



# CONVENTION 2016

# afterwords

MONDAY JULY 18, 2016

## TODAY @ CONVENTION

- ◆ State of the Union  
by President Randi  
Weingarten
- ◆ Hillary Clinton
- ◆ Sens. Franken and  
Klobuchar
- ◆ Divisional Meetings
- ◆ Committee Meetings

## 'Minnesota nice' just got nicer

Welcome to Minneapolis and the land where all the women are strong, all the men are good looking, and the labor movement is ridiculously above average! You couldn't ask for a better spot to host this very special convention—a chance not only to celebrate 100 years of unparalleled AFT achievement but also to lay the groundwork for a glowing century on the horizon.

There may be other national gatherings this week (some political get-together in Cleveland pops up from time to time) but don't let anyone fool you: If you want high energy (mixed with a little sanity), this is the place to be! The AFT's 84th convention will allow delegates to dig into a plate of pressing issues that couldn't be piled much higher. From strengthening and supporting our public schools at the federal level on down to fulfilling America's historic promise of social

and racial justice to making a real difference in a make-or-break political year, this is a convention with huge implications and will be one for the history books.

Oh, and one other topic should come up: The AFT turns 100 this year, so you better believe this is one convention where attention should, can and will be paid!

It's also a convention where the roster of speakers couldn't be deeper or more timely.

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Minne-bites

**THAT'S A LOT OF WATER.** Modesty, thy name is Minnesota. This "Land of 10,000 Lakes" is actually home to 11,842 bodies of water, according to the state Department of Natural Resources' official count. In fact, Minnesota has more shoreline than California, Florida, and Hawaii—combined.

**A ST. PAUL LABOR MILESTONE.** The first organized teachers strike in U.S. history took place in St. Paul in October 1946, when nearly 90 percent of the district's public school teachers—the vast majority were women—voted to strike. The job action lasted six weeks, and is still the only strike in the district's history.



**A (FLOUR)ISHING ECONOMY.** Flour milling was a vital part of the Twin Cities economy for decades; local companies General Mills and Pillsbury (now merged as General Mills) remain household names. One of the best places to learn more about that piece of local history is the Mill City Museum, which opened in 2003 in the ruins of an old mill on the banks of the Mississippi.

**TWO-WHEEL ADVENTURES.** The Nice Ride Minnesota bicycle-share program has 1,500 lime-green bikes in 190 self-serve kiosks around the Twin Cities. Single rides and three-day passes can be purchased anytime from all stations, and the bikes can be returned to any kiosk. [www.niceridemn.org](http://www.niceridemn.org)

**MINNEAPOLIS ROYALTY.** First Avenue & 7th St Entry, aka Minneapolis' "Downtown Danceteria," has been the starting point for Prince and virtually every band to come out of the Twin Cities in recent decades. Other notables include the Replacements, Hüsker Dü, Soul Asylum, the Jayhawks, Semisonic, Brother Ali and many others. First Avenue, housed in a former art deco bus station, also featured prominently in Prince's 1984 film "Purple Rain." [first-avenue.com](http://first-avenue.com)



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AFT President Randi Weingarten sets the tone Monday morning with a keynote address that will highlight the AFT as a proven, high-octane vehicle for member and community empowerment—one that will only rev up in the years ahead. Joining her at the podium later in the day will be Hillary Clinton, the presumptive Democratic nominee, who will discuss the historic stakes of this year's election with delegates from the first national union to endorse her historic presidential bid.

The Every Student Succeeds Act, the new keystone education law, is a top national issue, and delegates will hear from one of the law's key architects, U.S. Rep. Bobby Scott (D-Va.). United Steelworkers President Leo Gerard is expected to make news when he details how the AFT and the Steelworkers are teaming up to launch a public-private partnership

to revive the hard-hit economy and community of Massena, N.Y.

No issue dominates the nation's front pages more than social and racial justice, and delegates will be fortunate to hear from some of the country's most articulate, reasoned and persuasive voices in this arena: Color of Change executive director Rashad Robinson and Dolores Huerta, co-founder of the National Farm Workers Association, which later became the United Farm Workers. The international perspective also will be highlighted at the podium when Stav Shafir, the youngest member of Israel's Knesset, address delegates.

It's Minnesota, of course, so if you're wondering whether Al Franken and Amy Klobuchar, the state's two great progressive voices in the U.S. Senate, and Mark Dayton, Minnesota's fantastic Democratic governor, might be able to stop by with a few remarks and a North Star welcome to AFT delegates—oh, you betcha!

## The Action Fair is where it's at

THE AFT ACTION FAIR should be a must stop on every delegate's convention schedule. In fact, there's so much going on there, you might need to visit more than once.

Located in Hall D, the fair includes four separate sections: professional learning, member and community engagement, quality of work and community life, and Election 2016.

Here's some of what you'll find in the different sections:

**Professional learning** includes information on Share My Lesson, the Every Student Succeeds Act, Colorín Colorado, medical debt and AFT e-learning opportunities.

At **member and community engagement**, you can learn about student debt relief, First Book, the Alliance to Reclaim Our Schools and school nutrition.

Featured resources in **quality of work and community life** include health and safety programs, member benefits and the Ohio Nurses Association's One Million Hearts program.

Election 2016, as you might guess, is the place for information on politics (with a new theme each day) and the AFT's rapid responders network.

The Action Fair is also the place to check out the AFT interactive 100th anniversary timeline.

Many of the separate display areas will have demonstrations, materials and giveaways, so make sure you visit them all. The



PHOTO BY MICHAEL CAMPBELL

Action Fair will be open today from 10:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. and 5:30 to 7 p.m.; on Tuesday from 8:30 a.m. to 6 p.m.; and on Wednesday from 8:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.

# AFT brings a lively street fair to South Minneapolis



THE AFT TOOK OVER a blacktop down the street from Urban Ventures, a Minneapolis community organization, and turned it into a lively fair on Sunday that included gardening, free children's books and readings, healthy cooking demonstrations, health screenings, student debt advice, line dancing, face painting and just a whole lot of fun.

Dozens of AFT convention delegates joined community partners, AFT staff and the union's top three elected officers to help the neighborhood families that stopped by get the most of their experience.

"These are the kinds of programs that the AFT loves to support," AFT Secretary-Treasurer Lorretta Johnson said of Urban Ventures, which offers programs focused on employment, education, families and food to help alleviate poverty in the neighborhood surrounding its campus in South Minneapolis.

At every convention, AFT President Randi Weingarten said, the AFT reaches out to work with organizations like Urban Ventures in ways that we hope can have a lasting impact. With that in mind, the AFT donated two cherry trees to the center, which has an extensive garden and orchard.

AFT Executive Vice President Mary Cathryn Ricker, former president of the Saint Paul Federation of Teachers, said she was proud to help highlight one of the great programs that help improve lives in the Twin Cities. "We are stronger together."



PHOTOS BY ROB LEVINE

# *Minneapolis—from 'Jucy Lucy' to contemporary art*



PHOTO BY SCOTT STREBLE

WHILE YOU'RE HERE AT THE CONVENTION, you will find our host city not only to be Midwest friendly, but also a lively, accessible place with indoor and outdoor attractions for every interest. Shopping fanatics flock to the Mall of America's 520 stores and indoor amusement park, just 15 minutes from downtown (and accessible by light rail). Outdoor enthusiasts revel in the best big-city park system in the country (according to the Trust for Public Land), with lakeside trails, Mississippi River views and a popular bike-share program. The live music scene famously produced Prince—and you can go on a tour to see some of his old haunts, or check out a show at one of the music halls where he performed.

Live theater thrives in Minneapolis, which has the second-highest number of theater seats per capita in the nation. The art museums are legendary and display a broad array of period and contemporary work. And restaurants include local favorites like the "Jucy Lucy" (or Juicy Lucy), a landmark burger embedded with cheese, as well as high-end fare from no fewer than

10 James Beard Award-winning chefs.

You can enjoy much of this bounty in the downtown area surrounding the convention center. For example, the Nicollet Mall shops stretch nearly a dozen blocks out from the center. (It's under construction, but the shops are open for business.) Loring Park rings a nearby lake and includes a bike trail, basketball court and fanciful fountain.

Walk a bit farther to stroll along the Mississippi River. The intriguing architecture of the Walker Art Center is just a teaser for the contemporary visual arts and design inside this internationally recognized venue (sadly, the famous sculpture garden outside is closed for renovation). The Minneapolis Institute of Art (pictured above), just a short walk away, includes contemporary as well as ancient art and everything in between—and it's free. Downtown also hosts several theaters as well as First Avenue music hall and, yes, Prince played there.

For more details on fun things to do and see in other Minneapolis neighborhoods, go to [Minneapolis.org](http://Minneapolis.org).

## Mary Cathryn's top picks



WELCOME TO MINNEAPOLIS for the AFT convention. Since The Minneapple is right next door to my home in St. Paul, I thought I'd dispel the Prairie Home Companion myth that St. Smallites can't find their way west of the Mississippi River by sharing some of my favorite places to go. Below, you'll find my favorite restaurants. Tomorrow, look for a list of amazing local bookstores.

Sports fans, don't miss the Minnesota Lynx women's basketball team! They're at home on Wednesday. (And come back this winter for Minnesota Gophers hockey.)

I hope you have a great time here, get the chance to walk around a lake, try a craft brew or two, order the deep-fried cheese curds, and make plans to come back and see the many sights we just couldn't fit into this publication—or the few days of your visit.

—Mary Cathryn Ricker, AFT executive vice president

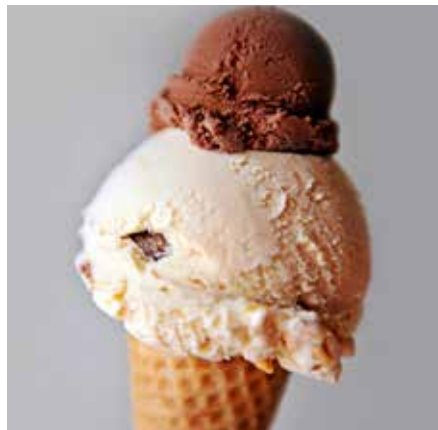


TV PERSONALITY AND CHEF Andrew Zimern (he lives in Minnesota!) would surely approve of Mary Cathryn's solid list of great eateries, many of which have workers represented by the local UNITE/HERE union. Google "union restaurants Minneapolis" for a link to a list of unionized establishments.

- ◆ Hell's Kitchen: homemade peanut butter (it goes on more than you think) and a great reputation for Bloody Marys.
- ◆ Betty Danger's Country Club: Mexican-American fusion with mini-golf and a Ferris wheel.
- ◆ Psycho Suzi's Motor Lounge: one of the best patios along the river.
- ◆ Dinkytown on the University of Minnesota campus: home to Annie's Parlour, with the best malts and fries; Al's Breakfast, the best hole-in-the-wall to start off your day; and The Big Ten for legendary subs.
- ◆ The Bachelor Farmer: Google the video of Gov. Dayton making fun of himself there (his sons run the place), then head over for locally sourced deliciousness.
- ◆ Little Mekong, a community along University Avenue in St. Paul: some of the best

phó in the country. Ngon Bistro also comes highly recommended.

- ◆ Liquor Lyle's: the place for late night drinks, comfort food and pool tables.
- ◆ St. Paul's Candyland (Minneapolis location): just won the trademark for Chicago Mix popcorn, perfect for snacking at the convention.
- ◆ Izzy's Ice Cream: small-batch, slow-churned ice cream; and when they ask "What do you want for your Izzy?" you can choose an additional flavor to try as a mini-scoop on top.



## Hubert Humphrey, leading liberal and AFT member

With the possible exception of Executive Vice President Mary Cathryn Ricker, Hubert Humphrey is probably the best-known AFT member from Minnesota. While revered for his long and distinguished career in politics—which spanned from serving as mayor of Minneapolis to U.S. senator to U.S. vice president and Democratic nominee for president—Humphrey's AFT ties began when he was an instructor at the University of Minnesota in the early 1940s and a member of the University of Minnesota Federation of Teachers.

Humphrey, who became one of the country's most prominent liberal politicians of his day and a leading supporter of legislation addressing civil rights, first won elected office in the 1945 race for mayor of Minneapolis. In 1948, he became the state's first Democrat in almost 50 years to win election to the U.S. Senate. He was propelled in part by a noteworthy speech at that year's Democratic National Convention—which included his platform proposal to end racial segregation—when he urged the party to "walk into the sunshine of human rights."

In the Senate, Humphrey was a leading voice on issues such as social welfare, civil rights and fair employment. He was instrumental in passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the same year he and President Lyndon Johnson won the presidential election in a landslide. As vice president, Humphrey worked for landmark legislation such as the Food Stamp Act, the Voting Rights Act, funding for Medicare and the creation of Head Start, as well as support for the arts and solar energy research.

When Johnson declined to run for re-election in 1968, Humphrey won the Democratic nomination. His narrow loss (by less than 1 percent in the popular vote) left us with the sad spectacle of President Richard Nixon, Watergate and everything that followed.

Humphrey returned to the Senate in 1971, where he served until his death in 1978. He's buried at Lakewood Cemetery in Minneapolis, along with other noteworthy Minnesotans as varied as Paul Wellstone and Tiny Tim.



# Lower your student debt at convention clinic

IF YOU HAVE STUDENT DEBT, you are not alone: 42 million people owe money on their student loans, at an average of at least \$33,000. Now there's a way to better understand how to pay it off.

We are holding three student debt clinics right here at the convention, to help members take specific steps to ease their debt load. Two have already taken place, but it's not too late to sign up for the final one. Any convention participant can attend.

The clinics, which have been offered at locals across the country, have already helped people save thousands of dollars and/or lower their monthly payments. The 90-minute sessions explain, in clear language, how to lower payments through Income-Based Repayment programs, how to deal with loan collection agencies, and how to arrange for debt forgiveness through the Public Service Loan Forgiveness plan.

The results are significant: One participant, an adjunct professor and single parent, learned how to reduce \$2,000-a-month payments to \$700. Others have adjusted their loans so that they can budget for other important expenses, like housing and healthcare. Members have described the feeling of relief when they're able to get ahead of their debt. "The class gave me the confidence I needed to sit down and fill out the paperwork," said one. "I definitely feel like the government has taken its thumb off of my neck."



In addition to the clinics, which help individuals, the AFT is also addressing student debt on a larger scale, supporting policies like Hillary Clinton's New College Compact. The proposal calls for free college and Pell Grants for summer school, to help avoid debt in the first place. And for those who already have debt, it proposes a three-month moratorium on payments, so they can explore refinancing options.

Student debt has seriously limited individual borrowers, preventing them from opening businesses, completing school, buying homes and starting families. It's especially crippling for low-income students who have

no other way to pay for higher education. And it's dragging the economy down.

The AFT's student debt clinics are one way to address the problem, one loan at a time.

The final convention clinic will be held Wednesday at 12:30 p.m. Reserve a spot at [go.aft.org/debtclinic](http://go.aft.org/debtclinic). To inquire about holding a debt clinic through your local—an event that has proven to be a great organizing tool—contact [debtclinic@aft.org](mailto:debtclinic@aft.org).

**Scavenger Hunt Clue**  
Florence Rood

## AFT Gives Back with First Book



A Union of Professionals



The AFT and First Book have teamed up to create an online "wish list" for early childhood programs in the Minneapolis and St. Paul area.

All you have to do is go to [www.fbmarketplace.org/AFTGivesBack](http://www.fbmarketplace.org/AFTGivesBack) to find all the items you need to support early learners. Shipping is free, and your generously donated items will be hand-delivered by local AFT members to the students in need when school starts.



# Retiree stories have the power to energize members



PHOTOS BY RUSS CURTIS



Rep. Betty McCollum

Education Minnesota, adding that retirees who share their stories of union building can energize new members. “Your stories reflect our values, and that’s why we value you so much. Please help me by telling your stories, and remind everyone about how valuable you are to our future.”

U.S. Rep. Betty McCollum (D-Minn.), a former high school teacher, applauded the retirees’ continued commitment. “I believe in the power of public education,” she told the attendees. “Your service has been essential. Thank you for your voice and your activism.”

McCollum took a moment to encourage the retirees to lend their support to presumptive Democratic presidential candidate Hillary Clinton. “There is a solution to Trump, and that is to elect Hillary Clinton. We need an experienced, compassionate and prepared candidate.”

AFT President Randi Weingarten also spoke of the upcoming presidential election. “People are really angry in America. It’s an anger our members have felt for a long time on the issue of education,” she said. “But when you started your union, you knew that the union was the vehicle to empower our aspirations, and it gave you collective strength.”

Weingarten called on the retirees to use what they have learned over the years as union builders and organizers to lead their friends and neighbors in the right direction. “It is the one-on-one engagement that will turn people around. I need you to be the soldiers in this fight.”

The two-day retiree conference continues Monday with workshops on anti-union attacks, Election 2016, building stronger retiree chapters, and health and wellness.

THE AFT’S 100TH ANNIVERSARY serves as a reminder to our retirees that their activism helped build the union into what it is today. The hundreds of retirees in attendance at the AFT Retiree Leaders Conference on Sunday were acknowledged for their commitment to the union and to public service.

“Retirees are an indispensable resource of our history,” said Denise Specht, president of

## Scavenger Hunt

Win prizes like a MacBook Air, an iPad or Bose speakers while completing fun challenges with fellow delegates.

Scavenger hunt clues and more details can be found in the AFT convention app and on paper copies available at the bag pickup counter.





PHOTO BY MICHAEL CAMPBELL

## Awards recognize affiliates' impressive membership growth

FOR ALMOST 40 YEARS, the AFT Pride of the Union awards have recognized affiliates that make significant membership growth. This internal growth is a key reason why, year after year, the AFT continues to be one of the country's largest and fastest-growing unions. And AFT's focus on member engagement has helped spur continued internal growth, despite concerted anti-union efforts by our opponents.

Almost 200 affiliates qualified for the honor this year, and many were on hand to receive their awards in person at a reception Sunday evening. To qualify for the award, which started in 1968, affiliates have to post net membership increases of at least 100 members, or 25 percent, in one of the past two years. The program also honors affiliates with membership levels of at least 90 percent.

"This is one of the few times today that I can just kvell—be proud—because of the work that everybody here has done," said AFT President Randi Weingarten, who gave out the awards. "We are one of the few unions in the United States whose membership numbers keep going up. In fact, we have more members today than we have ever had in our history."

Between internal growth and an impressive two-year record of new organizing victories, the AFT reached its highest membership total this year: 1,637,412. We organized more than 84 new units in 18 states, representing a total of more than 12,000 workers, and chartered 41 new locals in 15 states.

"That's the hard work of member engagement, of finding ways to make sure members can see that their power comes from themselves," Weingarten said. "I'm really proud of the work you've done. You create power. You create the power to realize the American dream and ensure everyone has the opportunity to live the life they deserve."

## There's an app for that!

Access the AFT convention app for general session and event schedules, maps, the shuttle bus schedule, breaking convention news and much more!

In your phone's App Store, search for **AFTconvention** and download the app now.

