Labor leaders bring ideas to jobs summit

By John Wojcik

FL-CIO President Richard Trumka went on cable television last night after attending the White House summit and said he was "encouraged" by the gathering called by the president. "I think it worked really well," Trumka said. "The president understands the urgency of job creation."

The president began an effort to take some of those ideas out across the country when he spoke today in Allentown, Pa.

Although the summit was attended by many labor leaders calling for strong government action, there were also many business leaders present, from companies both big and small, who the president called upon to come forward with job creation proposals.

Trumka reported that he told the president about the AFL-CIO’s five-point plan for job creation, which includes aid to state and local governments to prevent layoffs and maintain vital services and creating jobs through funding projects like repairing and building infrastructure.

Nobel Prize winner and economist Paul Krugman told the president now is not the time to cut the federal deficit and that without spending money to create jobs immediately, the nation will slip into deeper recession. He said that the corporations did not hesitate to ask for help and that workers deserve no less.

December 4, 2009
Union goes on the offensive with charter schools
By Lance Cohen

Hugo Hernandez is a key person in a unique labor organizing initiative here. On June 18, teachers at three Chicago charter schools voted in order to unionize their working conditions. Over 70 percent of the teachers chose ACTS, Alliance of Charter Teachers and Staff, to represent them.

They withstood challenges by the charters' management, Civi
tas, which claimed the teachers had no right to form a union. Negotiations began the following month and led to across the board gains in salary, benefits, class size as well as curriculum and professional development. According to one of the teacher negotiators, Emily Mueller, "both sides acted in good faith, students and teachers came out the clear winners."

This union victory was put into perspective by Hernandez, the national representative for the American Federation of Teachers and the project director of Chicago ACTS:

"In July of 2000, the AFT convention passed a resolution supporting charter school teachers. Former AFT President Al Shanker originally pro
tected innovative lab schools to develop new ideas to help public schools. It was hijacked by corporate America.

I first got involved in 2006 as AFT national representative in Florida. I was assigned to Pembroke Pines Charter Schools which had 350 teachers. We succeeded in organizing seven schools into a union in a 'right-to-work' state. This first historic victory was the spark for a national organizing drive.

"Teachers were calling from all over the country for help. Chicago was chosen because it was considered ground zero due to being one of the largest number of charter schools in the country. The Civitas teachers had been trying to organize for almost a year, and they had been asking for help.

LocAL NeWS

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Worrying about Afghan surge's impact
By John Rummel

With all the problems people here are struggling with, trying to stop the escalation of the Afghan war was not one they wanted or needed to add to their to-do list. But the 100-plus people who marched in the rain here recently connected the dots between rough times at home and needed funds wasted on an Afghan troop buildup.

Kim Siegel, a junior at Wayne State University, didn't have to stop and think. "Students and education" would be a more productive place to spend the nation's money and resources, she said. "Education and training" would be a more productive place to spend the nation's money and resources, she said.

"Tuition will be going up from $8,000 to $14,000 over the next five years" and students lost $4,000 over four years from cuts to state scholarships.

Lydia Wylie-Kellermann moved back to Detroit to do community orga
nizing and is helping with an urban farming project. "Anything else, other than war, would be a great way to spend $30 billion."

Al Fishman, Detroit Area Peace and Justice Network coordinator, said if he had the opportunity to speak with the president he would ask, "How is an invasion of Afghanistan going to deal a blow to the Al-Qaeda network when the network is scattered throughout the world?"

It will need to be treated "as an international conspiracy, because Al-Qaeda is now in Indonesia, many countries in Europe, Somalia, so an international ef
fort of policing is needed," he said.

Our public school teachers and organized charter school teachers will play a vital role in future organizing drive.

LOCAL NeWS

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¿Qué líneas aéreas, hoteles, y agencias de coches de alquiler se están ecologizando a un costo

By Paul Kaczocha

Querida DiálogoEcológico:

Soy un agente de viajes y nuestra empresa tiene varios clientes que quieren contratar coches de alquiler "verde", incluyendo el servicio de transporte en el transporte público. En el futuro, la empresa quiere implementar programas de esta naturaleza.

Con respecto a los alojados, la moda ecológica no es sólo para albergues ju
tivos y colonias de vacaciones. En una inspección reciente, más de dos tercios de los hoteles de EEUU indicaron que tienen luces eficientes en energía y que han aplicado programas de reuso de toallas y lino. Un incremento de un tercio con respecto a la mitad en los años últimos. Según la revista Budget Travel, las cadenas Marriott, Starwood, Hilton, Hyatt, Best Western y Wyndham tienen grandes zancadas en la conservación de energía y agua, reciclaje y diseño ecológico en los últimos pocos años.

Aparte de las cadenas, muchos hoteles independientes han tomado también la batuta verde; es muy probable que usted encuentre uno o más en su destino a través del sitio web de la Green Ho
tels Association (Asociación Hoteles Ecológicos).

En cuanto a las compañías de co
des de alquiler, casi todas ofrecen este cuantos grandes de coches eficaces en combustible, si por ninguna otra razón que satisfacer las demandas de clientes tanto de negocios como tur
tos que no desean gastar demasiado en gasolina. Hertz, Avis, Budget y En
terprise cada una tiene flotas grandes de coches híbridos y/o flex-fuel (etanol) para alquiler en cientos de ubicaciones de aeropuerto y en ciudades por toda el mundo.

Advantage Rent-A-Car por su parte ha prometido convertir un 100 por cien
do de su flota al protocolo ecológico para 2010. Por ahora, alquilar un híbrido to
da cuesta típicamente $8-15 más por día que un carro convencional equiva
teco, pero cuando las compañías de coche de alquiler pongan más de estos vehículos en línea, el precio será el mismo. Se recomienda a los viajeros al Bay Area deben tener presente que el Aeropuerto internacional de San Francisco ofrece un crédito de $15 para alquilar un híbrido de cualquiera de las compañías de coche de alquiler que operan allí.

Viajar por cualquier medio que no sea a pie, por bicicleta o a remo siempre impone un costo al ambiente, pero los que están conscientes de sus huellas de carbono - y están a tanto de que prov
cedores de servicios ofrezcan los cursos de acción más "verdes" - pueden man
tener sus impactos a un mínimo. Visite un menú sitio web como Go Green Travel Green para las últimas informa
ciones sobre lo que las líneas aéreas, ho
tes, compañías de alquiler de coches y otros negocios relacionados con viajes están haciendo para "ecologizar" sus in
dustrias.