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## SEIU Healthcare PA Organizing For Rally On March 26<sup>th</sup> In Support Of Nursing Home Residents And Caregivers

By Denise Cox  
SEIU Healthcare PA  
Internal Organizer

SEIU Healthcare PA is organizing for a rally on March 26<sup>th</sup> in support of nursing home residents and caregivers. The rally will be held in front of the Beaver County Courthouse. It begins at 4:00 pm.

Pennsylvania has the 3rd highest COVID nursing home death rate in the entire country. We have lost over 12,000 nursing home residents to COVID-19 -- that's over half of all COVID deaths in the Commonwealth.

But the problems in Pennsylvania nursing homes began long before the pandemic -- chronic and dangerous understaffing and unacceptable conditions created a system that does not protect residents or caregivers.

These failures are due in part to Pennsylvania's archaic nursing

home regulations, which have not been updated in nearly 30 years. Enough is enough.

Preceding the March 26<sup>th</sup> rally, we will call on the PA Dept of Health to update its nursing home regulations immediately based on what research, evidence, and essential frontline caregivers know is needed. This call will be made on March 18<sup>th</sup>.

We will be telling Acting Secretary of Health Alison Beam that Pennsylvania nursing homes need:

- \* strong staffing standards, including 4.1 hours of care per resident per day - the minimum that research shows, and advocates and the federal government agree, is needed for quality care;
- \* protection for nursing home residents and caregivers when nursing homes are sold, which often results in deterioration of conditions and job

standards; and \* fair wages with affordable healthcare and a voice for caregivers - nursing home work has been named the most dangerous job in the country, and we cannot recruit and retain a strong workforce if caregivers are paid poverty wages.

Other states across the country, including New Jersey, have already instituted real reform in the wake of the pandemic. Pennsylvania nursing home residents and caregivers cannot be left behind.

We are calling on union members and the community to support our nursing home residents and their caregivers by attending our March 26<sup>th</sup> rally. Please contact Denise Cox, SEIU Healthcare PA Internal Organizer at 412-393-9282 for additional information about the rally.

# Solidarity Calendar

\* USW Local 1016-03 has settled its strike at the NLMK Pennsylvania plant in Farrell. A tentative agreement was reached on February 17<sup>th</sup> and the local's membership approved the agreement on March 1<sup>st</sup> by a vote of 276 to 103. Local 1016-03 President Jim Wells expressed his gratitude to all those that supported Local 1016-03 during the strike. The Beaver-Lawrence Central Labor supported the members of Local 1016-03 during the strike by arranging a Labor Day picnic for the members and their families, monetary donations to the Local's October 24<sup>th</sup> Strike Solidarity Spaghetti Dinner and the NWPA ALF's 2020 Union Families Christmas Project, and with visits to the strike headquarters in Wheatland and the main picket line in Farrell.

\* The strike of UAW Local 1311 at Langeloth Metallurgical Company in Langeloth (near Burgettstown, Washington County) continues. Local 1311 has been on strike since September 9, 2019. A Labor Council delegation visited the main picket line on March 15<sup>th</sup> of last year, immediately before the severity of the COVID-19 pandemic became apparent.

\* AFT Pennsylvania has released a web-

form for educators, staff, students, parents and community members to report non-compliance with the Pennsylvania Secretary of Health's November 24, 2020 Order Directing Public School Entities in Counties with Substantial Community Transmission to Attest to Health and Safety Protocols. For more information or to report non-compliance, visit <http://pa.aft.org/report-non-comply>.

\* The American Postal Workers Union and its community allies presented President Biden and the U.S. Senate a petition on February 23<sup>rd</sup>. The petition requested that the three vacancies on the Postal Board of Governors be filled with diverse and community-based members who are fully committed to vibrant, public and universal postal services. More than 400,000 signatures were attached to the petition. The next day the White House issued a press release announcing its plans to nominate board members. According to a National Association of Letter Carriers information release issued the same day, the NALC "looks forward to working with the Senate to

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## UNION BUG

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The opinions expressed in Union Bug articles are those of the author and not necessarily those of the Beaver-Lawrence Central Labor Council or its officers.

## Solidarity Calendar

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move their nominations as quickly as possible.”

\* TNG-CWA Local 38061 (Newspaper Guild of Pittsburgh) has won a battle in its long struggle to settle a fair contract with the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette. The Newspaper Guild's contract with the Post-Gazette expired on March 31, 2017 and the parties have met more than 20 times since. On March 4<sup>th</sup>, a federal judge ruled that the Post-Gazette must reimburse approximately 140 Newspaper Guild members for higher deductible payments that they have incurred since their contract expired because the Post-Gazette's refusal to pay medical insurance increases reduced the level of coverage for Newspaper Guild members.

## President's Report

By Rick Galiano  
Labor Council President

\* The February Labor Council Executive Board meeting was held virtually on February 15<sup>th</sup>. The February Membership meeting was canceled. The Executive Board decided at the meeting that it will meet virtually in March and that the March membership meeting will be canceled. The Executive Board also decided to hold in-person Executive Board and Membership meetings in April if warranted by improving pandemic conditions. The meetings will be held in accordance with the Labor Council's regular schedule of times and locations. Please contact the

Executive Board in April to find out the status of the meetings.

\* Thank you to all those Labor Council members and allies who supported the members of USW Local 1016-03 during its long strike that began on August 22, 2020 and which recently ended with the signing of a new contract. More than 1,000 USW members employed by Allegheny Technologies (ATI), including approximately 450 members of Local 1196 in Brackenridge, voted on March 5<sup>th</sup> to authorize a strike if needed to settle a fair contract. I have reached out to Local 1196 to let it know that as Labor Council president I will work to encourage our Labor Council to actively support any strike of ATI USW members.

Please help the union journalists at the Post-Gazette by visiting the Newspaper Guild website at [www.pghguild.com](http://www.pghguild.com) to email a

letter to the Post-Gazette encouraging it to return to the bargaining table and negotiate in good faith.

## CONGRESS NEEDS TO PASS THE PRO ACT: THIS IS WHY

Op-Ed by PA AFL-CIO  
Pres. Rick Bloomindale and  
Sec-Treas. Frank Snyder  
appearing in the  
March 12<sup>th</sup> Capital-Star

*[Editor's Note: The U.S. House of Representative passed the Protecting the Right to Organize Act (PRO Act) by a vote of 225-206 on March 9th. It must now be passed by the Senate before it can become law by being signed by President Biden.]*

The 21<sup>st</sup> century American Labor Movement is committed to lifting up all working people and dismantling the systemic oppression that has continued to divide our communities and our country for the better part of a century.

Suppressing economic rights creates two classes of citizens – the haves and the have nots. Silencing an employee's voice at work creates an anti-democratic environment that

does not allow positive input and ideas to build the business from the real experts on the job – the workers themselves.

Forming or joining a union is unlike membership in any other social organization. Employers who intend to remain union-free stop at little to convince, harass, threaten, or even fire those who simply seek to participate in a fair and representative process to collectively

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# CONGRESS NEEDS TO PASS THE PRO ACT: THIS IS WHY

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bargain terms and conditions related to their employment.

Such businesses would instead feed a billion-dollar, union-busting industry comprised of malicious consultants to prevent workers from exercising fundamental rights like freedom of speech or the freedom of association. One hundred years ago, thugs fought us with bullets. Today, they fight us with briefcases, with an equally devastating impact.

Imagine if you intended to join a club or organization that existed to represent its members' collective interests yet were immediately met with a barrage of non-stop resistance. Imagine that the campaign of lies, bribes, and intimidation lasted for months, ridiculing the group and those who wish to join.

Today, workers experience this discriminatory treatment regularly with 'captive audience' meetings, a common employer tactic, which forces employees to sit through one-sided, anti-union presentations.

Constitutional law provides the legal requirement of "Due Process" to be extended to its citizens in society. However, that right is not readily afforded to those at the workplace.

Those workers without a union are considered "At-Will" workers. At-Will employees can be fired for any reason or no reason. To kill a union organizing drive, many bosses do just that –

fire workers. While this and many other union-busting schemes are illegal, the fines are so minimal they rival the cost of a twenty-year-old used car.

Many bosses consider this bullying an acceptable price of doing business.

The Protecting the Right to Organize Act (PRO Act) is the most significant opportunity to advance, enforce, and protect workers' rights since the National Labor Relations Act (NLRA) was enacted in 1935.

Over the last 75 years, the NLRA has been whittled away by anti-worker amendments, making it more difficult for workers to form unions.

The PRO Act would restore the NLRA to its original intent – giving workers a collective voice to negotiate the terms and conditions of their employment, including living wages, meaningful benefits, a safe working environment, retirement security, and protection against all forms of discrimination.

The National Labor Relations Board would have the ability to hold employers accountable for retaliating against workers who support union organizing. Those who vote to join a union will be able to reach a first contract quickly. It also ends 'right to work' laws, which allow employers to divide their workforce.

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, unionized workers have had a voice in how their employers navigated the pandemic.

Being covered by a collective bargaining agreement in-

creased the chances of having medical coverage, adequate personal protective equipment, and the ability to negotiate policies that would secure enhanced safety measures, additional premium pay, paid sick time, and a say in terms of layoffs or work-share arrangements to save jobs, to name a few.

The coronavirus also added "essential workers" to the labor lexicon. Essential workers are often the lowest paid and the least protected. Women and black and brown workers have been hit hardest by the impact of economic and racial discrimination.

The Bureau of Labor Statistics proves union workers overall earn considerably more than their non-union counterparts. And the difference increases dramatically in each of the aforementioned demographic groups. More people than ever want the freedom to join a union, but eliminating barriers is essential.

Pennsylvania has a legacy of worker power and courage to fight for what's right. After all, it was in Aliquippa, Pennsylvania, that the United States Supreme Court upheld the constitutionality of the National Relations Act. The PRO Act is the next step in what has been a painfully slow process to ensure workplace justice is a reality for all.

We call on all of our U.S. Senators to protect the right to organize by voting union YES and the PRO Act.

BEAVER/LAWRENCE  
CENTRAL LABOR  
COUNCIL

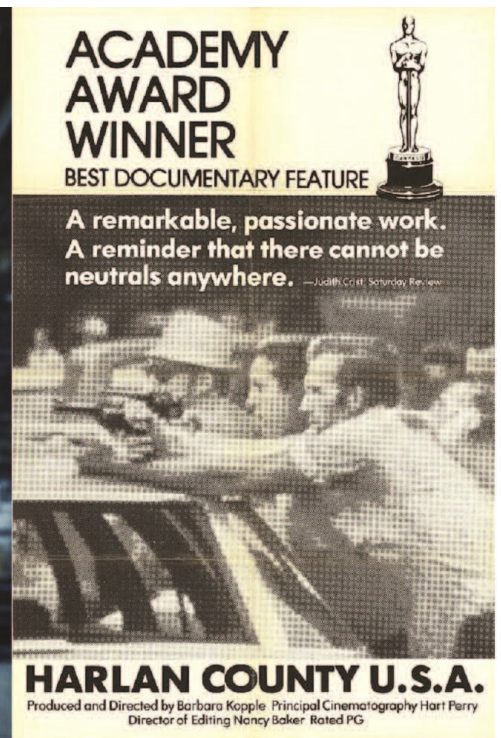
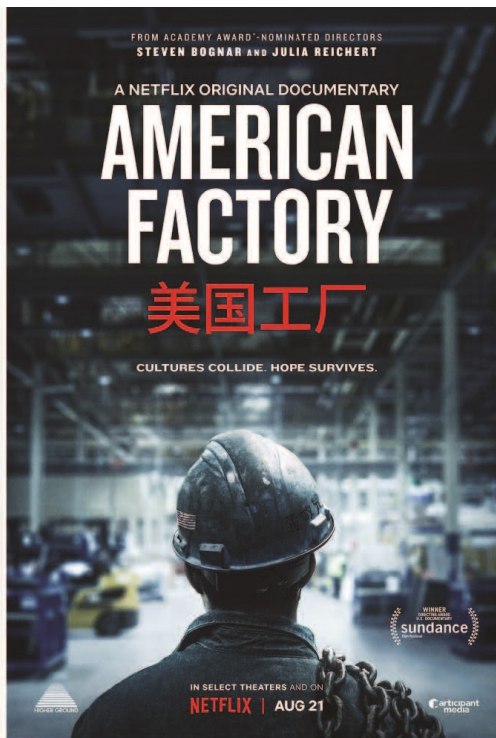
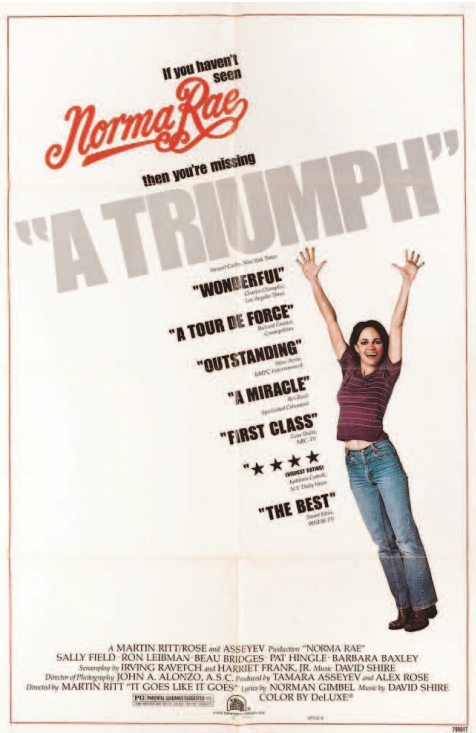


We're on the Web:  
[pa.aflcio.org/349](http://pa.aflcio.org/349)

## Calendar of Events

- 03/15 Beaver-Lawrence Central Labor Council Executive Board and Membership meetings; Executive Board – 6:00 pm via Zoom; Membership meeting is canceled due to continuing pandemic.
- 03/26 SEIU Healthcare PA rally in support of nursing home residents and caregivers; the rally will be held in front of the Beaver County Courthouse, Beaver; 4:00 pm. See first page of this issue of the UNION BUG for additional details
- 03/31 1<sup>st</sup> quarter NWPA ALF meeting. Check with NWPA ALF for status of meeting.
- 03/31 Last day to file Pennsylvania AFL-CIO scholarship applications. Deadline extended from February 28<sup>th</sup>. See February UNION BUG for application.
- 04/19 Beaver-Lawrence Central Labor Council Executive Board and Membership meetings. Please check with Executive Board members or read April UNION for status of meetings.
- 04/28 Workers' Memorial Day.
- 05/07 Last day to file NWPA ALF scholarship applications. See application attached to the end of February issue of the UNION BUG.
- 05/18 Primary Election Day.
- 05/21 Last day to file Beaver-Lawrence Central Labor Council scholarship applications. See application attached to the end of February issue of the UNION BUG.

Calendar of Events submissions must be emailed to Jody Kohser, Calendar of Events Coordinator, at [jkohser@verizon.net](mailto:jkohser@verizon.net), by 6:00 p.m. on April 12th to be considered for publication in the April 2021 issue of the **UNION BUG**.



# Stay Home With These Critically Acclaimed Labor Films

Whether it's the cold or the pandemic keeping you indoors, you can get cozy in the comfort of your own home and watch some of our favorite movies about unions and workers. Choose one or take in several and make it a union film night!

**Labor 411**  
 MAKING IT EASY TO SUPPORT GOOD JOBS  
 LOS ANGELES | SAN FRANCISCO | WASHINGTON, D.C. | PHILADELPHIA | NEW YORK

## Feature Films

- "On the Waterfront" (1954)
- "The Molly Maguires" (1970)
- "Norma Rae" (1979)
- "Matewan" (1987)
- "Bread and Roses" (2000)
- "North Country" (2005)
- "Made in Dagenham" (2010)

## Documentaries

- "Native Land" (1942)
- "American Factory" (2019)
- "Roger & Me" (1989)
- "Harlan County U.S.A." (1976)
- "The Willmar 8" (1982)
- "At the River I Stand" (1993)
- "Miles of Smiles: Years of Struggle" (1982)

Find more union-made products at [www.Labor411.org](http://www.Labor411.org)