

The WFP Quarterly

Issue No. 3, October/2023



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Letter from the NVP

Hello AFGE Family,

Over the last three months, the Women's and Fair Practices (WFP) Departments have continued to do amazing work, develop new

programs, and embark on new training opportunities for our AFGE Leaders and Members!

At the end of July and during the beginning of August, WFP was honored to host AFGE's 4th Annual Sister's Keeper Summit and AFGE's Human Rights Training Conference. During this 8-day span of workshops, meetings, events, and training courses, AFGE leaders and members from around the country received the opportunity to learn from knowledgeable and skilled instructors on topics that fall directly in line with our mission to fight for Civil, Human, Women's, and Worker's Rights. We are beyond thankful for everyone who sponsored, attended, instructed, and assisted us with making these training events some of the best ever offered in AFGE. We know that it takes us all to make our Union work, so we want to give our sincerest gratitude to each of "You" because none of the work that we accomplish in WFP or AFGE as a whole would be possible if it wasn't for leaders and members like yourselves that are always willing to stand up and stay ready in the fight for justice and equality for all.

I would also like to highlight the various AFGE Staff Members who worked day and night to ensure everything went flawlessly during our training events. Last, but definitely not least, I would like to give a special shout out and thank you to the WFP Staff Members, who have proven time and time again that they will always go above and beyond for our AFGE leaders and members.

In addition to the Human Rights Training Conference, we have made a lot of progress in rebuilding, rebranding, and revitalizing our AFGE Constituency

Groups. Some of our Constituency Groups hosted their first ever in-person meeting during HRTC; some even held their first ever elections to elect their executive board members as required by their respective charters. We are so excited to work with the leaders and members of these groups, to learn more on how We, as AFGE, can reach a real place of unity and solidarity by ensuring that we create a Union where everyone is represented, every member has a voice, and every leader has a seat at the table, in an effort to promote real inclusion within AFGE. Through these diversity based constituency groups, we have been successful with creating new resources, developing new programs, and offering various trainings, all of which are a true reflection of what We can accomplish within AFGE by embracing change and working together as a diverse Union. We encourage you to make sure that you read more about these groups within this edition of the WFP Quarterly, We recommend for you to visit our website pages for more information, We ask for you to join us at the upcoming monthly virtual meetings, and We challenge you to pledge your support towards the leaders and members of these groups by simply just showing up or asking how you can be more involved in the amazing work that is being accomplished.

Finally, whether you identify within these constituency groups yourself, or you want to learn more about each group's purpose and plans, or even if you are interested in serving as an ally to the community that each group represents, please know that in WFP you are always invited and you are always welcome to be a part of our Work, our Human Rights Network, and our WFP Family!

In Solidarity,

Jeremy A. Lannan,
NVP for Women and Fair Practices



AFGE HISCO Chair, Tiffany Roman, speaking to members during the Annual In-Person AFGE HISCO Meeting at the 2023 Human Rights Training Conference.

Celebrating Hispanic Heritage Month

Hispanic Heritage Month, celebrated from September 15th to October 15th, is a time to honor the rich cultural contributions of Hispanic and Latinx communities in the United States. While it is a celebration of cultural heritage, it is also a moment to recognize the significant impact that Hispanic and Latinx workers have had on the American labor movement.

To understand the significance of Hispanic Heritage Month in the labor movement, it is essential to delve into its historical context. Hispanic and Latinx individuals have been an integral part of the American labor force for centuries. From agricultural laborers to industrial workers, their contributions have been pivotal in shaping the nation's economy.

One crucial aspect of this history is the *bracero* program, initiated during World War II, which brought millions of Mexican agricultural workers to the United States to help fill labor shortages. The program, however, was filled with labor rights abuses and exploitation, leading to protests and labor activism among *bracero* workers. This early activism laid the groundwork for the Hispanic and Latinx labor movement that would emerge in the decades to come.

The 1960s marked a turning point for the Hispanic labor movement. Cesar Chavez, a Mexican-American

labor leader, founded the United Farm Workers (UFW) in 1962, along with Dolores Huerta. Their efforts and grassroots organizing led to significant improvements in the working conditions and rights of agricultural workers, many of whom were Hispanic or Latinx.

Chavez's famous grape boycott and hunger strikes drew national attention to the struggles faced by Hispanic farmworkers. Their dedication and sacrifice in the fight for fair wages and humane working conditions became a symbol of the broader labor movement and inspired solidarity from various communities.

Today, Hispanic and Latinx workers continue to play a vital role in the American labor movement. They are active in various sectors, including agriculture, manufacturing, healthcare, and service industries, advocating for workers' rights, fair wages, and safer working conditions. Labor unions, such as the United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) and the Service Employees International Union (SEIU), have strong Hispanic and Latinx representation, ensuring that the voices of these workers are heard and their concerns addressed. With the revitalization of the AFGE HISCO Constituency Group, AFGE is well on its way to joining UFCW and SEIU in ensuring that our hispanic and latinx siblings that work federal and DC jobs, are given their seat at the table to ensure they also receive the fair and equitable treatment within their workplaces that the deserve.

Hispanic Heritage Month serves as a reminder of the struggles and achievements of Hispanic and Latinx workers within the labor movement. It provides an opportunity to recognize their significant contributions and to raise awareness about ongoing issues, such as wage disparities and immigration reform. It is also a time to celebrate the diversity of cultures and traditions that make up the Hispanic and Latinx communities in the United States.

Furthermore, Hispanic Heritage Month encourages solidarity among workers of all backgrounds. It reminds us that the fight for labor rights and social justice is a collective effort, where the experiences

and perspectives of Hispanic and Latinx workers enrich the broader labor movement.

Hispanic Heritage Month is a time to honor the cultural heritage of Hispanic and Latinx communities, but it is also a moment to reflect on the vital role these communities have played within the American labor movement. From the early struggles of bracero workers to the founding of the United Farm Workers and beyond, Hispanic and Latinx workers have been at the forefront of the fight for labor rights and justice. Their contributions continue to shape the labor movement today, reminding us that diversity and solidarity are at the heart of the pursuit of a more equitable and just society.

Coordinators and Committees

National Human Rights Committee

With the 4th Annual Sister's Keepers Summit and 2023 Diversity Week and Human Rights Training Conference completed, the National Human Rights Committee would like to thank everyone who attended. This conference would not be possible without you attending and of course the amazing work of the Human Rights Committee and our fantastic Women's and Fair Practices Department's hard work to ensure everything went off without a hitch. The NHRC received valuable feedback from so many of our participants which included ways that the events can be made even better in the future. Please

save the dates for our next Human Rights Training Conference that will take place on August 1st - 8th, 2025, in San Francisco, CA.

The NHRC has also been working with NEC members, Y.O.U.N.G. Committee members, and WFP to review and assess AFGE's Conflict Resolution Program and AFGE's Y.O.U.N.G. Mentorship Program. We will also be planning to host several Coordinator Boot Camp Trainings in various districts in 2024. Our goal is to help bridge the union gap between our members, leaders, and our Coordinators to ensure we strengthen AFGE's Human Rights Network by maximizing all opportunities available to us.

Please be on the lookout for future programming and training brought to you by the NHRC and WFP.

Website: <https://www.afge.org/leaders-activists/womens-and-fair-practices-departments/coordinators-and-committees/afge-national-human-rights-committee/>



Left to Right: NHRC Vice Chair Deborah Toussant, D5 NVP Tatishka Thomas, D4 NVP Anita Autrey, D9 NVP Diana Hicks, NHRC Chair Yvonne Renee Evans, and NHRC Secretary Kate Foley presenting the District NVPs their Woman of Labor Awards for making history as elected women leaders to their respective Districts.

National Y.O.U.N.G. Committee

During the 2023 Human Rights Training Conference the National Y.O.U.N.G. Committee offered the “New Unionist” training class. The class learned about how to be an activist, AFGE structure, Robert’s Rules of Order and much more. Class attendees gained the knowledge and skills needed to better represent their members with new ways of communication, speak more knowledgeably about how Congress operates and hold a rally, and learned the importance of solidarity with the Labor Movement by utilizing the Y.O.U.N.G. Bridging Union Gaps (B.U.G.) initiative. Additionally, the AFGE Y.O.U.N.G. Podcast team recorded a few episodes of our highly anticipated season 2, where you will hear from District NVPs, NHRC, Y.O.U.N.G. and other District Coordinators regarding their roles and work being accomplished through teamwork and solidarity.

AFGE Y.O.U.N.G. is also working with various NEC and NHRC members to develop an AFGE Y.O.U.N.G. Mentorship Program that will be geared towards coaching, mentoring, and leadership development. The purpose of AFGE Y.O.U.N.G.’s Mentorship Program is to ensure that we create a strong succession plan in AFGE because our responsibility as leaders is to take our torch and light other leaders’ torches along the way. AFGE Y.O.U.N.G. is

committed to making sure that AFGE’s future shines bright for all of our members.

AFGE Y.O.U.N.G. will be working closely with

SSA Council 220 and some of our other Council and Local leaders representing various agencies to establish an AFGE Y.O.U.N.G. Anti-Bullying Taskforce. The AFGE Y.O.U.N.G. Anti-Bullying Taskforce will develop strategies and action items that will help educate, identify, and eradicate bullying in the workplace and within AFGE.

Email: young@afge.org

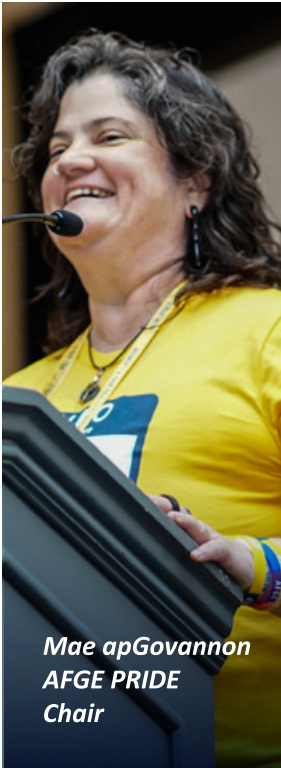
Website: <https://www.afge.org/leaders-activists/womens-and-fair-practices-departments/coordinators-and-committees/afge-national-young-committee/>



AFGE NHRC and AFGE Y.O.U.N.G. Coordinators dropping off donated supplies to charitable organizations located in the D.C., Maryland, and Virginia areas.



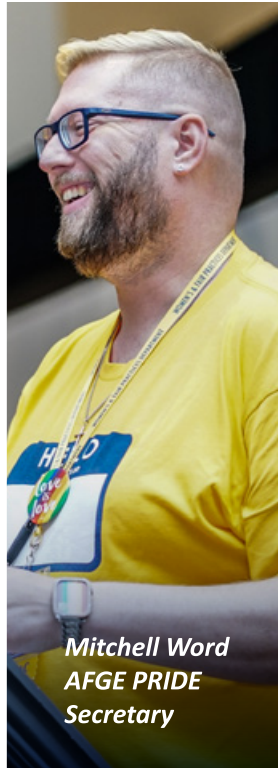
Make sure to listen to season 1 of the AFGE Y.O.U.N.G. Podcast now available at www.AFGE.org/YOUNG. Season 2 coming November 2023!



Mae apGovannon
AFGE PRIDE
Chair



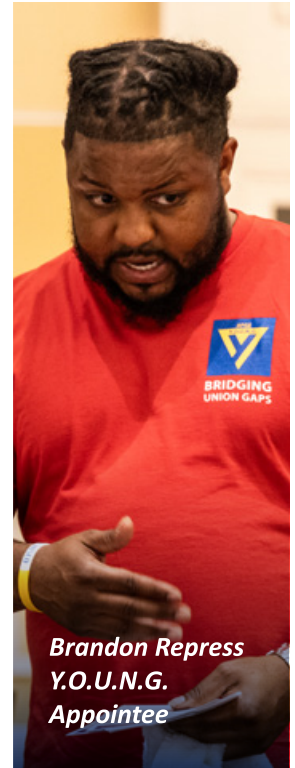
Tiffany McPherson
AFGE PRIDE
Vice Chair



Mitchell Word
AFGE PRIDE
Secretary



Terri Heyman
NHRC Appointee



Brandon Repress
Y.O.U.N.G.
Appointee

AFGE PRIDE

At the 1st Annual In-Person AFGE PRIDE Constituency Group meeting held during the 2023 Human Rights Training Conference in National Harbor, MD, AFGE PRIDE held its elections for the AFGE PRIDE Executive Board positions to include Chair, Vice Chair, and Secretary. The membership body present at the meeting elected Sibling Mae apGovannon (they/them) as Chair, Sister Tiffany McPherson (she/they) as Vice Chair, and Brother Mitchell Word (he/him) as Secretary. In addition, the National Human Rights Committee appointed Terri Heyman (she/her) and the National Y.O.U.N.G. Committee appointed Brandon Repress (he/him), to round out the AFGE PRIDE Executive Board. Since this election the AFGE PRIDE Executive Board held its first monthly meeting where they reviewed their

budget, their strategic plan and had discussions around their plans for the remainder of the year and going into 2024.

Be on the lookout for some of AFGE PRIDE's future programming and trainings on topics such as, What is AFGE PRIDE?, Pronouns and Why They're Important, and How to Be an Ally. AFGE PRIDE will also be working to update our program and educational materials to ensure we put out the best information for our AFGE members.

AFGE PRIDE meets regularly on the second Thursday of every month. [Register Here](#)

Email: afgepride@afge.org

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/169241119891895>

Website: <https://www.afge.org/leaders-activists/womens-and-fair-practices-departments/coordinators-and-committees/afge-pride/>

If you would like to show your support for AFGE PRIDE, please visit AFGE's online store [HERE](#) and purchase your shirts today!



LESBIAN, GAY, BISEXUAL, TRANSGENDER, QUEER/QUESTIONING, INTERSEX, ASEXUAL & ALLIES.



AFGE B.L.A.C.K. Chair Dr. Kendrick Roberson (center), Linda Mason (left), Sheila Stevens (right) from AFGE SSA Local 3172 at the AFGE B.L.A.C.K. and Diversity Mixer.

AFGE B.L.A.C.K.

AFGE B.L.A.C.K. held their Second Annual In-Person meeting during the 2023 Human Rights Training Conference. During this meeting they provided updates on the group's survey results, strategic plan, and future programming and training opportunities that the group will be working with WFP on. The membership present during the meeting also offered additional feedback and recommendations on the work they would like to see AFGE B.L.A.C.K. focus on. One recommendation that AFGE B.L.A.C.K. will be prioritizing its work around is developing and implementing an AFGE B.L.A.C.K. Coordinator role and toolkit for Locals and Councils.

AFGE B.L.A.C.K. also debuted their new shirts, wristbands, and buttons for use during Local Union

or Community events and will continue to promote the program and constituency group at all levels of the federation.

AFGE B.L.A.C.K. recently held their monthly virtual meeting where they discussed and made minor changes to their Charter and will be working on their annual report to WFP and the NEC for November 2023.

AFGE B.L.A.C.K. meets regularly on the third Wednesday of every month. [Register Here](#)

Email: black@afge.org

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/948007205779830>

Website: <https://www.afge.org/leaders-activists/womens-and-fair-practices-departments/coordinators-and-committees/afge-black/>

If you would like to show your support for AFGE B.L.A.C.K., please visit AFGE's online store [HERE](#) and purchase your shirts today!





AFGE A.P.O.W.E.R.

AFGE A.P.O.W.E.R. held their Second Annual In-Person Meeting during the 2023 Human Rights Training Conference. Vice Chair Gilbert Galam led the meeting and gave those in attendance an overview of AFGE A.P.O.W.E.R.'s recent survey results and asked for ideas from the membership present how A.P.O.W.E.R. can utilize the information gained to better serve AAPINH members and their allies within AFGE.

AFGE A.P.O.W.E.R. also debuted their new shirts and wristbands for use during Local Union or Community events and will continue to promote and educate members about the program and constituency group at all levels of the federation.

AFGE A.P.O.W.E.R. recently held their monthly virtual meeting where they discussed and updated their 2023 Strategic Plan.

These updates included increasing

membership participation and building a stronger AAPINH network in AFGE as well as creating more educational materials that highlight the different diversities represented within the AAPINH community. AFGE A.P.O.W.E.R.'s ultimate goal is to help lead AFGE into the direction of being a more intentionally inclusive Union and to remind AAPINH federal and D.C. government workers that AFGE is their Union too. AFGE A.P.O.W.E.R. also agreed to work on their annual report to WFP and the NEC for November 2023.

AFGE A.P.O.W.E.R. meets regularly on the third Tuesday of the month. [Register Here](#)

Email: apower@afge.org

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/615065329791689>

Website: <https://www.afge.org/leaders-activists/womens-and-fair-practices-departments/coordinators-and-committees/afge-apower/>

If you would like to show your support for AFGE A.P.O.W.E.R., please visit AFGE's online store [HERE](#) and purchase your shirts today!





Left to Right: NHRC Appointee Debra Cook-Rice, Secretary Catalina (Cathy) Horta, Vice Chair Christian Gonzales, Chair Tiffany Roman, YOUNG Appointee Jennifer Dickerson. AFGE HISCO Executive Board displaying the 2012 AFGE HISCO Conference t-shirt after being sworn into their newly elected and appointed positions at the 2023 Human Rights Training Conference.

AFGE HISCO

AFGE HISCO held their first in-person annual meeting during the 2023 Human Rights Training Conference. During their meeting they held elections for Chair, Vice Chair, and Secretary successfully electing Chair Tiffany Roman, Vice Chair Christian Gonzales, and Secretary Cathy Horta. In addition, the National Human Rights Committee appointed Debra Cook-Rice and the National Y.O.U.N.G. Committee appointed Jennifer Dickerson, to round out the AFGE HISCO Executive Board. AFGE HISCO also debuted their new shirts and wristbands for use during Local Union or Community events and are excited to continue to rebrand, restructure, and revitalize AFGE HISCO at all levels of the federation.

Following the in-person meeting, AFGE HISCO held their monthly virtual meeting where they collaborated and designed an AFGE HISCO survey and developed a programming plan for 2023 Hispanic Heritage Month. From September 15th, 2023 - October 15th, 2023 AFGE HISCO is proud to celebrate Hispanic Heritage Month and provide a wide variety of opportunities for you to learn more about the Hispanic and Latinx communities. Be on the lookout for these upcoming events and help



HISCO
AFGE HISPANIC COALITION

AFGE HISCO and WFP celebrate our Hispanic and Latinx members and their contributions to AFGE.

In October 2023, AFGE HISCO will be discussing their 2023 Strategic Plan and establishing their plan for 2024. Some of the goals and focus of AFGE HISCO will be centered around translation of AFGE materials, pay compensation for bilingual and multilingual skill sets, immigration and citizenship issues, and how AFGE HISCO can better serve and advocate on behalf of our Hispanic and Latinx members and their communities. AFGE HISCO also committed to work on their annual report to WFP and the NEC for November 2023.

There is still time to complete the AFGE HISCO Survey until October 16th, 2023. AFGE HISCO meets regularly on the third Thursday of the month.

[Register Here](#)

Email: afgehisco@afge.org

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/1219687571993565>

Website: <https://www.afge.org/leaders-activists/womens-and-fair-practices-departments/coordinators-and-committees/afge-hisco/>

If you would like to show your support for AFGE HISCO, please visit AFGE 's online store [HERE](#) and purchase your shirts today!

Local and Council Coordinators

WFP's Human Rights Network also includes our Local and Council Coordinators who serve within the role as a Women's, Fair Practices, Y.O.U.N.G., and PRIDE Coordinator. These Coordinator positions play an integral part in fighting for civil, human, women's and workers rights on behalf of federal and D.C. workers nationwide and abroad. WFP would like to challenge each Local and Council to establish and/or appoint the following Coordinator positions below to help bridge this



union gap and to ensure that our members are receiving the best representation possible at all levels of the federation.

Local/Council Women's Coordinator
Local/Council Fair Practices Coordinator
Local/Council PRIDE Coordinator
Local/Council Y.O.U.N.G. Coordinator

Also, check out our resources for Local and Council Coordinators: [WFP Coordinator Toolkit](#), [AFGE Y.O.U.N.G. Toolkit](#), and [AFGE PRIDE Toolkit](#).

Email WFP Program Coordinator, Matthew Uchaker matthew.uchaker@afge.org, to find out more about the process of establishing and/or appointing a coordinator for your Local or Council.

Important EEO information on Damages and Discovery

When an EEO complainant seeks a monetary award for pain and suffering caused by an agency's discriminatory conduct, the complainant often uses witness damages statements to support their claim. While a witness statement can help buttress a claim for damages, the statement is most effective when it contains details instead of broad sweeping testimony regarding how the complainant has suffered. This article provides guidelines for obtaining effective damages statements.

receive an email asking, "Can you please provide a damages statement for the complainant?" without any information about why they were selected. For example, if the complainant has a spiritual advisor that they consult with regularly regarding their life problems, the complainant should give a summary of the case and explain that the reason they are asking the spiritual advisor for a statement is that the spiritual advisor has first-hand knowledge of how the agency's discriminatory conduct impacted the complainant's life.

1 Identify witnesses who can provide statements regarding the complainant's personal and professional life. While the discrimination may have occurred at the office, the complainant needs to show that the discrimination had an adverse effect on all aspects of their life including their relationships with family and friends.

2 Specify the time that is relevant to the case. For example, if a complainant alleged, they were subjected to discrimination in September of 2021, the relevant time would cover a few years before the discriminatory event up until the present.

3 Have an initial conversation with the witness about why they have been asked to provide a damages statement. Often a witness will

4 Give guidance regarding what is expected. Being asked to give a damages statement can be daunting without an idea of what is expected. A simple but effective explanation is to ask the witness to talk about their relationship with the complainant and their first-hand observations regarding the complainant before the discrimination occurred and then after the discrimination occurred. For example, if the complainant's closest friend is asked to give a statement, they may say "Before the discrimination that occurred in September 2021, the complainant and I went bowling every Wednesday with our other high school friends. After the incident in September, the complainant would come bowling every other Wednesday and by December of 2021, the complainant stopped joining us for Wednesday bowling nights".

5 Give the witness enough time to write the statement! Asking a witness to write a damages statement with a 24-hour turnaround is not fair and will likely result in an ineffective statement. Give the witness sufficient time to draft the statement and ask questions if

necessary. For more information regarding effective damages statements, download our Fighting Discrimination booklet from www.afge.org, or contact the Fair Practices Department at eeo@afge.org for further guidance.



Q: What is EEO Discovery?

A: EEO discovery is a process of obtaining information and evidence from the opposing party in an EEO complaint. It is the formal process by which the parties exchange information about the case, such as information about potential witnesses and potential evidence to be presented at hearing.

Q: What is the purpose of Discovery during the EEOC Hearing process?

A: The purpose of discovery is to allow the parties to obtain information and evidence from each other, to prepare for the hearing itself, and to help resolve any factual disputes. Discovery is extremely important, as it makes the parties aware of evidence which may be presented at hearing. For a complainant, discovery helps prove a claim of discrimination, while challenging the agency's defenses.

Q: What are the types of discovery methods that can be used in an EEOC hearing?

A: Common types of discovery methods are interrogatories, requests for production of documents, requests for admissions, and depositions.

-Interrogatories are written questions that the other party must answer under oath. Interrogatories are sent by one party to another as part of discovery and can help find additional evidence helpful to prove a case. A request for production is a discovery device used to gain access to documents, electronic data, and physical items held by the opposing party.

-Requests for production are written requests for the other party to supply copies of documents or records that are related to the case. They help the party gain

insight into any relevant evidence that the opposing party holds.

-A request for admission is a discovery device that allows one party to ask that another party admit or deny the truth of a supplied statement, under oath. If admitted, the statement is then considered to be true for all purposes of the hearing.

-A deposition is testimony taken from parties or witnesses, made under oath, and usually conducted by an attorney and recorded by a court reporter. A deposition is done without the administrative judge present.

Q: When does discovery begin and end in an EEOC hearing?

A: Discovery usually begins after the complainant receives a scheduling order from the administrative judge (AJ) assigned to the case. The scheduling order will specify the discovery period, which is typically 60-90 days, but may be extended or shortened at the AJ's discretion. The parties must complete all discovery activities within the discovery period, unless otherwise ordered by the AJ.

Q: What are the consequences of not following discovery requests or orders in an EEOC hearing?

A: If a party does not follow a discovery request or order, the AJ may impose sanctions or penalties on that party, such as limiting their evidence, dismissing their claims or defenses, or issuing a default judgment against them. The AJ may also refer the matter to the agency for disciplinary action or to the Office of Special Counsel for investigation of possible prohibited personnel practices.

What's Next?

Check out the WFP website

Visit us at www.afge.org/wfp to learn more about WFP, the work we do, our Human Rights Network, and more. Most importantly, check out our WFP Resource Library, where you can find all of our most important resources—toolkits, handbooks, brochures, EEO materials, photo albums, materials for Spanish and Tagalog speakers, and more.



Upcoming Events

October 10, 2023;

3 pm - 4 pm EDT: **AFGE HISCO Lunch and Learn: Latina Mental Health Professional Panel**

October 12, 2023;

2 pm - 3 pm EDT: **AFGE HISCO Lunch and Learn: AFGE HISCO and PRIDE Panel**

October 16 - 20, 2023: AFGE's National Equalizer Certification Training Program at AFGE's National Office in Washington, D.C.

October 25 - 26, 2023:

6 pm - 8 pm EDT: **Overview of Worker's Compensation**

October 26, 2023:

7 pm - 9 pm EDT: **Relevant Factors in the Reasonable Accommodation Process. Program will start with video from Debbie Dingle**

November 1, 2023;

10 am - 2 pm EDT: **Workplace Bullying Webinar; The Harm Bullying Causes: Heath, Social & Economic**

November 29, 2023;

5 pm - 9 pm EST: **Workplace Bullying Webinar; The Harm Bullying Causes: Heath, Social & Economic**

December 6, 2023;

10 am - 2 pm EST: **Workplace Bullying Webinar; Action Plan for the Union, Becoming Anti-Bullying Champions in your Local**

December 13, 2023;

5 pm - 9 pm EST: **Workplace Bullying Webinar; Action Plan for the Union, Becoming Anti-Bullying Champions in your Local**

The AFGE Women's and Fair Practices Departments (WFP) are committed to protecting and advancing the civil, human, women's, and worker's rights of federal and D.C. government workers and their families through education and training, member organizing and mobilization, legislative and political action, and representation through litigation.



Contact Us

For general inquiries, email wfptraining@afge.org. For EEO-related questions, email eeo@afge.org.

Do you know a Local or Council Coordinator that's doing amazing work? We want to hear about them! Reach out to us at wfptraining@afge.org to share your story and possibly be featured in future issues of the WFP Quarterly.