

BUILDING COMMUNITY

Labor Roundtable pays tribute to allies in Southwest Washington

VANCOUVER — A record 310 union members, politicians, family, and friends attended the 34th annual Labor Roundtable of Southwest Washington awards banquet, held Sept. 28 at the Vancouver Hilton Hotel and Convention Center. Awards were presented to individuals and organizations whose leadership has made a significant impact on organized labor and the community at large. Some two dozen teachers from Southwest Washington who attended the banquet gave a standing ovation to the labor community for its support in the teachers' recent strikes, which resulted in large raises for the educators. Keynote speakers were U.S. Sen. Maria Cantwell and state Attorney General Bob Ferguson.

Cantwell talked about a new federal policy she helped create which gives financial priorities to cities and counties and states that move freight; states like Washington, counties like Clark, and cities like Vancouver. Since the policy change, Cantwell said Washington has received some of its largest grants ever. She called on the Port of Vancouver and the Southwest Washington region to apply for freight dollars that can be invested in building a new I-5 bridge, which "will pay dividends for growing a stronger regional economy."

Cantwell also guaranteed to not let the Trump Administration sell the Bonneville Power Administration. "It's not happening. We are keeping our cheap hydro," she said.

Ferguson talked about his agency's victory to change unsafe working conditions at the Hanford nuclear waste facility by filing a lawsuit against the federal government. He also told of his success in starting to eliminate "no poach" clauses in the fast food industry with the mere threat of a lawsuit. A no poach clause is an agreement amongst franchise owners (for example, a franchise owner of a McDonald's restaurant) to never hire an employee from another McDonald's restaurant.

"I do not care who I have to sue to make things right for workers in this state," he said. "But I'm going to do it, and we're going to win while we're doing it."

In closing, Ferguson said: "The way I look at it is, each worker is entitled to every penny that they earn. They're entitled to a good living, fair wage. They're entitled to a safe work environment. They're entitled to respect for the work that they do. They're entitled to be a part of a system that is not rigged against them by powerful interests that do not play by the rules. My job is to make sure that powerful interests that don't play by the rules, and harm workers, are held accountable, and change their practices."



PHOTO ABOVE: Winners, front row from left: Didi Gray, Paul Stuckenschneider, Eryn Byram, State Sen. Annette Cleveland, and Deken Letinich. Back row: Clark County Treasurer Doug Lasher, Mark Dale Rauchenstein, and Laborers Local 335 Business Manager Shannon Stull.



PHOTO LEFT: Labor Roundtable Chair Ed Barnes (right) introduces keynote speaker, Washington Attorney General Bob Ferguson.



Washington U.S. Sen. Maria Cantwell was a keynote speaker at the 34th annual Labor Roundtable of Southwest Washington awards banquet held Sept. 28 at the Vancouver Hilton.

Award Recipients

Phil Parker Public Service Award for Excellence:
Deputy Sergeant Kevin Allais, Clark County Sheriff's Office

Union Member of the Year:
Deken Letinich, Laborers Local 335

Labor Leader of the Year:
Didi Gray, Washington State Nurses Association

Labor Union of the Year:
Laborers Local 335

Community Service:
State Sen. Annette Cleveland

Lifetime Achievement:
Paul Stuckenschneider, retired Federal Mediator

Labor Service Award:
Labor's Community Service Agency

Business of the Year:
Thompson Metal Fab Inc.

Leader of the Year:
Doug Lasher, Treasurer, Clark County

In Solidarity Award:
(Presented by the SW Washington Central Labor Council)
Anne McEnery-Ogle
Mayor, City of Vancouver

Citizens Honored for Military Service:
Terry Ogle, US Army, June 1969 - Jan. 1972
Mark Dale Rauchenstein, US Air Force, Jan. 1976 - Aug. 1981