

**Washington State Labor Education and Research Center
South Seattle Community College**

Women’s Labor History of the United States

Selected Information compiled by Ariel Natalo-Lifton and Sarah Laslett for the
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	1700’s & 1800’s
1765	The first society of non-indigenous working women, the Daughters of Liberty, is organized as an auxiliary of the Sons of Liberty.
1824	In Pawtucket, Rhode Island, 102 female workers go on strike to support their fellow (male) weavers. These women, who protested wage reduction and long hours, were the first women to go on strike.
1825	The first women-only union is formed: The United Tailoresses of New York.
1831	In February, the United Tailoresses strike. About 1600 women band together to demand fair wages for their work.
1833	Women shoe binders from Lynn, Massachusetts and neighboring towns form their own protective organization. They drew on the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution to proclaim that, "Women as well as men have certain inalienable rights, among which is the right at all times of peaceably assembling to consult upon the common good."
1834	First turnout of “mill girls” in Lowell, Massachusetts, to protest wage cuts
1835	General strike for ten hour work days in Philadelphia.
1837	Lowell employers raise rents in the women's boarding houses, provoking a widespread and better organized response from the women than in 1835. The women stayed on strike until the rent increases were canceled or reduced.
1845	In Lowell cotton mill workers led by Sarah Bagdley, form The Female Labor Reform Association to reduce the workday, and improve sanitation and safety in the mills.
1848	Seneca Falls Convention is held to rally for women’s rights.
1849	Harriet Tubman escapes slavery, and then makes 13 journeys back into slave territory to guide more than 70 slaves, including her own family, to freedom.
1853	Antoinette Brown is the first African American women to be ordained as a Protestant minister although women had long been spiritual leaders in the underground religious life of slave communities.
1857	Ten state associations sent out “The Call” to teachers across the nation to form the National Teachers Association and organize in and for public education. Originally restricted to men, the Association was opened to women nine years later, welcomed African American members before the Civil War, and elected a women President a decade before women in the U.S. were granted the right to vote. These efforts eventually led to the creation of the National Education Association which now has 3.2 million members, of which 61% were women in 2000; 33% of top leadership positions were held by women. The NEA is the largest labor organization in the United States.
1866	Laundresses in Jackson, Mississippi start the first African American women’s labor organization and strike to protest low wages.
1866	The National Labor Union is formed.
1867	The national union for cigar makers becomes the first union to accept women and African Americans.

1869	The Knights of Labor, a national labor organization, is formed.
1869	Female cobblers and shoe-stitchers from six different states form the first national women's union/labor organization, the Daughters of St. Crispin in Lynn, Massachusetts.
1873	Ellen Swallow Richards graduates from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, the first woman known to have been accepted at a scientific school in the U.S.
1879	Belva Ann Lockwood is the first female lawyer to present a case before the U.S. Supreme Court.
1881	African American laundresses in Atlanta, Georgia form the Washing Society to fight for higher pay. About 3,000 women strike to increase the price-per-pound of the washing they take in to their homes.
1881	Federation of Organized Trades and Labor Unions is formed.
1882	The first Labor Day parade is held in New York City.
1883	Lucy Gonzales Parsons (1853-1942) and her husband Albert help found the International Working People's Association (IWPA). Lucy Parsons was also an influential organizer for the International Ladies' Garment Workers Union (ILGWU) and an Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) leader.
1886	The American Federation of Labor (AFL) is formed, but women are mostly excluded by the craft unions that made up the federation.
1888	The Knights of Labor agrees to admit women. Leonora O'Reilly organized a female chapter called the United Garment Workers of America. She later joined the Women's Trade Union League (WTUL) and was influential during the "Great Uprising" among garment workers in 1909-10.
1888	Mary Burke is elected first the female Vice President of the Retail Clerks.
1888	Working class and middle class women in Chicago create the Illinois Women's Alliance to fight against sweatshops and child labor.
1888	In New York, a law is passed that requires female doctors for female patients in mental institutions.
1889	Jane Adams sets a precedent for women in social work. She forms Hull House in Chicago, which assists the poor in the area.
1889	Isabel Hampton Robb is appointed head of the new Johns Hopkins School of Nursing. She will serve as President of the American Nurses Association.
1891	Hotel Employees & Restaurant Employees International Union (HERE) forms.
1892	Mary Kenney O'Sullivan is the first salaried, national female organizer for the AFL.
1892	Matrons are required in police stations to supervise arrested women.
1896	A small group of nurses attend the first convention of the Nurses Associated Alumnae of the United States and Canada which became the American Nurses Association (ANA) in 1911.
1898	Charlotte Perkins Gilman argues that women need to be financially independent from men in her book <i>Women and Economics</i> .
1898	Agnes Nestor is a leader in a successful strike at a glove factory in Chicago. In 1902, Nestor led the women out of the union to form their own local, of which she was the President – the first woman to hold a union presidency. She went on in the same year to be one of the founders of the International Glove Workers Union for which she was an officer from 1903 to 1948. She was also active in the Chicago Women's Trade Union League, and served as its president from 1913 to 1948.
1899	The National Consumers' League is formed to organize women to fight for better working conditions and protective laws. Florence Kelley is president.
	1900-1910
1900	The International Ladies Garment Workers Union (ILGWU) is formed by the

	amalgamation of seven local unions. At the turn of the century most of the workers in the garment industry were immigrant Jewish women.
1900	U.S. Industrial Commission declares trade unions good for democracy.
1903	The National Women's Trade Union League (WTUL) is established at the AFL convention. The WTUL is based on a British group of the same name that formed thirty years earlier.
1903	Mary Harris Jones, nicknamed "Mother Jones," led a 125-mile march of child workers to bring the evils of child labor to the attention of the President and the national press. They marched from Philadelphia, Pennsylvania to Oyster Bay, New York to stop at President Theodore Roosevelt's home.
1903	Rose Schneiderman starts organizing the women in the cap factory where she works. When she and her partner applied to the United Cloth Hat and Cap Makers Union for a charter, the union told them to come back after they had succeeded in organizing twenty five women. They did that within days and the union then chartered its first women's local. Schneiderman went on to be a leader in the WTUL, an organizer for the ILGWU, and an advocate for women's suffrage.
1903	The International Brotherhood of Teamsters (IBT) forms. In 2000 the IBT had 450,000 female members comprising 30% of the union; 4% of the top leadership positions were held by women.
1905	The Industrial Workers of the World (IWW or Wobblies) was founded with the help of San Antonio labor organizer Lucy Gonzales Parsons. In contrast to the AFL which organized in specific skilled crafts, the IWW slogan was ONE BIG UNION. Everyone was welcome.
1905	The Illinois branch of the WTUL passes a resolution to seek Federal investigation of working women's conditions. WTUL lobbies with other women's organizations in Washington, D.C. to introduce a bill to fund such a report in 1906.
1907	Bill passes; several investigations conducted over 3 years, authorized by the Secretary of Commerce & Labor, yield 19 volumes of reports unveiling poor conditions, health, and wages of women workers and recommending establishment of a permanent agency to watchdog and set standards. Women's groups continue to lobby for such an office in the Department of Labor.
1908	African American nurses meet in New York City and found the National Association of Colored Graduate Nurses. Martha Franklin of Connecticut was chosen as the first President; the Association works for higher professional nursing standards, the elimination of discrimination, and the development of leadership among African American nurses. Among them was Mary Eliza Mahoney, the first African American registered nurse in the U.S. She was also one of the original members of the ANA.
1909	"Uprising of the 20,000" - female shirtwaist makers in New York strike against sweatshop conditions.
1910	Washington State grants suffrage to women.
	1911-1920
1911	The Triangle Shirtwaist Factory fire in New York City; 146 immigrant women garment workers are killed when a fire breaks out in the factory where they are locked in. This event focuses national attention on the dangerous conditions under which women work.
1912	The International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, which has been organizing in the telephone industry, accepts telephone operators, who were primarily women.
1912	The U.S. Children's Bureau is established; marks the beginning of modern programs designed to protect children and strengthen families.

1912	The IWW leads the “Bread and Roses” strike in Lowell, Massachusetts to organize the textile mills. This strike of 23,000 men, women, and children is frequently referred to as the first successful multi-ethnic strike.
1912	The Department of Labor is formed.
1912	The Bull Moose Party becomes the first political party to have women’s suffrage as part of its platform.
1913	The Department of Labor establishes a Women's Division as a sub-division of the Bureau of Labor Statistics. It is not effective at making policy due to lack of a strong mandate and inadequate organization, but does publish informative materials on segments of the women's labor force.
1914	The National Guard, backed by a small private army, opens fire on the tent village of striking mine workers and their families in Ludlow, Colorado killing seven men and thirteen women and children. This is known as the “Ludlow Massacre.” The strike was organized by the United Mine Workers of America.
1916	The American Federation of Teachers is founded to represent the economic, social and professional interests of classroom teachers. In 2000 the AFT had 600,000 female members, comprising 60% of the union. As of 2007 the AFT had the highest percentage of any union with women in top leadership positions – 39%.
1916	Anna Louise Strong runs for the Seattle School Board and wins – the only women on the board. She is hired by the New York Evening Post to report on the “Everett Massacre” when armed guards hired by mill owners shot down Wobblies arriving by ferry to organize mill workers.
1916	Alice Paul and Lucy Burns established the National Women’s Party to work for women’s suffrage.
1916	Jeanette Rankin is the first woman to serve in the House of Representatives from 1916-1918 and again from 1940 -1942. There were no women in the House in between her terms. Rankin was a Republican, pacifist and feminist.
1917	The Seattle Laundry Workers Union stages a successful strike to force laundry companies to pay union scale wages. The strike and settlement increased union involvement by women; in the first ten days of the strike over 600 women joined the union. Eventually, 85% of the women laundry workers joined.
1917	The Council of Defense sets up the Committee on Women in Industry, including WTUL and Consumers League members, to advise it on means of safeguarding the welfare of women workers during the war. The Board of Labor Standards and the U.S. Railway Administration set up women's branches, as does the Ordinance Department, the latter to oversee women's work in munitions plants.
1917	In July, the first military draft of American men to fight in World War I begins to cause labor shortages. By the fall, the U.S. Employment Service launches a campaign to replace men with women in "every position that a woman is capable of filling."
1918	In June, the War Labor Administration sets up a "Woman in Industry Service" (WIS) to meet the problems connected with more rapid introduction of women into industry. A month later, Mary Van Kleeck, a WTUL activist, moves from the Ordinance Department to direct the WIS with Mary Anderson as Assistant Director, and Helen Brooks Irvin as an experienced organizer of African American women workers.
1918	WIS formulates standards for employment of women in war industries, including a 48 hour work week, equal pay, lunch breaks, and sanitation and safety standards. By August, the Department of Defense begins to include these standards in war contracts, although many contractors did not adhere to them. The WIS was

	successful in promoting better working conditions, if not equal pay, for women and it continued to publish detailed reports and guidelines based on the WWI experiences of women and employers until it was transformed into the Women's Bureau in 1920.
1919	One of the most militant years in U.S. labor history. An epidemic of strikes breaks out across the country caused by the rising cost of living and post-war economic recession as the country shifts from war to peacetime production. Massive strikes shut down the nation's steel, coal, and meatpacking industries and threaten civil unrest in a dozen cities. Women and workers of color are among the worst affected by lay offs & recession; they join in the strikes. One in every five workers strikes at some point during this year.
1919	Seattle General Strike. The strike began in the shipyards that had expanded rapidly with war production contracts. 35,000 workers expected a post-war pay hike to make up for two years of strict wage controls imposed by the federal government. When regulators refused, the Metal Trades Council union alliance declared a strike and closed the yards; they were joined by most of the city's 110 local unions. A city of 315,000 people stopped working. While women's unions like the telephone operators and garment workers voted in favor of the strike, women were not asked to join the protest, but were instead told to stay in "their proper role as wife and mother in the home". They were also asked by labor leaders to "stand by your man in this, his hour of trial".
1919	The National Federation of Business and Professional Women's (BPW) Clubs are founded. Throughout the years, three major issues shaped BPW's legislative agenda: elimination of sex discrimination in employment, the principle of equal pay, and the need for a comprehensive equal rights amendment.
1919	First International Congress of Working Women meets in Washington, D.C. It later becomes the International Federation of Working Women with the promotion of trade union organization among women as its main priority.
1919	Fannie Sellins, a single mother of four, is fatally shot while leading strikers in Brackenbridge, Pennsylvania. She was working for the United Mine Workers of America.
1920	In June, Congress establishes the Women's Bureau (WB) in the Department of Labor with a staff of 20 and a budget of \$30,000, under the Directorship of Mary Anderson. The WB begins its field investigations. Analysis and recommendations on national, state and industry trends affecting women at work begin to emerge. Some titles published in 1920: "Night-Work Laws in the U.S., 1919"; "The New Position of Women in American Industry." The WB continued to research and publish reports on the economic status of women for decades.
1920	The 19th Amendment to the Constitution is ratified, giving women the right to vote throughout the United States.
1920	The American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) is founded by Roger Baldwin, Crystal Eastman, Albert DeSilver and others.
	1921-1930
1921	Seven small janitors unions form the Building Service Employees International Union (it became SEIU when 'Building' was dropped in 1968). Organizing in the three core industries of property services, public sector, and health care, SEIU claims more than 2 millions members in 2009. In 2000 they had 650,000 female members, who comprised 50% of the union. Women held 32% of their top leadership positions.
1923	Alice Paul of the National Woman's Party introduces the first proposed amendment

	to the Constitution on equality for women. The Equal Rights Amendment does not gain enough support to pass.
1923	The Federal Government Classification Act passes; an equal pay victory for the WB, which exposed hiring and wage discrimination against women in a 1920 report, "Women in the Federal Government." The new law establishes that Government salaries should be determined by job duties, not the sex of employee.
1925	Rose Knox, president of Knox Co., producers of gelatin for food and industrial purposes, begins to oversee her profitable business "in a woman's way." She institutes one of the first 5-day work weeks, keeps her plants clean and pleasant and wins enduring loyalty from her employees.
1925	Nellie Taylor Ross becomes the first woman to serve as a state Governor in Wyoming. She was elected to succeed her deceased husband, William Bradford Ross, in the fall of 1924. Miriam Amanda "Ma" Ferguson is inaugurated as Governor of Texas days later.
1929	As the depression hits America, Anne Ronnell is paid \$25 for writing the song, "Who's Afraid of the Big Bad Wolf?" about labor organizers and corporate "wolves".
1930	12% of workers in the U.S. are union members.
1930	Rosina Tucker helps to organize the first Black labor union — the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters. In September 1938, the wives of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters established the International Ladies Auxiliary. Tucker became its first Secretary-Treasurer.
1930	Ellen Church becomes the first airline stewardess for United Airlines.
	1931-1940
1931	Lucy Randolph Mason authors " <i>Standards for Workers in Southern Industry</i> " the first pamphlet of its kind. In 1932, Mason succeeded Florence Kelley as the general secretary of the National Consumer's League (NCL), the foremost national organizational advocate of fair labor standards.
1931	Verne Mitchell, aged 19, becomes the first woman to pitch baseball for an organized male team—Chattanooga Baseball Club.
1931	Clara Holden, a National Textiles Union organizer is kidnapped and beaten in Greenville, South Carolina.
1932	The Wisconsin State Employees Union/Council 24 is formed by white collar state employees. This eventually becomes the American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees which had 728,000 female members in 2000, comprising 52% of the union; 38% of AFSCME's top leadership positions were held by women
1932	Section 213 of the Federal Economy Act requires that one spouse resign if both husband and wife are working for the Federal Government. A WB study later shows that more than 75 % of those resigning were women. Section 213 remained on the books until 1937. The economic contribution of women to family support was demeaned by the stereotype that women worked for "pin money" and/or stole jobs from men. Section 213 is only one example of many public and private pressures on women to give up jobs in favor of the working man during the depression. The WB reports on "Women Office Workers in Philadelphia"; "The Effects on Women of Changing Conditions in the Cigar & Cigarette Industries"; "The Employment of Women in Slaughtering and Meat-Packing."
1932	Hattie Wyatt Caraway of Arkansas becomes the first woman elected to the U.S. Senate. She ran as a Republican.
1933	Frances Perkins is appointed Secretary of Labor by President Franklin Delano Roosevelt, making her the first woman member of a presidential cabinet.
1934	Florence Ellinwood Allen becomes the first female judge on the US Court of

	Appeals.
1934	There is another upsurge in strikes including in the national textile industries.
1935	<i>14% of workers in the U.S. are union members, an increase of 2%.</i>
1935	On July 5, President Roosevelt signs into law the National Labor Relations Act which formally legalizes the rights of workers to form unions. It established a federal agency, the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB), with the power to investigate and decide on charges of unfair labor practices and to conduct union elections.
1935	The National Council of Negro Women is formed by Mary McLeod Bethune to lobby against racism, sexism, and job discrimination.
1936	President Roosevelt asks Mary McLeod Bethune to be the director of Negro Affairs of the National Youth Administration. She becomes the first African American woman to be a presidential advisor.
1936	The Women's Emergency Brigade forms to support the United Auto Workers' "sit-down strike" at the General Motors Plant in Flint, Michigan. The women provided food, clothing, and other necessities to the men who stayed in the plant from December 30, 1936 until February 11, 1937. They also battled the police who used tear gas to try and break the strike. The Women's Emergency Brigade is featured in the film <i>With Babies and Banners</i> .
1937	Clerks and other workers, all women, stage a sit-down strike at the Woolworth store in Detroit, Michigan. They occupied the store for seven days and won on a broad range of issues. The strikers were supported by the Waiters and Waitresses Union of Detroit.
1938	The Fair Labor Standards Act sets standards for minimum wages and maximum hours without overtime to protect workers in the lowest paid jobs, but doesn't cover all job categories. This law improved working conditions and reduced the need for the WB to carry out field investigations on basic conditions, freeing it to focus on other issues affecting women workers. Mary Anderson and the WB made major contributions towards the passage of this bill.
1938	Representatives of 31 telephone organizations, representing a total combined membership of 145,000, assemble in New Orleans, adopt a constitution and establish the National Federation of Telephone Workers (NFTW).
1938	Luisa Moreno, a Guatemalan immigrant, becomes the first Latina Vice President of a major labor union: the United Cannery, Agricultural, Packing and Allied Workers of America (UCAPAWA).
1938	Esther Peterson became a paid organizer for AFT. Earlier she had been involved with the ILGWU and spent summers working at the Summer School for Women Workers in Industry. The school brought young working women from across the country and several nations together for classes ranging from economics to poetry grounded in working-class life.
1938	The Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO) splits from the AFL and forms a rival labor federation. The CIO had begun as the Committee for Industrial Organization formed by 8 unions within the AFL in 1935. The Committee wanted the AFL to organize workers in mass production industries as opposed to traditional craft unionism. The Committee failed to change AFL policy from within and the ten unions on Committee (two more had joined) were suspended by the AFL in 1936. They went on to become the Congress of Industrial Organizations
1939	Southern textile workers found the Textile Workers Union of America (TWUA).
1939	Under the leadership of Luisa Moreno, El Congreso Nacional del Pueblo de Habla Hispana (The National Congress of Spanish-Speaking Peoples) was founded; it

	was the first national effort to bring together Hispanic workers from diverse ethnic backgrounds: Cubans and Spaniards from Florida, Puerto Ricans from New York and Mexican Americans from the Southwest.
1940	<i>28% of workers in the U.S. are union members, an increase of 14%.</i>
1940	Slightly more than 11 million women are holding jobs. War in Europe stimulates U.S. production, but men, not women, are first beneficiaries of more jobs. The WB issues reports on how women could contribute to the economic upswing and recommends training programs to prepare them for future calls from industry.
	1941-1950
1941	The National War Labor Board is created with the participation and acceptance of union workers.
1941	After the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor on Dec. 7, the U.S. enters World War II. A Fair Employment Practices Commission is established to help alleviate discrimination against African Americans in war production employment. African American women especially press to escape from domestic and agricultural jobs into more lucrative factory employment.
1942	As the military draft begins to decimate the ranks of male workers, the Government issues a nondiscrimination directive, reversing depression-era restrictions on employment of women, especially married women. Many gains in protective legislation for working women are waived in favor of wartime needs. For the first time, employers actively seek out women workers for nontraditional jobs and some offer services—day care, meals, transportation—making it easier for women with families to work. The WB publishes a series of 13 reports on women in various wartime industries, as well as "Equal Pay for Women in War Industries"—which was not the practice in many cases. By mid-1942, the War Manpower Commission starts a campaign to actively recruit women in labor shortage areas. The National War Labor Board issues an order "permitting" employers to equalize wages paid to women and men for work of comparable quality and quantity; the Federal government lowers the legal working age for women from 18 to 16.
1943	War Production Board announces a need for 1.5 million more women workers within a year. Rosie the Riveter is invented as a propaganda tool to make women want to work in war time jobs like welding, which had previously been exclusively male-dominated. Rosie was based on a real woman: Rose Will Monroe, an aircraft assembly worker.
1944	Between 1940 and 1944, more than 6 million women join the civilian labor force, though fully 75% of all women working for wages during the war had worked before. By mid-year, the WB had already begun studying the effect of cut-backs in employment of women as employers prepared for postwar slowdown. Some women began to quit their jobs voluntarily; many others who preferred to stay were harassed by employers. The Bureau recommended full employment and equal wages for men and women as part of the reconversion process.
1944	Women joined unions in large numbers during the war, in spite of resistance from some trades. Before the war only some 800,000 women belonged to unions (9.4% of total union membership). By 1944, more than 3 million were union members (22% of total).
1945	<i>35% of workers in the U.S. are union members, an increase of 7%, the all-time high.</i>
1945	The Air Line Stewardesses Associations (ALSA) forms, the first union for flight attendants. Their first contract in the following year raised wages, limited hours, set rest periods, and established a grievance procedure.

1945	The WB and the WTUL wage an aggressive campaign for the House-sponsored Women's Equal Pay Act.
1946	This year marks the largest strike wave in U.S. history. This wave is frequently attributed to job changes and dissatisfaction after World War II.
1946	The ANA establishes a Committee on Employment Conditions of Nurses to identify resources for helping nurses improve salaries and working conditions. The ANA House of Delegates endorses the 8-hour day, 40-hour week for all nurses, calls for the elimination of discrimination against people of color, and votes to inaugurate an Economic Security Program to stabilize nursing services and improve working conditions for nurses in all fields. State nurses' associations are urged to conduct active programs, including collective bargaining for nurses.
1946	Eleanor Roosevelt serves as a member of the US delegation to the United Nations.
1946	The WB publishes its analyses of World War II industrial experiences for women and begins a series of reports on women workers in other countries.
1946	The United Nations Commission on the Status of Women is formed.
1947	Communication Workers of America (CWA) founded. In 2000 CWA had 320,000 female members, comprising 51% of the union. In 2007, 12 % of the top leadership positions were held by women.
1947	ALSA President Ada Brown, 30, marries and becomes a victim of United Airlines no-marriage rule. She retires from her career and union Presidency.
1947	The Taft-Hartley Act is passed, amending the National Labor Relations Act. Taft-Hartley added a list of prohibited actions, or "unfair labor practices" (ULPs) on the part of unions; previously prohibited ULPs were actions only by employers. Certain kinds of strikes were prohibited (jurisdictional, wildcat, solidarity, or political), secondary boycotts, closed shops, monetary donations by unions to federal political campaigns, and "common situs" picketing (where unions picket, strike, or refuse to handle the goods of a business with which they have no primary dispute but which is associated with a business engaged in a labor dispute.) It also required union officers to sign non-communist affidavits. Union shops (where all employees covered by a union contract are required to be union members) were heavily restricted, and states were allowed to pass "right-to-work laws" outlawing union shops. Also, the executive branch of the Federal government could obtain legal strikebreaking injunctions if an impending or current strike "imperiled the national health or safety," a test that has been interpreted broadly by the courts.
1948	Economic & Social Council of the UN adopts the principle that women should receive the same pay as men for equal work.
1949	Union of Electrical, Radio and Machine Workers sponsors first postwar conference of any major union on the problems of women workers.
1949	The WB investigates the future of women in the police force.
1950	32% of workers in the U.S. are union members, a decrease of 3%.
1950	Women are 29% of the total workforce; 32 % of working-age women have jobs; nearly half are married. The postwar period saw a drop in young married women workers, but half again as many women age 45-54 were working after the war than before.
1950	The ANA affirms nurse's voluntary relinquishment of the right to strike and insists that this voluntary no-strike guarantee obligated employers to recognize and deal justly with nurses through their authorized representatives.
1950	Predominantly Mexican-American members of the Mine-Mill Workers Union struck the mines in southern New Mexico from October 1950 until January 1952 to protest unsafe working conditions and racial discrimination. When an injunction

	against the men's picket line was signed by a judge, the women took over despite resistance from their husbands and carried the strike to victory. Called the "Salt of the Earth Strike," it became the subject of a movie by the same name in which some of the real strikers and their families appear.
1950	The Women's Trade Union League is dissolved.
	1951-1960
1952	A coalition of civic groups, women's organizations, labor and employer organizations, including the WB, form a National Committee for Equal Pay and hold a conference. WB publishes the conference's report.
1953	Women in Construction of Fort Worth, Texas founded. Evolved in to the National Association of Women in Construction (NAWIC).
1955	34% of workers in the U.S. are union members, an increase of 2%.
1955	Women earn 63.9 cents to every male dollar. (annual earnings – for statistics broken down by race & region, go to the Institute for Women's Policy Research)
1955	The AFL & CIO merge.
1955	Rosa Parks refuses to give up her seat in the front of the bus for a white passenger in Montgomery, Alabama. This act of defiance sparked the Montgomery Bus Boycott.
1955	The White House holds a Conference on Effective Use of Womanpower, in which the WB plays a major role. Director Leopold describes it as the "beginning of new efforts on the part of the U.S. Department of Labor to develop our country's manpower to the fullest." It explores sex-stereotypes as limits to opportunities for women and makes suggestions for increasing women's labor participation.
1955	The last of the local branches of the WTUL dissolves itself; most of the League's functions have been assumed by the unions.
1958	100,000 striking ILGWU members in eight states win the required use of the union label to identify union-made textiles.
1958	The National Union of Hospital and Health Care Employees Local 1199 begins to organize city hospital workers such as dietary, housekeeping & maintenance staff who were overwhelmingly poor, African American & Latina women.
1959	The United Nations adopts the Declaration of the Rights of the Child, which affirmed the rights of children everywhere to receive adequate care from parents and the community.
1959	The WB begins to promote women working in the scientific professions.
1960	31% of workers in the U.S. are union members, a decrease of 3%.
1960	Women earn 60.7 cents to every male dollar, a decrease of 3.2 cents. (annual earnings)
1960	Women make up 33% of the total work force; 30.5 % of married women work for wages, contributing about 26% of total family income. One-third of all wage-earning women hold clerical jobs. Nearly 80 % of wage-earning women hold jobs stereotyped as "female."
	1961-1970
1961	On the suggestion of Esther Peterson, director of the WB, President John F. Kennedy establishes the first national Commission on the Status of Women. Eleanor Roosevelt is the first Chair of that Commission.
1962	Presidential memorandum bars discrimination against women in Federal Civil Service hiring and promotions policies.
1963	The Commission on the Status of Women report leads to the passage of the Equal Pay Act. The Equal Pay Act made it illegal to pay different wages to men and

	women who performed the same work. However, the new law had little effect on narrowing the wage gap between the sexes. Most female workers remained in jobs traditionally held by women, offering low wages and little prospect for advancement.
1963	<i>The Feminine Mystique</i> , by Betty Friedan, examines the causes and effects of the underemployment of educated American women. While it becomes a classic in feminist literature, this book is also criticized for focusing on the white, middle-class experience.
1964	Congress passes Civil Rights Act, including Title VII, which prohibits firms with 14 or more employees from discriminating on the basis of race, color, religion, sex or national origin. It establishes the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission to implement the law. Shortly thereafter, the EEOC is flooded with sex discrimination complaints. Flight attendants use Title VII to challenge discriminatory policies based on gender, race, age, weight, pregnancy, and marital status.
1965	28% of workers in the U.S. are union members, a decrease of 3%.
1965	Women earn 59.9 cents to every male dollar , a decrease of .8 cents. (annual earnings)
1965	The Voting Rights Act of 1965 finally bans restrictions on voting, such as literacy tests and other measures that are used to bar African Americans from voting.
1965	Dolores Huerta became the first female leader of the farm worker's union. She co- founded the United Farm Workers with Cesar Chavez and became its contract negotiator.
1965	Patsy Takemoto Mink, of Hawaii, is the first Asian- American woman elected to Congress. She served in the U.S. House of Representatives for 24 years.
1965	8,000 striking AFSCME Local 371 members in the New York City Department of Welfare, including home health care providers, social workers, and case aides shut down two-thirds of New York City's welfare centers during contract negotiations over case loads, overtime compensation, promotional opportunities and pay rates.
1965	Aileen Hernandez was the first woman appointed to the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission.
1966	The National Organization for Women (NOW) is founded by activist Betty Friedan to end sex-based discrimination.
1966	The ANA helps introduce legislation to raise the rank of chief nurses in the armed services to top officer rank and to provide for an increased number of nurse officers to attain the grade of Colonel and Lieutenant Colonel.
1967	The Age Discrimination in Employment Act bars discrimination against workers ages 45-65.
1967	President Lyndon B. Johnson's affirmative action policy of 1965 is expanded by Executive Order 11375 to cover gender discrimination.
1968	Shirley Chisholm becomes the first African American woman in the U.S. House of Representatives from the state of NY. Four years later she becomes the first African American to run for President in the Democratic primaries.
1968	Sex-segregated want ads in newspapers are deemed illegal.
1968	The Supreme Court hears <i>Bowe v. Colgate-Palmolive</i> and rules that any woman who meets the physical requirements can work in jobs that were once male-only.
1969	The EEOC declares legislation that had previously protected only women workers invalid.
1969	Cornell University launches the first Women's Studies course.
1969	Mary Moultrie and over 300 African American female hospital workers strike in Charleston, South Carolina and win the right to union representation. They formed

	Local 1199B, which was affiliated with the New York Local 1199 of the Retail, Wholesale, and Department Store Workers.
1970	27% of workers in the U.S. are union members, a decrease of 1%.
1970	Women are 12% of all union members. There is an increase of nearly 80% of women in the skilled trades compared to 1960—still, their participation accounts for only 2-3% of total workers in those trades. This percentage remains largely unchanged in 2009.
1970	Women earn 62.3 cents to every male dollar (based on weekly earnings for wage and salary workers from here forward).
1970	40.8% of women are in the labor force.
1970	"Women's Strike for Equality"—women demonstrate in cities across the country to observe the 50th anniversary of women's suffrage and to highlight demands including equal opportunity in jobs and education.
1970	The EEOC files charges against AT&T for discrimination on the basis of sex, race and national origin. Specific charges include extreme segregation of jobs by sex - almost all low paying jobs were held by women; recruitment, hiring and promotion practices that discriminated against women; lower wages paid to women than to men for equivalent jobs; very few African Americans in craft jobs; very few Latino workers anywhere in the company; people of color grouped in the lowest paying jobs. Resolved in 1973, the settlement included \$5 million in back pay to 13,000 women and men of color, and an estimated \$30 million in wage adjustments for women and minority workers. In 1974, an additional settlement provided \$30 million back pay and wage adjustments to 25,000 employees in lower management positions.
1970	Postal workers who had no collective bargaining rights strike. Beginning in NY, the strike spreads across the country and, within days, 200,000 postal workers are on strike in 30 cities. Nixon orders the National Guard to deliver the mail in NY but they prove themselves incompetent as strike breakers. After two weeks the Federal Government agreed to most of the striker's demands.
1970	The Occupation Safety and Health Act (OSHA) is passed making the workplace safer for all workers.
	1971-1980
1971	Pressed by the ALSA, courts prohibit airlines from refusing to hire males and find United Airlines' no-marriage rule illegal.
1971	National Women's Political Caucus organized.
1971	In the first recorded mass resignation over non-economic issues, registered nurses at an Ames, Iowa hospital resigned when the hospital administration refused to negotiate on issues including a patient care committee, an orientation program for new staff members, paid educational leave to attend seminars and workshops, and a nursing care committee.
1971	Department of Labor rules require government contractors to take positive action on discrimination against women. Such rules and acts are seen as the beginning of affirmative action laws.
1972	The Joint Resolution of the U.S. House & Senate that becomes the Equal Rights Amendment (E.R.A) is adopted and presented to the states for ratification.
1972	Congress passes Equal Employment Opportunity Act, outlining in detail anti-sex discrimination guidelines for employers.
1972	"9 to 5" is founded in Boston; it eventually becomes a national association of working women employed in banks, publishing houses, insurance companies, colleges and universities, etc. The Service Employees International Union Local

	925 in Seattle, Washington is the descendent of this nation-wide organization.
1972	20% of first year medical students are women, compared to 13.5% the year before; 12% of first year law students are women, compared to less than 5% in 1967.
1972	Title IX is passed. It states that “no person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance.” Among other things, this led to increased funding for girls sports.
1972	The Secretary of Labor orders the WB to coordinate all Department activities concerning women, designating its Director as special counsel to the Secretary.
1972	Ruth Bader Ginsberg founds the Women’s Rights Project (WRP) of the ACLU which focuses on assisting and empowering poor women, women of color, and immigrant women. Through litigation, community outreach, advocacy, and public education, the WRP pushes for change and systemic reform of those institutions that perpetuate discrimination against women.
1972	Sally Priesland becomes the first female ordained rabbi.
1973	The Association of Flight Attendants (AFA) is formed by mergers of earlier organizations including ALSA.
1973	The Comprehensive Employment & Training Act (CETA) passes to help prepare economically disadvantaged persons and those facing barriers to employment become productive members of the labor force. Programs are to be conducted at the State and local level under the monitoring of the Federal Government.
1974	Fair Labor Standards Act extended to cover domestic workers, giving them minimum wage and overtime protections which are rarely enforced.
1974	The ANA House of Delegates adopts a position on national health insurance which calls for a comprehensive system of health insurance benefits for all Americans.
1974	The WB and Department of Labor help to finance the First Trade Union Women's Conference in New York City, which leads to the formation of the Coalition of Labor Union Women (CLUW). At its founding conference in Chicago, it states as its purposes organizing unorganized women, affirmative action in the workplace, political action and legislation, and participation of women in their unions.
1974	The Federation of Women Telephone Workers of Southern California (FWTW) merges with CWA. Its President, Dina Beaumont, became the first female CWA Vice President in over two decades. In 1973 & 74 the CWA National Executive Board established a “Blacks and Other Minorities Structure Study Committee” and a “Female Structure Committee” to prepare reports on the position of women and minority members within the union.
1974	Court rules that Northwest Airlines must pay female flight attendants the same scale as males.
1974	Karen Gay Silkwood, an officer of the Oil, Chemical, and Atomic Workers Union, dies mysteriously on her way from a union meeting to meet with a NY Times reporter regarding exposure of workers at Kerr-McGee to radioactive contamination, faulty respiratory equipment and improper storage of samples.
1975	25% of workers in the U.S. are union members, a decrease of 2%.
1975	Women earn 62.0 cents to every male dollar, a decrease of .3 cents.
1975	42% of women are in the workforce, an increase of 1.2%. An economic recession deepens; women workers are the hardest hit by unemployment.
1975	The ANA establishes a fund to be used to promote ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment. The ANA's Affirmative Action Task Force holds two regional conferences on improving nursing care and health care delivery for people of color

	and on promoting affirmative action programs in nursing.
1975	The Tax Reduction Act increases the availability of income tax deductions for child and dependent care expenses.
1976	Male clothing workers from the Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America (ACWA) and the TWUA merge to create the Amalgamated Clothing & Textile Workers Union (ACTWU).
1977	Women make up 27.6% of all union members, due to increased efforts to organize clerical, office, hospital and other workers in predominantly female occupations.
1977	Publication of <i>Pink Collar Workers</i> by Louise Kapp Howe, coins this new term to highlight continuing sex-segregation of women in low paying jobs.
1978	Department of Labor's affirmative action guidelines, 77-78, expand opportunities for women in apprenticeships and construction work. New CETA provisions relate specifically to employment needs of economically disadvantaged women. A goal of hiring women into 6.9% of federal funded construction projects is set, but never met.
1978	CWA holds its first annual National Women's Conference in Minneapolis, Minnesota. Resolutions on the Equal Rights Amendment, child care and job pressures are presented to the CWA Executive Board.
1978	Washington Women in the Trades is founded to improve women's economic equity and self-sufficiency through access and success in high-wage, high-skilled careers in the construction, manufacturing and transportation sectors.
1978	The WB's focus expands to include training programs for women in prisons.
1978	About 100,000 people in Washington, D.C. march in support of the Equal Rights Amendment.
1979	Merger of the Retail Clerks and the Meat Cutters creates the United Food and Commercial Workers Union. In 2000 the UFCW had 700,000 female members comprising 50% of the union; 11% of top leadership positions were held by women.
1979	Tradeswomen, Inc. is founded in California to recruit and retain more women in the building and construction trades, and develop women's leadership in their crafts and unions.
1979	Executive Order 12138 establishes national Policy on Women's Business Enterprise, directing Federal agencies to establish goals for contract awards to women-owned businesses.
1979	The WB begins funding programs for career counseling and occupational training of displaced homemakers, women without recent paid work experience or skills.
1979	The Carter administration gives women training and access to jobs in the building and construction trades.
1979	The WB director testifies for an amendment to Title VII of the Civil Rights Act, banning discrimination in employment based on pregnancy.
1980	24% of workers in the U.S. are union members, a decrease of 1%. Public sector: 43.4% union. Private sector: 21.7 % union.
1980	Women earn 64.3 cents to every male dollar, an increase of 2.3 cents.
1980	47.7% of women are in the labor force. While more than 42 million women are working for wages, 80 % of them remain in traditionally female jobs.
1980	The first UFCW Women's Affairs, Civil Rights and Political Action Conference is held in Washington, D.C.
1980	The ANA plays a major role in getting an amendment passed prohibiting hospitals from using Medicare funds for anti-union activities.
1980	Sexual Harassment Guidelines reaffirm that sexual harassment is an unlawful

	employment practice, clarifying what constitutes such harassment and employer responsibility.
1980	The National Women's History Project is founded in Santa Rosa, California by Molly Murphy MacGregor, Mary Ruthsdotter, Maria Cuevas, Paula Hammett and Bette Morgan to broadcast women's historical achievements.
1980	The WB participates in the Organization for Economic Cooperation & Development (OECD) Conference on the Employment of Women in Paris, the first cabinet and ministry level meeting of officials from 24 countries to address women's issues.
	1981-1990
1981	Women earn 64.5 cents to every male dollar , a decrease of .2 cents.
1981	Sandra Day O'Connor is appointed by President Reagan to the U.S. Supreme Court, making her the first woman justice.
1981	The AFL-CIO draws more than a half million people to Washington D.C. for a Solidarity Day march in support of striking PATCO workers who were seeking safer working conditions, shorter shifts, and wage increases. President Ronald Reagan fired all of these unionized air traffic controllers, and de-certified their union.
1981	Born out of Carpenters potlucks and pickets, Chicago Women in the Trades is formed to support and train women in skilled, high-wage nontraditional careers.
1981	Following a nine-day strike in San Jose, CA, AFSCME wins \$1.5 million in a comparable worth campaign to correct pay disparities between jobs dominated by men, and those dominated by women in city employment.
1982	Women earn 65.5 cents to every male dollar , an increase of 1 cent.
1982	The AFA represents 22,000 flight attendants at 18 carriers.
1982	The Equal Rights Amendment to the U.S. constitution is defeated when only 35 states pass the measure, three short of the 38 required for ratification.
1983	WOMEN ARE 32% OF ALL UNION MEMBERS.
1983	Women earn 66.6 cents to every male dollar , an increase of 1.4 cents.
1983	The Job Training Partnership Act replaces CETA as the primary federally-funded job training program to help disadvantaged or dislocated workers find permanent jobs. The WB publishes a guide to JTPA benefits for working women and sponsors workshops to promote its effectiveness.
1983	AFSCME's Women's Rights Department is established.
1983	Sally Ride becomes the first woman astronaut in space.
1984	Women earn 67.6 cents to every male dollar , an increase of 1 cent.
1984	Geraldine Anne Ferraro becomes the first female Vice Presidential candidate nominated by a major American political party – the Democrats. The Presidential candidate is Walter Mondale, former Vice President under President Jimmy Carter.
1984	The Emergency Mathematics and Science Education and Jobs Act provides set-asides from funds provided to State educational agencies for special projects for underrepresented and underserved populations, including girls and women.
1984	The Retirement Equity Act of 1984 makes it easier for women workers and surviving spouses of workers to collect retirement benefits under private pension plans.
1984	The Carl D. Perkins Vocational Education Act reauthorizes Federal funding for vocational education, targeting over half the funds allocated to States for programs for special needs groups, primarily women.
1985	18% of workers in the U.S. are union members , a decrease of 6%. Public sector: 43.1% union. Private sector: 15.9% union.
1985	Women earn 68.2 cents to every male dollar , an increase of .6 cents.

1985	For the first time, more than half of all women aged 16 and over are participating in the labor force at 50.4%, an increase of 2.7%. While African American women always participated in the labor force at higher rates than white women, the rate for white women has risen rapidly to virtually the same as that of African American women.
1985	A national Women In Non-traditional Careers (WINC) conference is held for young professionals and students. One of the main goals of this conference is to help women enter math and science-related fields of study and work.
1985	The WB begins replication of Project Discovery, a pilot program to help first-time job seekers or those seeking to re-enter the workplace, focusing on women of color aged 35-50.
1985	A World Conference connected to the UN Decade for Women is held in Nairobi, Kenya. The WB Director participates as member of U.S. delegation. The WB publishes a report on the major economic and legislative accomplishments during the Decade for Women.
1985	Wilma Mankiller becomes the first woman chief of the Cherokee Nation of Oklahoma.
1986	Women earn 69.3 cents to every male dollar , a decrease of 1.1 cents.
1986	Lenore Miller becomes president of the Retail Wholesale and Department Store Union, part of the UFCW.
1986	The Tax Reform Act of 1986 removes many working poor from tax rolls and gives higher standard deduction to single heads of household. This benefits many poor women and women who are single parents.
1986	The Higher Education Amendments allow Pell grants for part-time students and provides grants to establish on-site child care for low income students who are the first in their families to attend college.
1986	The National Science Foundation Authorization Act establishes 3-year interagency task force on women, minorities, and the handicapped in science and technology.
1986	The Department of Labor's Ministry-to-Ministry Program holds a seminar on women's issues in Israel. Topics included work and family, child care, single-parent families, and women's labor force participation.
1986	AFSCME wins a \$106.5 million settlement in its Comparable Worth sex discrimination suit on behalf of female employees of Washington State agencies. As a result, nearly 35,000 state workers in undervalued job classifications dominated by women get pay increases.
1987	Women earn 69.9 cents to every male dollar , an increase of .6 cents.
1987	Beth Shulman is named the first woman Director of the UFCW Trade Division and is elected as International Vice President of the union.
1987	The US Congress declares March to be National Women's History Month.
1987	In July, the Department of Labor issues its report "Workforce 2000: Work and Workers for the 21st Century." Women are projected to be two-thirds of net new labor force growth and minorities are projected to be the next largest group of new entrants.
1987	Child care emerges as a key work issue. The WB holds a conference on child support programs and the Director provides congressional testimony on programs.
1988	WOMEN ARE 33% OF ALL UNION MEMBERS , an increase of 1%.
1988	Women earn 70.1 cents to every male dollar , an increase of .2 cents.
1988	An omnibus housing measure funds a program to establish child care facilities in public housing projects.

1988	The Women's Business Ownership Act amends the Equal Credit Opportunity Act to add particular business loans to those already covered and funds demonstration projects to provide training and management assistance to women in business or entering business.
1988	The Civil Rights Restoration Act restores broad scope of coverage and clarifies application of Title IX of the Education Amendments and other nondiscrimination laws pertaining to entities receiving federal financial assistance.
1988	In a comparable worth campaign, AFSCME Iowa Council 61 scores a \$1.3 million win for AFSCME state employees victimized by sex-based pay discrimination.
1989	Oregon Tradeswomen forms to promote success for women in the trades through education, leadership and mentorship.
1989	Ileana Ros-Lehtinen, of Florida, becomes the first Latina elected to Congress. She serves in the U.S. House of Representatives.
1989	A task force report on nurses is issued by the Department of Health and Human Services; the apparent shortage of nurses is the result of increased demand for nurses' skills in a wider variety of health care programs, decline in numbers graduating from U.S. schools, and low pay and prestige accruing to these professionals.
1990	16% of workers in the U.S. are union members, a decrease of 2%. Public sector: 43.3% union. Private sector 13.2% union.
1990	Women earn 71.9 cents to every male dollar, an increase of .8 cents.
1990	54.3% of women are in the labor force, an increase of 3.9%.
1990	The UFCW Women's Network holds the first Mother's Day Walmart protests.
1990	The Americans with Disabilities Act provides protections from discrimination in employment and public accommodations similar to those provided on the basis of race, sex, religion, and national origin by the Civil Rights Act of 1964.
1990	Five years after the UN World Conference in Nairobi, the UN Commission on the Status of Women holds a review in Vienna.
1990	Women serve in combat for the first time in the Gulf War.
1990	Judi Bari, an environmental activist, is injured when a pipe bomb explodes in her car. The FBI then used the pretext of investigating the bombing as cover for a nationwide investigation of Earth First!
	1991-2000
1991	Women earn 74.3 cents to every male dollar, a decrease of 2.4 cents.
1991	Sharon Pratt Dixon is sworn in as mayor of Washington, DC, becoming the first African American woman to serve as Mayor of a major city.
1992	Women earn 75.8 cents to every male dollar, an increase of 1.5 cents.
1992	In "The Year of the Woman" a record number of women run for public office, and win. Twenty-four are newly elected to the House of Representatives and 6 to the Senate. Carol Moseley-Braun, of Illinois, becomes the first African American woman elected to the U.S. Senate.
1993	WOMEN ARE 39% OF ALL UNION MEMBERS, an increase of 6%.
1993	Women earn 77.1 cents to every male dollar, an increase of 1.3 cents.
1993	The Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) is signed by President Clinton. The FMLA mandates 12 weeks of unpaid leave for workers caring for family members without fear of losing their jobs.
1994	Women earn 76.4 cents to every male dollar, a decrease of .7 cents.
1994	AFA CHAOS campaign of intermittent work stoppages is upheld in the courts, results in a landmark contract settlement at Alaska Airlines.

1994	The Violence Against Women Act becomes law, changing the criminal justice system's response to violence against women by setting aside funding to enhance investigation and prosecution.
1995	14.9% of workers in the U.S. are union members, a decrease of 1.1%. Public sector: 43.5% union. Private sector: 11.3% union.
1995	Women earn 75.4 cents to every male dollar, a decrease of 1 cent.
1995	55.6% of women are in the labor force, an increase of 1.3%.
1995	The AFA represents 36,000 flight attendants at 36 airlines.
1995	UNITE is formed by the merger of the ILGWU and ACTWU.
1995	Linda Chavez-Thompson, an AFSCME International Vice President, is elected as the AFL-CIO's Executive Vice President, becoming the first Latina elected to an executive office in the AFL-CIO.
1996	Women earn 75 cents to every male dollar, an increase of .4 cents.
1997	Women earn 74.5 cents to every male dollar, a decrease of .5 cents.
1997	The Fuerza Laboral Feminina, the Women's Committee of The Workplace Project, a Worker's Center on Long Island in NY, kicks off a campaign to get agencies that refer immigrant women to domestic jobs to sign the Workplace Project Domestic Worker's Bill of Rights.
1997	The AFA Board of Directors makes a major commitment to organizing, creating a new organizing fund to unite all flight attendants in the AFA.
1997	Madeleine Albright is sworn in as Secretary of State. She is the first woman in this position as well as the highest-ranking woman in the United States government.
1997	Pride At Work, a national coalition of GLBT workers and their supporters becomes an AFL-CIO constituency group.
1998	WOMEN ARE 39% OF ALL UNION MEMBERS, no change.
1998	Women earn 76.3 cents to every male dollar, an increase of 1.8 cents.
1998	Strikers from the Culinary Workers union and other unions at the Las Vegas Frontier Hotel & Casino win after nearly 7 years – the longest successful hotel strike in U.S. history.
1998	UNITE begins major organizing campaigns in commercial laundries.
1999	Women earn 76.5 cents to every male dollar, an increase of .2 cents.
1999	In Los Angeles County, over 74,000 home health care workers – mostly women - are unionized by the Service Employees International Union Local 434B. This leads to a wave of unionization among home health care workers across the country. These workers are mainly women, many from immigrant communities and communities of color.
1999	American West flight attendants achieve a solid first contract on the eve of a CHAOS strike after nearly 10 years of struggle with a recalcitrant employer. AFA membership tops 46,000 members at 26 airlines.
1999	Over 30,000 protesters against the World Trade Organization in Seattle, WA chant, "If the Global Economy Doesn't Work for Working Families, It Doesn't Work."
1999	5,000 workers at Fieldcrest Cannon textile mills in North Carolina unionize and join UNITE after a 25-year struggle.
2000	13.4% of workers in the U.S. are union members, a decrease of 1.5%. Public sector: 42% union. Private sector: 9.8% union.
2000	Women earn 77 cents to every male dollar, an increase of .5 cents.
2000	57.5% of women are in the labor force, an increase of 1.9%.
2000	The ANA gets funding for a study on the impact of extended work hours, especially mandatory overtime, on registered nurses and patient safety.

	2001-2009
2001	Women earn 76.4 cents to every male dollar , a decrease of .6 cents.
2001	25 flight attendants die in the 4 hijacked airplanes used in the September 11 attacks. The AFA fights to protect the jobs of thousands of furloughed flight attendants who lost their jobs as a result of the terrorist attacks.
2002	Women earn 77.9 cents to every male dollar , an increase of 1.5 cents. At the rate of progress between 1989 & 2002, women will not achieve wage parity for more than 50 years.
2003	WOMEN ARE 42% OF ALL UNION MEMBERS , an increase of 3%.
2003	Women earn 79.5 cents to every male dollar , an increase of 1.6 cents.
2003	Domestic Workers United, a coalition of domestic workers organizations in New York City, gets the NY City Council to adopt the Domestic Worker's Bill of Rights.
2003	Originating with Walmart worker Betty Dukes, the largest class action sex discrimination law suit in U.S. history is filed against Walmart. Women charge that Walmart systematically discriminates against its female hourly and salaried employees across the nation by denying them promotions and equal pay. These policies may affect more than 1.5 million women workers. As of March 2009, the suit is still in litigation.
2003	Nancy Pelosi becomes the first woman Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives.
2004	WOMEN ARE 43% OF ALL UNION MEMBERS , an increase of 1%. A total of 70.9% of female union members are in three sectors: (education - 42.9%); (health care - 16.8%), and (public administration 11.3%). 77.3% of all male union members are in (manufacturing - 18.6%); (transportation/utilities - 17.9%); (public administration - 14.5%), (construction - 13.9%), and (education - 12.4%).
2004	Women earn 80.3 cents to every male dollar , an increase of .8 cents.
2004	HERE & UNITE merge to create Unite Here. In 2000 UNITE had 330,000 female members, comprising 66% of the union; in 2007 30% of the top leadership were women. In 2000 HERE had 185,000 female members comprising 48% of the union; 18% of the top leadership positions were held by women.
2004	AFA merges with CWA. Two years later it grows to 55,000 members strong with the addition of Northwest Airlines flight attendants
2005	12.5% of workers in the U.S. are union members , a decrease of .9%. Public sector: 40.5% union. Private sector: 8.5% union.
2005	Women earn 81 cents to every male dollar , an increase of .7 cents.
2005	56.2% of women are in the labor force, a decrease of 1.3%
2005	The ANA supports legislative action to address concerns about the Bush Administration's newly implemented overtime regulations. A new Department of Labor rule revised the Fair Labor Standards Act making it easier for employers to unfairly classify nurses and other workers as ineligible for overtime pay. The legislation supported by the ANA would restore the right to overtime pay to any worker who was previously eligible.
2005	Condoleezza Rice becomes the first African- American female Secretary of State.
2005	Resolution 2 is passed at the AFL-CIO convention. Submitted by the Executive Council, this resolution recognizes that the leadership of unions in the U.S. is not representative of the membership in terms of race, gender, and age. It calls on unions to take specific steps to bring more women, people of color, and young workers into leadership positions.
2005	A new labor federation, Change to Win, splits off from the AFL-CIO with seven

	unions taking approximately 6 of the 13 million union members into this new organization. Those unions are the International Brotherhood of Teamsters (IBT), Laborers' International Union of North America (LIUNA), Service Employees International Union (SEIU), United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners of America (UBC), United Farm Workers of America (UFW), United Food and Commercial Workers International Union (UFCW), and UNITE HERE. Anna Burger becomes the Chair, the first woman to lead a trade union federation in the U.S.
2006	Women earn 80.8 cents to every male dollar , a decrease of .2 cents.
2006	56.6% of women are in the labor force, a decrease of .9%.
2006	Missouri Women in Trades begins as an informal group; incorporates two years later as a chapter of NAWIC.
2006	Sisters in the Building Trades forms to provide mentoring and support to trades women in Washington State.
2007	WOMEN ARE 44% OF ALL UNION MEMBERS , an increase of 1%. At current unionization rates, women will soon be the majority of union members.
2007	Women earn 80.2 cents to every male dollar , a decrease of .6 cents.
2007	Arlene Holt Baker is named Executive Vice President of the AFL-CIO, becoming the highest ranking African American woman in the union movement.
2007	The Employee Free Choice Act is introduced in Congress. Proposing measures that would make it easier for workers to form unions, EFCA is the first major piece of federal legislation supporting worker's right to organize since the NLRA of 1935. Among other provisions, EFCA would require employers to recognize a union among their employees if a majority signed cards saying they want a union. As of July 2009, EFCA is under serious attack by business and anti-union groups.
2007	Domestic partners registry signed into law in Washington State provides some legal benefits for same-sex couples, but stops short of providing all the benefits of marriage.
2008	Women earn 80 cents to every male dollar , a decrease of .2 cents.
2008	Women comprise 46.5% of the total U.S. labor force.
2008	Three women are elected to the top leadership positions of the AFT for the first time. Over 70% of the AFT membership is female.
2008	In a historic run for the presidency, Hillary Clinton is one of the two leading contenders for the Democratic ticket. Sarah Palin, Governor of Alaska, runs for the Vice Presidency on the Republican ticket.
2009	Cindy Ryu is elected Mayor of Shoreline, Washington. She is the first Korean-American woman to hold a mayoralty in the U.S.
2009	Governor Christine Gregoire signs legislation giving registered same-sex domestic partners all the rights and benefits that Washington State offers married couples.
2009	President Barack Obama signs into law the Lily Ledbetter Fair Pay Act which amends the Civil Rights Act of 1964, giving victims of wage discrimination a new 180-day period for filing an equal-pay lawsuit with each new discriminatory paycheck. This was the result of a long legal and legislative battle on behalf of Lily Ledbetter who had been paid less than her male colleagues for the same work at Goodyear Tire Co since the late 1970's.
2009	President Obama establishes the White House Council on Women and Girls to ensure that American women and girls are treated fairly in all matters of public policy like equal pay, family leave, child care and others. He emphasizes that these are not just women's issues, they are family issues and economic issues.