

POWER office work party!

Tuesday, November 11th, 11 am – 5 pm, at our downtown Olympia office, 309 5th Avenue SE. After party at the Reef. We want to turn POWER's entry room into an art gallery and services and crafts store. Help us clear out and beautify the room. These hours will count toward active membership.

Are you an active member of POWER?

POWER has two tiers of membership. All of you receiving this email are *General Members*. That means at some point in time you contacted us or attended an event where you signed up to receive our newsletter.

Some of you may have participated in 20 hours of POWER activities throughout the year. That would make you *Active Members*. There are many ways to achieve active membership status – you can attend a POWER meeting, take POWER brochures and fliers to hand out and post at your local welfare office and other locations low-income parents frequent, you can volunteer in a variety of ways, you can read your newsletter and respond to the calls to action by calling or writing to your elected officials, heck, you can even count hours you have spent educating yourself and talking some sense to a bigoted friend, family member, or co-worker.

Be a card carrying POWER member.

If you are an active POWER member, we want to hear from you! Send us a quick reply, or email info@mamapower.org, with a short description of your 20 or more POWER activities. We will mail you your own beautiful POWER Active Member Card.

Below:

- 1. Vote for POWER Board Members**
- 2. Info about Affordable Health Care Open Enrollment**
- 3. Join by livestream the Kairos Center's End Poverty Event in NYC.**
- 4. Workers in Venezuela take over abandoned Clorox plant.**
- 5. What Good Is A Safety Net – article from Coalition for Human Needs**

1. POWER Board Elections

Thanks to all who attended POWER's Member meeting last Saturday.
Thanks to Monica and Cat for the fabulous apple pies.

We have 6 returning Board members and 2 new candidates. Board members serve a year term and can reapply each year. POWER can have up to 12 Board members, so this year's 8 candidates receive a yes (vote of confidence) or no (have concerns) vote. Only Active POWER Members may run for and vote for the Board.

If you are an Active POWER Member, send us your yes/no votes, along with this year's POWER activities description.

To see returning POWER members bios, go to
<http://mamapower.squarespace.com/board-bios/>.

The 2 new candidates are:

Amanda Lehr is a warrior mama of Kaia and Liam, who both attend Lincoln Elementary school, owner of two cats named Fizzgig and Vladimir, and lives with her partner near Olympia High School. A California native, Amanda moved to Olympia in 2008 where she finished her BA at Evergreen, where her studies centered on community development, especially in supporting at-risk youth and families living in poverty. She was raised in a large family that struggled with poverty, and has experienced firsthand the many setbacks experienced by families that are trying to make ends meet or get ahead. Amanda has been described as: Straightforward, opinionated, a "bad-ass," a good listener, fair and honest, and one who cares about the well-being of her community.

and

Kevin Cline is a father of 2 young children and the fiancé of a wonderful woman. He does identify as Bisexual but has re found the love of his life. He will be starting at Pacific Lutheran University in Tacoma in February of 2015

(Spring Semester) and will be working on his BA in Social Work with Minors in Nonprofit Leadership and Political Science. He currently works part time as a Volunteer/Outreach Coordinator for a small non profit in Tacoma that serves those with HIV/AIDS. He has served on two non profit boards in the past and has several years of experience supporting non profits. He also founded Child Welfare Reform and Family Support Association which is a small grass roots full contact social justice oriented community organizing and empowerment organization and he not only grew up in foster care, he survived it despite the many difficulties and traumas he experienced. He has also encountered the system as a parent and lived to tell about it or better put, encourage and educate others.

Additionally, Kevin is a former TANF recipient and currently has a Section 8 Voucher and utilizes the Basic Food program. He grew up in poverty and still knows the sting all too well and hopes to see the poverty cycle end with his generation.

Kevin is a political nut and very much enjoys being ultra-engaged in the political process both as a 2 time past candidate for city council and through organizing work with the 15 now Tacoma Campaign and has his hands involved in anything Leftist/Marxist/Leninist related. He can speak to a decent sized crowd but is much more at home talking one on one with people or engaging in small groups where work truly gets done and people really get to know each other and their experiences.

If he is not working with his organization, or involved in the political process, he is spending time with his family and enjoys Acapella music(will be joining the male PLU Acapella group), both listening to it and singing it, ebaying and craigslisting, garage sales/yard sales/flea markets and engaging in serious conversations on his many social media accounts. His other interests are in supporting first nations peoples and all people of color in their many struggles, as an ally and increasing access to education (including student loan reforms) and learning more about the idea of Basic Income as a means to fight poverty and looking and working towards a just and equal society.

2. Get Ready for ACA Open Enrollment

Millions of Americans just like you have access to high quality, low-cost health insurance, thanks to the Affordable Care Act (ACA).

The Open Enrollment period to get Affordable Care coverage November 15th to February 15th. And for **Medicaid and CHIP**, individuals can enroll anytime.

For those with coverage, this is the time to explore changes that could help you expand coverage, find a more affordable plan, and potentially lower costs. The Coalition on Humans Needs has compiled resources and tips [here](#) and below. Please share with your networks and forward this email.

Resources to help you Get Covered:

- [Healthcare.gov: State by State Enrollment Resources](#)
- [Doctors for America: How to Enroll in the New Healthcare Marketplace](#)
- [National Women's Law Center: We've Got You Covered: Frequently Asked Questions on Health Care Enrollment](#)
- [Families USA: How the Affordable Care Act Makes Health Coverage More Affordable](#)
- [Families USA: Enrollment Assister Resource Center](#)
- [Get Covered America: Calculator: Estimate your Costs](#)
- [Georgetown University Health Policy Institute: Private and Marketplace Insurance Resource Guide for Individuals and Small Business Employers](#)

Tips for Getting More Affordable/Lowering Your Coverage:

- [Income levels that qualify for lower health coverage costs](#)
- [How to save on monthly insurance premiums](#)
- [How Marketplace plans set your health insurance premiums](#)
- [Free or low-cost coverage through Medicaid & CHIP](#)
- [How to find low-cost health care in your community](#)

Use this link to share these resources and view on the web:

<http://www.chn.org/get-covered-affordable-care-act/>

3. Can't be there in person on November 15th?

You can still see leaders on the front lines of the fight for our human right to water share about their struggles, the actions that the poor across the country and the world are already taking to end poverty, and the potential of this moment for uniting the poor and dispossessed as a "new and unsettling force."

Join us via livestream at www.kairoscenter.org/november-15th-live, starting at 6:30pm. And join in the conversation on Facebook and Twitter using the hashtag #EndPoverty.

4. Workers Take Over Factories After US Firm Abandons Production

<http://www.venezuelasolidarity.org/?p=303>

Paul Dobson

Caracas- Oct22, 2014

The 780 Venezuelan workers of Clorox Company- a US cleaning products firm- staged a workers takeover of the company's assets after the owners abandoned production in Venezuela and fled to the USA, causing a mass,

sudden lay off of their entire workforce and an illegal closure. Workers, with State support, promised to reactivate and expand production.

“The owners of Clorox abandoned the country, their functions and legal responsibilities” stated President Maduro. “We won’t abandon any worker… Socialist formula: abandoned firm, firm taken by the working class”.

Vice-President Jorge Arreaza, at an inspection of the factories with the workers assemblies, explained that “this factory was abandoned, a bosses walkout, violating the rights of their workers and collaborating with the economic war by leaving the People without cleaning products… now it has been liberated by its workers”.

He explained how the workers “were working normally until last Friday. When they arrived on Monday the doors were closed, and afterwards they received a voice message on their phones from the President of the company, Oscar Ledezma, which said ‘we’re leaving Venezuela, we will deposit your pay off fee in the bank’”.

On the 22nd Sept, the organized workforce “sent a petition to the Labor Ministry and a reactivation of the plant by the owners was ordered- it was ignored, as they had left Venezuela already… so here we are, temporally occupying the factory, fulfilling our role in these historic moments” stated Arreaza on the 26th Sept.

Article 149 of the Venezuelan Labor Law legalizes an “occupation and continuation of activities” in the case of “illegal closure” when there is the “request from the workforce” in “protection of the social process of labor, the workers and their families”.

Representative of the workers, Luis Piñango, explained that “if this government had a capitalist vision, then today more than 780 workers would be without any hope of recuperating our jobs”.

Clorox Co. has been producing in Venezuela since 1990, and in a posterior communication issued from California it reported that business in Venezuela “isn’t workable anymore”, highlighting inflation levels, price controls, and “constant operational losses”. Despite leaving massive debts to suppliers, the workers, and social security payments, and 780 family men and women without jobs, the firm falsely assured that “we are working to support them through this transition”.

Clorox had received \$21m of heavily subsidized foreign currency since 2004 for the importation of raw materials, and \$1.75m just this year, which allowed low operational costs and profit margins despite regulated prices of the sale of products.

HISTORIC RESPONSIBILITY OF THE WORKING CLASS

Workers promised to return production levels to the 9000-crate capacity of the plants, denouncing that the owners had kept production at 3,500 crates.

“These workers are committed to assuming the responsibility to run a company based on the needs of the country” explained Labor Minister Jesus Martinez. “They aren’t debating a pay rise nor a collective contract... to deepen this revolution the workers must assume their historical responsibilities... what we are waiting for from the working class is an attitude such as that taken (at Clorox)”.

Workers explained that the owners had fled with production manuals, account details, supplier details, and employment records, hindering reactivation of

production. “We have the task of starting to reconstruct information” explained the Special Temporary Board of Administration, which is made up of representatives of the Commerce Ministry, the Ministry of Industry, the Labor Ministry, the Superintendent of Fair Prices, and representatives of the workers from both factories and the administrative HQ in Caracas. “We hope to reach full production in the next few weeks” explained Arreaza alongside the organized workforce.

Workers explained that “the government is with us, we tell the People, and the entire world who buy our products that they will be on the shelves, we will improve the numbers”.

5. What Good is a Safety Net?

By [Lindsay Koshgarian](#)

November 7, 2014

America’s safety net is one of our most maligned and threatened public institutions, where attacks rely on arguments about decreasing the size of government and “entitlement reform.” But a funny thing happens when you ask Americans what they are willing to cut: the answer is, [not much](#).

Americans recognize that our safety net provides stability and security to our loved ones and our communities. These aren’t far-off programs that help people somewhere else. They’re programs that touch the lives of the people you interact with every day.

With the release of State Smart, a website that shows you in graphic detail how much federal aid comes to your state, we’re rethinking the way that entire communities benefit from the existence of these programs.

We’re talking about our parents and grandparents receiving a hard-earned check from Social Security after decades of work, and getting check-ups and prescriptions through Medicare. We’re talking about friends and neighbors who were laid off during the recession and made it through the tough times thanks to

unemployment insurance. We're talking about kids showing up to school well-nourished and ready to learn thanks to the Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program (SNAP).

From California's agricultural Central Valley to cities like Detroit and Washington, DC, to coal mining towns in Appalachia, the numbers show that America's safety net supports our grandparents, parents, children and neighbors when they need it most:

- Our nation has a strong commitment to taking care of seniors after a lifetime of hard work. The biggest category of federal money in 47 states is aid to individuals, driven primarily by our commitment to take care of our parents and grandparents through Social Security and Medicare.
- Federal aid to individuals is a way of planning for the worst. In the Great Recession, SNAP benefits more than doubled, and unemployment benefits nearly tripled as the safety net expanded to help those who were hurting the most.
- The safety net doesn't discriminate on the basis of red state or blue, urban or rural. For instance, the states that received the biggest bump in unemployment insurance (on a per person basis) from 2007 to 2010 were Utah, Colorado, Arizona, Florida and Wyoming.
- SNAP – or food stamps – is a small program that makes a big difference: even as the program doubled after the recession to meet the escalating need, the entire SNAP program still came in at less than ten percent of the cost of another safety net program, Social Security.

What's more, Americans are willing to pay for these programs:

- Solid majorities of Americans across all age groups want to maintain or increase Social Security spending, and many want to do so by [raising payroll taxes and raising or eliminating the earnings cap](#).
- Late last year as unemployment benefits ran out for millions of Americans still out of work after the recession, a majority of Americans supported [extending those benefits](#).

- **More than 70% of Americans supported maintaining or increasing [aid to the needy](#), and more Americans would increase than decrease such aid.**

Without these programs, communities across America would see more of their neighbors and relatives, lining up at food banks, failing to make rent or mortgage payments, and running out of options. With these programs quietly humming along, our communities are stronger. Counterproductive attacks not only threaten that security, but they fail to recognize that Americans want to contribute to their communities in this way.

Want to see how your state measures up? Head over to [State Smart](#) and see how federal aid to individuals made a difference in your state before, during and after the recession.