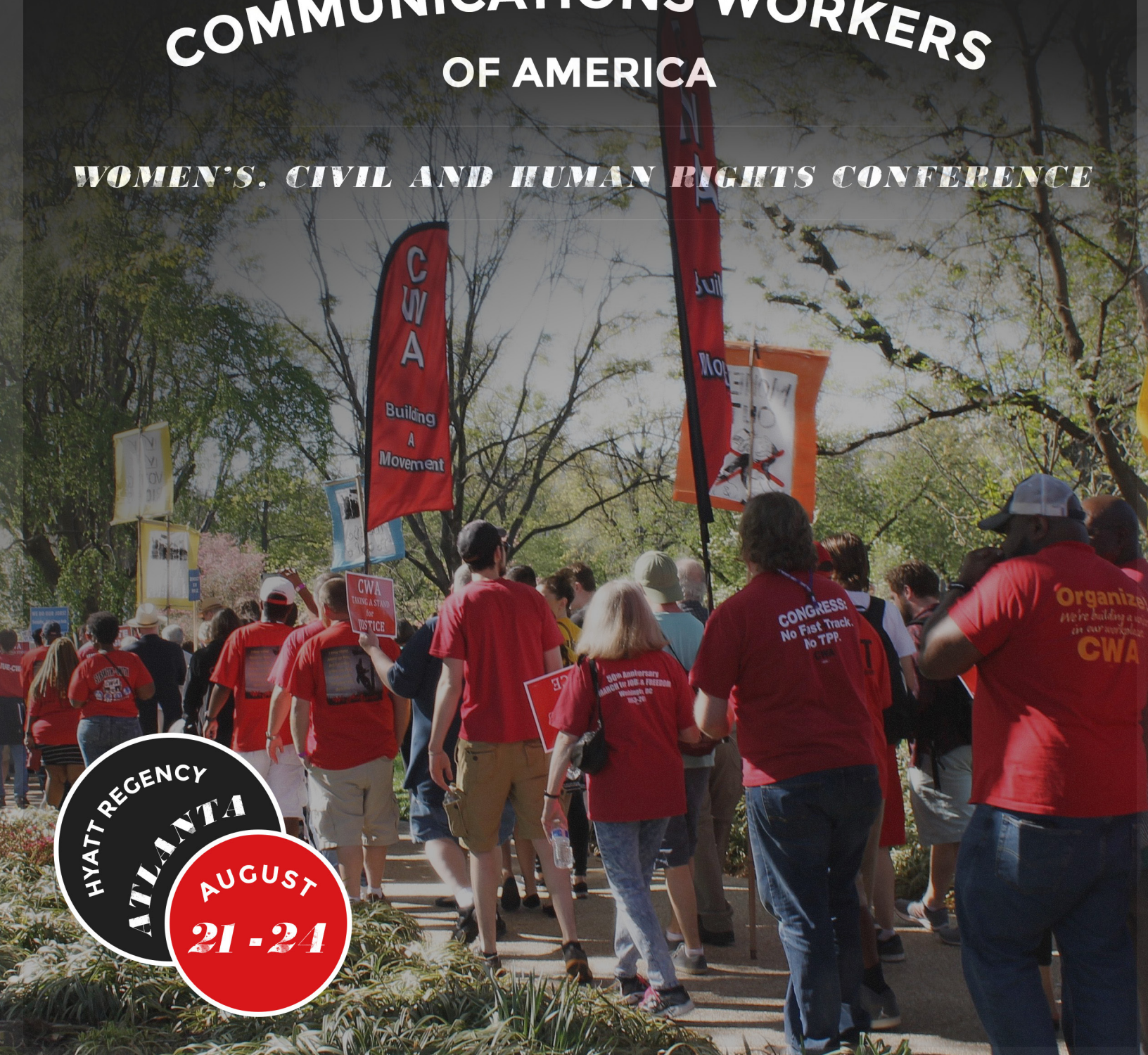




WE THE PEOPLE
RECLAIM OUR DEMOCRACY

COMMUNICATIONS WORKERS OF AMERICA

WOMEN'S, CIVIL AND HUMAN RIGHTS CONFERENCE



AGENDA



SUNDAY | AUGUST 21, 2016

12:30 - 3:00 PM

REGISTRATION

Location: International Foyer

3:30 - 5:00 PM

RICHARD HONEYCUTT

CWA Vice President – District 3

CLAUDE CUMMINGS

CWA Vice President – District 6

LARRY COHEN

Chair of Democracy Initiative

5:00 PM

WELCOME RECEPTION

Location: Embassy Hall

MONDAY | AUGUST 22, 2016

9:00 AM

CHRIS SHELTON

CWA President

9:30 AM

SARA STEFFENS

CWA Secretary-Treasurer

ELISE BRYANT

Labor Heritage Foundation

10:00 AM

SARA NELSON

AFA President

11:00 AM

THE HONORABLE SYLVESTER TURNER

Mayor of Houston, Texas

11:30 AM

PANEL DISCUSSION

The One Percent: Attacking Voting Rights, Assaulting Labor Rights, and Buying our Democracy

MODERATOR

Yvette Herrera, Assistant to the President

PANELISTS

Gregory Cendana, APALA Executive Director

Angie Wells, Democracy Initiative Senior Organizer

Shane Larson, CWA Legislative Director

12:30 PM

LUNCH BREAK

1:30 - 3:00 PM

WORKSHOPS BEGIN

- **Missed Representation**
Location: Embassy AB
- **Voter Suppression**
Location: Embassy EF
- **Working Family Jeopardy!**
Location: Embassy D
- **Extraordinary Leadership**
Location: Embassy C

3:00 PM

BREAK

3:30 - 5:00 PM

OFF-SITE DEMONSTRATION

Location: Liberty Plaza

TUESDAY | AUGUST 23, 2016

9:00 AM

CARMEN BERKELEY

AFL-CIO Director of Civil, Human and Women's Rights

9:30 AM

NATAYIA MCCRAY

CWA Activist

ELISE BRYANT

Labor Heritage Foundation

10:00 AM

ALICIA GARZA

Black Lives Matter Co-Founder and Organizer

11:00 AM

MARA KEISLING

National Center for Transgender Equality Executive Director

11:30 AM

POLITICAL ROUND UP

Rafael Navar, CWA Political Director

12:30 - 1:30 PM

MARY MAYS CARROLL AWARD LUNCHEON

Location: International Ballroom

1:30 - 3:00 PM

WORKSHOPS

- **Missed Representation**
Location: Embassy AB
- **LGBTQ**
Location: Embassy EF
- **Working Family Jeopardy!**
Location: Embassy D
- **Extraordinary Leadership**
Location: Embassy C

3:00 PM

BREAK

3:30 - 5:00 PM

WORKSHOPS

- **Educating & Empowering**
Location: Embassy AB
- **Planned Parenthood**
Location: Embassy C
- **Criminal Justice Reform**
Location: Embassy D
- **Modern Day Slavery**
Location: Embassy EF

WEDNESDAY | AUGUST 24, 2016

9:00 AM

LINDA HINTON

CWA Vice President - District 4

10:00 AM

CONGRESSMAN AL GREEN, TX-9

ELISE BRYANT

Labor Heritage Foundation

JESSICA NEWMAN

CWA Legislation, Policy, and Human Rights Coordinator

11:30 AM

CONFERENCE WRAP UP

Chris Kennedy, CWA Administrative Director of Human Rights

WORKSHOPS



MISSED REPRESENTATION: ADDRESSING THE WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP GAP AND THE IMPORTANCE OF WOMEN LEADERS

Sponsored by the National Women's Committee

Women understand the issues women face and women in public office prioritize issues of concern to women and families as a part of their policy agenda. Unfortunately, there are far fewer women leaders than male. We know that true democracy cannot exist in the United States without elected leadership that is reflective of the demographics of our country. This workshop will discuss the importance of women running for and winning elected office, share strategies on how to develop and support these candidates, and demystify the process to unlocking every woman's leadership potential.

Presenters: Jessica Newman, Janine Brown

WHAT'S LOVE GOT TO DO WITH IT: THE FUTURE OF THE LGBTQ CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT

Sponsored by the Civil Rights & Equity Committee

The advancement of LGBTQ rights in the United States has experienced unprecedented success over the last twenty years, shifting both public attitude towards, and legal protection for, LGBTQ Americans. Despite these successes, the LGBTQ community continues to face social stigma and significant discrimination in all aspects of their lives, from the work place to faith communities. This session will examine the unique history of the LGBTQ Civil Rights Movement and explore the challenges and next steps that must be taken to shift the hearts and minds of society with the goal of advancing equity, justice, and full equality for LGBTQ individuals.

Presenter: Jon Hurst

FIGHTING FOR WORKING FAMILIES: JEOPARDY! EDITION

Sponsored by the National Women's Committee

Women dominate in more ways than one. Not only do women comprise half of the workforce, but they are also breadwinners, caregivers, mothers, and guardians. Yet, women's issues often are seen as secondary or separate from a progressive economic agenda. Utilizing a fun Jeopardy format, this session will focus on family friendly policies and what you can do to bring these campaigns back to your community.

Presenter: Melissa Matos

EXTRAORDINARY LEADERSHIP

Sponsored by the Civil Rights & Equity Committee

This session will explore your role as a leader and educator in term of understanding different leadership styles and techniques. You will learn leadership styles that are both traditional and cutting edge and understand how emotional intelligence impacts effective leadership. You will also learn how to Spearhead a 4 Step Action Plan that is sustainable with strong deliverables. Specifically, leadership roles will be presented that will enhance and clarify your role as a union activist and ambassador.

Presenters: Arthur and Evelyne Matthews

WHEN WOMEN WIN, WE ALL WIN | PRESENTED BY PLANNED PARENTHOOD SE

Sponsored by the National Women's Committee

||| This workshop will introduce participants to organizing through a gender lens. This interactive session will focus on intersectionality and how every issue is a women's issue. YT Bell, Legislative Coordinator at PPSE, will share her experience in collaborating with Atlanta Jobs for Justice and how other labor groups can work with their local Planned Parenthood affiliate.

Presenters: Nikema Williams, YT Bell

CRIMINAL JUSTICE REFORM

Sponsored by the Civil Rights & Equity Committee

||| This workshop will discuss some of the leading strategies being spearheaded in the area of criminal justice reform. It will include highlights of the developments emerging on the national, state, and local levels. Specific topics include reform activism, restorative justice, and other cutting edge reform.

Presenters: Evelynne and Arthur Matthews

HIDDEN IN PLAIN SIGHT:HOW WE ARE FIGHTING BACK AGAINST MODERN DAY SLAVERY

Sponsored by the National Women's Committee

||| Nearly 30 million people are enslaved around the world. Unfortunately, fighting human trafficking is one of the most overlooked aspects of the human rights movement. As eyes in the sky, the 100,000 flight attendants of the Association of Flight Attendants-CWA are uniquely positioned to help fight back against this humanitarian crisis. This panel will examine how slavery continues to persist and the best strategies for creating sustainable freedom for all people.

Presenter: Deb Sutor

EDUCATING & EMPOWERING

Sponsored by the Civil Rights & Equity Committee

||| This session will evaluate the marriage and divorce between democracy and education. It will analyze how education has transformed and evolved into what we have today. This session will disaggregate high stakes testing; accountability; Common Core; the economic divide; school reform and other issues. It will also evaluate the core democratic values and juxtapose what is and is not happening in the American education system. Finally, this workshop aims to find real solutions to problems facing the American education system and its population.

Presenters: Dorethea Brown-Maxey, Sherise Hedgespeth, LaShain Blake

VOTER SUPPRESSION

Sponsored by the Civil Rights & Equity Committee

||| This session will analyze the historical aspects of political suppression ranging from poll taxes to Jim Crow laws, as well as look at topical developments. Moreover the cycle of political suppression will be dissected on a federal, state and local level. Participants will be armed with strategies for combating political suppression and best practices and worst practices will be presented for continuous learning.

Presenter: Onida Coward Mayers

SPEAKERS & PRESIDENTERS



CARMEN BERKLEY

AFL-CIO DIRECTOR OF CIVIL, HUMAN, AND WOMEN'S RIGHTS

Carmen Berkley is a radical civil & labor rights activist, writer, and trainer who currently serves as the youngest Director for the Civil, Human and Women's Rights Department at the AFL-CIO.

In 2009, Berkley served as the Regional Field Director for the NAACP, where she worked with NAACP branches to build their organizing capacity, organized marches, developed innovative trainings, and mentored youth activists. While at the NAACP, Berkley was tapped to serve as the Deputy Field Director for the One Nation Working Together march where she lead a team of organizers from across the country to recruit over 200,000 people to march for jobs, justice and education on the national mall.

Berkley's passion training organizers and activists has allowed her to train with Midwest Academy, Wellstone Action and she serves as a Co-Founder of Can't Stop, Won't Stop, LLC.

Berkley received her Bachelor's Degree in Political Science, Rhetorical Process and Africana Studies from the University of Pittsburgh. She is the proud wife of Lee Anderson, fellow labor activist and musician.

LASHAIN BLAKE

INSTRUCTIONAL SUPPORT SPECIALIST DEKALB COUNTY SCHOOL DISTRICT ATLANTA, GA

LaShain Blake is an Instructional Support Specialist with the DeKalb County School District. She has been an educator for 17 years and is an active member of the Georgia Federation of Teachers Educational Research and Dissemination Division. LaShain believes deeply that all children have the right to a good education. She takes pride in inspiring her students to view the world as an abundance of opportunity and instills in them a high sense of morality, brotherhood, and self-confidence.

LaShain earned her bachelor's of science in elementary education from Florida Memorial University, a master's degree in math education from Nova Southeastern University, and is currently working towards her Doctorate of Education at Nova Southeastern University. She resides in Atlanta, Georgia with her two wonderful children.

JANINE BROWN

JANINE BROWN FOR GEORGIA DISTRICT 59

Janine was hired in Boston, MA by AT&T in 1972, as a Communications Craftsman, one of the first women in the previously all-male job title. In 1978, she transferred to Atlanta, GA and became an activist in Communications Workers of America (CWA) Local 3250. She rose from job steward to Executive Vice President.

In 1995, she was appointed to CWA Staff Representative in the office of Communications and Technologies (C&T) in Washington, DC. In 2001, Janine transferred to the Women's Activities and Community Services director position where she was responsible for coordinating women's activities for the entire union including biannual national women's conferences. In 2006, she returned to Atlanta as the AFL-CIO Community Services Liaison with the United Way of Metropolitan Atlanta & the Atlanta North Georgia Labor Council.

She serves on the board of Atlantans Building Leadership for Empowerment (ABLE) a multi-racial, interfaith regional coalition of congregations, unions and grassroots organizations that develops leadership capacity to effect change in communities. Since retiring in 2012, Janine works in the community including the Social Action Committee at her church, post seat holder in the County Democratic Party, and is a member of the Fulton County Personnel Board. As of July, 2016, she is a candidate in the Democratic Primary runoff for the Georgia House of Representatives.

Janine holds degrees from Georgia State University (Bachelor of Science - Urban Studies) and American University (Master of Science - Organization Development). She has 2 grown children and lives in Atlanta GA with her partner of 23 years, Gerald Souder retired CWA staff rep.

DORETHERA BROWN-MAXEY

NABET-CWA LOCAL 43

Dorethea Brown-MaxeY was born and raised in Detroit, Michigan and is a proud graduate of the University of Michigan where she majored in Broadcasting and African American Studies. She began her career in broadcasting at Channel 56, a PBS station. She is currently a News Editor at WDIV Local 4, a NBC affiliate.

Dorethea has been a member of NABET-CWA Local 43 for the last 20 years. She was elected Vice President prior to serving as acting President for a year and a half; she was elected and is currently serving as President. She represents broadcast engineers from WJBK Fox 2 News and WDIV Local 4. She has also served as Steward and Chief Steward. Dorethea is an Executive Board Member for NABET-CWA Local 43 and the Metro Detroit AFL-CIO. She is a member of the A. Philip Randolph Institution Detroit Downriver, the CWA Minority Black Caucus, the CWA Minority Leadership Institute Class of 2008, the CWA Michigan State Unified Council Committee, CWA MAC representing Southeastern Michigan Jobs with Justice, and CLUW. She was appointed to the CWA National Civil Rights and Equity Committee in 2013.

She and her husband John have three children: Jonathan, a senior at Prairie View A&M University, Jonae, a freshman at the University of Michigan, and Juwan, a seventh grader at Foreign Language Immersion and Cultural Studies. Dorethea is an advocate for education and is very instrumental in her children's education. She takes education very seriously. She has been on several advisory boards as well as serving as President and Vice President on her children's school parent associations.

ELISE BRYANT

LABOR HERITAGE FOUNDATION

Elise launched her labor arts career as the artistic director of the University of Michigan's labor theatre project, *Workers' Lives/Workers' Stories* in 1982. She joined the National Writers Union and began her screenwriting career with a script for the documentary, *Porgy and Bess: an American Voice* which aired last year on PBS. In 1998 Elise made her Washington, DC stage debut in Theatre J's production of *Goodnight Irene* and founded the DC Labor Chorus. Most recently she directed two productions of the labor jazz opera, *Forgotten*, in Detroit and in the Washington, DC area (see www.forgottenshow.net).

After working 35 years as a labor educator, Elise retired from her professorship at the National Labor College to start her own consulting service, the E.L.I.S.E. Consortium. Her areas of expertise include Communication Skills, Effective Committee Training, Leadership Training, Teaching Techniques, Labor History and Culture, Diversity Training, Organization Development and "Arts as a Tool for Organizing".

Elise is a lifetime member of the Wobblies (Industrial Workers of the World), a member of the AFM Local 1000 as well as CWA/Newspaper Guild Local 32035. In 2012 she was given the Lifetime Achievement award from the international organization, United Association of Labor Educators.

GREGORY CENDANA

ASIAN PACIFIC AMERICAN LABOR ALLIANCE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Strategist, politico, and coalition builder Gregory Cendana is the first openly gay and youngest ever Executive Director of the Asian Pacific American Labor Alliance and Institute for Asian Pacific American Leadership & Advancement. He is the immediate past chair of the National Council of Asian Pacific Americans, co-founder of the diversity initiative Inclusv, treasurer for the Labor Coalition for Community Action and is the youngest general board member of the AFL-CIO, a federation of labor unions representing 12 million workers.

Gregory has been named one of Washington, DC's most influential 40-and-under young leaders, one of the 30 Most Influential Asian Americans Under 30 & the "Future of DC Politics". He also co-authored *Asian American and Pacific Islanders (APPIs) Behind Bars: Exposing the School to Prison to Deportation Pipeline*, a first of its kind report on the impact of mass incarceration and mass criminalization in the AAPI community. Previously, he served as president of the United States Student Association (USSA), where he played an integral role in the passage of the Student Aid & Fiscal Responsibility Act and Healthcare & Education Reconciliation Act. In his spare time, Gregory enjoys singing karaoke, choreographing dances, and trying new recipes. Be a part of his journey by following him on Twitter at @GregoryCendana.

LARRY COHEN

DEMOCRACY INITIATIVE CHAIR

Larry Cohen is chair of the Democracy Initiative, an organization convened by the Communications Workers of America, Sierra Club, Greenpeace, NAACP, AFL-CIO and Common Cause with the goal of building a movement of 50 million progressive activists that will restore economic and social democracy for all.

As president of the Communications Workers of America, serving from 2005 to 2015, he was recognized as one of the most effective leaders in the labor movement, leading the fight for fair trade and against the Trans-Pacific Partnership and to restore workers' bargaining rights.

At CWA, Cohen built a highly respected and successful organizing program with new strategies to help workers gain bargaining rights and also worked to build international connections among global unions. With the German union ver.di, with 2 million members, Cohen created TU, an organization for workers at Deutsche Telekom-T-Mobile and T-Mobile USA, which represents workers in both countries.

CLAUDE CUMMINGS, JR.

CWA DISTRICT 6 VICE PRESIDENT AND CWA DIRECTOR OF HUMAN RIGHTS

Claude Cummings, Jr., who has served as an at-large member of the Executive Board of the Communications Workers of America since 2007, was elected Vice President of CWA District 6 in July 2011, and was re-elected in July 2015 representing workers in Arkansas, Kansas, Missouri, Oklahoma and Texas. Since then Claude has also been appointed to lead the Human Rights Department for the National CWA. In addition, Vice President Cummings has been elected as 2nd Vice President of the Houston NAACP, while also serving as an At Large member of the CBTU and APRI Executive Boards. Prior to his election to District 6 Vice President he was President of CWA Local 6222 representing more than 4,000 members. He was first elected President of the Local in 1999; previously serving as Vice President and held other leadership positions in the local. He also served as a delegate to past Democratic National Conventions.

A leader in the Fifth Ward Missionary Baptist Church, Cummings is Chairman of the Deacon Board and a member of Choir, Brotherhood, and Male Chorus. Cummings joined Southwestern Bell Telephone Company in 1973 (now AT&T) and has worked as a Frame Attendant and Communications Technician, maintaining systems for NASA, among other corporate customers. He is married to Ruth Cummings; they have three children and eight grandchildren.

JERAME DAVIS

PRIDE AT WORK EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Jerame Davis is a long-time LGBTQ and labor rights activist. His first campaign was in 1999 when he led a coalition of labor unions and social justice organizations - including Pride at Work, the organizations he now leads - to develop a successful campaign against an employer who fired him and two other workers because they are gay.

He was also a leader in the Democratic Party as an officer of the Indiana Stonewall Democrats and was appointed to represent the state as a member of the Rules Committee for the 2008 Democratic National Convention in Denver. In 2010, he moved to Washington, DC to lead the National Stonewall Democrats where he helped make history once again by working with the Democratic National Committee to coordinate efforts of Stonewall Democrats around the country to send a record number of openly LGBTQ delegates to the 2012 Democratic National Convention.

Davis' personal papers and mementos from his career in activism have been archived by the Smithsonian Museum of American History. He continues his activism for LGBTQ equality and labor rights in his current role as the Executive Director of Pride At Work, the only national group dedicated to bringing together the LGBTQ and labor movements.

ALICIA GARZA

BLACK LIVES MATTER CO-FOUNDER AND ORGANIZER

Alicia Garza is an organizer, writer, and freedom dreamer living and working in Oakland, CA. She is the Special Projects Director for the National Domestic Workers Alliance, the nation's leading voice for dignity and fairness for the millions of domestic workers in the United States, most of whom are women. She is also the co-creator of #BlackLivesMatter, a national organizing project focused on combatting anti-Black state sanctioned violence.

Alicia's work challenges us to celebrate the contributions of Black queer women's work within popular narratives of Black movements, and reminds us that the Black radical tradition is long, complex and international. Her activism connects emerging social movements, without diminishing the specificity of the structural violence facing Black lives.

She has been the recipient of numerous awards for her organizing work, including the Root 100 2015 list of African American achievers and influencers between the ages of 25 and 45, and was featured in the *Politico 50* guide to the thinkers, doers and visionaries transforming American politics in 2015.

CONGRESSMAN AL GREEN

D-TEXAS

On January 6, 2015, U.S. Congressman Al Green took the oath of office to serve the people of Texas' 9th Congressional District and began his sixth term in the United States House of Representatives. As a veteran civil rights advocate, he has fought for those in society whose voices, too often, are not heard.

Congressman Al Green currently serves on the Financial Services Committee. He sits on two subcommittees: Housing and Insurance as well as Oversight and Investigations, where he holds the position of Ranking Member. Within the Democratic Party he holds the position of Assistant Whip.

Born in New Orleans, Louisiana, Congressman Al Green's family taught him the importance of positive preparation through education and righteous resistance to overcome persistent injustice. He attended Florida A&M University, Howard University, and the Tuskegee Institute. Before receiving an undergraduate degree, he enrolled in the Thurgood Marshall School of Law, where he earned his Juris Doctor degree in 1973. As a law student, he earned awards in the areas of Federal Procedure and Conflicts. After graduating from law school, Congressman Al Green co-founded and co-managed the law firm of Green, Wilson, Dewberry, and Fitch. In 1977, he was appointed Justice of the Peace in Harris County, Texas, where he served for 26 years before retiring in 2004.

For approximately ten years, Congressman Al Green served as president of the Houston Branch of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP). Under his leadership, the organization grew to unprecedented heights, increasing membership from a few hundred to many thousands, and the staff from one to more than ten.

SHERISE HEDGESPETH

INTERNATIONAL BACCALAUREATE COORDINATOR AND ENGLISH INSTRUCTIONAL SPECIALIST CASS TECHNICAL HIGH SCHOOL

Sherise Hedgespeth has been educating children for 18 years as an English teacher, instructional specialists and currently serves as the International Baccalaureate Coordinator for the Diploma Program. She earned her bachelors at Adrian College and her masters at MaryGrove College, and masters of education at Oakland University. Sherise is a member of both the American Federation of Teachers and the Detroit Federation of Teachers. She loves reading, writing, singing and serving youth both at school and at work. Sherise passion's stem from her belief In God and her passion for helping children no matter what it takes. Sherise loves spending time with her husband, William, and her four blessings, LaShawn- 17 years old; Cierra- 15 years old; William II- 11 years old and Hailee- 7 years old. Sherise has edited a book, presented workshops to educators, and loves lifelong learning.

YVETTE HERRERA

ASSISTANT TO THE PRESIDENT

This year Yvette celebrates 36 years of service with CWA. Yvette has held many positions over the years starting in the former District 5 office. In 1987 Yvette moved to Washington, DC as the Education and Mobilization Director and later Assistant to the Executive Vice President. For the last 11 years she has served as Assistant to the President.

Yvette was born in Cuba and Spanish is her first language. She was responsible for the Minority Leadership Institute for 26 years, working closely with former CWA Human Rights Directors Drew Clark, Mary Mays Carroll, Leslie Jackson and Gwend Johnson.

Yvette serves on the national board of LCLAA (Labor Council for Latin American Advancement) and is the President of the International Labor Rights Forum. She is the highest ranking Latina in CWA.

RICHARD HONEYCUTT

CWA DISTRICT 3 VICE PRESIDENT

Richard currently serves as Vice President of District 3 based out of Atlanta, GA. He was elected to this position at the National Convention in Detroit, MI in 2015.

Richard first became a member of CWA in 1996 when he was employed by Bellsouth, now AT&T. Soon after becoming a member, he took on the role of steward, Vice President, and in 2001 was elected President of Local 3605 in Gastonia, NC.

In 2009, Richard served on the AT&T Core bargaining team and in 2012 he became the representative for District 3 on the Defense Fund Oversight Committee. It was during this time that he made the decision to run for the position of Vice President for District 3 as he felt that he could bring positive change to the District.

After the election he made the move from North Carolina to Atlanta where he was soon joined by his wife of 23 years and his two sons Landon and Harrison. He graduated from the University of North Carolina Charlotte and also served for 8 years in the Army Reserve and NC National Guard.

Throughout his time with CWA he has been committed to serving the members. He has done this through his leadership and understanding of the issues that they face. A couple of his goals are to provide the best possible representation for all members and uniting the membership no matter which sector or industry that they belong to or work in.

JON HURST

LGBTQ CENTER AT NEW YORK UNIVERSITY DIRECTOR

Jon comes to NYU after serving 3 years as the Director of the LGBT Resource Center at the University of Georgia, where he was responsible for conceptualizing, developing, and overseeing the implementation of LGBTQ education, outreach and advocacy programs. Prior to his time at the University of Georgia, his professional experience included positions in Wellness Education Services at the University at Buffalo, Enrollment Management at Central State University, 6 years of nonprofit work in the area of HIV/ AIDS Education, Outreach and Prevention, as well as a stint in electoral politics as a campaign staffer for then Congresswoman Tammy Baldwin of Wisconsin.

Jon is a social justice educator and experienced student affairs practitioner committed to student success and providing safe sustainable spaces of self-discovery and life affirming student experiences. A member of the Consortium of Higher Education LGBT Resource Professionals, and past member of the planning committee for the National Creating Change Conference in Atlanta, GA, he also served on the board of directors of the Northeast LGBT Conference and as an executive board member for Athens Boybutante AIDS Foundation.

He is a native Ohioan and holds a bachelors degree in Journalism from Central State University and a masters in Higher Education Administration with a concentration in Educational Leadership and Policy from the University at Buffalo.

MARA KEISLING

TRANSEQUALITY EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Mara Keisling is the founding Executive Director of the National Center for Transgender Equality. Mara is a transgender-identified woman and a parent. As one of the nation's leading voices for transgender equality, Mara has appeared on news outlets including CNN, MSNBC, and Fox News. Mara is regularly quoted in national and local print and broadcast media.

Since NCTE's founding in 2003, the organization has led or participated in coalition efforts that have won significant advances in transgender equality.

Mara is a graduate of Penn State University and did her graduate work at Harvard University in American Government. She has almost twenty-five years of professional experience in social marketing and opinion research.

SHANE LARSON

CWA ADMINISTRATIVE DIRECTOR OF LEGISLATION

Shane Larson has served as the Legislative Director for the 700,000 member strong Communications Workers of America (CWA) since April of 2010. Shane, a native of South Dakota, attended Georgetown University's Walsh School of Foreign Service, earning a BSFS in International Politics.

Shane began his career working for Senator Tom Daschle (D-SD) in Washington, DC and South Dakota serving as Deputy Press Secretary in his Senate office and Communications Director on his 1998 re-election campaign.

In 1999, Shane was hired by the Association of Flight Attendants as the Senior Government Affairs Representative, eventually becoming Director of Government Affairs. During his decade at AFA-CWA he developed membership training programs that resulted in a meaningful increase in the number of AFA-CWA members that have become involved in the legislative and political process. He was responsible for a number of important legislative victories including the decade's long goal of flight attendant certification, legal seniority protections for airline employees in an airline merger and the long sought goal to correct the FMLA to guarantee full time airline employees qualify for coverage.

He serves as Co-President of the National Executive Board of Pride at Work, the LGBT constituency group of the AFL-CIO. In addition he is the Treasurer of the c4 Board for Progressive Congress.

MELISSA MATOS

CWA EDUCATION STAFF REPRESENTATIVE

Melissa Matos serves as the Education Staff Representative for the Communications Workers of America (CWA) where she develops education and training curriculum for CWA staff, local officers, stewards and rank-and-file members. Melissa also serves as a liaison to the AFL-CIO and community groups on immigration and immigrant workers' rights issues. Before joining CWA, Melissa served as Counsel for the Legislative and Political Department of the American Postal Workers Union where she worked on postal reform and postal banking legislation along with other matters impacting the federal workforce. During the 2012 election, Melissa was a Field Manager for the NAACP's get-out-the-vote campaign aimed at mobilizing low propensity voters in Ft. Lauderdale, FL. During law school, Melissa worked at Legal Services of Eastern Missouri helping low-income residents of St. Louis gain access to much needed public assistance programs. Melissa has also served in various capacities at the Council on American Islamic Relations, assisting Muslim Americans on immigration and workplace discrimination issues.

Melissa holds Bachelor's degrees in History and Political Science from Florida International University, as well as a Juris Doctor and Master of Public Health from Saint Louis University. Melissa was born in the South Bronx and currently resides in Washington, DC. When she's not organizing and educating around social, economic and racial justice, Melissa can be found with family on Miami Beach with her feet in the sand and perico ripiao in her headphones.

ARTHUR MATTHEWS

MATTHEWS & MATTHEWS CONSULTING CHIEF OPERATING OFFICER

Arthur T. Matthews, JD, is the Chief Operating Officer and principal partner of Matthews & Matthews Consulting aka diversityofficers.com which is a boutique firm specializing in divergent aspects of labor, human capital management and the workforce. He currently serves on the faculty at NYU, Cornell University School of Industrial and Labor Relations and the University of Arkansas. He teaches workshop, seminar, certificate, boot camp, undergraduate, MPA and MBA courses in areas such as facilitation, negotiations, mediation, arbitration, labor relations, labor-management cooperation, human resources, organizational change, knowledge transfer, diversity & inclusion, leadership, public speaking and ethics.

Early in his career Arthur was featured on a CNN Special as a positive role model and consistently serves as a motivational speaker. He was a Congressional and Assembly aide and earned his Juris doctor (J.D) degree from Howard University School of Law where he was elected the President of the Student Bar Association. In was in this capacity that he led hundreds of law students in the march that helped enact MLK Day as a national holiday. Moreover he proudly hosted one of the last public appearances of Supreme Court Justice Thurgood Marshall. He obtained his undergraduate degree with honors from C.W Post College, Long Island University where he earned a Martin Luther King academic scholarship and a NCAA football scholarship. He is married to his soul mate and business partner Evelynne and they have two sons, Jaleel & Joseph and a grandson Jaylen. He is a life member of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity Inc.

EVELYNE MATTHEWS

MATTHEWS & MATTHEWS CONSULTING CEO

Evelynne R. Matthews BA, CMH is the CEO of Matthews and Matthews Consulting aka diversityofficers.com which is a human resources and labor workforce company. Her areas of teaching, training and consulting expertise is divergent and include but not limited to Diversity & Inclusion, Human Resources, Anger Management, Conflict Resolution, Workplace Bullying, Mediation, Workforce Development, Workplace Violence, Managing Stress, Work/Life Balance, Sexual Harassment, Leadership, Team Building, Communication Skills, Mentoring, Executive and Life Coaching.

She has over thirty years' experience in the private and public sectors which includes work in the insurance, law enforcement, telecommunications and information technology industries. She is also a motivational speaker to various organizations throughout the United States and whether it is one individual or hundreds she believes in the fundamental necessity of embracing the human condition. She is a Certified Master Hypnotist, Quantum Touch Certified, a Reiki Master, a Spiritualist and a Priestess. In the late 1980s through the 1990s she served 12 years as a police officer and was recognized by her peers, businesses and groups such as the NAACP.

She has served either as a mediator or arbitrator for the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, the U.S Postal Service Redress Program and the New York Stock Exchange. She is currently an occasional lecturer at Cornell University School of Industrial and Labor Relations and previously served on the faculty at the NYU. Lastly she serves as a guest lecturer at the University of Arkansas, Sam M. Walton College of Business. She is married to her soul mate and business partner Arthur and they have a son and a grandson.

ONIDA COWARD MAYERS

CAMPAIGN FINANCE BOARD DIRECTOR FOR NEW YORK CITY'S VOTER ASSISTANCE

Onida Coward Mayers is an award-winning Communications Executive and the Director for New York City's Voter Assistance at the Campaign Finance Board (CFB). For the past 10 years, Ms. Coward Mayers has directed strategic voter outreach, policy and vision planning for one of the largest voting populations in the United States. She has worked with a broad range of stakeholders including policy advisors, legislatures, corporations, academic institutions and civic organizations to ensure that everyone has equal access to a non-partisan fair and friendly voter experience. In her capacity at the CFB, Ms. Coward Mayers led the launch of the nonpartisan NYC Votes Program aimed at increasing voter awareness, education and participation. Ms. Coward Mayers was able to achieve these goals by designing and using unique organizing tools, technology and mobile platforms and was the first to launch PSA's and surveys in NYC taxis. She is also charged with managing the Inter-agency charter mandated voter awareness local law program responsible for 16 city agencies.

Prior to joining the CFB, Ms. Coward Mayers served as the agency head for the NYC Voter Assistance Commission where she launched the City's first ever Video Voter Guide television program and website for voters and candidates; the Youth Poet Laureate program, a voting-themed teen competition designed to energize youth voters through spoken word poetry; and the Voter Awareness Month, a city-wide campaign to promote voter education, registration, awareness and participation.

Ms. Coward Mayers is a visionary and appears as an analyst on television and radio programs. She is a frequent guest lecturer and presenter at conferences, forums and meetings discussing cutting edge voting rights issues and nonpartisan election education strategies and partnerships. Her continued success in voter communication and program development places her at the forefront of directing how people and cities will vote, register, prepare for elections, and become civically engaged.

NATAYIA MCCRAY

CWA ACTIVIST

Natayia McCray has spent the last 13 years as a dedicated preschool teacher and a family social service worker for the United Vailsburg Services Organization (UVSO) in Newark. While she is currently working towards a degree in Psychology, she is also a fearless leader in her community and in her workplace. Earlier this year, Natayia joined her colleagues and ran a successful union organizing campaign, voting 77-to-6 to join CWA Local 1037. Natayia is one of more than 400 child care center workers at three major child care centers in Newark who have joined CWA Local 1037 since January of this year. Natayia represents a growing movement of child care center workers and working parents fighting to improve working and learning conditions in centers across Newark and fight for more resources for early childhood education.

RAFAEL NAVAR

CWA POLITICAL DIRECTOR

Since early 2012, Rafael Navar has served as the National Political Director for the Communication Workers of America (CWA), the largest Telecommunications union in the world. As one of only two current Latino National Political Directors within organized labor, he is committed to building one of the most progressive rank and file led political programs in the country.

Rafael began his career working in support of international human and indigenous rights with the National Commission for Democracy in Mexico, coordinating the US portion of an international referendum on indigenous rights. His later experiences as a community organizer with Dolores Mission/Proyecto Pastoral and the Bus Riders Union eventually led him to join SEIU Local 99 as Political Director. While there, he worked to set up the political program that helped navigate the new leadership of the local after coming off of a three-year trusteeship. Rafael dramatically increased fundraising, volunteer recruitment, and community activism, eventually assuming responsibility for SEIU International's political operations for the entire Western Region.

Born and raised in East Los Angeles, Rafael currently resides in Washington DC. When not doing political organizing, he can be found hiking the Shenandoah mountains or spending time with his abuelita.

SARA NELSON

AFA PRESIDENT

Sara Nelson took office as the International President of the Association of Flight Attendants-CWA, AFL-CIO on June 1, 2014, having served International Vice President from January, 2011 through May, 2014. Sara became a United Airlines Flight Attendant in 1996 and has been a union activist since nearly the beginning of her flying career, including leading communications and serving as strike coordinator.

Whether it's at the bargaining table, in organizing, on Capitol Hill, in communications, or on the picket line, Sara is passionate about her union and what it can mean to the Flight Attendant profession. She believes that building a strong Flight Attendant union is important for workers' rights around the globe, as the message of workers' rights and collective bargaining travels throughout the world with every member of the Association of Flight Attendants-CWA. She learned first hand how to build the union's power through collective action.

Sara grew up in Corvallis, Oregon and earned a bachelor's degree from Principia College with majors in English and Education before joining United Airlines as a Flight Attendant. She resides in the DC area with her husband, David Borer and son Jack.

JESSICA NEWMAN

CWA LEGISLATION, POLICY, AND HUMAN RIGHTS COORDINATOR

Jessica Newman is the Legislation, Policy and Human Rights Coordinator at the Communications Workers of America. In this role she works with our national Women's Committee to advance issues of importance to working women within the union. Moreover, Jessica advocates on behalf of CWA in front of Congress and the Administration on a portfolio of issues including campaign finance reform, voting rights, and family economic policies. Previously, Jessica worked as a legal advocate on behalf of children in the foster care system. Jessica received her Bachelor's degree in Social Relations and Policy from James Madison College at Michigan State University, and holds a J.D. from Washington University in St. Louis School of Law.

CHRIS SHELTON

CWA PRESIDENT

Christopher Shelton was elected president of the Communications Workers of America by acclamation by delegates to the union's 75th convention on June 8, 2015.

Since 2005, he has been vice president of CWA District 1, representing 160,000 members in more than 300 CWA locals in New Jersey, New York and England. Prior to his election as vice president, Shelton was assistant to the District 1 vice president, responsible for contract negotiations and the thousands of collective bargaining agreements covering District One members.

He served as the Verizon Regional Bargaining Chair in 2000 and 2003, and overall Chair of CWA District 1, District 2-13, IBEW New Jersey and New England in 2008 and 2011. He also chaired negotiations in New Jersey for 40,000 State Workers in 2008 and 2011.

Shelton started his union career when he went to work for New York Telephone in 1968 as an outside technician. He was elected a CWA Local 1101 shop steward in 1968 and served Local 1101 in various positions until December 1988 when he joined the CWA national staff. He is a native of the Bronx, N.Y.

SARA STEFFENS

CWA SECRETARY-TREASURER

Sara Steffens was elected secretary-treasurer of the Communications Workers of America by delegates to the union's 75th convention on June 8, 2015.

As CWA secretary-treasurer, Steffens is responsible for overseeing the union's operating budget, investments and membership funds, facilities and other operations. She also is charged with ensuring full fiscal and legal compliance by the International union and locals with all government, financial and regulatory requirements.

Before her election to CWA's second highest ranking office, she served as secretary-treasurer of The NewsGuild-CWA, the CWA affiliate representing journalists and other media workers.

A native of Minnesota, Steffens earned a journalism degree from The Evergreen State College in Olympia, Wash. and beginning in 1999 worked as a reporter for nine years at the Contra Costa (California) Times. There, she successfully led her co-workers at the Times and its sister newspapers in the Bay Area News Group to organize and join the Northern California Media Workers Guild, now known as Pacific Media Workers Guild, TNG-CWA Local 39521.

Steffens was among a group of union activists fired two weeks after the vote, but she continued to work with The NewsGuild and CWA, ultimately bargaining a first contract for workers at the newspaper group. Steffens and her family live in the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area.

DEB SUTOR

ASSOCIATION OF FLIGHT ATTENDANTS-CWA, AFL-CIO INTERNATIONAL VICE PRESIDENT

Debora Sutor is a 25-year flight attendant with Envoy Air, formerly American Eagle, and became AFA's International Vice President on June 1, 2014. Debora's extensive experience within the AFA structure, holding numerous elected positions in local leadership and serving on various International committees, enables her to assist in furthering AFA's mission for economic and social justice for all flight attendants. Tasked with leading AFA's training and leadership programs, Debora brings valuable insight to the position and assists in cultivating and mentoring newly elected flight attendant union leaders.

Prior to her election as International Vice President, Debora served as Master Executive Council Vice President for Envoy and was most recently instrumental in successfully navigating flight attendants through difficult bankruptcy negotiations.

A lifelong resident of Chicago, Debora and her husband Steve have four sons and 2 grandchildren.

SYLVESTER TURNER

MAYOR OF HOUSTON, TEXAS

Sylvester Turner was elected Mayor of Houston on December 12, 2015 to serve a four year term beginning January 4, 2016.

Sylvester graduated from the University of Houston and Harvard Law School before joining the law firm of Fulbright & Jaworski. He later founded the Houston law firm of Barnes & Turner in 1983.

In 1988, Sylvester was elected to the Texas House of Representatives to serve the people of House District 139 in Northwest Houston. He served until his election as mayor, working on the House Appropriations Committee for 21 years and serving as Speaker Pro Tem for three terms. He was appointed to several Budget Conference Committees to help balance the state's budget and served on the Legislative Budget Board.

He is very proud of his daughter Ashley, who is continuing the Turner family tradition of public service in the healthcare field.

ANGIE WELLS

DEMOCRACY INITIATIVE SENIOR STRATEGIST AND ORGANIZER

Angie Wells is currently the Senior Strategist and Organizer at Democracy Initiative. She has been a tireless advocate for working people across the country for over twenty years.

Prior to joining Democracy Initiative, Angie served as Senior Campaign Lead in North Carolina for the Communications Workers of America (CWA) and has served as the MEC Governmental Affairs Chair for the Association of Flight Attendants (AFA-CWA). She served on the Executive Board of the Harris County AFL-CIO and has worked on behalf of the International Association of Machinists (IAM) in Texas, California and North Carolina.

Angie has worked in two Texas gubernatorial administrations. First, at the Department of Labor and Standards in Governor Mark White's administration and next with Governor Ann Richard's administration as Ombudsman for the Texas Department of Commerce. Angie also served as Governor Richard's African American Field Director organizing 254 counties statewide.

She has a Bachelor of Social Work degree from the University of Texas at Austin.

NIKEMA WILLIAMS

PLANNED PARENTHOOD SOUTHEAST VICE PRESIDENT OF PUBLIC POLICY

Nikema Williams is the Vice President of Public Policy for Planned Parenthood Southeast, Inc. She is the primary contact with key community leaders, coalition partners and elected officials. Nikema works to build a long term public policy, legislative, and community engagement program for reproductive healthcare throughout Alabama, Georgia, and Mississippi. She also serves as the Vice President of Planned Parenthood Southeast Advocates, the affiliated advocacy and political arm of Planned Parenthood Southeast.

Nikema also serves as the First Vice Chair of the Democratic Party of Georgia. She represents the Southern Region on the executive board of the Association of State Democratic Chairs (ASDC). Over the past decade, she has served in numerous leadership roles within the Democratic Party including serving as a member of the Democratic National Committee, Chair of the 13th Congressional District and 1st Vice Chair of the Fulton County Democratic Party. Nikema represented Georgia as a delegate to the 2008, 2012, and 2016 Democratic National Convention.

Nikema was appointed to the Advisory Board of SCLC W.O.M.E.N. Inc, by founder, Mrs. Evelyn G. Lowery. SCLC Women, INC is a civil rights group dedicated to offering intergenerational programs designed to empower women, girls, and families as they relate to human rights, social action, economic self-sufficiency, reduction of health disparities, and leadership to build strong families and communities.

She is a graduate of Talladega College and is an active member of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Incorporated. She is married to Mr. Leslie Small. They reside in Historic Westside Village in Atlanta with their infant son, Carter Leslie and two rescue Yorkshire Terriers, Ginger and Belle. Nikema and Leslie are members of Central United Methodist Church in Atlanta



CWA

COMMUNICATIONS WORKERS OF AMERICA
501 THIRD STREET NW
WASHINGTON, DC 20001