

The Workmen's Circle to Honor American Federation of Teachers President Randi Weingarten at Annual Winter Benefit on November 30

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By
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The Workmen's Circle will honor its historic partnership with the American Federation of Teachers (AFT) and its President, Randi Weingarten, at its Annual Winter Benefit on Thursday, November 30.

"The American Federation of Teachers and the Workmen's Circle have been partners and allies for many decades. Under Randi Weingarten's leadership, the AFT has stood alongside us on many issues of social and economic justice—most recently, supporting immigrant rights, the Pregnant Workers Fairness Act and condemning acts of violence and bias in Charlottesville," said Ann Toback, Executive Director of the Workmen's Circle. "The Workmen's Circle's mission is to build a *shenere un besere velt far ale* – a better and more beautiful world for all. We echo the ideals that the AFT espouses— our collective strength. I look forward to leveraging Randi Weingarten's energy and activism to help propel us forward, together."

"It is exactly at this moment, that the importance of Randi Weingarten's message of collective worker strength cannot be overemphasized. It is because of this that the Workmen's Circle is honored to celebrate its historic connection to the labor movement in honoring Randi," said Peter Pepper, President of the Board of Directors of the Workmen's Circle.

The Workmen's Circle and the AFT have shared a mandate to support fair labor practices dating back to the early 1920s. Historically, they have had leaders in common, including Hyman Weintraub, Israel Kugler, and Albert Shanker. When the AFT fought a bitter campaign to unionize St. John's University in New York City in 1966, the Workmen's Circle contributed significant financial support. Ms. Weingarten has continued the close and productive relationship.

Ms. Weingarten has been President of the 1.6 million-member AFT, AFL-CIO since 2008. Prior to that, she served for 12 years as president of the United Federation of Teachers, AFT Local 2, representing approximately 200,000 educators, home child care providers and other workers in health, law and education in New York City. During that time, she chaired New York City's Municipal Labor Committee, where she coordinated labor negotiations and bargaining for benefits on behalf of the MLC unions' 365,000 members.

She served as counsel to the UFT's president, taking a lead role in contract negotiations and enforcement, and in lawsuits in which the union fought for adequate school funding and building conditions. She was a history teacher at Clara Barton High School. Ms. Weingarten holds degrees from Cornell University's School of Industrial and Labor Relations and the Cardozo School of Law. She worked as a lawyer for the Wall Street firm of Stroock & Stroock & Lavan from 1983 to 1986. She is an active member of the Democratic National Committee and numerous professional, civic and philanthropic organizations. Ms. Weingarten's column "What Matters Most" appears in *The New York Times'* Sunday Review the third Sunday of each month.

"I am honored to accept this award from an organization dedicated to social justice activism through Jewish and Yiddish cultural engagement and multigenerational education," Ms. Weingarten said. "The Workmen's Circle has been a strong voice for social and economic justice for more than a century; I remember hearing about its importance growing up. It is needed today more than ever, given the turbulent, divisive times in which we live. We must continue to work together to fight for good jobs with a voice at work; decent health care; a secure retirement;

public schools that are safe and welcoming and prepare young people for life, citizenship, college, and career; social justice; a strong and vibrant democracy; and, protection of civil rights for all. By doing all of this to improve Americans' lives, we will be doing the work the founders of the Workmen's Circle intended."

The Workmen's Circle Benefit will be held at Helen Mills Event Space and Theater, 137 West 26th Street. The event starts at 6:00 PM with cocktails and a buffet, followed by a short program and concluding with dessert.

Tickets are \$250. For more information on tickets, sponsorships, and tribute journal ads, visit: www.circle.org/winterbenefit, email events@circle.org, or contact Jaime Gorelick at 212.889.6800 ext. 821. RSVPs are recommended by November 22. All gifts to the Workmen's Circle are tax-deductible to the extent permitted by law.

About The Workmen's Circle

The Workmen's Circle powers progressive Jewish identity through Jewish cultural engagement, Yiddish language learning, multigenerational education, and social justice activism. For over a century we have provided this 360-degree approach to Jewish identity-building. Through contemporary cultural programs, joyful holiday celebrations, strategic social justice campaigns, vibrant Yiddish language classes, interactive educational experiences and more, we connect Jewish adults, kids and families of all affiliations with their cultural heritage, working to build a better and more beautiful world for all.

Learn more at www.circle.org.