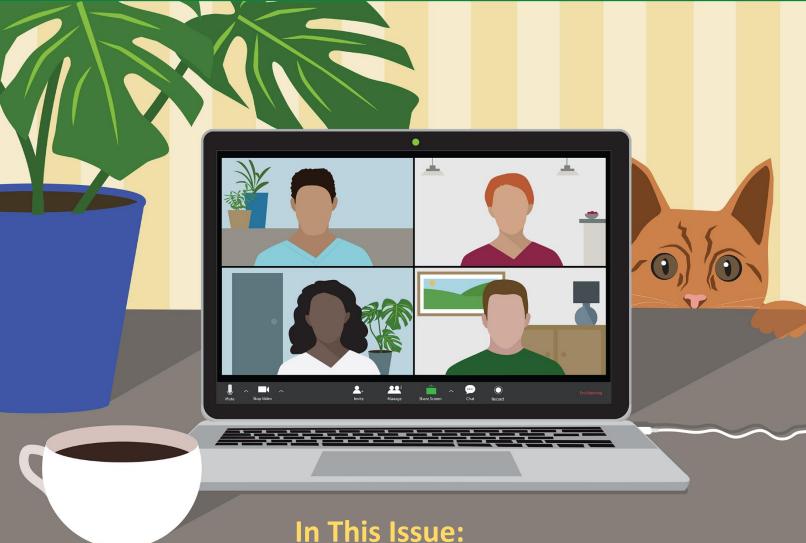
LEARNing Together

WINTER 2022



FEATURE:

Arts & Culture Worker Organizing

FACULTY SPOTLIGHT:

James Cooney, Esq.

NEW ULA:

Communication & Media Skills

LABOR CENTER NEWS

And More...

Official Newsletter of the Labor Education Action Research Network

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The Rutgers Labor Education Center 50 Labor Center Way, New Brunswick, NJ 08901

MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

Dear friends and colleagues,

Welcome to the Winter 2022 edition of the Rutgers LEARN newsletter.

This year officially marks the 75th anniversary of the program as it was established through the creation of the Institute of Management and Labor Relations by the State of New Jersey in 1947. As we reflect back



on this anniversary, we can see some similarities between then and now. The period immediately following World War II was filled with labor unrest and work stoppages. We are currently living through the Great Resignation and a prolonged period of new organizing drives and strikes that were at first dubbed #striketober. Both periods experienced the often contradictory but always interconnected patterns of growth and prosperity for some alongside poverty and inequality for others. Unlike the previous period, we currently have the added complexity of a seemingly unending pandemic, reminiscent more of 1918 than 1947. The tension between the good and the bad in both periods reminds me of the opening passage from *A Tale of Two Cities*, by Charles Dickens:

"It was the best of times, it was the worst of times, it was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness, it was the epoch of belief, it was the epoch of incredulity, it was the season of light, it was the season of darkness, it was the spring of hope, it was the winter of despair."

In this classic novel, Dickens juxtaposes London and Paris during the period of the French Revolution. Like now, it was a time where radical opposites were vividly displayed. The rules of the game, created and perpetuated by powerful interests, have created social structures that benefit some while disadvantaging others, especially along the lines of race, class, and gender. Economic inequality continues to soar even as the economy expands. Mass communication has been democratized, but misinformation abounds, sewing deep divisions which undermine efforts to address our shared problems. Then as now, education and organizing are the tools needed to construct positive change.

Since its creation, LEARN has sought to promote greater harmony and shared prosperity through educational programming, including classes, webinars, original research, conferences, and workshops. On this 75th anniversary, we recommit to this goal and promise to continue providing the programming our constituents need to fulfill their missions and help to build a more just, sustainable, and democratic world. We hope you will continue to join us on this guest for the second 75 years of LEARN and beyond!

Todd Vachon, Director of LEARN

LABOR EDUCATION CENTER NEWS



The James B. Carey Library is Open

The Carey Library will continue to provide remote services, including processing material requests and addressing research questions. For more information, contact Carey Library Director, Julie Peters at: ipeters@smlr.rutgers.edu 848-932-9608

REMOTE LEARNING TO CONTINUE IN THE SRPING

Please note that all LEARN classes and programs will remain remote at this time as we continue to navigate through uncharted waters. The rise of the Omnicron variant, the spike in cases following the holidays, and the continued state of uncertaintly have guided this decision to ensure that the health and safety of our instructors, staff and students are prioritized.

We will share updates regarding potential in-person and/or hybrid information options more becomes available.



SCHOOL OF MANAGMENT AND LABOR RELATIONS

OPEN TO CURRENT HR/LABOR RELATIONS STUDENTS & ALUMNI

Meet virtually via Rutgers Handshake with employers to learn about opportunities within their organizations

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 10 10AM - 3PM

HTTPS://RUTGERS.JOINHANDSHAKE.COM/ CAREER_FAIRS/29525/



CAREER SERVICES

FACULTY SPOTLIGHT

James M. Cooney, Esq.

Professor Cooney is an Assistant Teaching Professor at the Rutgers University School of Management and Labor Relations, in the Labor Studies and Employment Relations Department, where he teaches courses including "Employment Law," "Employment Discrimination Law" and "Immigration Law & Employee Rights," along with certificate program courses for Human Resources, Labor Relations, and Union representatives, and Attorneys.



Mr. Cooney serves as a neutral Labor Arbitrator. He is on the grievance arbitration rosters of the American Arbitration Association, Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service, N.J. Public Employment Relations Commission, N.J. State Board of Mediation, and Pennsylvania Bureau of Mediation. Mr. Cooney also serves as a Mediator, focusing on employment law and related cases.

Previously, Mr. Cooney worked as an attorney with Weissman & Mintz LLC, Somerset, N.J., representing employees and labor unions before federal and State courts, administrative agencies, and in arbitration proceedings, and handling immigration cases. Prior to that, he was an associate with Apruzzese, McDermott, et al., Liberty Corner, N.J., representing employers in labor, employment law, and immigration matters. He also served as a Trial Attorney with the National Labor Relations Board, Contempt Litigation Branch, in Washington, D.C.

Mr. Cooney is admitted to practice law in New Jersey and Florida, as well as various federal courts. He earned his J.D degree from the University of Miami (Florida) School of Law and his B.A. degree in from Rutgers University. He is an executive board member of the Labor & Employment Relations Association (LERA), N.J. Chapter.

Some Upcoming LEARN Classes with Professor Cooney:

ULA: Mediation and Arbitration Basics, Jan. 11 - Feb 15, 2022

LEL Certificate: Workers' Compensation, Apr. 22, 2022

FEATURE

WE STILL CAN'T EAT PRESTIGE



LESSONS FROM ARTS & CULTURE WORKER ORGANIZING

In the past decade, the unionization of museum workers has seen great increases. While non-profit cultural institutions do not conform to many Americans' image of workspaces that need organizing, those who labor in art, history, and natural science museums are often treated as disposable, exploitable workers who should tolerate poor working conditions, low pay, and inconsistent scheduling in exchange for the opportunity to "contribute to the social good." At museums that have remained open or reopened while Covid-19 remains a threat, the pandemic has helped to ramp up calls for collective bargaining rights that will bring greater health and safety protections.

On October 18, LEARN brought together unionized museum workers, organizers, activists, and scholars for a discussion of what the future of organized labor in museums might look like, and what the movement to organize cultural workers seeks to accomplish.

The panel was moderated by labor journalist, Sarah Jaffe, the author of *Necessary Trouble: Americans in Revolt* and *Work Won't Love You Back: How Devotion to Our Jobs Keeps Us Exploited, Exhausted and Alone.* Panelists included Maro Elliott who works at MassMOCA and is a member of UAW Local 2110, Karissa Francis, who works at the Whitney Museum and also belongs to UAW Local 2110, Robert Burnier, who works at the Chicago Art Institute and belongs to AICWU/AFSCME, and Brian Kiprutoof the Philadelphia Museum of Art, represented by AFSCME DC 47 Local 397.

After introductory remarks by Rutgers Professors Rebecca K. Givan, School of Management and Labor Relations, and Andrew Urban, Department of History and American Studies, the panelist jumped right into a thought-provoking discussion about worker organizing in cultural workplaces. Topics ranged from working conditions to diversity in hiring as well as diversity in exhibits. For those that are interested in learning more, the full recording of the webinar is available on the Rutgers LEARN website: https://tinyurl.com/42u2subx

Recap of Fall '21 Programs

Union Leadership Academy (ULA) – Fall 2021

Contract Interpretation and Enforcement (ULA Fall-Session I)

Thirty-seven students completed the online Contract Interpretation and Enforcement ULA class with instructor Pete Donatello between Sep. 8 - Oct. 13. Students learned how to understand and interpret contract language and how to use grievance procedures, unfair labor practices, labor-management committees, member education, and collective action as tools for enforcement.

Labor History (ULA Fall-Session II)

A record, sixty-seven students took the online Labor History ULA class with Professors Naomi Williams, William Brucher, and Dan Sidorick between Nov. 3 - Dec 15. Students explored the lives of working people and the organizations they created in the 19th and 20th centuries, how the history of labor could be preserved and promoted in the 21st century, and how lessons from the past can help to build a more vibrant and powerful labor movement today. We had our first internarional student in a LEARN program all the way from the UK via Zoom.

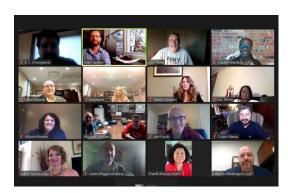


Recap of Fall '21 Programs

Labor & Employment Relations Certificate Programs – Fall 2021

Public Sector Labor Relations Certificate Program

Thirty-six students completed the three courses offered in the PSLR program in the Fall of 2022, including Public Sector Labor Law Overview, taught by James Mastriani; PERC Policies and Procedures, taught by Mary Beth Henessey-Shotter and Jon Roth; and Public Sector Grievance Handling and Discipline, taught by Joyce Klein, Esq.



Labor and Employment Law Certificate Program



Twenty-two students completed the three courses offered in the LEL program in the Fall of 2022, including Labor and Employment Law - An Overview, taught by Professor Tamara Lee, Esq.; Employment Relationships - Start to Finish, taught by Melanie Lipomanis, Esq.; and Constitutional Rights and the Workplace, taught by Professor James Cooney, Esq. Complete six classes to earn the Rutgers Labor and Employment Law Certificate.

Negotiation, Arbitration, and Conflict Resolution Certificate Program

Nineteen students completed the four courses offered in the NACR program in the Fall of 2022, including Getting Ready to Bargain and Win, taught by Don Dileo; Conflict Resolution at the Workplace, taught by Professor Saul Rubinstein, PhD.; Countering and Preventing Harassment, taught by Professor James Cooney, Esq.; and Interest-Based Bargaining, taught by Professor William Dwyer.

Recap of Fall '21 Programs

Webinars and Public Programs - Fall 2021

COVID Weekly Update Mini-Series

As the Delta variant began to take hold over the summer of 2021, LEARN and the NJ Work Environment Council decided to relaunch the popular weekly webinar series "Saving Lives, Protecting Workers," for a temporary 8-episode run in order to address new emerging questions about the virus and to share pertinent up-to-the-minute scientific information with workers and workplace representatives. The eight epsidoes in the mini-series were:

Nov. 16: Emotional Health and Resources for Children and Families During COVID-19

Nov.9: Resources for Safety and Support for Domestic Violence Victims During a Pandemic

Oct. 26: Vaccines, Boosters & NJ Vaccine Distribution Program

Oct. 19: OSHA's ETS and State Government Infectious Disease Prevention Policies

Oct. 12: Building Equity and Resilience in Vulnerable Communities – Community Engagement Across New Jersey

Oct.5: Building Ventilation and Minimizing Exposure to COVID-19

Sept. 28: OSHA's ETS & Guidance for Mitigating & Preventing Spread of COVID-19

Sept. 21: The Latest Science on the Virus and Vaccines with NJ Department of Health Expert

Full summaries, including links to all materials that were shared in these and all previous episodes of the COVID Update can be found both on the LEARN webpage (https://tinyurl.com/2p8nssns) and WEC webpage (https://njwec.org/covid-19/#Webinars).







Recap of Fall '21 Programs

Webinars and Public Programs – Fall 2021

Revaluing Workers: Book Launch Event for LERA Research Volume





Labor and Employment Relations Association Series

Rutgers SMLR and LEARN faculty, Tobias Schulze-Cleven and Todd E. Vachon co-edited the 2021 LERA Research Volume, titled Revaluina Work(ers): Toward a Democratic and Sustainable Future. The volume presents a labor studies perspective on the future of work, arguing that revaluing work is crucial to realizing the promises of democracy and improving sustainability. The event featured comments from Marissa Brookes. University of California, Riverside, Jason Jackson, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Inez von Weitershausen, The George Washington University, and Todd Wolfson, Rutgers University. Introductory remarks were offered by Dean Adrienne Eaton, Rutgers School of Management and Labor Relations (immediate past president of LERA)

We Still Can't Eat Prestige: Arts and Culture Worker Organizing

See page 6 above for further details about this webinar. The recording can be viewed through the LEARN website at: https://tinyurl.com/42u2subx

"Climate Justice is Worker Justice" RU Public History Roundtable

On Sept. 23, LEARN's Todd Vachon joined Reynalda Cruz and Louis Kimmel of New Labor, as well as Drs. Robin Leichenko (RU Geography) and David Eisenhauer (Bennington Coll) to discuss the inextricable link between climate justice and workers' rights.

Upcoming Programs

Preview of Spring '22



Spring 2022

Mediation and Arbitration Basics (ULA Spring-Session I)

Learn the fundamental skills of mediation and arbitration and the appropriate use of these skills in problem solving in the workplace. Determine when and where mediation can be used for position outcomes as well as when mediation may not be the correct path. Learn the basics of arbitration. Avoid grievances using these skills or be better prepared to handle adversarial situations. This course involves a mix of lecture and role-play.

Tueday evenings from 5:30-8:30pm, Jan. 11 - Feb. 15

Instructor: Professor James Cooney, Esq.

Communications and Media Skills (ULA Spring-Session II)

One of the most effective ways to get your message across to an intended audience is to communicate in a clear, concise, and informative manner. This course will help students improve their ability to communicate in a variety of formats, from speaking in public forums to writing op-eds, engaging the traditional press, and using social media tools. This course involves a mix of lecture, discussion, role play, and group projects.

Tueday evenings from 5:30-8:30pm, Mar. 8 - Apr. 12

Instructor: Professor Todd E. Vachon, PhD. and guests

Upcoming Programs

Preview of Spring '22

Labor and Employment Relations Certificate Program Classes - Spring 2022

Public Sector Labor Relations Certificate Program

Jan 21, 2022 - Public Sector Contract Interpretation – Steven Weissman, Esq., J.D.

Feb 25, 2022 - Grievance Arbitration I: Basics – Joan Parker, Ph.D

Mar 25, 2022 - Grievance Arbitration II: Advanced-Joan Parker, Ph.D

Apr 14, 2022 - Scope of Public Sector Negotiations – Christine Lucarelli-Carneiro, Esq.

More details and spring class listings can be found here: https://tinyurl.com/k9uxx4f2

Labor and Employment Law Certificate Program

Jan. 20, 2022 - Leave and Absence Workshop - Rosemarie Ciparullo, Esq.

Feb. 24, 2022 - Bias, Harassment and Discrimination – Ursula Leo, Esq.

Mar. 24, 2022 - Workplace Investigations & Interviews: Overview – Carla Katz, Esq.

Apr. 22, 2022 - Workers' Compensation – James Cooney, Esq.

More details and spring class listings can be found here: https://tinyurl.com/krrwpm2z

Negotiation, Arbitration, and Conflict Resolution Certificate Program

Jan 28, 2022 - Strategic Grievance Handling and Contract Enforcement - William Dwyer

Feb 25, 2022 - Grievance Arbitration I: Basics – Joan Parker, Ph.D

Mar 25, 2022 - Grievance Arbitration II: Advanced-Joan Parker, Ph.D

More details and spring class listings can be found here: https://tinyurl.com/62v38ta6

More from LEARN

Original Research

Did you know that LEARN also conducts original labor and employment research? We are just beginning to unfold our wings in this area, but we intend to expand our applied research portfolio to further advance the mission of the program. If your organization has labor market or employment policy-related research questions, please reach to discuss options with us. You can check out some of our recent reports on the LEARN webpage here: https://tinyurl.com/3tjnmaxb

White Paper Series

To commemorate our 75th anniversary, LEARN launched a white paper series titled, "A Better Tomorrow: Research & Reflections on Past, Present, and Future of Workers." The contributions include original



Rutgers LEARN

presents

"A Better Tomorrow"

Research & Reflections on the Past, Present, and
Future of Workers

75th Anniversary White Paper Series

research, reflections from scholars and practitioners, and chapters from forthcoming books by LEARN affiliated faculty, students, and friends. You can read the full call for papers as well as the first two white papers on the LEARN webpage, here: https://tinyurl.com/3dfak3bd

Custom Trainings

LEARN offers dozens of customized training programs for labor unions and other organizations every year. Customized training programs begin with consultation sessions with our faculty members to assess your needs. We then design curriculum to meet those needs and deliver the classes at times and in locations convenient to your organization.

For more information, email: learn@work.rutgers.edu or call (848) 932-9504

LEARN in the News

August – December 2021

Associated Press: Striking Kelloggs workers have rejected a tentative contract agreement. SMLR's Todd Vachon of Rutgers LEARN tells AP, they're unhappy with the deal and they're "signaling they believe they have the leverage that's needed to win more."

Associated Press: John Deere executives say they will not return to the bargaining table after striking workers rejected a "last, best, and final offer" that included a 10% raise. Todd Vachon of Rutgers LEARN tells the AP, both sides risk overplaying their hand.

Bloomberg: Kellogg's workers are on strike and now the company is suing the union. Vachon calls it "yet another escalation in an already deeply entrenched battle over not only wages, hours, and working conditions, but in many ways the future of work."

BirGun: "The experience of acting collectively and winning can be transformative," LEARN tells the Turkish paper BirGun about the ongoing Strikesgiving happening across the U.S.

BlackPowerMedia: LEARN's Fran Ryan spoke with Jared Ball from BlackPowerMedia on the RemiX Morning Show about the history of AFSCME.

CBS News: Workers at three Starbucks stores in Upstate New York will vote on whether to join a union. It's a historic election. There are currently no unionized Starbucks locations in the U.S. CBS News quotes SMLR's Todd Vachon of Rutgers LEARN in its coverage.

CBS News: "It's a little bit of warfare" LEARN Director Todd Vachon said of the NYTimes tech unit - workers want the largest number of people who want a union to have one, management is about restricting the unit (or padding it with less supportive groups before an election).

CNN reports on union organizing efforts at a Starbucks, a DollarGeneral, and four Amazon facilities. SMLR's Todd Vachon of Rutgers LEARN says, "There's much more potential to organize in these spaces due to the labor shortage."

CNN: Rutgers LEARN talks to CNN about the strike wave sweeping across the U.S. "The current situation is a recipe for long-lasting change. I can't predict that will happen, but the pieces are there for that to be a reality."

Governing Magazine: The 8,000 members of IUOE Local 825 earn \$40 to \$65 an hour. SMLR's Todd Vachon of Rutgers LEARN says, "They've created an opportunity to make a middle class living through blue collar work." And if the infrastructure bill passes, they'll get even more work.

The Hill: The #CDC says its decision to reduce isolation time for #asymptomatic people was guided by science. But SMLR Todd Vachon says it "certainly does benefit #employers that are already experiencing a shortage of #workers willing to fi many essential jobs."

Input Magazine: LEARN Professor Will Brucher talks to Input Magazine about Amazon. "It's not slavery per se, but the whole mantra of earning more and spending less. You look at the gilded age of robber barons here in the United States, and I'm sure it was the same."

Kaiser Health News: A growing number of nurses are taking collective action to demand safe staffing. SMLR's Rebecca Kolins Givan says, "They want working conditions where they can provide a high level of care. They don't want appreciation that is lip service."

Insider NJ: Check out LEARN and other NJ state labor leaders in Insider NJ's Labor Edition (see page 51-57)! See our new analysis and data on employment and unionization trends in the state--a preview of our larger NJ State of Labor report, coming out early next year!

KKFI 90.1 FM: On Labor Day, LEARN Director Todd Vachon joined Labor Network For Sustainability President Joe Uehlein and Occidental College Professor J. Mijin Cha on KKFI 90.1 FM 's Eco Radio hour with host Bob Grove to discuss labor and the Climate Crisis - listen here: https://tinyurl.com/59ewdzjk

KWQC-NBC: "Everyone is overworked and stressed. I think people have had enough." SMLR's Todd Vachon of Rutgers LEARN talks to KWQC TV6 News about the John Deere Strike. Todd says the national labor shortage is giving #workers more leverage.

KWWL-NBC: "This 90% rejection of that tentative agreement just shows that they are unified behind the idea of not dividing up their workers along the lines of age," Director of the Rutgers Labor Education Action Research Network Todd Vachon told KWWL on the eve of the John Deere Strike.

Liberation: LEARN spoke with Frederic Autran with Liberation in France about the ongoing labor unrest in the U.S. this #striketober. "It is too early to tell, but many ingredients are in place to shift the balance of power, after decades of a system biased in favor of capital and employers. Much will depend on the strikes being carried out at the moment. Will they lead to tangible gains for workers? Will these victories inspire other employees to take action?"

NewsNation: Why are so many Americans on #strike? And why now? SMLR's Todd Vachon of Rutgers LEARN explains in a live interview with Leland Vittert on NewsNation Now.

NJBIZ spoke to LEARN Professor Naomi R Williams about what the expiration of extended unemployment benefits for about 80,000 New Jerseyans means for the #laborshortage and working families.

NJ Spotlight News: Rhonda Schaffler of NJ Spotlight News talks one-on-one with SMLR's Naomi R Williams about The Great Resignation. Employers are desperate to hire, but Naomi says workers are fed-up with low wages and inflexible schedules. (Begins at the 7-minute mark.)

NJ Spotlight News: New #COVID rules require #vaccination or weekly testing for all employers with more than 100 #workers. LEARN instructor Rosemarie Cipparulo tells NJ Spotlight News, "I think it's perfectly legal for the president to do this with regard to private companies."

PBS NewsHour: LEARN instructor and SMLR Professor Rebecca Givan speaks with PBS NewsHour about labor unrest, including strikes and other collective efforts by workers to improve their wages and working conditions this #striketober.

Quad City Times: LEARN continues to be a go-to source of expertise for media outlets covering the ongoing U.S. strike wave, "Todd Vachon, a labor expert at Rutgers University, said the U.S. is currently experiencing a strike wave, which some on social media have dubbed #striketober.'When a series of labor unions successfully negotiates improved benefits with an employer, it empowers others to do the same.'"

WQAD-ABC: "Solidarity is the glue that holds it all together." LEARN Director talks to WQAD about the John Deere Strike, labor unrest, and growing inequality between the working class and those at the top.

WQAD-ABC:"It's kind of caught on among a lot of people that, hey, this is the time to try and make changes that we've been wanting to make for decades," LEARN Director Todd Vachon tells ABC Local WQAD after 90% of John Deere employees voted to reject a tentative contract with their employer which, among other things created a two-tier retirement system. "The strength that the workers have in bargaining is their solidarity, to all speak together in one voice," Vachon said, which is why the rejection of the divisive two-tier retirement plan is so important. John Deere is experiencing a period of record profits.

Yahoo Finance: "It's really kind of a classic struggle between employers wanting to have rules that give them flexibility and maximize their profits, and workers who understand that and realizing that they would have more power if they could be classified as employees," LEARN Director Todd Vachon told Yahoo Finance in regard to the recent court ruling against Prop 22 in California, an Uber-backed ballot initiative which exempted so-called gig companies from a state law that would require them to treat workers as employees entitled to benefits like health care and workers comp.

Yahoo! News: Workers at three Starbucks stores in New York will begin voting next week on whether to join a union. SMLR's Todd Vachon of Rutgers LEARN says they wouldn't have asked the NLRB for an election if they didn't think they had the votes to win.

Recent Editorials

"Democracy is Dying. Unions Can Help Save It." By Todd E. Vachon, *Common Dreams*, September 6, 2021: https://tinyurl.com/2p8akbe6

"There Was No Union. There Was No Plan." By Janice Fine, *The Nation*, December 28, 2021: https://tinyurl.com/yw2wmn5h





ON THIS LABOR DAY, REMEMBER THE WORKERS WHO

ORGANIZE & FIGHT

EVERDAY TO GIVE WORKING PEOPLE THE RESPECT AND DIGNITY WE DESERVE!



The Labor Education Action Research Network (LEARN) at Rutgers University is New Jersey's #1 provider of training and certification for unions, worker organizations, and labor relations professionals. The State of New Jersey established the Rutgers Institute for Management and Labor Relations in 1947 to provide extension services that would both help to foster labor-management cooperation in New Jersey workplaces and educate labor-management representatives and the general public about the advantages of such cooperation as well as the means to achieve it. LEARN graduates include top-level union leaders, shop stewards, rank and file workers, chief negotiators for labor and management and more. Our programs cater to the needs of all industries and occupations in both the private and public sectors.

LEARN is proud to honor our veterans and active-duty military personnel by offering a 10% discount on all classes and certificate programs.

To register for classes and use the veteran discount, email learn@work.rutgers.edu or call 848-932-9504.

Thank you for all you have done and continue to do for our country.

Sincerely,

The LEARN Team

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day – January 17, 2022



"True peace is not merely the absence of tension; it is the presence of justice."

Stride Toward Freedom (1957)