



Promoting 'green collar' jobs is focus of LERC's new STAR Fund

Up to six union members will be taking a three-day field trip to California this summer to study local efforts to promote what are being called "green collar" jobs — jobs that come out of efforts to combat environmental ills like global warming. The trip comes thanks to a new fund set up by the Labor Education Research Center (LERC), the Strategic Training and Action Research (STAR) Fund.

Former LERC director Margaret Hallock was among a crowd of several hundred to turn out March 7 to celebrate LERC's 30th anniversary. Also attending were UO President Dave Frohnmayer (standing behind) and Gov. Ted Kulongoski.

It's the fund's first project, and dovetails closely with plans by LERC educator (and AFL-CIO secretary-treasurer) Barbara Byrd. Byrd wants to get Oregon labor leaders up to speed on global warming before next year's session of the Oregon Legislature. That's when state lawmakers will be debating how to curb greenhouse gas emissions that are contributing to global warming. Labor unions could help push to make sure tax-subsidized investments create living wage jobs — not just profits for eco-entrepreneurs.

The project is titled, "Just Transition: Developing a union approach to the challenge of global warming." LERC will be accepting applications until May 1. Union members whose ap-

plications are accepted will take part in extensive study prior to the field trip. Then they'll travel to the San Francisco Bay area, where local unions have already been securing union jobs from local efforts to address global warming. Upon their return to Oregon, participants will spend time educating other union members.

The STAR Fund was begun with a \$115,000 bequest from former Carpenters business agent Robert Uhrbrand and his wife Cloydene, a teacher. Leading up to LERC's 30th anniversary celebration, LERC did fundraising to increase that endowment. LERC director Bob Bussel said the goal was \$30,000; over \$60,000 was raised.

Oregon labor turns out to celebrate 30 years of LERC

Close to 600 people attended what amounted to the 30th birthday party of the University of Oregon's Labor Education & Research Center, a \$60-a-head dinner at the Oregon Convention Center. Among the attendees were Oregon Governor Ted Kulongoski and University of Oregon president Dave Frohnmayer.

LERC was founded in order to use university's intellectual resources — teaching and research — to aid labor unions. As such, its budget has sometimes faced political attacks in the Legislature from union foes. But that also

means the department has its friends — elected leaders and others — and they filled the banquet hall March 7.

Frohnmayer assured them of the university's continued support, and Kulongoski, who was present at LERC's birth, praised the department for 30 years of service.

"LERC," Kulongoski told attendees, "exemplifies the social compact between government and labor that build America's middle class."

Proceeds from the dinner benefited a new fund LERC set up for special projects.

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