



**Fostering
Creation
of Good
Jobs**



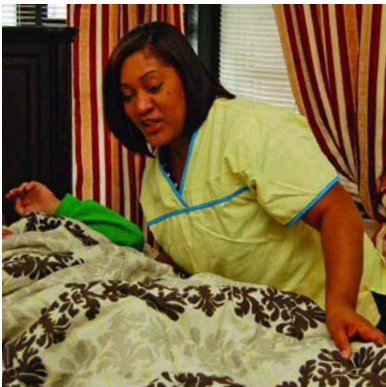
**Improving
the Quality
of America's
Jobs**



**Ensuring
Access to
Jobs**



**Building
Economic
Security
Between
Jobs**



ABOUT NELP

For more than 40 years, the National Employment Law Project has sought to ensure that work is an anchor of economic security and a ladder of opportunity for all working families. In partnership with national, state, and local allies, NELP promotes policies and programs that create good jobs, strengthen upward mobility, enforce hard-won workplace rights, and help unemployed workers regain their footing. To learn more about NELP, visit www.nelp.org.

Letter from the Executive Director



Friends,

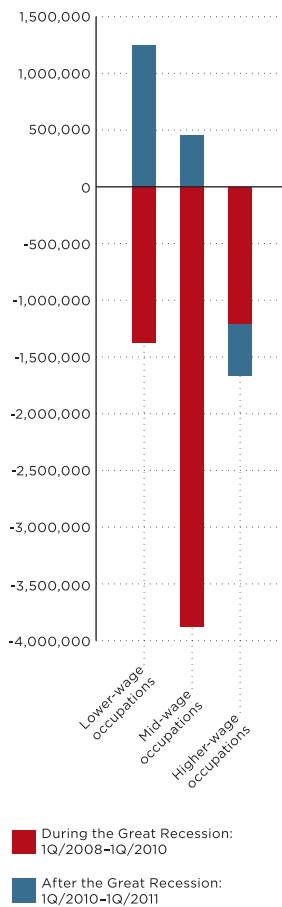
The year 2011 entered like a lion—and ended with the people roaring back. Even before the final inaugural confetti fell last January, the rout on workers' rights had begun. Lawmakers in Wisconsin, Ohio and elsewhere axed public employee collective bargaining. A number of states where joblessness remains high made deep cuts in unemployment insurance, and proposals surfaced to punish the unemployed for not finding work. Maine's leaders rolled back the state's pioneering child labor protections, and in Florida, Washington and Missouri, corporate lobbyists and their political allies tried to block the indexed minimum wage increases that voters had approved to prevent inflation from eroding the value of this core standard.

The overreach was palpable, the attacks too extreme—and by year's end, workers across America had had enough. In Ohio, voters roundly repudiated the rollback of bargaining rights for public employees. Same-day voter registration was restored in Maine, through a people's referendum that overruled the reactionary state legislature. Arizona voters recalled the legislator who had authored the state's egregious anti-immigrant law. And occupiers of Wall Street and Main Streets across the country put the issue of rising income inequality front and center.

Through it all, NELP was in the fray, fighting *against* efforts to gut unemployment insurance and core labor standards, and fighting *for* good jobs, economic policies that prioritize working families, and stronger labor law enforcement. As you'll see in the pages that follow, **NELP's work in 2011 made a positive difference for America's workers across the full continuum of work-related issues—from job creation and job access to job quality and security between jobs.** Among the highlights:

- NELP helped cement economic security for millions of workers, leading efforts to maintain federal unemployment insurance, reauthorize Trade Adjustment Assistance, and amend state laws to preserve extended unemployment insurance in 33 states;
- NELP built the capacity of workers' allies to fight wage theft by publishing a comprehensive [guide](#) and conducting training sessions that reached hundreds of advocates, while continuing to successfully promote U.S. Labor Department enforcement reforms;
- We partnered with groups on the ground to beat back attacks on minimum wage laws in numerous states, enforce voter-approved indexed increases, and launch new campaigns in several states;

**Low-Wage Occupations
Lead Job Growth, Following
Loss of Better-Paying Jobs**



- We **documented** the loss of good jobs and lopsided growth of low-wage jobs, and issued a comprehensive **blueprint** of innovative strategies state and local governments can harness to accelerate economic recovery and grow good jobs; and
- NELP shone a **spotlight** on discriminatory hiring practices that limit job opportunities for the unemployed and for people with criminal records, and promoted reforms in policy and practice to end these unfair and unlawful exclusions.

There were setbacks along the way as well, but 2011’s victories and achievements were powerful reminders that even when challenges are daunting, ***the best within us can—and must—transcend the worst around us***. And they signified something else: a powerful reaffirmation of the fundamental role work plays in the lives of Americans, of the value we attach to it, and of the commitment most Americans feel to guaranteeing that work will be the cornerstone of economic opportunity and security.

All of us at NELP believe in the power of work to transform individuals, their families and their communities; to provide for today and prepare for tomorrow; and to build a strong economy that revolves around and rewards work and workers. We are grateful for the opportunities we have in *our* work to play a role in realizing the promise of work for others—and because we know our work is possible only with the generous support, financial and otherwise, of our many partners, allies, friends and donors, we are deeply grateful for that support.

As we look ahead, we know daunting challenges remain. But we are also excited and energized by the positive opportunities. Numerous states are taking up proposals to raise their minimum wage rates. Legislation to ban hiring discrimination against the unemployed is moving in several. And the electoral campaign provides many openings for inserting “work” and “workers” into the national discourse—and to give office seekers and office holders an opportunity to show whose side they’re on.

Excited by these opportunities and buoyed by the winds at our back, we are eager to continue this important work with you throughout 2012 and beyond.

Warmly,

Christine L. Owens
Executive Director

Official White House Photo by Lawrence Jackson



President Barack Obama delivers a statement on proposed minimum wage and over-time protections for home care workers at the White House on December 15, 2011. NELP was a leading advocate for the proposed rules.

Thousands of New Yorkers rally for living wage jobs in historic Riverside Church on November 21, 2011. The event was sponsored by the Living Wage NYC campaign, in which NELP is a key partner.



Living Wage NYC/RWDSU

National Employment Law Project



The Occupy Wall Street protests sparked renewed debate about economic inequality in America. NELP is working to expand economic opportunity for America's low-wage workers so they have a fair shot at good jobs and the American Dream.

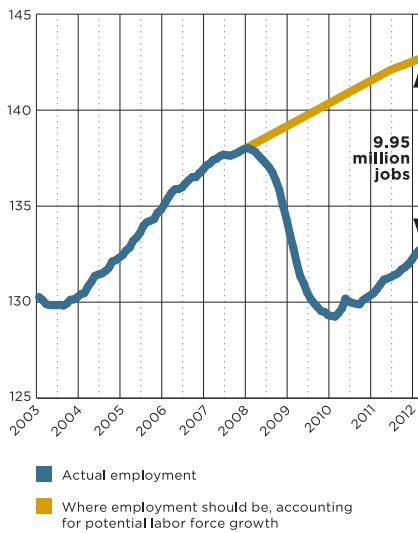
Fostering Creation of Good Jobs

Our nation is facing a deep deficit of good jobs that can sustain middle-class families. Nearly 13 million Americans are unemployed, and roughly eight million more are underemployed, unable to find full-time work. Millions more are working in jobs that leave them struggling to meet their families' most basic needs.

Our economy lost nearly nine million jobs during the recession and its aftermath, and we've gained back less than one-third of them. The jobs that have returned thus far are concentrated in lower-wage occupations and pay less than the mid-wage jobs that constituted 60 percent of jobs lost in the recession.

NELP is working to elevate the creation of family-sustaining jobs as a top policy priority at the local, state, and national levels. Our economic recovery [agenda](#) points the way forward, highlighting successful model projects from around the nation that can put workers onto payrolls quickly and improve the quality of life in our communities. We're advocating for living wage ordinances that require big developers to meet higher wage standards if they want to benefit from public subsidies. And we're focused on improving existing jobs through stronger labor protections and enforcement.

The Jobs Deficit as of February 2012 (in millions)



Source: Analysis of Congressional Budget Office and Current Employment Statistics data, Bureau of Labor Statistics

2011 HIGHLIGHTS

Mapping Road to Economic Recovery

NELP's economic recovery agenda, *Filling the Good Jobs Deficit*, provided state and local allies a compendium of proven job creation strategies to get Americans back to work quickly while laying the foundation for sustainable growth and long-term public good. Our follow-up report, *State Infrastructure Banks*, drilled down on a key strategy for infrastructure financing and highlighted best practices for using public funds to create quality jobs.

Fighting for Living Wage Jobs

NELP was a key partner of the Living Wage NYC Campaign, which won an agreement with city leaders to extend living wage standards to New York City's taxpayer-funded economic development programs for the first time. NELP was the architect of the policy proposal and helped shape the debate at City Hall and in the media on why New York needs to refocus its economic development efforts around creating more living wage jobs for local residents.



NELP's Christine Owens introduces keynote speaker Tim Bartik of the Upjohn Institute at NELP's Transforming Communities conference in Flint, Michigan on June 1, 2011.

National Employment Law Project



A Year of Unbalanced Growth: Industries, Wages, and the First 12 Months of Job Growth After the Great Recession

February 2011

“It is too early to predict whether the pattern of unbalanced, bottom-heavy job growth will continue. But these findings do suggest that for unemployed workers, as well as for those seeking to move up in the labor market or entering it for the first time, the current distribution of job opportunities has deteriorated, compared to before the recession.”

Fostering Innovative Economic Development

NELP broadened our efforts to revitalize the Midwest economy, serving on the steering committee of the Irvington Innovation Zone, a community-based economic development program that aims to revitalize the east side of Indianapolis by creating good jobs in advanced manufacturing, motorsports, logistics, education, and health care.



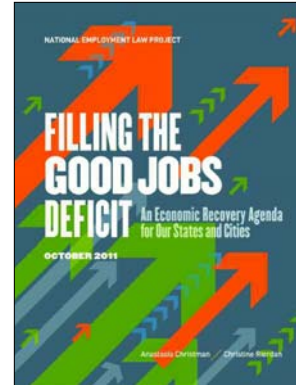
The Good Jobs Deficit: A Closer Look at Recent Job Loss and Job Growth Trends Using Occupational Data

July 2011

“During the Great Recession, employment losses occurred across the board, but were concentrated in mid-wage occupations. But in the weak recovery to date, employment growth has been concentrated in lower-wage occupations, with minimal growth in mid-wage occupations and net losses in higher-wage occupations.”

Shaping Our Nation’s Job Creation Agenda

NELP was an influential voice in the public dialogue around job creation; our ideas on subsidized work programs and ending discrimination against the unemployed were incorporated into President Obama’s American Jobs Act proposal. NELP also elevated the need to consider the quality of new jobs at two national conferences in Washington, D.C., and participated in national coalitions weighing in on proposed federal legislation concerning job creation.



Filling the Good Jobs Deficit: An Economic Recovery Agenda for Our States and Cities

October 2011

“Putting America back to work is a national challenge and requires a strong national response. But there are also solutions we can deploy at the state and local levels to address the good jobs deficit. We highlight innovative projects and financing tools to spur local ideas and note parallel steps federal lawmakers could be taking to support job creation on the ground.”

Sharing Ideas to Transform Communities

NELP’s *Transforming Communities* conference in June brought more than 100 community leaders, advocates, and experts from eight states to Flint, Michigan, to share real-world policies and strategies to create good jobs and restore opportunity in the Midwest and beyond.

Standing Up Against Wage Theft

In 2011, NELP wrapped up an 11-year lawsuit filed on behalf of 1,000 delivery workers from West Africa who worked for major grocery and pharmacy chains in Manhattan. Partnering with the law firm Outten & Golden to represent the class, NELP recovered more than \$6 million in back wages and fees, and the bonds forged between workers in the case, *Ansoumana v. Gristedes*, led to unionized delivery positions at the stores sued.

My name is Ansoumana Faty. I come from Senegal.

I worked as a delivery worker. The man who hired me shuttled us from store to store. After a while, he assigned me to a supermarket on 90th Street.

My day started at 8 a.m. and finished at 8 p.m. There was no break at all. You do whatever they ask you to do—not only delivering groceries, but bagging, cleaning, picking up heavy stuff, whatever—otherwise you're out.

We were paid \$90 for 84 hours a week. Sometimes I couldn't even get that money. I was basically relying on tips.

The day I decided to stand up, it was because of the disrespect. I called the lady in charge to ask for my check, and she got upset and answered me, "What do you need all this money for?"

Ninety dollars for 84 hours. No day off in five years. Working even in blizzards. It was a little too much. So, I did some research and got connected with NELP.

NELP filed a lawsuit on my behalf, and other workers joined it. As a result, people in the delivery business are now considered employees of the stores, so they are paid like the other workers. They have the same rights as the cashier, the manager, and the floor guys. It all started from this lawsuit.

I'm not in the delivery business anymore. I became a taxi driver. NELP made a very big difference in my life. ■



NELP represented Ansoumana Faty in a lawsuit against a Gristedes supermarket in Manhattan, where he was paid little more than \$1 an hour as a delivery worker.



National Employment Law Project

Ensuring Access to Jobs

One in four U.S. adults—65 million people—has a criminal record.



Source: NELP analysis of U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics data

A tough job market isn't the only factor preventing millions of Americans from finding work. Arbitrary and unfair employment barriers are shutting out many qualified applicants from competing for jobs. Employers are increasingly and wrongfully using criminal background checks, credit checks, and even unemployed status as reasons to exclude job applicants.

It's illegal for employers to adopt blanket no-hire policies that refuse employment to all persons with criminal records, without taking into account the age, seriousness, and job relevance of the offense. Making matters worse, the background checks often pull up information that is erroneous or out of date. Nonetheless, job postings that disqualify anyone with a criminal record continue to appear, as do exclusionary postings that essentially tell the unemployed not to apply.

NELP is at the forefront of the movement to eliminate arbitrary barriers to employment that unfairly shut out millions of Americans from the dignity and reward of work. We're educating employers on best practices and the fair use of background checks. We're promoting model policies and basic protections that keep job opportunities open to all who deserve a chance. And, we continue to advocate for quality job training and reemployment programs so that workers are equipped with the skills and qualifications they need to successfully join the workforce.

2011 HIGHLIGHTS

Spotlighting Hiring Discrimination Against Unemployed

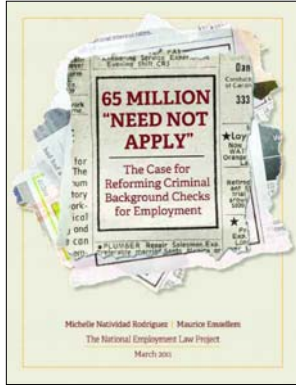
A [report](#) by NELP drew national attention to this disturbing trend and galvanized policymakers to act. The U.S. House and Senate introduced legislation informed by NELP's research and analysis to outlaw the practice, and President Obama included a version of it in his American Jobs Act. More than a dozen states and localities introduced bills to curb such exclusion; several have been enacted into law.

Challenging Criminal-Records Barriers to Employment

NELP's study, *65 Million "Need Not Apply,"* made the case for reforming the use of criminal background checks in employment. We educated government officials and employers through trainings on Title VII employment discrimination and criminal-records best practices, and we sponsored a conference in April that assembled top federal officials and advocates from 21 states to advance the policy and legal agenda.

Pressing for Clear Federal Policies on Criminal Records

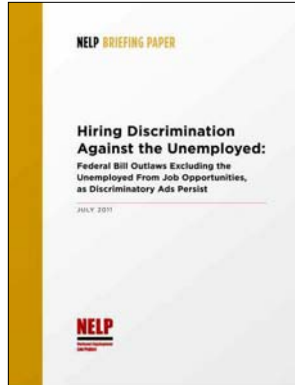
NELP filed discrimination charges with the U.S. Labor Department's Civil Rights Center to protect the rights of Workforce Investment Act program participants who were unfairly denied job opportunities because of criminal records. As a result, the Labor Department has agreed to issue detailed policy guidance for WIA-funded programs.



**65 Million “Need Not Apply”:
The Case for Reforming
Criminal Background Checks
for Employment**

March 2011

“Across the nation there is a consistent theme: people with criminal records ‘need not apply’ for available jobs. In the end, workers are not the only ones who suffer. Employers are disadvantaged as blanket hiring restrictions artificially limit the pool of qualified candidates.”



Hiring Discrimination Against the Unemployed: Federal Bill Outlaws Excluding the Unemployed From Job Opportunities, as Discriminatory Ads Persist

July 2011

“At a time when the competition for jobs is extraordinarily intense, some businesses and recruitment firms are telling would-be job seekers that they can’t get a job unless they already have a job. This perverse catch-22 is deepening our unemployment crisis by arbitrarily foreclosing job opportunities to many who are otherwise qualified for them.”



State Reforms Promoting Employment of People With Criminal Records: 2010-11 Legislative Round-Up

December 2011

“The inspiring work of state policy makers and advocates across the country has led to new model policies that allow qualified people with criminal records to compete more fairly for employment. This paper highlights these laws enacted in 2010 and 2011 and reports on state trends of concern that broadly restrict employment based on a criminal record.”



National Employment Law Project

NELP’s Michelle Rodriguez meets with the late U.S. Representative Donald Payne of New Jersey on April 6, 2011 to urge criminal background check reforms.

Urging Fairness in Healthcare Background Checks

NELP advised the federal government’s Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services on model background check procedures for states to apply to long-term care workers under the Affordable Care Act. NELP delivered a presentation about fair screening policies at the Centers’ conference of state ACA grantees.

Defending Workers’ Legal Rights

NELP and co-counsel reached a confidential settlement in August in a federal class-action lawsuit filed against First Transit, Inc., one of the nation’s largest bus companies, for discriminating against African-American and Latino employees and job applicants with criminal records. NELP also filed two more discrimination cases with the EEOC in 2011.

Protecting Home Care Workers' Rights

Josefina Toledo Montero is lead plaintiff in a class-action lawsuit filed by NELP, MFY Legal Services, and the law firm Abbey Spanier, against a New York-based home care agency, alleging flagrant violations of wage-and-hour laws, including underpayment of wages and failure to pay overtime as required by law. In 2011, the parties negotiated a settlement agreement, which awaits final court approval. (Her story is translated from remarks in Spanish.)

As a home care worker, I take care of all of my patients' needs, including changing their diapers, feeding them, helping them take their medications, and accompanying them to appointments. I work a 12-hour shift. I cannot leave the patients alone for a moment, because I'm completely responsible for them.

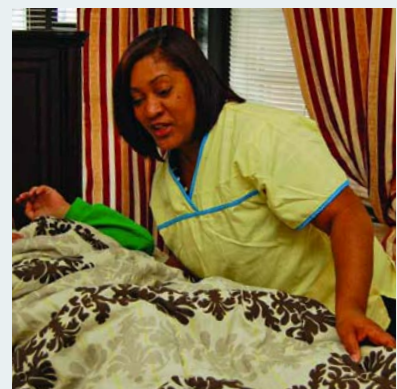
Some employers don't treat you the way they should. I used to work 60 hours a week and was never paid overtime. They didn't tell us if the patient had a contagious illness. They didn't give us gloves, uniforms, or disinfectant for our hands. They charged us for our identification cards. If you didn't accept a case, they'd begin to retaliate against you. They'd say, "Well, you don't need the job then."

I was getting minimum pay, without benefits or anything. I'd been working for three-and-a-half years with this employer. One day I felt ill and asked them to send someone else the next day. They said, "No, you have to go." When I went in, someone else was there. They did not notify me of anything. I lost my work day, came home, and that's when my husband and I started doing some research and found NELP.

Since we started the lawsuit, NELP has helped me understand my rights and defend them without fear of retaliation. Now, I work for another agency that is more reasonable and pays overtime. If there's a misunderstanding, I speak with my employer and resolve the issue. I don't just accept whatever they tell me. I no longer have that fear. ■



NELP represents Josefina Toledo Montero in a lawsuit against a New York home care agency that committed frequent violations of minimum wage and overtime laws.



National Employment Law Project

Improving the Quality of America's Jobs

Three in four low-wage workers were underpaid or not paid at all for overtime.



Source: *Broken Laws, Unprotected Workers* (2009) available at www.unprotectedworkers.org

The rising concentration of wealth at the top, combined with stagnant or falling wages for most workers, has widened income inequality and taken its toll on America's families. Today, more than 46 million Americans are living in poverty—the most in half a century—even though many are fully employed. A full-time job at the federal minimum wage of \$7.25 an hour pays barely \$15,000 a year—several thousand dollars below the poverty line for a family of three. Increasing numbers of Americans—including many formerly unemployed who were desperate to find work—are now working in low-wage jobs, where job growth has been concentrated since the recession.

Adding insult to injury, millions of low-wage workers are routinely cheated out of the wages they've earned. Some don't get paid minimum wage or overtime; others have their tips stolen or illegal deductions taken out of their paychecks; and many are misclassified as "independent contractors" instead of employees and deprived of basic labor standards, or are simply not paid at all. But many workers are afraid to complain, due to threats of retaliation or deportation.

Stagnant pay and poor job conditions are not only hurting America's families—they're holding back our economy, which needs higher family incomes to restore the consumer spending that drives growth. To respond, NELP is working to promote good jobs at good wages through campaigns to raise the minimum wage, fight wage theft, close loopholes, and promote the creation of middle-class jobs for local communities.

2011 HIGHLIGHTS

Raising the Profile of Minimum Wage

NELP helped launch the latest round of activism making the case for a stronger minimum wage. Through aggressive media work (over 25 op-eds, dozens of radio interviews, and scores of online and print hits), a new website (www.RaiseTheMinimumWage.org), a Washington, D.C. forum on the latest minimum wage research, and direct support for campaigns across the country, NELP helped put the minimum wage back on the national policy agenda as a cornerstone of national economic recovery.

Winning Fairness for Home Care Workers

Years of persistent advocacy by NELP and allies paid off in December when the U.S. Labor Department proposed rules to finally extend federal minimum wage and overtime protections to the nation's more than 2.5 million home care workers. In 2011, NELP published the report, *Fair Pay for Home Care Workers*, and spoke at a U.S. Senate briefing on the decades-old exclusion.

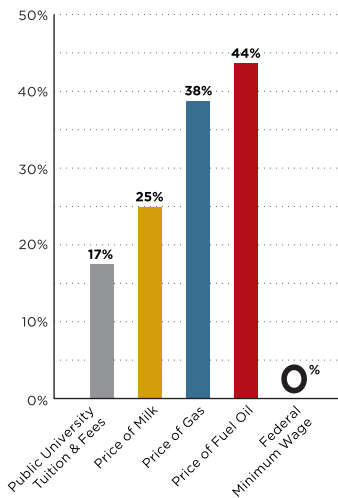


NELP's Paul Sonn moderates a Washington, D.C. press briefing on new research that bolsters the case for raising the minimum wage on June 7, 2011.

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Prices Rise, but the Minimum Wage Stagnates

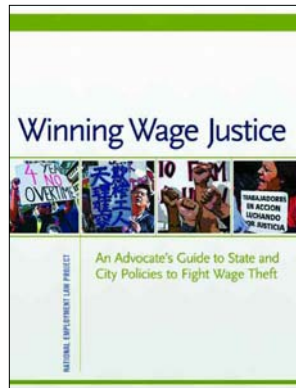
August 2009–August 2011



Source: Analysis of Bureau of Labor Statistics and College Board data

Protecting Immigrant Workers from Abuses

NELP successfully advocated for U.S. Labor Department reforms to address workplace abuse of immigrant workers. They include a [Memorandum of Understanding](#) that prevents immigration enforcement from interfering with investigations of labor violations; and new U visa protocols that protect immigrant victims of workplace crimes such as involuntary servitude or trafficking. NELP monitored implementation of both policies and provided technical assistance to community partners.



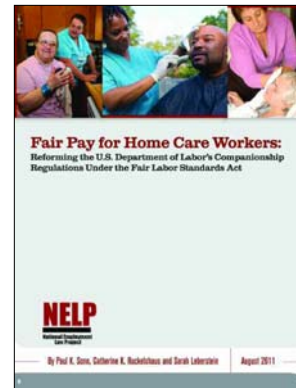
Winning Wage Justice: An Advocate's Guide to State and City Policies to Fight Wage Theft

January 2011

“By providing our allies a concrete menu of innovative policies to strengthen enforcement of minimum wage and overtime laws—as well as strategic guidance on identifying which policies make sense in a given community—our hope is that we help turn the tide and shift the American workplace from wage theft to wage justice.”

Supporting Campaigns to End Wage Theft

In January, NELP published [Winning Wage Justice](#), a comprehensive 132-page guide featuring 28 model policies for which community groups can advocate at the state and city levels to fight wage theft. We conducted trainings and webinars for hundreds of advocates coast to coast, and advised wage theft campaigns in California, Florida, Illinois, Maryland, Michigan, New York, Rhode Island, Texas, and Washington.



Fair Pay for Home Care Workers: Reforming the U.S. Department of Labor's Companionship Regulations Under the Fair Labor Standards Act

August 2011

“Since 1974, home care workers have been excluded from basic minimum wage and overtime protections as the result of overly broad U.S. Department of Labor regulations. The result has been to suppress wages for the home care workforce, consigning millions of caregivers—the overwhelming majority of them women, many of them immigrants and women of color—to working in poverty.”

Countering Attacks on Minimum Wage

NELP defended the minimum wage in state legislatures and in the courts. We provided technical and media support to advocates in Maine, New Hampshire, Missouri, Ohio, and Wyoming to successfully fend off attempts to roll back minimum wage gains. NELP also protected annual cost-of-living increases in the courts: we successfully sued Florida for failing to raise its minimum wage (winning pay raises for more than 200,000 workers); and we helped defeat a legal challenge to a cost-of-living increase in Washington state.

Advocating
for the
Unemployed

Sandy Pochapin, a former marketing manager, was laid off in 2011. Sandy first shared her story with NELP through our website, www.unemployedworkers.org, and has since been quoted about the struggles of being unemployed in *The New York Times* and other major media. She lives in Massachusetts.



I've worked full-time in advertising/marketing in a manager or director role since 1979, so I have over 30 years of experience. Because marketing is one of the first departments to be let go in bad times, I've been laid off more than once in my career. But this last one has been the worst.

I have a strong résumé, and I've been trying to keep my skills fresh. I do a lot of networking, yet I've just entered my tenth month of unemployment, without having had a single interview to date. Most employers don't want to hire people with more than ten years of experience. My decades of experience—which flag that I'm over 50—aren't in great demand.

Unfortunately, my husband's business has taken a huge hit as well. We were fortunate to have savings to fall back on, but that's almost gone now. It's hard to believe that we could lose our home in the near future, but unless I find a job or the economy starts to pick up, that could happen.

Several people in my networking groups have been out of work for as long as three years now. They've exhausted their unemployment benefits and have received foreclosure letters from their banks. They literally don't know which way to turn.

That's why NELP's advocacy on behalf of unemployed workers is so important. For many of us, unemployment insurance is the main thing keeping us out of homelessness or worse. Unemployed people want to continue to contribute to society by paying our taxes, raising our kids, being active in our communities. Unemployment insurance is a lifeline, and believe me, nobody *wants* to collect it. We would much rather be working. ■



Former marketing manager Sandy Pochapin continues her job search while giving voice to the situation facing America's unemployed workers through media interviews arranged through NELP.

Sandy Pochapin

Building Economic Security Between Jobs

Employers shed nearly nine million jobs during the Great Recession and its aftermath, and the number of unemployed workers more than doubled. Recovery has been slow, with nearly 13 million Americans still officially unemployed. Almost six million of them—more than four in ten—have been out of work for six months or longer, with the average length of unemployment exceeding nine months. The jobs shortage remains acute, with around four unemployed workers for every one job opening.

Average Duration of Unemployment (in weeks)



Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, Current Population Survey (seasonally adjusted)

When our nation suffers job loss and long-term unemployment on such a massive scale, it's a stark reminder of why social insurance programs such as unemployment insurance are so critical to building economic security for workers and their families. Unemployment insurance cushions the blow when involuntary job loss strikes. It prevents millions of families from plummeting into poverty, while keeping workers attached to the labor market and providing much-needed spending to stabilize and boost local economies.

NELP has led the effort to retain economic security for jobless workers by helping to win the strongest program of income support through unemployment insurance in our nation's history. We promote policies and best practices that create jobs, improve job training and reemployment services for laid-off workers, and help avert layoffs in the first place. We're fending off brazen attacks on unemployment insurance at the state and federal levels, and shaping the program's future with tenacious advocacy and smart ideas on how to modernize and responsibly finance the program.

2011 HIGHLIGHTS

Renewing Federal Unemployment Insurance

NELP led a national coalition that won a hard-fought reauthorization of the federal unemployment insurance extension programs. Our research helped shape the public debate, and our outreach to unemployed workers and their allies moved thousands of unemployed workers to make their voices heard.

Fighting State Unemployment Cuts and Restrictions

NELP joined with state allies to fight proposed unemployment insurance cuts and eligibility restrictions in ten states, helping to mitigate the damage in some. We hosted a national conference in December to proactively equip advocates with the tools they need to repel attacks on their states' programs.

Reauthorizing Trade Adjustment Assistance

NELP's solid expertise and first-hand experiences were crucial to winning reauthorization of Trade Adjustment Assistance, which provides job training and income support to workers laid off due to trade. NELP highlighted the program's real-world impact in a series of [videos](#) featuring displaced workers in the Midwest.



**Hanging On by a Thread:
Renew Federal Unemployment
Insurance to Aid Families,
Boost Stalled Economy**

October 2011

“Never in the history of the unemployment program have federal jobless benefits been eliminated, or even reduced, when unemployment rates were as high or durations of unemployment as prolonged as they are today. With workers facing a national crisis of long-term unemployment, it is not the time to change course and terminate federal support for jobless workers and their families.”



**Unraveling the Unemployment
Insurance Lifeline**

August 2011

“In this climate of fiscal austerity, and amid mounting federal debt, states are asking workers who have lost their jobs through no fault of their own to bear a greater-than-equal share of the federal debt burden. In the first half of this year, states lawmakers approved or seriously considered a series of damaging measures that reduce the amount of UI benefits workers may receive, restricted the types of workers who may receive them, or both.”



**Can't Get There From Here:
Facing Reality in Financing
Michigan's Unemployment
Insurance System**

August 2011

“Today’s financing problems are rooted in a history of irresponsible employer UI tax breaks starting in the 1990s. Proponents of UI cuts wrongly promise that today’s benefit cuts will result in significant reductions in future UI payroll tax increases on Michigan employers. In fact, there is no reasonable hope that significant payroll tax savings will arise from UI benefit cuts.”

**Extending Unemployment
Insurance in 33 States**

NELP worked with field partners to successfully advocate for state legislation authorizing continuation of the Extended Benefits unemployment insurance program in 33 states and the District of Columbia.



Office of Manhattan Borough President

NELP's Mitchell Hirsch speaks at an October 23, 2011 press conference in New York City highlighting the problem of job discrimination against the unemployed.

**Working to Restore
Unemployment Program Solvency**

With 30 states facing insolvent unemployment insurance trust funds, NELP partnered with a key ally to develop a comprehensive federal policy solution to mitigate the immediate crisis in the states while putting funds on a path to solvency without cutting workers’ benefits. Federal legislation to address the problem incorporated recommendations from this proposal.

2011 National Awards Dinner



REBUILD
AMERICA'S ECONOMY

RESTORE
OPPORTUNITY FOR ALL

RESPECT
AMERICA'S WORKERS

On November 9, 2011, NELP hosted our National Awards Dinner to celebrate two champions of workers' rights: former *New York Times* columnist Bob Herbert, whom NELP honored as our inaugural Beth Shulman Fellow; and U.S. Solicitor of Labor M. Patricia Smith, whom NELP recognized as the first recipient of our Frances Perkins Legacy Award.

Hundreds of advocates and allies from around the nation joined to applaud the awardees and to support NELP's continuing work to rebuild America's economy, restore opportunity for all, and promote respect for America's workers.

Photographs by R David Original Photography



From left: Fran Ansley, Jim Sessions, and Jules Bernstein



Bob Herbert and David Michaels



Terry Meginniss



Paul Sonn and Judy Scott



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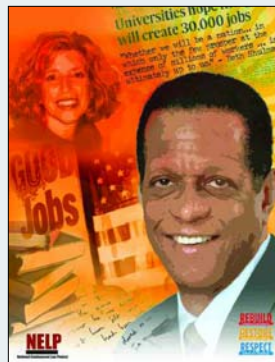
Foreground: Shaun O'Brien and Rich Walsh; Projected: Beth Shulman



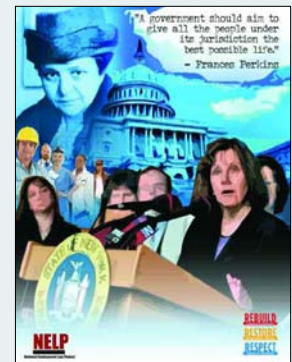
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IN MEMORIAM

Bruce Herman (1957-2012), immediate past executive director at NELP, earned a reputation as a leading national expert on high-road economic development, worker cooperatives, job training, and labor-management partnerships, over the course of a brilliant but too short career.

Bruce came to NELP in 2004, after a number of years with the Garment Industry Development Council in New York and the AFL-CIO Working for America Institute in Washington, D.C. In addition to expanding NELP's profile and funding, Bruce created NELP's Economic Adjustment Initiative to help displaced auto workers gain access to benefits, services, and training. Bruce also was actively involved in the exemplary work of the Restaurant Opportunities Center and helped found the worker-owned restaurant Colors, a cooperative built by former employees of the Windows on the World restaurant atop the Twin Towers. Bruce left NELP in 2007 to serve as New York State deputy commissioner of labor for workforce development, and he recently began working as an independent consultant and advisor on revitalizing American manufacturing.

At such a crucial time for our nation's economy and for the millions of workers still struggling to find good jobs, we will sorely miss Bruce's vision, dedication, and wisdom. ■



Restaurant Opportunities Center

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