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STRIKES SWEEP THE NATION AND WORLD: CLIMATE STRIKERS, AUTO WORKERS, NURSES, TEACHERS, AND MORE TAKE TO THE STREETS



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Strike Stories: Climate—P. 3, 6, 7; Auto—P. 9; Nurses—P. 11; Education—P. 12

Homeless need housing not prison camps

EDITORIAL

“No FEMA Camps for the Homeless!” has been a rallying cry in the streets and on social media since President Trump’s recent threat to destroy tent communities and force people into federally-run ‘facilities’: empty military bases and other prison like encampments. His words have sparked outrage and fear among homeless people and far beyond, and the determination to resist.

Saying that the homeless ‘live on the best streets of Los Angeles and San Francisco’, cities that ‘destroy themselves’ by ‘allowing’ them to be there, Trump has ominously stated that ‘we’ll be doing something about it’, because the presence of homeless people interferes with ‘real estate’. And this ‘something’ has nothing to do with providing people with housing.

Trump and his administration, in fact the whole corporate class, have shown what they are capable of: stuffing refugee children into concentration camps where they sicken and die. Now they are moving on to the next set of vulnerable people. This is also the next level of mass incarceration as slave labor. People who live on the streets will be swept out of sight into work camps, where their labor will match the cost of the labor of the robots that have taken many of their jobs. This is the fascist face of corporate rule.

The financialization of housing by real estate cartels has driven housing costs and especially rents up so high that many workers simply can’t afford a place to live. Then people’s rights



In addition to putting immigrants into prison camps, the government now plans to do the same with the homeless. CARTOON/ANDY WILLIS

are brutally violated by sweeping them out of sight. This is the next step. Homeless people have seen this coming.

Instead of housing people, the powers that be punish them for trying to stay alive, for the ‘crime’ of being victims of a failing economic system. More and more people, even working full-time, can’t even afford to rent an apartment or room. Many are families who have been through a medical crisis, an eviction or foreclosure, or a job loss. Many homeless people work, often in the gig economy, either part or fulltime. They come from all backgrounds and walks of life, and many are very skilled—yet thrown out of an economy in crisis.

On September 18, the Head of HUD Ben Carson visited a public housing complex in San Francisco’s Potrero Hill district, and was met by protesters. Under his watch, HUD has proposed to cut its budget by 20%, end rental assistance to a quarter of a million families, and threatened to evict 55,000 children of immigrant families from subsidized housing. Five hundred thousand public housing units across the country stand empty.

The fight against this latest attack is a moral and practical one for the vast majority of us who don’t belong to the billionaire class that owns the corporations and controls the government in the interest of their profitmaking.

Many of us are a step away from homelessness ourselves.

A 3D-printed house can be created overnight. By one estimate there are six empty houses for every homeless person in this country. We must demand that the government fill existing units and build new public housing, affordable for all, even for those with no income. Various housing groups are demanding that housing be a universal right, and are pushing for massive programs; and a few candidates are beginning to respond.

House all homeless people in decent housing now! Make housing and all we need a human and economic right.

PEOPLE’S TRIBUNE

The *People’s Tribune* is devoted to the understanding that an economic system that doesn’t feed, clothe, house, or care for its people must be and will be replaced by a system that meets the needs of the people. To that end, this paper is a tribune of the people. It is the voice of millions of everyday people who are fighting to survive in an America in crisis. It helps build connections among these fighters and the awareness that together, we can create a whole new society and world.

Today, technology is permanently eliminating jobs. Our needs can only be met by building a cooperative society where we the people, not the corporations, own the technology and the abundance it produces. Then, everyone’s needs will be provided for.

We welcome articles and artwork from those who are engaged in the struggle to build a new society that is of, by and for the people. We rely on readers and contributors to fund and distribute this paper.

The *People’s Tribune*, formerly published by the League of Revolutionaries for a New America, is now an independent newspaper with an editorial board based in Chicago.

PEOPLE’S TRIBUNE EDITORIAL POLICY: Articles that are unsigned, such as the cover story and editorials, reflect the views of the editorial board. By-lined articles reflect the views of the authors, and may or may not reflect the views of the editorial board.

Deadlines for articles and art: The deadline for articles, photographs and other art is the first of each month for the issue that comes out at the beginning of the following month. For example, the deadline for the June issue is May 1. Articles should be as short as possible, and no longer than 500 words. We reserve the right to edit articles to conform to space limitations.

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Publisher: People’s Tribune
ISSN# 1081-4787

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Youth lead fight: ‘System change, not climate change’

COVER STORY

CHICAGO, IL — “The oceans are rising—and so are we!”

That defiant chant shouted by thousands of marchers summed up the mood during the massive Global Climate Strike September 20. More than 4 million people took part in the 2,500 events in more than 150 countries, demanding an end to fossil fuels and serious action to reverse climate change.

The protests were huge, vibrant, and colorful. The participants were overwhelmingly young. The protests were partly inspired by the activism of Swedish teen-ager Greta Thunberg who has staged weekly protests over the past year about climate change.

Across the world, there was a broad recognition that—as one sign in New York City pointed out—“Our Planet Is Poisoned For Profit.”

Brazilian activist Artemisa Xakriabá told New York strikers, “The Amazon is on fire. Our future is connected by the same threads of the climate crisis.”

In Chicago, marchers chanted: “Say it loud! Say it clear! We only have 11 years!” Numerous signs called for “System Change, Not Climate Change.”

The extraordinary day was summed up well by Varshini Prakash of the Sunrise Movement, one of the organizers of the protests:

“Yesterday our generation took over. We really did. Our voices, our anger, our energy, our demands for serious climate action were *everywhere*—flooding the streets on all seven continents, and on the front page of nearly every newspaper in the world. And now that we know what it feels like to take the streets and take control, we’re not stopping.

“From now to Election Day 2020 and beyond, we need to build an unstoppable force in every city and town across the country that cannot be ignored by those in power. We will mobilize our generation in historic numbers to strike and vote so we can make crystal clear that any candidate who wants the youth vote in 2020 must make the Green New Deal a top priority.”

Those sentiments were echoed by Mary Boeve, the executive director of the group 350.org who said in a statement:

“[On September 20] we saw a movement, made up of people from all ages and backgrounds



PHOTO/JIM WEST



PHOTO/STAY HUMAN, SAN JOSE

coming together and calling for the end of coal, oil, and gas. ... September 20 was a demonstration of intent, of four million people who say that they are ready. Ready to move on and make the changes we need for a future free from fossil fuels and based in climate equity and justice. And it was only the beginning.”

Today, young people are stepping forward to lead the struggle for change—just as previous generations of young people did.

The Global Climate Strike showed that the world’s cor-

porate elite can be challenged through unrelenting pressure from the grassroots. We can confront those corporations about climate change and also about the denial of health care and education and every other injustice in our society.

Let’s keep the pressure up! We have entered a moment in history where the choice is clear: Either the people will end the rule of the corporations, or the corporations will destroy humanity and the planet. *System Change, Not Climate Change!*



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PHOTO/DAYMON HARTLEY, DAYMONJHARTLEY.COM

Strikes sweeping nation and globe have much in common

From the Editors

What do U.S. auto workers at GM, Chicago teachers and nurses, direct care provider workers in Massachusetts, Metal workers in Brazil, South African bank workers, transportation workers in Greece and France, and doctors in Sri Lanka have in common with the youth of the world who are fired up about climate change? All struck or authorized strikes during the month of September. The youth see no future in a world with a poisoned and increasingly dangerous environment. Workers increasingly have no future in a profit driven world capitalist economy—especially when their jobs can be replaced by technology faster than new jobs can be created.

Regardless of whether the issue is job security, a living wage, enough weekly hours, the conditions in classrooms under which our children learn, the environment in which our loved ones are cared for in hospitals or the condition of the environment we all live in, all stand in opposition to the maximum profits of the corporations. To increase one is to decrease the other.

As long as the technology of the digital revolution remains in the hands of the corporations or government they control, it will be used to grow their profits to the same extent that it insures our misery. It is when that technology is in the hands of humanity for the benefit of humanity as a whole that we will all enjoy a happy and prosperous future.

What candidates say on healthcare, homelessness, & more

From the Editors

The crisis in our country is arousing millions of people to bring their demands for economic survival and a just society to the arena of the 2020 elections. On this page, we briefly summarize the positions of the four currently top-polling Democratic presidential primary candidates on two key issues: Health care, and housing and homelessness. We've also highlighted the thinking of a couple of lower-polling Democratic candidates who have put forward ideas on the challenges technology brings society and a strong anti-war platform.

We hope these summaries can help our readers determine what program might best help “we, the people” continue our fight for a society and government that serves the people, not the corporations and billionaires. We will publish similar features in upcoming editions.

Views of the four top-polling candidates on healthcare and housing/homelessness

Joe Biden

Health care: Biden says he will protect Obamacare and build on it with a plan he says will insure more than 97% of Americans. He favors a “public health insurance option” similar to Medicare, to give people a choice between private insurance

and the public option. The public option would negotiate lower prices from hospitals and other health care providers. Medicare would be able to negotiate drug prices with pharmaceutical corporations, and there would be limits on drug price increases.

Housing/homelessness: Biden's only plan on housing sets a national goal of ensuring 100% of formerly imprisoned people have housing after leaving prison. Biden would direct the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development to only contract with entities that are open to housing individuals “looking for a second chance.” And he would expand funding for transitional housing.

Elizabeth Warren

Health care: Warren would defend Medicaid and Obamacare, but also enact Medicare for All. To bring down drug prices, the Department of Health and Human Services would manufacture generic drugs in certain cases, and Medicare would aggressively negotiate with drug companies. She also favors importing drugs from other countries when that is the cheapest way to get them.

Housing/homelessness: Warren says her plan would invest \$500 billion over the next 10 years to build, preserve, and rehab units that will be affordable to lower-income families. A big chunk of that investment leverages private dollars. The



Medicare for All action outside PhRMA headquarters in D.C. PHOTO/JACLYN HIGGS, NATIONAL NURSES UNITED

plan would be paid for with an increase in inheritance taxes on the wealthy. It would also help first-time, low-income homebuyers in formerly redlined or segregated neighborhoods to buy a home. Warren says her plan will bring down rental costs by 10% by increasing the supply of affordable housing, and by changing land-use rules that drive up housing costs. Warren has not stated a plan to provide immediate relief to the homeless.

Bernie Sanders

Health care: Sanders favors a Medicare-for-All, single-payer program that would replace private health insurance with a public plan that covers everyone. He advocates allowing Medicare to negotiate drug prices with pharmaceutical companies, allowing patients and pharmacists to buy drugs from other countries, and passing legislation that would cut prescription drug prices in half.

Housing/homelessness: Sanders announced a \$2.5 trillion housing plan that would include ending homelessness and limiting rent increases across the country by imposing a national rent control standard. Over the next decade, he said his plan would expand public housing, increase the availability of affordable housing and cap annual rent increases nationally, regardless of income, at no more than one and a half times the rate of inflation or 3 percent, whichever is higher. His plan would also

create a first-time homebuyer assistance program.

Kamala Harris

Health care: Harris would protect Obamacare, and her plan would extend Medicare to everyone over a 10-year transition period. Private insurers could offer Medicare plans. At the end of the 10-year transition, every American would be a part of this new Medicare system, getting their insurance either through the new public Medicare plan or a Medicare plan offered by a private insurer. Harris's plan would also audit prescription drug costs to ensure pharmaceutical companies are not charging more than other comparable countries.

Housing/homelessness: Harris has not stated a plan to provide relief to those already homeless. She has introduced in the Senate a Rent Relief Act that would provide a tax credit for people spending 30% or more of their income on rent and utilities. She also proposes that the government invest \$100 billion to provide downpayment and closing-cost assistance to four million homebuyers who rent or live in historically red-lined communities.

Some strong ideas on other crucial issues

Andrew Yang

Yang is the only candidate who has focused on the fact that technology is eliminating jobs and people's incomes. Yang says, “In the next 12 years, 1 out of 3

American workers are at risk of losing their jobs to new technologies—and unlike with previous waves of automation, this time new jobs will not appear quickly enough in large enough numbers to make up for it.” To avoid what he calls “an unprecedented crisis,” he proposes a Universal Basic Income (UBI) of \$1,000 per month to be paid to all U.S. citizens over the age of 18, with no conditions attached. Current welfare and social program beneficiaries would be given a choice between their current benefits or the \$1,000 a month. Yang's UBI would be paid for by consolidating some welfare programs and implementing a Value Added Tax of 10 percent.

Tulsi Gabbard

Gabbard is a major in the U.S. Army National Guard and is the first female combat veteran to run for president. She has made peace and diverting military spending to other purposes a central issue in her campaign. She says, “As president I will end these counterproductive and wasteful regime change wars, work to end this new Cold War and nuclear arms race, and take the trillions of dollars that we've been spending and invest those resources in serving the needs of the American people—healthcare, education, rebuilding our crumbling infrastructure, protecting our environment. There are many urgent needs here that we need to address and we've got to get our priorities straight.”



“Affordable Housing Vacancy” in San Francisco where thousands of people are criminalized for sleeping in the streets.

PHOTO/SARAH MENEFFEE



Advocates Cathleen Williams, Tyler Spagnolo and Crystal Sanchez intervene when the police department offers nonexistent resources in advance of a police sweep of a 200-person tent community in Sacramento, CA.

No FEMA camps for the homeless!

Editor's note: Below are comments by homeless movement leaders about Trump's threats against California's homeless. The outcry has been clear and wide against this latest threat—to round up homeless people, destroy their tents and tent communities, and put them away in federally-run camps, away from downtowns and resources. Talk of sweeping and incarcerating people in shutdown military bases is sparking outrage and resistance.

I've said it a million times Trump's next target is the homeless. ... Sprung tents in Sacramento ... the last shelter had barbed wire like prison and awful conditions, more people outside than inside. ... Can't deport the homeless but U.S.A. will hide its dirty secret instead of using the resource\$ to provide resources. They will use the resources to hide and dehumanize these people. Don't think it can happen to you? Think again no one is secure ... it can happen to anyone. Perfect example Campfire victims in Sacramento and Marysville camps who during the fire were provided for taken care of ... until it was no longer the big story. ... Stop throwing people away. ... Most Americans are one check away.

— Crystal Rose Sanchez, *The Sacramento Homeless Union and the Poor People's Campaign*

CLASS WARFARE ALERT!

The President of the United States has threatened homeless people. He has threatened their possessions. He has threatened their ability to care for themselves as they choose to. He is threatening to round them up and force them into government-backed facilities. He is not issuing an executive order for the needed housing. He is not funding the needed housing in a budget. He is going to raze our independent camps instead.

Our founding members all had the same fear. FEMA [Federal Emergency Management Agency] camps. It was a topic of discussion every day when we were doing the 9-month occupation of the Federal Reserve. That occupation had many hundreds of homeless people stopping through. All of them joined in the discussion and agreed it was coming.

When we formed 'First they came for the homeless' we were very deliberate about our name and image messaging. We were trying to send a warning and a wake-up call. The truth is, homeless, seniors, and disabled are not profitable. They are useless eaters. They will be the first to go into a warehouse full of other useless eaters.

A billionaire who has never needed a thing in his life said he was going to raze homeless camps. Inherited money made him. Not ability. Not life challenges that normal people experience. Not our reality. His daddy's money.

He has started us down the path that leaves us no choice but to put a call to action out. Make and display signs saying "No FEMA Camps for the Homeless". It's easy and quick. If enough people do it and spread the idea, perhaps the President will back the hell off.

— Mike Zint, *Co-founder "First they came for the homeless," San Francisco Bay Area, CA*



People without shelter on Sunset Boulevard in Hollywood, CA. On any given night, nearly 60,000 people fall asleep in L.A. County either unsheltered, on the street or in a homeless shelter. Meanwhile, profit-driven banks and real estate interests rake in billions. There's plenty of money to house everyone.

PHOTO/MATT TINOCO LAIST

Camps in the desert?

By: Chris Venn

LOS ANGELES, CA — Seemingly out of nowhere the discussion among the Los Angeles City Council, the Los Angeles Board of Supervisors, homeless service providers and even some homeless advocacy groups has abruptly shifted from housing the unhoused to banishing them. This includes proposed new laws that would severely limit areas where the unhoused can sleep, indicating a ruling class that has no idea how to respond to this crisis fac-

ing Los Angeles.

The dirty details are a proposal by City Councilperson Mitch O'Farrell that would change the Los Angeles Municipal Code 41.18 (d) to read, "No Person shall sit, lie or sleep in or upon any street, sidewalk, or other public right of way" within 500 feet of a school, 500 feet of a park, 500 feet of a daycare center and eight other equally severe limitations.

These restrictions would limit areas for unhoused encampments to less than 50% of the

city and the areas for encampments would change day by day and from one side of a street to the other. Sleeping or lying in a restricted area would be a violation of the code and punishable by fines, confiscation of property or jail time!

Because there are so few shelters in L.A. City, this proposal would soon lead to proposals for "camps in the desert" eerily similar to camps created for immigrants seeking asylum in the U.S. from deadly living conditions in their home countries.

'If you were homeless I would fight for you' A letter to the Mayor of Chicago

By Thomas Gordon

CHICAGO, IL — You say that you support the homeless people of Chicago. I don't believe that is true. Because this past weekend we had so many police down in the park in Uptown where we have tents. They are writing tickets because we live in tents. We were told to take our tents down and move. Where are we supposed to go? The city is selling our buildings and we are forced to live in the street. What are we supposed to do?

The Chicago police are supposed to fight crime. Living in a tent is not a crime. Housing is our

right, for everyone. What are we supposed to do? Where are we supposed to go? How are you and the Chicago police helping us? We are voters too. We helped put you in office. Is this how you treat people who vote for you?

Even if we are homeless we have rights too. I am one of the main leaders for the homeless people. I am also homeless. I fight for our rights. I fight for all of the homeless people in the city of Chicago. If you were homeless I would be happy to fight for you as well. You are no different than me. The only difference is that you live in a house and I live in a tent.



Tom Gordon, "Mayor of Uptown Tent City," organizes with people living in Chicago homeless encampments.

Lead is poison – ingesting poison constitutes poisoning

From the People's Tribune
Flint correspondent

FLINT, MI — On August 29, over a dozen women dressed in white painter suits with a bright red broken heart confronted the Hurley Hospital Board of Managers regarding a member of its staff, a Dr. Hernan F. Gomez, who claimed that the rise in stillbirths in Flint due to the water crisis was “extremely unlikely.” *Below are excerpts from a statement made to the board by Flint resident Melissa Mays.*

Dear Hurley board,

I was here last year about the same doctor from Hurley doing the same thing: trying to diminish and dismiss the *real* damage that was done to the residents of Flint. Last year, Dr. Gomez tried saying we were all lead exposed, not lead poisoned, even though lead is a poison and ingesting poison constitutes poisoning.

What that does is tell residents that what was done to us is “not a big deal,” which is horrifying to residents who spoke up. Also, I spoke as an affected Flint resident with a history of medical billing and pointed out that “lead poisoning” and “lead exposure” have two different diagnosis codes, which leads to two different levels of care, effectively

shorting poisoned residents out of proper healthcare and supports. Flint has had enough of this.

I’m here today as an affected Flint resident and as a woman who has given birth and has also miscarried. The same Dr. Gomez now says that he studied the blood lead levels of only 84 women, not

necessarily pregnant women, just women of child-bearing age and decided to make the assumption that our water disaster and poisoning did not contribute to the massive increase in fetal death and decrease in fertility that occurred during that same time frame. I’m not a scientist but how is this

good science or research?

Let’s remember what your very own Dr. Mona Hanna-Attisha says about blood lead testing. Her October 12, 2018 deposition states, “blood lead levels have never been considered as a marker for exposure in Flint. Exposure has only been determined as a

measure of consumption of the contaminated water. This has applied to all exposure-related recovery services.” So, if blood lead levels are not viewed as an accurate measure of lead ingestion, poisoning or retention in the body, why does your Dr. Gomez keep desperately trying to use them for his attempts at research?

It has become a clear pattern that Dr. Gomez spends his time writing papers to downplay and dismiss the Flint Water Crisis instead of trying to find ways to help the families suffering through the side effects as well as the unknowns. I do not believe this fits in with what a community medical center should be focusing on, especially during an ongoing crisis.

It is time that you actually DO SOMETHING this year about this because YOUR SILENCE = COMPLICITY. Thank you for your time.

– Melissa Mays



Women dressed in white painter suits confront hospital managers about a staff doctor’s claim that it was “extremely unlikely” the rise in Flint’s stillbirths was due to the water crisis. PHOTO/FACEBOOK

“Flint’s Deadly Water” - PBS *Frontline* exposes how the lead poisoning of thousands of Flint children also spawned one of the largest outbreaks of Legionnaires’ disease in U.S. history, and government cover-up. See pbs.org/video/flints-deadly-water-pwsj3m/

Global Climate Strike: ‘Unite behind the science’



Global Youth Climate Strike, Detroit, September 2019. PHOTO/JIMWESTPHOTO.COM

By Irving W. Wainer, Ph.D., DHC

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Sailing under the banner “Unite Behind the Science”, Greta Thunberg brought her enthusiasm and leadership to the U.N. Climate Summit and the September 20th youth-led Global Climate Strike.

Tens of thousands of scientists from around the world endorsed the climate strikers and participated in the action. As scientists, joining the Global Climate Strike was a natural extension of our daily work and career goals.

We collect facts, observe change, try to understand why change occurs and then develop new methods to stop, alter or speed up change. Our goal is to understand nature and to use this knowledge to fight disease and hunger, to help provide clean water, a safe environment, better housing, and, in general, to make the world a better place.

These are the reasons that academic and governmental scientists sounded the initial alarm on global climate change, and the growing poisoning of our water, soil and food. We are part of the struggle to preserve the Earth and to provide a future for our children.

The participation of scientists in the strike represents the ongoing integration of scientists and scientific organizations into the developing social and economic struggles. This integration reflects the growing collective understanding that we are in a battle for the very essence of science.

The attack on science is represented by Trump’s brazen alteration of hurricane Dorian’s projected path

and the demand to replace scientific fact with political expediency. This “sharpie” attack on science was the public face of a sustained assault as government scientists in regulatory agencies such as the Environmental Protection Agency and the Departments of Agriculture and Energy are being laid off and their work buried.

Another anti-science campaign is the effort to discredit science and scientists. In the April 16, 2019 issue of *The Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, Lyengar and Massey point out that the founding of the Americans for Prosperity (AfP) in 2006 by the Koch brothers initiated a campaign of fake news, misinformation and disinformation aimed at reducing government regulations by discrediting the scientific basis for these regulations. The AfP’s campaign has been extremely successful. For example, in 2016 only 39% of U.S. adults trusted scientists “a lot” on climate change.

The objective of the attacks on science is to help clear the way for the unfettered capitalist rape of the earth. The Global Climate Strike and programs such as the Green New Deal present an alternative path towards saving our planet and developing a peaceful and cooperative society.

As scientists, we know that advances in science have laid the foundations for a society that provides housing, food, health care and necessities of life for all living beings. It is now our main task to share this vision of the future with the developing social and economic struggles.

We cannot move forward unless we all move together.

'The climate crisis connects us'

"I am from the Xakriabá people in Brazil. I am here today representing the more than 25 million indigenous and traditional communities from the Global Alliance of Territorial Communities. ... Together, we protect 600 million hectares of forest. I am also here as a young woman, because there's no difference between an indigenous young female activist like myself and a young indigenous female activist like Greta. Our future is connected by the same threads of the climate crisis. The Amazon is on fire. The Amazon agonizes year after year for the responsibility of the government and its destructive policies that intensify deforestation and drought, not only in the Amazon, but in the other five Brazilian biomes. Climate change is a result of this, and it also helps to make the fires stronger. And beyond the Amazon, there are the forests of Indonesia, Africa, North America, whose suffering has such an impact in my life and in your life. We, the indigenous peoples, are the children of nature, so we fight for our Mother Earth, because the fight for Mother Earth is the mother of all other fights. We are fighting for your lives. We are fighting for our lives. We are fighting for our sacred territory. But we are being persecuted, threatened, murdered, only for protecting our own territories. We cannot accept one more drop of indigenous blood spilled."

– Artemisa Xakriabá, 19-year-old climate activist, speaking at U.N. Climate Action Summit



Artemisa Xakriabá. VIDEO STILL/DEMOCRACY NOW!

Building a movement to save Earth and humanity

"We should be building an unstoppable movement of the world's people that crosses all boundaries, united in a commitment to create a world that truly works for all. The deep transformation of culture, institutions, technology, and infrastructure on which our common future depends will be a difficult struggle and will require persistent and determined support from powerful social movements. We the people will need to lead that discussion and demand that the politicians follow..."

– David Korten, author, in YES! magazine

An open letter from fighter against Mountain Top Removal coal mining



Maria Gunnoe, holding a photo of her father and grandfather. PHOTO/ MARK SCHMERLING

Editor's note: Below are excerpts from an open letter by Maria Gunnoe, a 2009 Goldman Prize winner who has been in the fight for a safe environment in Appalachia for 25 years. See the full letter at peopletribune.org.

There is very little that I have not done to end mountain-top removal (MTR) coal mining and to stop the coal industry tirade on our land, water, air, our economy, and our people. I have always been a friend to miners and to environmental organizations across this country. ... I have taken threats on my life and my family's lives and criticisms from both sides of the coal war. Still, I attempt to focus on good

work that will improve the lives of the people where I live, all while trying to sustain my own...

I had two children with breathing problems and Dakota Coal Company was blasting close to my home. ... My water well went bad. ... There were underground mine fires burning close to our schools in Van, WV. The coal smoke was so thick people had to stay indoors. ... This was in 1998 before my Dad (at 51) was killed on an MTR mining operation trying to gather wild ramp bulbs from what he called Heaven's Land. ... I moved back to my home place to care for my 85-year-old Cherokee Grandfather. I promised my Dad and my Grandpa that I would tend to their land and see to it that my kids inherited something worth having. ... We deserve clean water and safe communities to raise our kids in. Our kids deserve a fair and well-funded education...

Every group that ever muttered the words mountaintop removal coal mining or used our work in any capacity owes us something in return. ... In the coal war many people have been left behind on the battlefield and if you listen you can hear them still calling out for the help they've been promised.

Contact Maria Gunnoe on Facebook at [fb.com/maria.gunnoe](https://www.facebook.com/maria.gunnoe), call 304-989-9581, or write to PO Box 494, Van, WV 25206.



Greta Thunberg [left] and Tokata Iron Eyes [right]. VIDEO STILL/LAKOTALAW.ORG

'Everyday regular people are going to make the difference'

In October, Lakota youth activist Tokata Iron Eyes and Swedish climate activist Greta Thunberg spoke at rallies in Native American country in South Dakota.

"There cannot be a solution to the climate crisis that doesn't include indigenous people," Tokata said in Pine Ridge. In Rapid City, she called for intercultural unity, saying, "This crisis doesn't care about the imaginary political boundaries. It is everyday regular people like me and Greta who are going to make the difference."

Greta said in Rapid City, "We need to reclaim our power. We're the ones who have the power." She added: "The Keystone XL Pipeline is morally indefensible."

Earlier, Greta told the U.N. Climate Action Summit, "You are failing us. But the young people are starting to understand your betrayal. The eyes of all future generations are upon you ... we will not let you get away with this. ... The world is waking up. And change is coming, whether you like it or not."

Truth is a spark.
To the torch of freedom,
Warriors
Throw your spears burnin'
Dance through the dark!

– Ayat Bryant-Jalal

Alex Sanchez – a beacon of hope for youth

By Magdaleno Leno Rose-Avila, founder of Homies Unidos

LOS ANGELES, CA — “My parents left me and my brother in El Salvador for five years, and at the age of seven, I was reunited with people who said they were my parents, but I did not know them,” said Alex Sanchez.

It was a difficult life coming to a country with no English skills, facing the racism of the schools, the street violence and no one to defend a small child.

Alex’s mother adopted an ultra-strict religion with many difficult standards, accompanied by physical discipline (beatings), which drove him to seek refuge with other youth, many in worse conditions than his, for companionship and protection.

This would lead to his participation in a gang structure by age 14, now known as LA Mara Salva Trucha, or MS-13. And by 1994, he found himself in prison on a probation violation that led to his deportation to El Salvador.

El Salvador was filled with its own violence, including La Sombra Negra or the Black Shadow, a death squad. Within two days, Alex had a death sentence on him.

Alex then did what many undocumented individuals do and

made the difficult trip north to the U.S.A. and a return to the neighborhood and MS-13.

Alex later saw that a new organization had formed in El Salvador in 1996 called Homies Unidos. He was soon asked to join their budding leadership at a National Youth Conference in Santa Cruz sponsored by Barrios Unidos and its amazing leader, Nane Alejandrez.

This conference opened a door into the future, showing Alex how different clickas and neighborhoods could come together to work to diminish violence and provide reasonable futures for Salvadorans, Central Americans and homegrown homies.

Alex began helping build the L.A. office of Homies Unidos, and began changing the lives of many youth through his example.

Twice the government tried to deport Alex and jailed him both times. The police and immigration did not like that a former gang member was fighting hard for the human rights of all immigrants.

Since 2015, Alex sponsored an Annual Central American Youth Conference attended by 500 students and teachers from a number of schools in Los Angeles. “We want to give these youth a history lesson into their indigenous



Alex Sánchez (right) with friends and members of Homies Unidos.

history and a great menu of possibilities for their future,” he said.

Today Alex also is helping to design the county of Los Angeles’ first Probation Oversight Commission to improve and monitor this important part of the criminal justice system.

Alex has had to fight to stay alive on the difficult streets of El Salvador and Los Angeles and is now a beacon of hope for all who come to know him.

“When I get my Green Card, I will work on a transnational criminal justice system plan to

address the mass deportation of criminalized immigrants,” said Alex.

Alex is a voice for peace and prosperity for every community that he can touch through his work with Homies Unidos.

Life was perfect until it wasn't

By Round the Way Girl

CHICAGO, IL — 1989. Life was perfect until it wasn't. What I mean is that everything until that year seemed to go according to the natural laws of “life.” I had two great parents. I played in every single sport imaginable. I played every single music instrument. I went to school, I was on the honor roll, I had a little brother, a dog, a pet worm, and even an imaginary friend. I went to church every Sunday, I was an altar girl, I had a group of friends I associated with daily and we had a great bond. I was a Girl Scout. Every single summer I came to Chicago on an airplane by myself, sometimes with my parents, to see my grandparents in their really nice house in the Chicago suburbs. My grandparents spoiled me, and I knew I was loved by everyone.

Then someone asked me the question, “What color is you?” That was a quite shocking and bold question to ask or to be the recipient of because I had no idea how to answer. What do you mean? I’ve never had to identify. I was just always accepted. The change was a culture change, a change of my environment, which changed my being.

Meanwhile, my parents divorced. I was uprooted from my childhood home in Washington D.C., and brought to the Midwest, in an area where I had no roots. Everybody here had roots, they had my perfect life. I

was not a part of theirs. So when that question was asked I said, “I don’t know, I’m not a color.” From that moment on I experienced my first real form that I can remember of colorism.

The confusing thing to me at that time was that it came from someone who identified as someone like my father: a Black, an African-American or however-you-identify-yourself person, but not a color that differentiated you. From that moment, I spent the next few years in an internal battle, as well as external, of who was I. I wasn’t “Black” enough to hang out with the “Black” kids. I wasn’t “white” enough to hang out with the “white” kids, so who was I?

Many times I made a joke about it. I’d say that my mind was internally battling, “the left side is battling with the right side,” meaning the Black side is arguing with the white side about “are you Black or white today.” I was 15 years old, living in a neighborhood where, depending upon how you identify yourself, that’s how you are treated. From there you have to pick which side you’re going to ride with, to protect yourself. White: you can be harassed, be a snitch, an addict or a neutron. Black equals, in my area, GD, Vice Lord (any fraction), Four Corner Hustler (4CH) or Blackstone. On my block in that year I had to go with 4CH. So now: how do you go from this perfect life to this...

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What the GM strike means for America today

Editor's note: The Santita Jackson Show, WCPT-820 AM in Chicago, interviewed Sheilah Garland, retired National Nurses United Political Organizer about the UChicago nurses strike; and John Nichols, correspondent for The Nation and Claire McClinton, GM retiree and UAW member, about the GM strike. Below are questions addressed to Claire McClinton. To hear Santita Jackson's full interview with all of the participants, please go to fb.com/WCPT820/videos/806805809818138/

Santita Jackson: Claire McClinton, tell us what don't know we know about this strike.

Claire McClinton: Well, I'm retired. What is different is that in the past, GM, Ford or Chrysler would be picked as the union's strike target. So the selected strike target would only strike selective plants within that company. Not new. This time all of GM's North American operations walked out. This is hardball on the union side. The other thing that's different is that the UAW made a right decision that whenever there's a contract, that tentative agreement would be voted on *before* you go back to work. Conversely, management is flexing their muscles by suspending the workers healthcare and making the union pay for COBRA. So this is a very intense strike in an era of new technological changes. It's going to impact the future of the workers in this country. It's not just about what kind of contract workers will have. It's about what kind of America are we going to have?

SJ: Is cutting off healthcare another way of breaking the union?

CM: Yes, it's financial and also intimidation. But Flint, our city, is the home of the Great Sit Down Strike of '37 and we are not deterred! I am so proud of our membership. They are full of resolve. For alot of these young workers, this is the first time they've experienced this. They're learning that if you want to win, you have to fight for your benefits and future. When the bankruptcy happened, we took losses. A two-tier wage system, the temporary hire, was unheard of before. Now, if you hire in at GM, you have no pension. Did y'all hear what I said? Not only are your wages profoundly depressed, but you have no pension and no retiree health care. Before, many workers stayed at GM for those benefits. I no longer have company-funded health care. A trust fund called VEBA was set up. I live off of it and hope it doesn't go belly up. These are very shaky economic times. So these young people, working years as "at will" employees, are stepping up and fighting the facilities they work so hard in every day.

SJ: What do you mean that this strike is about the kind of America we're going to have?

CM: Any worker can tell you that when you go into that factory and see the state of the art electronics, the robots and the paint shops, and know that workers used to go in there and wear big clothing and masks to protect them. Now the robots are there. So working people are really insecure by the electronics, see themselves being replaced on a daily basis, seeing these trade deals taking jobs and plant closings. And at the same time, GM is playing hardball. They are telegraphing you the message that you will be replaced by robots, that you will have depressed wages and outsourcing, and that this is the new normal you have to live with. So this is a very intense strike. It's about what kind of future you are going to have in this brave new world of electronics?



Picket line at GM's Detroit-Hamtramck Assembly plant, one of the plants GM says it will close. Issues of the strike include plant closings, wages, pensions, the two-tier pay structure, temporary workers, and health care.

PHOTOS/JIMWESTPHOTO.COM

Unite with our brothers and sisters across borders, says GM striker

By Sean Crawford

FLINT, MI — A strike against General Motors is but one battle in what is a much bigger class war waged against "US" by owners of society. To paraphrase Walter Reuther: What we gain at the bargaining table can be taken away from us in legislative halls BUT it is also being taken away by the gradual whipsawing of one section of the working class against another. Like a saw blade pendulum, corporations move work from one plant to another across the globe in a race to the bottom. They sow the seeds of hate and nativism in our minds to keep us divided and weak, pitting worker against worker in a death spiral for lower wages, benefits and working conditions.

International solidarity is necessary to fight international corporations. The bigger the bargaining unit the greater the power we have. We should be aggressively organizing across borders instead of investing massive funds into phony and corrupt "joint" programs. [It] is different [today] from the past when we were unified by geography. Companies like GM would envelope an entire city.

With workers living so close to one another they could develop a culture of solidarity that was strong enough to break the chains of bondage.

Now the workforce is global, split up over invisible lines in the dirt and superficial nationalistic thinking. If our goal is to regain the power we once had, the power that birthed the labor movement in the first place, we need to broaden our vision and see the global class struggle.

If unions only exist in a single nation we will simply be undercut by companies who offshore our jobs and

exploit workers elsewhere. This puts downward pressure on our standard of living while the parasitic corporate class laughs all the way to the bank. To put the genie of globalization back in the bottle at this point is a fantasy.

We need to unify with our working class brothers and sisters across borders in a collective effort to win what is fair and right: the fruits of our labor.

Sean Crawford is a UAW member and GM autoworker in Flint. This article was reprinted with the author's permission.

International solidarity with GM strikers

A GM worker in Silao, Mexico sent a recording to GM workers in the U.S. that said, "We are organizing to collaborate for the success of your efforts by not permitting overtime work at General Motors Mexico—because this hurts your movement. ... Your struggle and problems are those of every GM worker in every part of the world." GM workers in Silao, with others at plants in Brazil, Canada, and South Korea—where GM workers are also on strike—have also sent messages of solidarity to GM workers in the U.S. (Reported by VICE)

Down the deepest well of lies
I dropped a few stones
making a small splash

— Suzanne McDonald

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— The Editors

Stop the attacks on migrants!

Attacks on migrants on the U.S.-Mexico border and inside the U.S. are increasingly vicious. The pro-migrant/immigrant movement is also gaining strength. “No Separation of Families! Defund Ice! Close Detention Centers! No Raids!” are demands of this movement. Also important is that the United Nations reiterated its position this September for an end to migrant children detention worldwide. The U.N. suggests governments replace the practice with community-based programs and other human rights-based alternatives.

– The Editors

Protest in San Francisco, CA. PHOTO/PEG HUNTER



Protest in support of migrant children and families at Milwaukee ICE facility. PHOTO/JOE BRUSKY, MTEA

Resisting attacks on migrants

Editor's note: Below are excerpts from fighters in Texas who spoke with the People's Tribune and its sister publication, the Tribuno del Pueblo.

“People are sent to Mexico where there are no resources to await U.S. immigration proceedings, instead of connecting them with sponsors and family members on the U.S. side. This is creating a homeless population in a dangerous area—people are sleeping in parks, in abandoned buildings, many with children. All are vulnerable to organized crime and drug traffickers. We’re seeing a level of desperation. The idea of U.S. immigration policy is to make it more difficult for people to access the process. The policies create obstacles to getting legal assistance, which is why a main purpose for our center is to connect people with legal assistance [and other needs]. We are working with groups of volunteer attorneys.”

– Gabriela Zavala, from a network of asylum seekers in the Rio Grande Valley and Matamoros, Mexico

“Media suddenly discovered El Paso after the killings, but it has been like this for years. What is different today is the level of militarism by the border communities, and what is also new is the cooperation of the Mexican government with the Trump administration. Everyday we see busses of migrants apprehended at the border brought to a nearby installation for processing. Then busses cross from Mexico to El Paso and then take people back to Juarez. So now we have close to 20,000 migrants stuck in Juarez [Mexico]. To add to the situation, white supremacist groups killed 22 people and injured 30. Some were members of our organization. We have denounced the presence for years of paramilitary groups collaborating with the Mexican government to contain migrants. Those killings are presented as a terrorist act in a city called ‘safe,’ but this is not the truth. The violence and repression on the border communities has been present all our lives. El Paso has been compared to a laboratory for repression and military containment for any sort of discontent, like poverty. So we have dedicated more time to organize the resistance of the migrant communities in the barrios where the majority are Mexican. It is important to understand that migration is an act of resistance. People are challenging the system that is waging an offensive against them. It is a war against the poor and working people throughout the U.S.”

– Carlos Marentes, from the Border Agricultural Workers Project in El Paso

Unity movement to free the wrongfully convicted confronts police ire

By Gabriel Montero

CHICAGO, IL — On August 2, more than 50 supporters from the Chicago Alliance Against Racist and Political Repression (CAARPR) and Innocent Demand Justice (IDJ) filled Associate Judge Thomas J. Hennelly’s courtroom at the Cook County Criminal Court building in Chicago.

Comprised of family members, activists and concerned citizens, they were there to support two brothers, Juan and Rosendo Hernández, and Gerald Reed. All three were framed by the Chicago Police Department and wrongfully convicted and now they are fighting valiantly for their freedom.

Reed was tortured in 1990 and had his leg broken by members of Chicago Police Department Commander Jon Burge’s infamous “midnight crew.” Imprisoned 27 years ago, Reed’s original conviction was tossed out in 2018. However, special prosecutors have been arguing to keep him in prison as they seek a new, baseless trial against him.

In 2000, the Hernández brothers were sentenced to life in prison. The lead detective in their case, Reynaldo Guevara, has been accused of framing at least 56 people for murder. “How do you think it made me feel to have my two sons taken from me?” Juan and Rosendo’s mother, Esther Hernández, shouted into a bullhorn at passersby making their way into the courthouse that day. “The Chicago police kidnapped my sons,” she cried out.

With constant pressure, a mass presence in the courtroom, and the election in 2016 of Kim Foxx as Cook County State’s Attorney, the families and supporters of Guevara’s and Burge’s victims have seen some breakthroughs recently. Foxx vacated the wrongful convictions of some 70 for-

mer prisoners, including 19 survivors of Guevara’s false accusations—all of which has drawn the ire of the Fraternal Order of Police (FOP), which resists any police reform or mention of the department’s decades of corruption.

The FOP is particularly incensed at Foxx because of her involvement in the case of Ricardo Rodríguez, another victim of Guevara’s frame-ups for whom Innocent Demand Justice has fought. After 20 years of false imprisonment, Rodríguez’s conviction was vacated in March 2018. Rather than celebrating and welcoming him home, his family was thrown into utter despair as the Illinois Department of Corrections transferred him to ICE custody. Facing deportation, he was eventually permitted to stay in the U.S. after Foxx’s office intervened on his behalf.

Outraged, the FOP formally requested the U.S. Department of Justice to launch an investigation into Foxx in February 2019, citing Rodríguez’s case. At least two other men framed by Detective Guevara—Gabriel Solache and Arturo Reyes—have been similarly handed over to ICE upon being exonerated, representing an outrageous torture-to-deportation pipeline in a city that supposedly prohibits local law enforcement working with ICE.

CAARPR and IDJ joined forces more than a year ago to resist such attacks on the innocent and free the wrongfully convicted. “We’re not going to stop,” Esther Hernández told the crowd outside the court building. “Even if I have to stand out here by myself, I’m going to make sure my sons come home.” As fate would have it, the Hernández brothers and Gerald Reed were all due back in court on September 6. Their many supporters were to be there with Esther, demanding their freedom.

Nurses strike to defend the safety of their patients

By Bob Lee

CHICAGO—On Sept. 20, some 2,200 nurses at the University of Chicago Medical Center (UCMC) carried out a one-day strike. The nurses, represented by National Nurses United (NNU), said the hospital doesn't have enough nurses to allow for proper care of patients or to give nurses a safe working environment. Although the nurses called for only a one-day strike, the hospital then locked them out for an additional five days.

The Chicago nurses were among 8,000 nurses who went on strike the same day to support one another's demands, including thousands at hospitals in Arizona, California and Florida.

"We strike for our patients, for our community, for safe staffing," nurse Talisa Hardin told a press conference. "We hope that the University of Chicago gets the mes-

sage and they come to the bargaining table and bargain in good faith. So we're going on strike today because we've been in bargaining, our contract expired in April, and at the bargaining table we haven't seen any significant movement on the things that are most important to us, like staffing here in the medical center. So as we feel unappreciated by the medical center, we're finding strength in each other, and it's beautiful."

Another striking Chicago nurse, Stuart Berkos, told a reporter, "The important message we're trying to tell our patients and everybody here is we're fighting for you. We swore an oath to take care of these people and to make sure that they are taken care of just as anyone deserves to be taken care of. But unfortunately we have management that just apparently can't agree with us."

Nurses said they had filed some 1,700 reports to manage-

ment at the hospital over the last 18 months objecting to unsafe working conditions related to short staffing.

Sheilah Garland, a retired political organizer for NNU, told the People's Tribune that the UCMC nurses had made "15 proposals that could improve patient care and the hospital rejected all of them. So the nurses felt they had no other recourse but to strike." She said nurses are "the last line of defense" for hospital patients because they provide 24-hour care.

She also noted that the hospital staffing situation "is horrible around the state of Illinois. You go to any hospital, the nurses are struggling to try to deliver care." Garland attributed this to hospitals in Illinois and around the country focusing on increasing their revenue and paying top administrators multi-million dollar salaries, all at the expense of patient and staff safety. She pointed out



University of Chicago hospital nurses go on one day strike for a contract that provides for quality patient care.

PHOTO/DANNY DIAZ, DIAZPHOTOGRAPHY

that UCMC, although it is "not for profit," is run based on a "corporate model." She noted that the hospital pays no property taxes because it is designated a "charity" hospital. (Meanwhile, according to Crain's Chicago Business, UCMC President Sharon O'Keefe made \$2.4 million in 2017, and UCMC Chief Nursing Officer Debra Albert made \$645,516 that year.)

When hospitals are facing the prospect of "having to pay for additional nursing, they don't want it, they want to give that money to their boards, to their investors and all of the folks who are administrators," said Garland.

Negotiations between UCMC and the nurses are continuing, and it is possible there may be another strike.

Women janitors and farmworkers unite



"Ya Basta! [Enough!]" theater performance by women janitors in Sacramento, CA.

PHOTO/A. IRENE DE BARRAICUA

By A. Irene de Barraicua

SACRAMENTO, CA — Women of all backgrounds and trades have been fighting for equality in the workplace for generations. Much progress has been made, but as we say, the struggle continues or "*la lucha sigue*."

In recent decades, women and organizations have used social media and the hash-tag specifically to take their activism towards gender equity and justice to a new level. This cyber-movement—from the #MeToo to #Timesup, and most recently #YaBasta (Enough)—has brought to light sexual crimes, thereby capturing the attention of millions. Latina farmworkers and

domestic workers are among the women coming out from the shadows.

The "Times-Up" movement addresses the dire need for solidarity among all women, regardless of background and occupation. Women from Hollywood began to see the significance in joining with women of various sectors of the labor industry to address sexual assault and harassment.

Alianza Nacional de Campesinas, a national farmworker organization, is one of several organizations on the forefront of this effort to consolidate. Líderes Campesinas, a network of women farmworker leaders in California, has dedicated itself to the empowerment of women and doing away

with taboos associated with gender-based violence by conducting theater skits and encouraging members to do outreach and education in their communities, also more recently, informing about the Time's Up Legal Defense Fund administered by the Women's Law Center to aid victims of sexual assault and/or harassment in the work place has been a primary focus.

In 2019, Alianza Nacional de Campesinas and Líderes Campesinas increased efforts by joining forces with SEIU janitors to help bring attention and push their legislation. The National Sexual Assault Coalition Resource Sharing Project in a recent newsletter highlighted this collaboration. Entitled "Organizing at the Intersections—The National Domestic Workers Alliance (NDWA) and Líderes Campesinas," it speaks of the NDWA's most recent campaign work and how Lideres Campesinas has thirty-years of ground-experience bringing light to similar issues. Thanks also to the valuable partnership of California Coalition Against Sexual Assault (CALCASA), they have helped assure progress in sexual assault and harassment prevention for these two industries.

The Ya Basta! Coalition, led by women janitors to "end" rape on the night shift via powerful theatrical performances, is a most recent example. Veronica Lagunas, member and co-founder of the Ya Basta! theater company, shared her gratitude and excitement to continue ties and a friendship with the farmworker women.

The month of September alone saw great strides for these two groups of predominantly Latina women who are among

the most vulnerable to sexual attacks and harassment on the job. CAL-CASA's role in uniting forces was strengthened when women farmworkers and janitors were invited to take part in a statewide-conference encouraging women to speak up, learn from each other, and empower one another.

The following week of September 9, members of Líderes Campesinas, Alianza, SEIU, CAL-CASA and other community members and organizations joined the janitors at the capitol grounds in daily demonstrations, theater and other innovative ways to promote awareness and urge the signing of AB 547 by Governor Newsom; the legislation dedicated to sexual harassment and prevention training in the janitorial industry. In solidarity, we await.

American Cry

In my vision
I saw a
small child
wrapped
in a blanket
with a cup
containing
a single dime
and a sign
that read:
"Welcome
to America."

— Eric Allen Yankee
@commiepoet

We can't allow Benton Harbor school to close



By Rev. Edward Pinkney

BENTON HARBOR, MI — Let the truth be told in the city of Benton Harbor, Michigan, a small city just beside Lake Michigan. The land is so valuable that Whirlpool, the dominant corporation in this region, is the Pink elephant in the room. Whirlpool wants the land that the school sits on for real estate development.

Benton Harbor High School binds the community together.

The basketball games are the highlight. Every game is packed. You will find signs all over the city celebrating several state championships.

The struggle in Benton Harbor holds a number of lessons for the American people. The fight over the closing of the city's only high school is a war. It is about whether Americans will have prosperity and democracy, or live in poverty under the heels of open rule corporate rule.

The problems facing the Benton Harbor School district are severe! According to the state of Michigan, which helped create the problems, the high school must close. Only 3 percent of the third graders in Benton Harbor schools read at grade level and fewer than three high school juniors have been deemed college ready in each of the last five years, says the state of Michigan. Enrollment is down. The families of some children living in the city district choose to send their children to other school districts and the district is drowning in debt, which was partly created by the state of Michigan.

BANCO (Black Autonomy Network Community Organization) says that transforming Benton Harbor schools into thriving schools can be done. We have to develop a plan. BANCO has a six-point plan: (1) Curricula that is engaging, culturally relevant and challenging, also have an after school program. (2) An emphasis on high quality teaching, not on high-stakes testing. (3) Wrap around supports and opportunities such as health care, eye care and social and emotional services, and support academics. (4) Positive discipline practices, such as restorative justice. (5) Authentic parent and community engagement. (6) Inclusive School Leadership.

BANCO's recommendations are aligned with the community's need to keep the school district open. We must not allow Benton Harbor High School to ever close. The community has spoken. Benton Harbor High School will not close.

Chicago teachers approve strike



In late September, 94% of the teachers authorized the Chicago Teachers Union (CTU) to strike. This photo at Hearst Elementary shows support staff from SEIU Local 73 also ready to walk out. As many as 35,000 public sector workers in schools and parks are set to walk out in a coordinated strike. The CTU House of Delegates set a strike date of October 17 when they met October 2. Teachers are striking for contract language to get a nurse, a librarian, and social worker in every school, and for smaller class size. Years of disinvestment have stripped the schools of these services. PHOTO/CTU



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Shut down the camps protest in Chicago. PHOTO/SARAH JANE RHEE