

# The Debs Foundation Newsletter

PO BOX 9454 ■ TERRE HAUTE INDIANA 47808-9454



Spring 2023

## From the Desk of the President

2023 has gotten off to a rocky start. Climate change in the form of blizzards and earthquakes have put millions of people at risk. The internal and external political conflicts of many countries have forced millions of people into abandoning their homes and countries. The dogmatic assertions of misleaders have heightened the instability of internal and external violence.

The United States is coming apart at the seams. Demagogues have surrounded themselves with people ready to take presumed law and order into their own hands. The streets of our cities are filled with the homeless. In many ways the 2020s harken back to the 1920s.

However there is an upturn in the desire of working people to organize themselves into unions and fight for the rights that belong to them. Whether it is workers in the fast food industry, the warehouse workers abused by conglomerates, the struggles of healthcare, education and transportation workers — the tide is turning back to basic rights and freedoms that are ours.

**2023 Eugene V. Debs  
Award Banquet**  
October 28<sup>th</sup>  
Terre Haute, Indiana

The work of the Debs Foundation since the 1960s has been to celebrate Gene's life and to acknowledge our contemporary leaders who admire and respect his accomplishments. The Pandemic that shook our planet and our country to the core has exposed clearly once again the lopsided possession of wealth by the few and the excessive exploitation of the rest of us.

We look forward to another in person Debs Award Banquet in Terre Haute this year on Saturday, October 28.

## Honoring Lynne Fox

Lynne Fox will receive the Eugene V. Debs Award for 2023 on Saturday, October 28, at an Awards Banquet in Terre Haute, Indiana.

Lynne is the International President of Workers United and Manager of the Philadelphia Joint Board and also serves as Chair of a number of Workers United institutions and is an Executive Board member of the Service Employees International Union.

A native of Philadelphia and raised in the labor movement, Lynne has committed her life's work to fighting

for justice and fairness for all people. With Lynne's leadership, Workers United is the union that has ignited the passion and imagination of hourly workers at Starbucks who seek to improve their workplaces.

Since the first store was organized Starbucks has aggressively fought against its own "partners" using illegal anti-union tactics in an attempt to intimidate and punish them. In response Workers United has filed over one hundred and eighty Unfair Labor Practice charges with the National Labor Relations Board.



**You're Invited:**  
**5th Annual Debs Day**  
**June 17th, 2023**

Join us in Terre Haute and online for our fifth observance of Debs Day, commemorating the anniversary of Debs' 1918 anti-war "Canton Speech."

Take part in our new annual tradition of bringing Debs' historic words to life in our voices. More information coming soon to [debsfoundation.org](http://debsfoundation.org).

**EUGENE V. DEBS FOUNDATION NEWSLETTER**  
Spring 2023

Published by  
**The Eugene V. Debs Foundation**  
Box 9454  
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The Debs Foundation Newsletter is published twice yearly for distribution to supporters and friends of the Foundation. The Eugene V. Debs Foundation is a non-profit, private organization which maintains the home of Eugene and Kate Debs as a museum and shrine to labor, and carries on educational and informational programs which aim to honor and promote the goals for which Debs struggled: industrial unionism, social justice, and peace. For those wishing to become supporters, a donation form is provided elsewhere in this issue.

## Labor Day Parade 2022



Labor Day Paraders assemble at the Debs House before stepping off downtown.



After a pause due to COVID, we were happy to march in the annual Labor Day Parade once again, organized by Plumbers and Steamfitters Local 157. It is one of the largest parades in the state of Indiana. What fun to walk with our comrades down the same streets as Eugene V. Debs and like Debs, share candy

with the children. As you can see, we go through a lot of candy!! We thank those who marched with us in 2022, and invite everyone to join us in 2023. If you cannot join us in person, please consider donating a bag of candy to the cause.



## From Our Comrades



The Debs Hall keeps labor history alive in Buffalo, NY.  
Photo: Chris Hawley

**From Chris Hawley in Buffalo, NY:** Eugene V. Debs Hall was established in 2021 to honor Eugene V. Debs and Buffalo and U.S. labor movement history. Thanks to 235 charter members, Eugene V. Debs Hall has undertaken a full restoration of a 1914 saloon, shuttered for three decades, on Buffalo's East Side. As a 501c7 nonprofit organization, our mission is to reactivate this historic space and to use resources we gain thereby to commemorate working class history and help uplift the neighborhood around us. It's been a fun project!

**Pullman Partners News:** Board members Sarah and JB continuously



The Pullman factory gate invokes a not-so-distant past.  
Photo: JB Daniel

seek opportunities and create possibilities to help solidify the Debs story in Pullman, IL. They strive to deepen the narrative introduced at the Pullman National Historic Park by screening documentaries such as *The Revolutionist* and *Miles of Smiles, Years of Struggle*, and leading neighborhood tours with the Illinois Labor History Society. Less formally, both also regularly engage visitors to the neighborhood and those entrusted with telling this important story.

**“We Shall Rise” Mother Jones Monument Moves Forward in Chicago:** After a four year effort, the City of Chicago has officially named the site and put out bids for a monument to Mary Harris “Mother” Jones. It will be placed in one of the most prominent sites in the City, Jane Byrne Park at the Historic Water Tower.

Following Debs into the socialist movement, Mother Jones became of the early Socialist Party's most effective organizers. Jones was also with Debs at the founding of the Industrial Workers of the World. Her path continued as a labor organizer while Debs focused on an electoral strategy. They remained close and she stayed at Debs' home in Terre Haute several times over the years. “Her very name expresses the Spirit of Revolution,” Debs wrote of Mother Jones in the *Appeal to Reason*.

In its “Request for Qualifications,” honoring her contributions, the City of Chicago says, “An Irish immigrant who became a pivotal Chicago-based labor organizer, Mary Harris “Mother” Jones (1837-1930) advocated for global justice, rejected racism against African-Americans, supported the Mexican Revolution, organized women as well as men and worked for improved living conditions for working families...Important goals of the project include fostering community driven monument projects, increasing the number of monuments to historic women and raising public awareness of Chicago's important labor history.”

The organizing efforts of hundreds of individuals and dozens of organizations will continue until this project is completed, but the day will come when you can tell your relatives or friends, “Yeah, meet me down at Mother Jones.” To contribute to the Statue Campaign, send a check to “Mother Jones Statue Fund,” 630 Joanne Lane, DeKalb, IL 60115 or visit us at [motherjonesmuseum.org](https://motherjonesmuseum.org).

**How do you preserve and share the Debs legacy?**  
**Write to us at [Info@debsfoundation.org](mailto:Info@debsfoundation.org)!**

## Honoree Updates

The A. Philip Randolph Institute held its Midwest Region Education Conference March 31-April 2.



Debs Museum Director, Allison Duerk, and Board Member, Anne D'Orazio, attended. Titled "The State of Black America in the Midwest," the conference displayed the leadership role of the APRI has demonstrated in training and education of union workers, in the partnership of civil rights and human rights and the promotion of civic engagement in the electoral process. Sessions in fundraising strategies, the role of Black Media, and the application of labor law to labor struggles highlighted the conference. Saturday evening's Awards Dinner illustrated the scope and success of the Institute's work.

## INNOCENCE PROJECT

In more than thirty years of effort to exonerate innocent men and women caught up in the criminal justice system of the United States, the Innocence Project has cleared the names and released from prison almost 300 wrongly incarcerated individuals. In 2021, the Innocence Project achieved the exoneration of two men who had served collectively 42 years in prison for their unjust conviction in the high-profile case of the assassination of Malcolm X. Following that victory, organization went on in 2022 to win a \$26 million compensation settlement for Muhammad A. Aziz and the family of Khalil Islam as partial redress of a grave injustice and the loss of a major portion of their lives.

## 50 Years Ago

For the Debs Foundation, it is vital that we keep in touch with our past, to remind ourselves of the path that brought us to this point. In 1973 the recipient of the Eugene V. Debs award was Michael Harrington, honored at a banquet held in Holiday Inn in Terre Haute on October 20.

As in any organizational decision, there was debate about who should receive the award that year, and Harrington was not the first choice. However, the person initially chosen, Shirley Chisholm, could not attend that year, so the nomination fell to Harrington.



Michael Harrington was born in St. Louis and educated in Catholic schools there. He graduated from College of the Holy Cross and University of Chicago. He joined the Catholic Worker Movement headed by Dorothy Day, who received the Debs Award in 1971. He became editor of the *Catholic Worker* newspaper, before moving to Queens College where he taught political science and wrote many books. His work *The Other America: Poverty in the United States* influenced both Presidents John F. Kennedy and Lyndon Johnson and became the foundation for the War on Poverty waged in the U.S. His second book, *Socialism*, sold over 100,000 copies and was influential on many readers. He met and worked with legendary figures such as Dr. Martin Luther King, UAW President Walter Reuther, Gloria Steinem, presidential candidate Robert Kennedy, and Swedish Prime Minister Olof Palme.

Michael Harrington was involved in the many splits that occurred in the Socialist movement after the death of Eugene V. Debs but was always true to the Debsian ideal. He wrote, "I think in our entire history you cannot find as dedicated, as magnificent, as profound a man as Eugene V. Debs." In presenting the award, Foundation Secretary Charles King wrote, "His was a lifetime of party organizing and social activism as well as writing and speaking about pressing social issues. Civil Rights leader, champion of equality, civil liberties, and freedom of speech and press... As a party leader, Harrington inherited the mantle of Norman Thomas and Eugene Debs. Although never the leader of a large, unified movement, he was America's most respected Socialist for decades."

<https://inthesetimes.com/article/michael-harrington>

# Museum Notes

The 1890 home of Eugene and Kate Debs is in a season of growth. With an increasing stream of visitors, a calendar of relevant programming, and ongoing restoration efforts, the museum is bustling with energy and enthusiasm. Dedicated volunteers, interns, and advocates have formed the new Museum Council, a group that meets regularly to coordinate our collective efforts in museum operations. The council has worked together to beautify the museum grounds, plan and promote special programming, care for and expand the museum library, and so much more. Recent programs include a Black Resistance Film Series in February, a lecture series on Black women labor leaders in March, and casual open houses for the winter holidays and May Day. The council will also host a training for new museum guides on June 6th of this year.

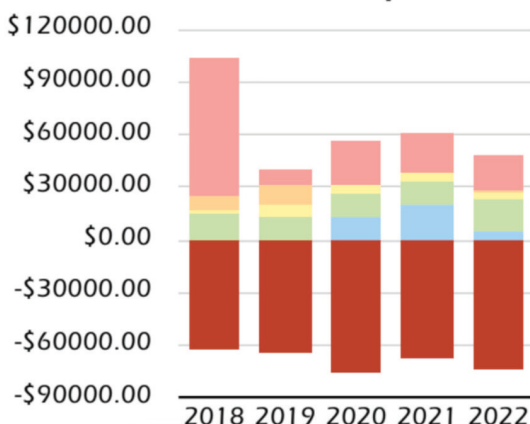
The Debs Museum is open Tuesday—Saturday from 12:00—5:00 pm. Tours are offered on a walk-in basis and no appointment is needed during regular hours. Morning and evening tours can be scheduled by appointment. Zoom tours are a convenient visiting option as well. Questions? Ideas? Write to us at [museum@debsfoundation.org](mailto:museum@debsfoundation.org).

## Financial Report

### 5-Year Profit/Loss Comparison

	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022
<b>Dues, Donations and Support</b>	\$ 80388.48	\$ 7521.53	\$ 25180.16	\$ 24171.21	\$ 21022.00
<b>Banquet Income</b>	\$ 7709.70	\$ 12581.37	\$ 0.00	\$ 0.00	\$ 1507.00
<b>Memorabilia Income</b>	\$ 2112.13	\$ 6287.77	\$ 4582.06	\$ 5102.79	\$ 3067.00
<b>Investment Income</b>	\$ 14261.24	\$ 13249.47	\$ 13032.70	\$ 12612.00	\$ 17962.00
<b>Capital Gains (Realized)</b>	\$ 0.00	\$ 0.00	\$ 13425.82	\$ 19920.17	\$ 4875.58
<b>Total Revenue</b>	\$104471.55	\$ 41499.06	\$ 56220.74	\$ 61806.17	\$ 48438.00
<b>Expenses</b>	\$(61652.10)	\$(63344.07)	\$(74991.84)	\$(66959.82)	\$(74419.00)
<b>Net Income (Loss)</b>	<b>\$ 42819.45</b>	<b>\$(21845.01)</b>	<b>\$(18771.10)</b>	<b>\$ (5153.65)</b>	<b>\$(25981.00)</b>

### Income/Expenses



### Expense Breakdown (2022)

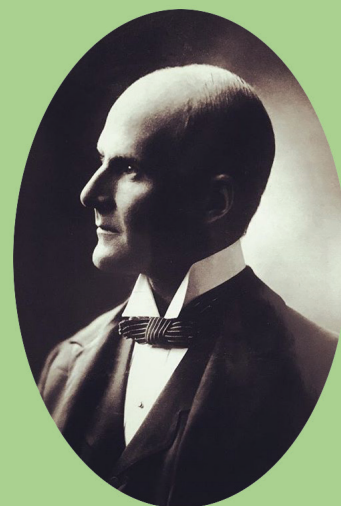
Salaries, Other Compensation, and Employee Benefits	\$ 27573.74
Professional Fees and Other Payments to Independent Contractors	\$ 12965.02
Occupancy, Rent, Utilities, and Maintenance	\$ 15493.51
Printing, Publications, Postage, and Shipping	\$ 3263.16
Other Expenses	\$ 15124.00
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$ 74,419.43</b>

## In Debs' Words

From his Statement to the Court  
Upon being Convicted of Violating the Sedition Act

This order of things cannot always endure. I have registered my protest against it. I recognize the feebleness of my effort, but, fortunately, I am not alone. There are multiplied thousands of others who, like myself, have come to realize that before we may truly enjoy the blessings of civilized life, we must reorganize society upon a mutual and cooperative basis; and to this end we have organized a great economic and political movement that spreads over the face of all the earth.

*Eugene V. Debs*



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Please make checks payable to:

**Eugene V. Debs Foundation ■ PO Box 9454 ■ Terre Haute, IN ■ 47808**

The Eugene V. Debs Foundation is a 501(c)3 not-for-profit educational organization. Your contributions are tax-deductible. The Foundation owns and maintains the Eugene V. Debs Home and Museum and offers educational and cultural programs.

**Your Continued Support Makes It Possible!**