

New Web Site On Organizing Women

If you want more women to join unions, you should check in at www.bergermarks.org and check out available finances for organizing women. That link will take you to the new web site of the Berger-Marks Foundation, whose mission is to help organize women into unions, and to financially support the people and organizations doing that work. The site also features important research on women and organizing, organizing tips, fact sheets and inspiring stories from women organizers.

If you already organize workers into unions or help others to do so, you should focus on women. As academic expert on union organizing, Dr. Kate Bronfenbrenner, puts it: “Women now make up nearly half of the U.S. labor force. And women are significantly more likely to join labor unions than men – especially if the lead organizer is a woman.”

The Berger-Marks Foundation, just over three years old, was created from the estates of Edna Berger, the first woman organizer for The Newspaper Guild, and her husband Gerald Marks, a songwriter. Royalties from Gerald’s prolific Tin Pan Alley catalogue, including his most famous song, “All of Me,” help fund the foundation and its activities.

In its short life, the Berger-Marks Foundation has :

- funded an all-woman Organizing Institute
- invited 21 top women union organizers to discuss the challenges they face in organizing and collected their thoughts in the groundbreaking report “Women Organizing Women: How Do We Rock the Boat Without Getting Thrown Overboard?”
- provided separate grants to one academic researcher, two union and community organizations and 5 women to support union organizing
- collected the results of their work on a new web site.

The web site contains fact sheets on women workers in various occupational groups, two full-length reports (Women Organizing Women and Union Organizing Among Professional Women Workers) and inspiring stories of women who have used grants from the foundation to advance organizing efforts. The site also links viewers to other sources of information on organizing.

The Berger-Marks web site was designed by Nancy Brigham, a long-time labor activist and communicator, who launched the UAW's award-winning web site when she served as the UAW's first webmaster. She is now a free-lance designer and consultant for unions and other progressive groups.

For more information on the Berger-Marks Foundation, go to www.bergermarks.org or email info@bergermarks.org.