



Report of the Secretary Treasurer

April Sims



In uncertain times, the work of Washington's labor movement is crucial. The global COVID-19 pandemic, a pending economic recession, a historic mass movement for racial justice, and unprecedented wildfires and drought conditions in the West have brought to the forefront what many of us in labor have known; working peoples' struggles for liberation are all intertwined.

The Washington State Labor Council's constitution calls us to resolutely fight the forces that seek to enslave the human soul and to win full respect for the dignity of working people. Our movement is strongest when we live out that mission to the fullest, trusting in the power of working people's solidarity.

When President Larry Brown and I took office, our affiliates tasked us with executing an expansive and intersectional view of the labor movement's role, calling on the Washington State Labor Council to defend and advocate for the full humanity of working people. President Brown and I are united in this vision, and I'm proud of the work that the officers, staff, and the executive board of the WSLC have done to ensure the labor movement shows up for working people — both on the job and in our communities.

We've won tremendous victories with this strategy, like a first-in-the-nation clean energy bill that will build the good union jobs and healthy climate our families need to thrive. We've strengthened apprenticeship programs in Washington, growing the diversity of our movement while ensuring labor's voice at the policy table. We've supported an explosion of workers' activism in Yakima Valley, and have begun offering crucial naturalization services for legal permanent residents, recognizing the key role citizenship can play in empowering workers' advocacy.

We have the resources to ensure this important work can continue. Our predecessors built a strong financial foundation for the WSLC, and we've worked to maintain and expand it. We've grown our membership, bringing in affiliates across the state. We've funded new positions to execute our crucial work on racial, gender, and climate justice. We've hired an organizer and increased our digital organizing capacity to support our affiliates and community partners, using our shared goals to grow our movement. While COVID-19 brings challenges, we're well-positioned to continue our work building power for working people through this crisis and the next.

There is tremendous opportunity in our movement's future. The face of the working class is changing, and the labor movement is poised to change with it. 2019 Bureau of Labor Statistics data shows Black workers were unionized at a greater rate than any other racial group; the Economic Policy Institutes estimates that the majority of working people aged 25 - 34 will be people of color by 2021, and that women will make up the majority of our Unions by 2025.

As our movement becomes more diverse in race, age, and gender, our movements' continued strength relies on an intersectional fight against the forces that seek to enslave the souls of all working people. Working people are the linchpin of our economy and country, and the WSLC is positioned to leverage our collective power to create the change we need to ensure equal opportunity for all working people, and a strong labor movement for us all.