



NEW YORK LABOR HISTORY ASSOCIATION

A Bridge between Past and Present

Thirty-Eighth Annual

John Commerford Labor Education

Awards Reception

Honoring

Rebecca Damon

&

Lauren Kaori Gurley

Thursday December 5, 2024

6-7pm

via NYU Zoom

This event is a partnership between the New York Labor History Association, Labor Arts, and NYU's Tamiment Library & Robert F. Wagner Labor Archives

Rebecca Damon is the Chief Labor Policy Officer and New York Local Executive Director for SAG-AFTRA. As part of the executive leadership team, Rebecca oversees the Labor Policy & International Affairs department and has oversight of the Locals outside of Los Angeles and New York.

A champion for workers' rights, Damon has advocated for a worker centered trade policy and protections for SAG-AFTRA members in a fast changing technological landscape and increasingly globalized creative industry.

Damon served as executive vice president, the union's second-highest elected national office, and president of the New York Local. She was a key architect of the SAG-AFTRA merger.

Damon is a vice president of the New York State AFL-CIO Executive Council, a member of the New York City Film and Television Production Industry Council, the New York City Central Labor Council, a board member of PowHer NY, and a vice president of the SAG-AFTRA Foundation.

Lauren Kaori Gurley is the labor reporter for *The Washington Post*. Previously, she covered labor and tech at *Vice*, and she has also written for *The American Prospect*, *In These Times*, and *The New York Review of Books*. At *Vice's Motherboard*, she covered labor and technology from 2019 to 2022, producing groundbreaking journalism, including scoops with stories [revealing that Amazon had hired the Pinkerton Detective Agency](#) to spy on its warehouse workers and that Amazon delivery drivers had to create their own photographic evidence to dispute the company's claim that it didn't deny them time to take bathroom breaks. Lauren also was [among the first to write about a union drive in Staten Island](#), where Amazon warehouse workers in 2022 voted to form the first union in company history.

At *The Washington Post*, as labor reporter since 2022, she has chronicled major strikes and union elections — from the auto industry to the ports to Hollywood. She's covered the child labor crisis in America's slaughterhouses and fast food industry, union endorsements in the 2024 presidential election, and the economic forces that shape workers lives. Her work has been honored by the Sidney Hillman Foundation and the Newswomen's Club of New York. She was nominated for a 2024 Gerald Loeb Award for her coverage of the United Auto Workers 2023 strike.

JOHN COMMERFORD LABOR EDUCATION AWARDS

Welcome	Shannon O'Neill
Song <i>A Change is Gonna Come</i>	Lana Crowster
NYLHA President's Remarks	Irwin Yellowitz
John Commerford	Keith Danish
Commerford Award Presentation	Sarah Seeds
Acceptance	Rebecca Damon
Bellush and Wertheimer Prizes	Brian Greenberg
Acceptances	Aaron Leon Freedman Natalia Facio
Commerford Award Presentation	Steven Greenhouse
Acceptance	Lauren Kaori Gurley
Closing remarks	Rachel Bernstein
Song <i>Lean on Me</i>	Lana Crowster

PATRONS

American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees DC 37
Keith Danish
International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees
New York City Central Labor Council
New York Metropolitan Area Joint Board, Workers United
The NewsGuild-CWA
Office and Professional Employees International Union Local 153
Organization of Staff Analysts
Professional Staff Congress
Puffin Foundation
Queens Library Guild Local 1321, AFSCME
Robert F. Wagner Labor Archives/Tamiment Library, NYU
SAG-AFTRA
Transport Workers Union
United Federation of Teachers
Irwin Yellowitz

Previous Commerford Award Recipients

Each year since 1987 NYLHA celebrates two honorees for their contributions to workers empowerment

Paul Cole, New York State AFL-CIO	Jeannette DiLorenzo, United Federation of Teachers
Kenneth Crowe, Labor Journalist	Joyce D. Miller, ACTWU, AFL-CIO
Ralph Fasanella, Labor Artist	David Montgomery, Yale University
Lois Gray, Cornell University	John J. Sweeney, SEIU, AFL-CIO
Ida Torres, Local 3, RWDSU	Dorothy Swanson, Tamiment Library, NYU
Education Department, DC 37, AFSCME	Gus Tyler, ILGWU, AFL-CIO
Joseph Murphy, City University of New York	Alice Kessler-Harris, Columbia University
Kathy Andrade, Local 23-25 ILGWU	María Portalatin, United Federation of Teachers
Morton Bahr, Communications Workers of Am.	Debra E. Bernhardt, Wagner Labor Archives, NYU
Thomas Y. Hobart, Jr., NY State United Teachers	Philoine Fried, Jewish Labor Committee
Sonny Hall, Transport Workers Union of America	Daniel J. Leab, Seton Hall University
Brian McLaughlin, NYC Central Labor Council	Judith Helfand, George Stoney & Vera Rony, Filmmakers
Gabriel P. Caprio, Amalgamated Bank	Sol Stetin, Textile Workers Union of America
Edward J. Cleary, NY State AFL-CIO	Kate Bronfenbrenner, Cornell University
Randi Weingarten, United Federation of Teachers	Connie Kopelov, New York Labor History Association
Moe Biller, American Postal Workers Union	Norman Hill, A. Philip Randolph Institute
Denis M. Hughes, New York State AFL-CIO	Theodore H. Kheel, Labor Mediator
Theodore Bikel, Associated Actors&Artistes of Am.	Jack Schierenbeck, United Federation of Teachers
Forward Association, Jewish Daily Forward	Brenda Berkman, Fire Department, NYC
Dolores C. Huerta, United Farmworkers	Roger Toussaint, Transport Workers Union, Local 100
Joshua B Freeman, Queens Coll, CUNY Grad Ctr	Judith P. Vladeck, Vladeck, Waldman, Elias & Engelhard
George Andrucki, Sheet Metal Workers, Local 28	Henry Foner, Fur, Leather and Machine Workers Union
Raglan George, Jr., AFSCME DC 1707	Steven Greenhouse, The New York Times
George Altomare, United Federation of Teachers	Janet Wells Greene, Labor Historian
Juan González, New York Daily News	Larry Cary, Labor Lawyer
Michael Mulgrew, United Fedn. of Teachers	Peter Yarrow, Artist and Activist
Jane LaTour, Labor Journalist	Eric Foner, Columbia University
Barbara Bowen, Professional Staff Congress	American Labor Museum/Botto House
Arthur Cheliotas, CWA, Local 1180	Sara Horowitz, Freelancers Union
Stuart Appelbaum, RWDSU	Ruth Milkman, CUNY Graduate Center
Keith Mestrich, Amalgamated Bank	Tom Robbins, Investigative Journalist
Bhairavi Desai, NY Taxi Workers Alliance	Annelise Orleck, Dartmouth College
Jennifer Egan, Writer	American Labor Studies Center
Miriam Frank, Historian	Brian Greenberg, Monmouth University
Bob Croghan, Organization of Staff Analysts	Robert Wechsler, Transport Workers Union
Jane McAlevey, organizer and writer	Melvyn Dubofsky, Binghamton University
Dorothy Sue Cobble, Rutgers University	Richard Steier, <i>The Chief</i>
<u>Rebecca Kolins Givan</u>	