

AFT National Higher Education Issues Conference

Preconference Union Leadership Training

March 5, 2009

Miami Beach Resort and Spa

Miami Beach, Florida

Preconference training workshops will be open on a first-come, first-served basis, with room for 50 participants in each session. Register early and be sure to check the preconference box on your registration form if you'd like to attend.

Agenda

8:00 am – 8:00 pm **Registration**

9:00 am – 5:00 pm **Working with AFT to Build Your Political Action Program**

The 2008 elections demonstrated the power of grassroots political action. The fiscal crisis we are all facing today will demand strong political action programs to fight for our members and for higher education in our respective states. This preconference session is designed for locals or states looking to either strengthen their existing political action program or begin building a new program. AFT Political and Legislative Mobilization staff will work with participants on how to structure effective programs, engage your members and connect with AFT national around political action. Locals and states are encouraged to send teams of 2-3 people to this session as there will be time to strategize on how to strengthen political action in your state or local.

Chris Runge, Deputy Director, AFT Political and Legislative Mobilization

12:00 pm – 1:00 pm **Lunch**

1:00 pm – 4:00 pm **Concurrent Afternoon Workshops**

Workshop 1:

Bargaining Healthcare in Tough Economic Times

Increasingly, the cost of healthcare presents real challenges for institutions and unions that have required a deeper understanding of healthcare costs and plans as well as innovative bargaining to make sure that our members have adequate healthcare coverage and that coverage does not come at the expense of everything else in the negotiations process. This challenge will become particularly acute in the current economic environment. One key to success is for locals to develop a healthcare committee that acquires an in-depth knowledge of the institution's healthcare plan, how members are utilizing it, and where improvements need to be made or where efficiencies might be realized. This helps locals participate in discussions about

the healthcare plan continuously rather than just during negotiations, and it also provides a way to activate more members around the process.

In this workshop, AFT's Research department will provide an overview of some of the current challenges we face with regard to bargaining healthcare and then work with participants to help them develop a plan for implementing a healthcare committee at the local level and assisting locals in gaining more knowledge about and input on the direction of healthcare at your institution or in your system.

Rachel Quinn, Assistant Director, AFT Research and Information Services Department
John Abraham, Manager, AFT PLUS Member Benefits

Workshop 2:

Strengthening your Union through Effective Management

The effectiveness of any local depends upon building accountable and transparent bodies and procedures. Newly elected union leaders and members who are taking on different responsibilities in their locals are often thrust into jobs that carry many reporting and managerial responsibilities that at first seem difficult to understand and burdensome to assume. This workshop, facilitated by members of AFT's Legal and Financial Services departments, is designed to familiarize participants with the range of activities associated with the effective management of locals and to help union leaders handle these responsibilities more easily. This workshop will discuss the significance and elements of the local constitution; it will describe the governance roles of various local bodies (executive board/committee, delegate assembly, election committee, etc.) and it will outline the steps for conducting transparent elections and resolving election disputes. In addition, the workshop will cover issues around building budgets, establishing realistic dues structures and meeting government and union accountability requirements.

John Feldman, Director, AFT Financial Services
Daniel McNeil, Assistant Director, AFT Legal