

Building a Bench of Fearless
Candidates, Campaigners,
and Organizers of Color

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Changing the Conversation
on Black Displacement in
Chicago

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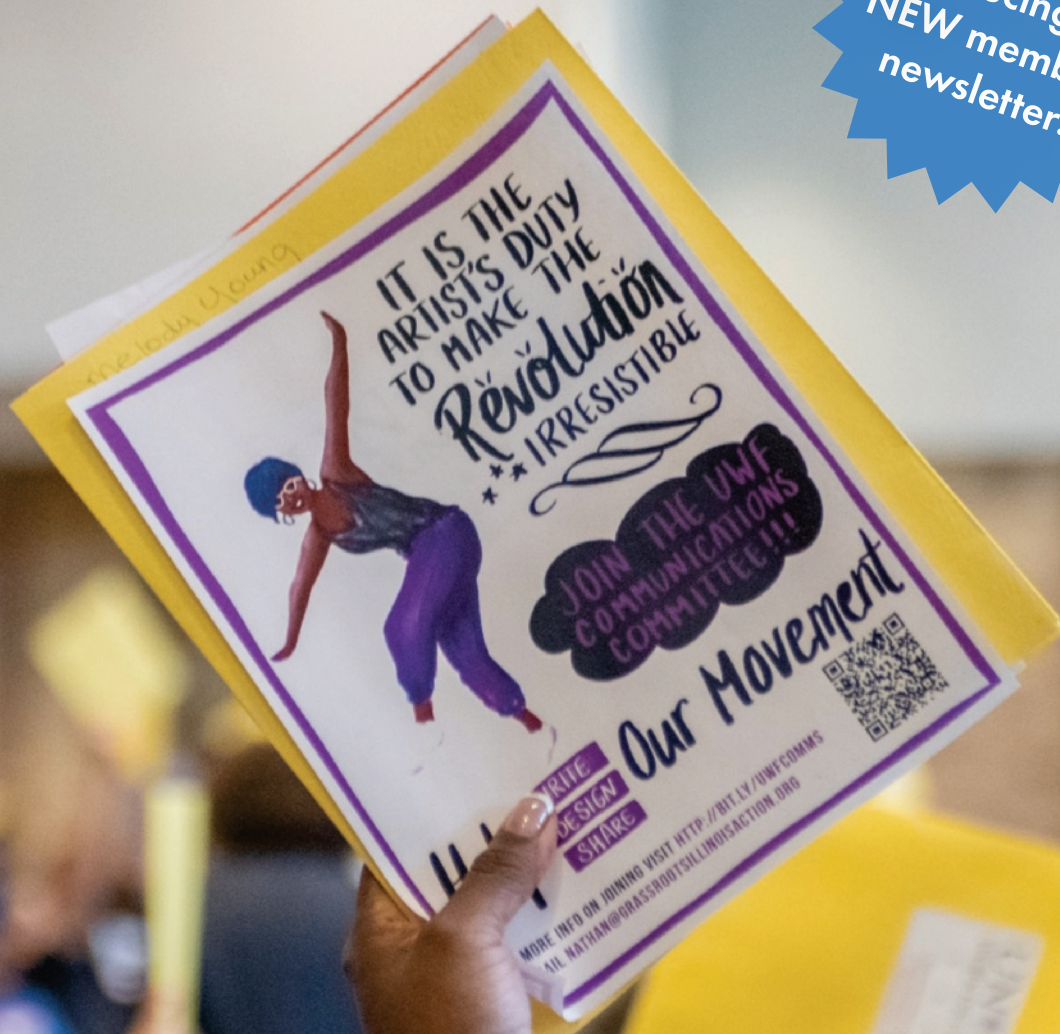
Meet Our Endorsed 2019
City Council Candidates

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THE PARTY LINE

United Working Families Newsletter / Winter 2019

Introducing our
NEW member
newsletter!





Letter from the Executive Director

Dear Member,

Thanks for picking up the first issue of **The Party Line**, the member newsletter of United Working Families. Written and edited by our member communications committee, in this issue you'll find highlights from this past year and what we're most looking forward to in the year ahead.

The Party Line is published by United Working Families, an independent political organization by and for the 99%. *The Party Line* is published twice a year with content from the member communications committee.

Let us know what you think, or submit a piece of your own: info@unitedworkingfamilies.org

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United Working Families is our independent political organization, by and for working class people of color. In 2018, we've taken great strides towards our vision of winning the political power we need to govern in unapologetically redistributive ways. Here are some of this year's highlights:



- **We are winning.** In the March 2018 primary elections, we elected a slate of Black and Latinx candidates from the rank and file of our movements: Brandon Johnson, Delia Ramirez, Alma Anaya, and Aaron Ortiz (pages 4-5). These victories were a direct result of our efforts to build and win on a set of aspirational politics as far back as 2014.
- **We are growing.** We continue to add new affiliated organizations and at-large delegates to our Party Committee! We saw this growth firsthand at our largest-ever convention, where over 300 members came together to debate and vote on our Resolution on Movement Politics. See pages 6-7 for a full list of Party Committee delegates.
- **We are building.** In 2018, we launched two programs that have deepened and broadened our bench of organizers, candidates, and campaigners of color: the Movement Leader Fellowship (pages 4-5) and the Black Worker Organizing Institute (pages 6-7). Our member committees have taken off with lots of great ideas for what our membership program will look like in 2019.

It's been a powerful year for us—and it's made possible only by the dedication, work, and vision of members like you. Thanks for everything you do.

In Solidarity,

Emma Tai
Executive Director

UWF's Early Endorsed City Council Candidates: Fighting For a Chicago For the Many, Not the Few

By Erica Bland-Durosinmi

We forced Rahm Emanuel into early retirement. Now, we're building a City Hall that will fight back against those who have profited from skyrocketing violence, displacement, and unemployment. Our 2019 early endorsed candidates are:

- **10th Ward – Ald. Susan Sadlowski Garza**, a longtime Chicago Public Schools counselor and union activist who was first elected in 2015.
- **15th Ward – Rafael Yañez**, a Chicago Police Officer and community leader who has provided violence prevention services to thousands of young people.
- **20th Ward – Jeanette Taylor**, Dyett hunger striker and prominent parent organizer for equity in public education.
- **22nd Ward – Michael D. Rodríguez**, a longtime community organizer, nonprofit leader, and youth mentor.
- **33rd Ward – Rossana Rodríguez Sanchez**, an arts educator, affordable housing activist, and co-founder of the ward's independent political organization.
- **35th Ward – Ald. Carlos Ramirez-Rosa**, former immigrant rights organizer elected in 2015 who has taken bold stances on the city budget and police reform.
- **46th Ward – Erika Wozniak Francis**, a Chicago Teachers Union delegate and nationally-recognized Chicago Public Schools teacher.
- **49th Ward – Maria Hadden**, a nationally-recognized advocate for participatory budgeting and transparent democracy.

Watch our video introduction to the slate: bit.ly/UWF2019



L to R: Michael D. Rodríguez, Erika Wozniak Francis, Maria Hadden, Jeanette Taylor, Ald. Carlos Ramirez-Rosa, Rossana Rodríguez Sanchez, Rafael Yañez, Ald. Susan Sadlowski Garza
Photo: Eddie Rivera

2018 Victories

By Emma Tai

Five young people of color, all first-time candidates who come from the ranks of our movements, are now headed to the Cook County Board and the Illinois General Assembly.

These are not just electoral victories. They are organizing victories, seeded by our work in the 2015 Chicago elections and powered by the independent political organizations that grew out of those efforts.

"This summer, I went to the border with UWF and Mijente to protest family separation and the criminalization of people of color. Delia Ramirez, Carlos Rosa, and I were the only elected officials from around the country who were willing to risk arrest outside a federal facility. I'm proud to be a part of an organization that takes bold stances for the dignity of Black and Latinx people."

Alma Anaya

Cook County Commissioner, 7th District



"It was so powerful to be at the first meeting of the UWF Elected Official Chapter and be around young Latinx and Black elected leaders from across the city who share the same progressive vision for change, who hold office at the city, county, and state levels, and who are coming together through UWF to build and strategize together. That's something that hasn't existed before."

Celina Villanueva

Illinois State Representative, 21st District

"UWF is a political home for all of us who refuse politics as usual. When the community drafted me to run for State Representative, UWF was there for me, making sure I had the staff and infrastructure I needed to win. Politicians and insiders would ask me all the time, 'who sent you?' I told them, 'it was the community that raised me that drafted me to run. It was grassroots support and it was United Working Families' early investment that ensured we had a viable campaign.'"

Delia Ramirez

Illinois State Representative, 4th District



Photos from top to bottom: Alma Anaya, Delia Ramirez, and Carlos Ramirez-Rosa protesting family separation at the US-Mexico border with Mijente. Photo: Kate Barthelme / Brandon Johnson and Celina Villanueva (center) at the CCCTU informational picket for a fair contract. Photo: Emma Tai / Aaron Ortiz speaking out for hospital workers with SEIU Healthcare. Photo: Aaron Cynic

Meet the Class of 2018 Movement Leader Fellows

By Kate Barthelme

In the 2018 primaries, UWF launched our flagship **Movement Leader Fellowship program**, recruiting and training young people of color from the rank and file of our community and labor organizations and placing them on UWF-endorsed electoral campaigns with mentors to guide their work. Today, of the 12 fellows in the class of 2018, four are running for office, two are playing a leadership role on a 2019 campaign, two have joined the Party Committee, and two have been hired as organizers by affiliated labor unions.



2018 Movement Leader Fellows with the victorious 2018 primary candidates at their April graduation
Photo: Nick Burt



Kerry Luckett
Photo: Aaron Cynic

“Before UWF, I wasn’t in environments where you got to know people who were running for office. I had never been invited to door knock before. I applied for the Movement Leader Fellowship because I wanted to work on campaigns and organize all throughout the city to build a new kind of infrastructure. I look at the fellowship as a seed—a way to germinate UWF.”

- **Kerry Luckett**, Member, Cook County College Teachers Union Local 1600; Delegate, UWF Party Committee

Introducing Champaign County Clerk Aaron Ammons: Fighting to Unchain Democracy in Champaign County

By Emma Tai

UWF endorsed **Aaron Ammons** for Champaign County Clerk in November. As clerk, Aaron will protect the voting rights of students, people of color, and working families from attacks by the corporate right. Aaron is a formerly incarcerated person, a union steward, and an activist for racial justice who is dedicated to building the promise of our democracy.



Aaron Ammons (third from left) with State Representative Carol Ammons (center) and UWF members during our GOTV road trip.
Photo: Candis Castillo

Summer 2018 Report: Black Worker Organizing Institute

By James Muhammad



Photos clockwise from left: Yvonne Heard (right) phonebanking with Gervaise Clay for the UWF membership convention. Photo: Ryan Kelleher / Yvonne Heard, front row, fifth from right, with other members of the Black Worker Organizing Institute. Photo: Emma Tai / Tanneshia Wilson Wearing (right) canvassing for Stacey Abrams with Mijente in Georgia. Photo: Kate Barthelme

Chicago Teachers Union member Yvonne Heard spent her summer knocking on doors on Chicago's far south side to get to know other union members who live on their street and neighborhood.

Yvonne's work was part of United Working Families' inaugural Black Worker Organizing Institute, which brought together CTU and SEIU Healthcare members to lay the foundation for sustained Black worker organizing to strengthen their unions, reimagine public safety in communities of color, and reclaim their right to the city.

"We asked the people how the city of Chicago was working for them," said Yvonne, a student advocate in Specialized Services at Hyde Park Academy. "Some people talked about gangs and abandoned buildings. Some talked about school closings and how the alderman isn't spending quality time in the community.

"I was impressed by how many union members live on

the same block and the same community and don't know each other. It's a base for real power. I think we got our point across," she said.

Yvonne liked the idea of unions working together to reach a goal that would lead to working families having more power. She was impressed by the technical tools the campaign offered where they were able to enter information on tablets or cell phones as they walked the neighborhoods.

"We informed people of their rights," she said. "Some people were scared to talk and others didn't mind talking. I really saw the changes that have occurred in our neighborhoods.

"I really like doing this kind of work. It educated me. And I feel if I can reach one person and make a change, then I'm happy," she said.

The Great Displacement: Mayoral Forum on Reversing Black Pushout and Building a Chicago for the Many

By Kerry Luckett

One study predicts that by 2030, Chicago's white population will have increased by 14% and its Black population decreased by 17%. Think there's nothing we can do about gentrification and displacement? Think again! On November 19, UWF brought over 800 people together to ask the leading mayoral candidates hard questions about how they will make Chicago a livable city for working families.



SEIU Healthcare President and UWF Party Committee Delegate Greg Kelley addresses the crowd at our November mayoral forum on Black displacement / Photo: Aaron Cynia

Meet Your UWF Party Committee

By Emma Tai

The **United Working Families Party Committee** is made up of delegates from affiliated organizations and six at-large delegates elected by members every two years at the convention. Delegates to the Party Committee meet quarterly to vote on the organization's budget and endorsements and to discuss and debrief strategy.

Stacy Davis Gates, Chicago Teachers Union (Chair)

Katelyn Johnson, Action Now (Vice-Chair)

Jessica Angus, SEIU Healthcare

Erica Bland-Durosini, SEIU Healthcare

Marcos Cenicerros, Grassroots Illinois Action

Sarah Chambers, Chicago Teachers Union

Roberto Clack, at-large delegate

Manny Diaz, at-large delegate

Margarito Diaz, Workers United CMRJB

Matt Duzer, 25th Ward IPO

Anna Green, SEIU Healthcare

Alex Han, SEIU Healthcare

Gloria Higgins, Chicago Teachers Union

Abbie Illenberger, Grassroots Illinois Action

Tony Johnston, Cook County Colleges Teachers Union Local 1600

Greg Kelley, SEIU Healthcare

Mayra Lopez, at-large delegate

Kerry Luckett, Cook County Colleges Teachers Union Local 1600

Matthew Luskin, Chicago Teachers Union

Mark Meinster, Warehouse Workers Organizing Committee

Sean Noonan, Cook County Colleges Teachers Union Local 1600

Sophia Olazaba, at-large delegate

Paul Pater, Illinois Nurses Association

Chris Poulos, 33rd Ward Working Families

Carl Rosen, United Electrical Workers Western Region

Jesse Sharkey, Chicago Teachers Union

Celina Villanueva, 22nd Ward IPO

Rod Wilson, People United for Action

Desmon Yancy, at-large delegate

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February 26, 2019

April 2, 2019

May 18-19, 2019

Chicago General Election

Chicago Run-Off Election

Movement Leader Camp

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