

A stylized illustration of a lighthouse with a red dome and a tan tower, set against a background of concentric circles and waves. The lighthouse is the central focus, with its tower extending from the bottom towards the top. The background features a large red circle with white outlines, and below it, stylized waves in shades of blue and white.

# INFINITE HOPE:

RAISING EXPECTATIONS TO WIN  
THE SCHOOLS AND COMMUNITIES  
WE DESERVE

## 2024 NCUEA FALL CONFERENCE

DECEMBER 4-7  
PROVIDENCE, RI



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## NATIONAL EDUCATION ASSOCIATION

The National Education Association is the nation's largest professional employee organization, representing 3 million elementary and secondary teachers, higher education faculty, education support professionals, school administrators, retired educators, and students preparing to become teachers.

### NEA OFFICERS

Rebecca S. Pringle, *President*  
Princess R. Moss, *Vice President*  
Noel Candelaria, *Secretary-Treasurer*

### NEA EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Mark Jewell, *North Carolina*  
Gladys Fátima Márquez, *Illinois*  
Ron "Duff" Martin, *Wisconsin*  
Robert Rodriguez, *California*  
Shannon McCann, *Washington*  
Christine Sampson-Clark, *New Jersey*

### OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Kim A. Anderson, *Executive Director*  
Karen M. White, *Deputy Executive Director*

### CENTER FOR ORGANIZING AND AFFILIATE SUPPORT

Tom Israel, *Senior Director*  
Nathan Allen, *Director*  
Kelvin Smith, *Manager of Business Affairs*  
Lucy Griswold, *Leadership Development Program Manager*  
Jasmin Hart, *Senior Program and Financial Assistant*  
Kai Nilsen, *Senior Program and Financial Assistant*

# ABOUT NCUEA

The National Council of Urban Education Associations (NCUEA) is an organizational body of local affiliates within the National Education Association (NEA), dedicated to supporting and empowering member locals to foster equity, opportunity, diversity, and access for all students and educators.

Activities include an annual Fall Conference and Summer Meeting designed to support its member affiliates in successfully achieving great public schools for every student.

## NCUEA EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE 2024-2025



### PRESIDENT

**Shannon Rasmussen**  
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### VICE PRESIDENT

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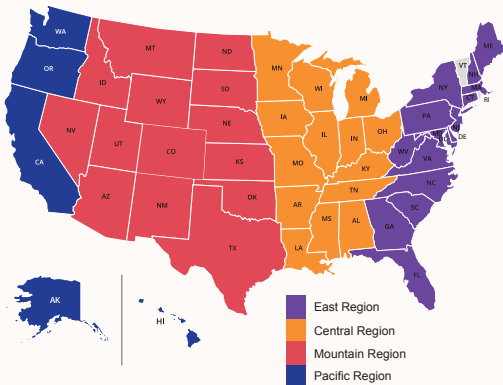
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## SCHEDULE-AT-A-GLANCE

### Wednesday, December 4

9:00 am – 12:00 pm	<b>NCUEA Executive Committee Meeting</b>	Executive Boardroom
1:30 pm – 4:30 pm	<b>Local Vice Presidents Training</b>	Providence I & IV
	<b>Secretary-Treasurers Training</b>	Providence II & III
	<b>Parliamentarian Training</b>	Bristol & Kent
2:00 pm – 7:00 pm	<b>Registration</b>	Narragansett Foyer
5:00 pm – 6:00 pm	<b>Welcome Reception</b>	Narragansett Foyer
6:00 pm – 8:00 pm	<b>General Session</b>	Narragansett
8:00 pm – 8:30 pm	<b>Book Signing</b>	Narragansett Foyer

### Thursday, December 5

7:00 am – 12:00 pm	<b>Registration</b>	Narragansett Foyer
9:00 am – 11:30 am	<b>General Session</b>	Narragansett
11:30 am – 1:00 pm	<b>Lunch</b>	On Your Own
1:00 pm – 2:10 pm	<b>Breakout Session I</b>	See Expanded Schedule
2:20 pm – 3:30 pm	<b>Breakout Session II</b>	See Expanded Schedule
3:45 pm – 6:00 pm	<b>General Session</b>	Narragansett
6:00 pm – 7:00 pm	<b>Reception</b>	Narragansett Foyer

### Friday, December 6

9:00 am – 10:30 am	<b>General Session</b>	Narragansett
10:45 am	<b>NCUEA New Business Items Due</b>	
10:45 am – 12:00 pm	<b>Breakout Session III</b>	See Expanded Schedule
12:00 pm – 1:30 pm	<b>Lunch</b>	On Your Own
1:45 pm – 3:00 pm	<b>NCUEA Regional Meetings</b>	See Expanded Schedule
3:15 pm – 6:00 pm	<b>General Session</b>	Narragansett
6:00 pm – 6:30 pm	<b>Book Signing</b>	Narragansett Foyer

### Saturday, December 7

8:30 am – 2:30 pm	<b>General Session</b>	Narragansett
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## WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 4

9:00 am – 12:00 pm	<b>NCUEA Executive Committee Meeting</b>	Executive Boardroom
1:30 pm – 4:30 pm	<b>Local Vice Presidents Training</b> <b>Secretary-Treasurers Training</b> <b>Parliamentarian Training</b>	Providence I & IV Providence II & III Bristol & Kent
2:00 pm – 7:00 pm	<b>Registration</b>	Narragansett Foyer
5:00 pm – 6:00 pm	<b>Welcome Reception</b>	Narragansett Foyer
6:00 pm – 8:00 pm	<b>General Session</b>	Narragansett
	<b>Welcome &amp; Introductory Remarks</b> Shannon Rasmussen, <i>President, NCUEA</i>	
	<b>Native Land Acknowledgment</b> Deb Gesualdo, <i>East Region Director, NCUEA</i>	
	<b>Remarks</b> <b>Introduction:</b> Deb Gesualdo, <i>East Region Director, NCUEA</i>  Rebecca S. Pringle, <i>President, NEA</i>	
7:00 pm – 8:00 pm	<b>Keynote Address:</b> 	Narragansett
	<b>Urban &amp; Minorities Issues Dialogue</b> <b>Introduction:</b> Deborah Jones, <i>Ethnic Minority Director-at-Large, NCUEA</i>  Dr. Denisha Jones, <i>Author, Black Lives Matter at School</i>	
8:00 pm	<b>Closing Remarks</b> Shannon Rasmussen, <i>President, NCUEA</i>	
8:00 pm – 8:30 pm	<b>Book Signing</b>  Dr. Denisha Jones, <i>Author, Black Lives Matter at School</i>	Narragansett Foyer

## THURSDAY, DECEMBER 5

7:00 am – 12:00 pm	<b>Conference Registration</b>	Narragansett Foyer
8:00 am – 8:45 am	<b>Local Presidents Town Hall</b> Rebecca S. Pringle, <i>President, NEA</i>	Narragansett
9:00 am – 9:30 am	<b>First Business Session</b>	Narragansett
	<b>Welcome</b> Shannon Rasmussen, <i>President, NCUEA</i>	
	<b>Adoption of the Agenda</b>	
	<b>Standing Rules</b>	
	<b>Elections &amp; Screening Report</b> Kumar Rashad, <i>Secretary-Treasurer &amp; Elections and Screening Chair, NCUEA</i>	
	<b>Candidate Speeches for NEA Office</b>	
	<b>Committee Reports</b>	
	<b>NCUEA New Business Items Due Tomorrow (Friday) by 10:45 am ET</b>	
9:30 am – 10:15 am	<b>Remarks – Election 2024</b> <b>Introduction:</b> Wil Page, <i>Pacific Region Director, NCUEA</i> Karen White, <i>Deputy Executive Director, NEA</i> Brandon Rettke, <i>Associate Director, NEA</i>	Narragansett
10:15 am – 10:30 am	<b>Break</b>	
10:30 am – 11:30 am	<b>Project 2025: A Looming Catastrophe for Public Education and Our Country</b> <b>Introduction:</b> Sara Earleywine, <i>Central Region Director, NCUEA</i> Mary Kusler, <i>Senior Director, NEA</i> Maurice Mitchell, <i>National Director, Working Families Party</i> Nahal Zamani, <i>Director of State Campaigns, ACLU</i> Raha Wala, <i>VP of Partnerships and Advocacy, National Immigration Law Center</i>	
11:30 am	<b>Framing Breakout Sessions</b> Shannon Rasmussen, <i>President, NCUEA</i>	
11:30 am – 1:00 pm	<b>Lunch</b>	On Your Own

## THURSDAY, DECEMBER 5

1:00 pm – 2:10 pm

### **BREAKOUT SESSION I**

(Descriptions can be found on pages 13-16)

<b>Elevating Educator Voice &amp; Well-Being: Labor-Management Partnerships</b>	Narragansett
<b>Lessons from Tennessee Locals Organizing for Majority Recognition and Power</b>	Providence II & III
<b>Empowering ESPs: Building Skills and Strength Through Collective Action</b>	Providence I & IV
<b>Leadership Strategies for Advocacy on Gun Violence, Health Education, and Cell Phone Bans</b>	Bristol & Kent
<b>Can We Talk? Calling Each Other In to Advance Racial and Social Justice</b>	South County
<b>EdCamp: Building Inclusivity and Equity in Your Union in Real Time</b>	Newport & Washington
<b>Gamify Association Participation with Our Passport of Relevance</b>	Waterplace I
<b>Using Walk-ins for Collective Action and Solidarity Building</b>	Blackstone
<b>Organize, Communicate, Win: Effective Strategies for Better Union Contracts</b>	Waterplace II & III

2:10 pm – 2:20 pm

### **TRANSITION TO BREAKOUT SESSION II**

2:20 pm – 3:30 pm

### **BREAKOUT SESSION II**

(Descriptions can be found on pages 17-19)

<b>Organizing &amp; Empowering Members at the Bargaining Table and Beyond</b>	Providence II & III
<b>Growing Leaders Through Intentional Programming</b>	Waterplace I
<b>Collaboration Across the District</b>	Newport & Washington
<b>Navigating the Shift: Understanding AutoPay for Your Local Association</b>	Bristol & Kent

## THURSDAY, DECEMBER 5

2:20 pm – 3:30 pm (continued)	<b>How Local PACs Can Win and What Comes Next</b>	Waterplace II & III
	<b>Building Coalitions: The Power of Donor Alliances</b>	South County
	<b>A Conversation with Jack and Jennifer of The Education Wars</b>	Narragansett
3:30 pm – 3:45 pm	<b>Transition to General Session</b>	
3:45 pm – 4:30 pm	<b>Panel Discussion: The Legal Landscape</b> <b>Introduction:</b> Becca Ritchie, <i>Pacific Region Director, NCUEA</i> Alice O'Brien, <i>General Counsel, NEA</i> Mary Kusler, <i>Senior Director, NEA</i>	Narragansett
4:30 pm – 5:30 pm	<b>Keynote Address</b> <b>Introduction:</b> Deb Gesualdo, <i>East Region Director, NCUEA</i> Jennifer Berkshire, <i>Author, The Education Wars</i> Jack Schneider, <i>Author, The Education Wars</i>	
5:30 pm – 6:00 pm	<b>Member Benefits</b> <b>Introduction:</b> Angela Patrick, <i>Central Region Director, NCUEA</i> Scott Kish, <i>Chief Enterprise Development Officer, NEA Member Benefits</i>	
6:00 pm	<b>Closing Remarks</b> Shannon Rasmussen, <i>President, NCUEA</i>	
6:00 pm – 7:00 pm	<b>NCUEA Reception</b>	Narragansett Foyer
7:00 pm	<b>Dinner</b>	On Your Own



## FRIDAY, DECEMBER 6

- 9:00 am – 9:05 am **Welcome** Narragansett  
Alfonso Salais, Jr., *Vice President, NCUEA*
- 9:05 am – 9:30 am **Remarks**  
**Introduction:** Alfonso Salais, Jr., *Vice President, NCUEA*  
Princess R. Moss, *Vice President, NEA*
- 9:30 am – 10:30 am **Panel: Organizing to Promote, Protect, and Strengthen Public Education**  
**Introduction:** Leslie Houston, *East Region Director, NCUEA*  
**Moderator:** Grant Schuster, *Steering Committee Member, NEA Community Schools*  
Cecily Myart-Cruz, *President, United Teachers Los Angeles*  
Marcia Howard, *Teacher President, Minneapolis Federation of Teachers*  
Catina Taylor, *ESP President, Minneapolis Federation of Teachers*  
Ingrid Walker-Henry, *President, Milwaukee Teachers Education Association*  
Mika Hunter Twietmeyer, *President, Durham Association of Educators*  
Cassandra Curiel, *President, United Educators of San Francisco*  
Adrian Reyna, *Vice President, San Antonio Alliance of Teachers and Support Personnel*  
**NCUEA New Business Items Due Today by 10:45 am**
- 10:30 am – 10:45 am **TRANSITION TO BREAKOUT SESSION III**
- 10:45 am – 12:00 pm **BREAKOUT SESSION III**  
(Descriptions can be found on pages 20–22)
- Artificial Intelligence: Leading Education into the Future** Narragansett
- The Power of H.O.P.E.: Having Options for People to Engage** South County
- Building Strong Communities with Restorative Practices** Waterplace II & III

## FRIDAY, DECEMBER 6


10:45 am – 12:00 pm (continued)	<b>Educator Voice: The Secret Weapon Against Anti-Public Education Forces and Disinformation</b>	Waterplace I
	<b>Power of Storytelling: Using Your Authentic Voice to Galvanize and Inspire</b>	Blackstone
	<b>Driving Local Strength and Growth: Applying the YRO Seven Strategies</b>	Providence I & IV
	<b>Enhancing Membership: The Value of NEA Member Benefits in Recruitment and Retention</b>	Bristol & Kent
	<b>Empowering Educators: Strategic Organizing for Collective Action</b>	Newport & Washington
12:00 pm – 1:30 pm	<b>Lunch</b>	On Your Own
1:45 pm – 3:00 pm	<b>NCUEA Regional Meetings</b> Pacific Region Mountain Region Central Region East Region	Narragansett Newport & Washington Providence South County
3:00 pm – 3:15 pm	<b>Break</b>	
3:15 pm – 4:45 pm	<b>Second Business Session</b>  <b>Call to Order</b> <b>Approval of the 2024 NCUEA Summer Meeting Minutes</b> <b>NCUEA Committee Reports</b> <b>NCUEA Business</b> <b>NCUEA Elections and Screening Report</b> Kumar Rashad, <i>Secretary-Treasurer &amp; Elections and Screening Chair, NCUEA</i>  <b>Candidate Speeches for NEA Office</b>	Narragansett

## FRIDAY, DECEMBER 6

4:45 pm – 5:00 pm	<b>NEA Executive Committee Greetings</b> <b>Introduction:</b> Angela Patrick, <i>Central Region Director, NCUEA</i> Shannon McCann, <i>Executive Committee Member, NEA</i>	Narragansett
5:00 pm – 6:00 pm	<b>Keynote Address</b> <b>Introduction:</b> Ang Anderson, <i>Mountain Region Director, NCUEA</i> Dr. Hahrie Han, <i>Author, Undivided: The Quest for Racial Solidarity in an American Church</i>	Narragansett
6:00 pm	<b>Closing Remarks</b> Shannon Rasmussen, <i>President, NCUEA</i> <b>Voting</b>	Narragansett
6:00 pm – 6:30 pm	<b>Book Signing</b> Dr. Hahrie Han, <i>Author Undivided</i>	Narragansett Foyer
6:00 pm	<b>Dinner</b>	On Your Own



## SATURDAY, DECEMBER 7

- 8:30 am – 9:00 am **NEA Resolution & Legislative Program** Narragansett
- 9:00 am – 9:05 am **Welcome** Narragansett  
Kumar Rashad, *Secretary-Treasurer, NCUEA*
- 9:05 am – 10:00 am **Remarks & NEA Budget Engagement** Narragansett  
**Introduction:** Kumar Rashad,  
*Secretary-Treasurer, NCUEA*  
Noel Candelaria, *Secretary-Treasurer, NEA*
- 10:00 am – 10:45 am **UMID: Providence Student Union**  Narragansett  
**Introduction:** Aaron Phillips, *Mountain  
Region Director, NCUEA*  
*Providence Student Union empowers  
students to become powerful advocates for  
their own education and well-being. PSU  
unites youth from across Providence to  
take the lead in reshaping their schools and  
communities right now.*
- 10:45 am – 11:00 am **Break**
- 11:00 am – 11:30 am **Extraordinary Rendition Band:  
The Power of Music in Social Movements** Narragansett  
**Introduction:** Sara Earleywine, *Central  
Region Director, NCUEA*
- 11:45 am – 2:30 pm **Third Business Session**  
**Call to Order**  
**NCUEA Committee Reports**  
**NCUEA Business**  
**NCUEA Elections and Screening Report**  
Kumar Rashad, *Secretary-Treasurer &  
Elections and Screening Chair, NCUEA*  
**Actions on New Business Items**
- 2:30 pm **Adjournment** Narragansett

# BREAKOUT SESSION I DESCRIPTIONS

Thursday, December 5, 1:00 pm – 2:10 pm

## **Collaborative Approaches to Elevating Educator Voice & Well-Being: Labor-Management Partnerships Yield Responsive Workplace Cultures, Positive Student Outcomes, and Educator Retention.**

**Narragansett**

Explore how labor-management partnerships can drive educator empowerment, strengthen unions, and enhance student outcomes through a culture of well-being and collaboration. This session will provide practical tools and insights from successful partnerships where unions and district administration achieved measurable improvements in school culture, educator well-being, and student success. Join leaders from White Bear Lake, Minnesota, and NEA partners working nationwide to discuss real-world applications of collaborative frameworks.

Participants will leave equipped with valuable tools for creating or strengthening labor-management collaborations, alongside insights into utilizing data-driven approaches to enhance educator well-being. They will also gain strategies for increasing member engagement and influence through partnerships, culminating in actionable plans for implementing well-being initiatives within their own districts.

**Tiffany Dittrich**, *President, White Bear Lake Area Educators (MN)*

**Dr. Alison Gillespie**, *Assistant Superintendent for Teaching and Learning, White Bear Lake Area Schools*

**Hallie Fox**, *Head of Research, Educators Thriving*

**Crystal Conley**, *Director of Programs, Catalyst for Educational Change*

**Andrea Walker**, *Acting Director, NEA*

**Maribeth Bradfield**, *Senior Strategy Development Specialist, NEA*

## **Turning Attacks into Opportunities: Lessons from Tennessee Locals Organizing for Majority Recognition and Power**

**Providence II & III**

Organizing for majority membership is necessary to build a strong union, whether your local is in a bargaining or non-bargaining state. In Tennessee, a hybrid bargaining law compels local educator unions to win a vote of the majority of district staff to negotiate improvements to salaries, benefits, and working conditions. Though initially meant to harm affiliates, the legal change has forced locals to commit to organizing. Join leaders

*(continues on next page)*

## BREAKOUT SESSION I DESCRIPTIONS (CONTINUED)

from Memphis, Nashville, and Knoxville to learn how their locals withstood the loss of traditional collective bargaining and the loss of payroll dues deductions and still organized thousands of educators to vote “yes” to bargain and “yes” to the union.

**Paula Pendergrass**, *President, Metropolitan Nashville Education Association*

**Elizabeth Marable**, *President, United Education Association of Shelby County*

**Paula Hancock**, *President, Knox County Education Association*

**Ben Bull**, *Organizational Specialist, NEA*

### Empowering ESPs: Building Skills and Strength Through Collective Action

Providence I & IV

Educational Support Professionals (ESPs) are increasingly seeking opportunities for professional growth and empowerment through their unions. This dynamic workshop will explore the critical link between union membership and skill enhancement, highlighting NEA's professional support offerings that help members build their skills and community. Additionally, we will delve into the ongoing Bill of Rights campaigns that ESPs across the nation are using to organize, engage new members, and elevate their voices. Attendees will learn strategies for effective campaign building and hear inspiring success stories from ESPs actively engaged in these efforts. Together, we will discuss how to leverage collective power to advocate for the issues that matter most to ESPs, fostering both professional development and enhanced organizational strength.

**Amber Parker**, *Director, NEA*

**Lisa Connor**, *Manager, NEA*

**Saul Ramos**, *Senior Program & Policy Specialist, NEA*

### Empowering Affiliates: Leadership Strategies for Advocacy on Gun Violence, Health Education, and Cell Phone Bans

Bristol & Kent

This session will focus on identifying effective leadership strategies that affiliates can implement to advocate for gun violence prevention, sexual health education, and the regulation of personal devices in their state and local areas. We will provide a high-level overview of the current issues and policy landscape within each focal area. Participants will engage with specific case studies and examples while utilizing a universal advocacy and action checklist to guide their efforts.

**Crystal Foxx**, *Senior Health & Safety Specialist, NEA*

**MaryBeth Szydowski**, *Senior Health & Safety Specialist, NEA*

## BREAKOUT SESSION I DESCRIPTIONS (CONTINUED)

### Can We Talk? Calling Each Other In to Advance Racial and Social Justice

South County

In fostering braver spaces of inclusion and belonging, it is important to recognize, name, and address when individuals or groups with marginalized identities are experiencing harm, such as bias, discrimination, or oppression. The concepts of “calling out” or “calling in” have become popular ways of thinking about how to bring attention to this type of harm. Knowing the difference between these concepts can help us reflect, then act, in the ways we feel will best promote constructive change. Creating the space to talk about the impact of problematic language and/or behavior can open the way for some of the most powerful learning, self-reflection, and change. This professional development provides foundational frameworks and tools to create and hold the space to navigate these challenging conversations. These frameworks allow us to create a compassionate space for listening, understanding, and accountability that “calls one another in” for deeper and impactful dialogue and self-reflection. As educator leaders, we must be ready and able to engage in the necessary conversations to advance racial justice in our schools, communities, and associations.

**Eriece Colbert**, *President, Cedar Rapids Education Association*

**Hilario Benzon**, *Associate Director, NEA*

### EdCamp: Building Inclusivity and Equity in Your Union in Real Time

Newport & Washington

Using the EdCamp model of “bottom-up” organizing, Madison Teachers Inc. President Mike Jones and Education Justice Center Coordinator Natasha Sullivan will support participants in building authentic member-led solidarity through the collective wisdom that’s already in the space, instead of a deficit-thinking, top-down presumption that all participants need to hear from 1-2 “experts” instead of hearing from each other. Participants will utilize the skills, experiences, and knowledge they already have and collectively share wisdom for others to bring back to their constituencies. Topics and lessons will be developed at the start of the session, and people will vote with their feet to synthesize the knowledge they seek with the knowledge they already have. Afterwards, participants will gather and reflect on how we can bring such an experience into our unions to utilize every member’s voice and talent instead of just those in certain positions of power during meetings and organizing opportunities. To be truly liberating as a collective, we have to ensure all voices are being heard in the space!

**Michael Jones**, *President, Madison Teachers Inc.*

**Natasha Sullivan**, *Education Justice Center Coordinator, Madison Teachers Inc.*

## BREAKOUT SESSION I DESCRIPTIONS (CONTINUED)

### **Gamify Association Participation with Our Passport of Relevance: Create Opportunities to Involve Your Members in All Three Frames of Unionism**

**Waterplace I**

Workshop participants will have the opportunity to explore Puget Sound UniServ Council's Passport of Relevance. This physical passport is filled with activities that members can do related to traditional union work, social and racial justice pursuits, as well as professional endeavors. The various activities included in the passport earn stamps, and members who get enough stamps earn prizes. Pages include Membership, Member Benefits, Political Action, Bargaining, Equity, Professional Learning, Leadership, Something New, and Local Association. We will also describe in detail the various Professional Learning opportunities we offer our members through our UniServ Council.

**Shannon Rasmussen**, *President, NCUEA*

**Eryn Pate**, *Trainer, PSUC Professional Issues Training Cadre*

**Lauren Hamilton**, *Trainer, PSUC Professional Issues Training Cadre*

**Michelle Cole**, *Trainer, PSUC Professional Issues Training Cadre*

### **Using Walk-ins for Collective Action and Solidarity Building**

**Blackstone**

Conducting a walk-in may sound like a simple action, but it can be an impactful form of collective action and community building, regardless of a state's union climate. The process of organizing walk-ins provides opportunities for escalating actions and community messaging. Focused leadership opportunities are created to engage members, and the overall collective power of the union can be displayed. This session will share how a walk-in was used by a right-to-work state local, and strike-prohibited state local. Participants will review the organizing plans, communication strategies, and escalation tactics used by the locals in order to identify what it is needed to take such action in their own locals.

**Dr. Tony Martinet**, *Leadership and Professional Development (LPD) Committee Co-Chair, Prince George's County Educators' Association*

### **Organize, Communicate, Win: Effective Strategies for Better Union Contracts**

**Waterplace II & III**

Earning key wins for members is more than just what happens at the bargaining table. The Rochester Education Association recently settled a historic contract with big gains for members that was 18 months in the making. Recognizing the need to rebuild trust and solidarity, a small group worked to make changes and empower members using the late author and strategist Jane McAlevey's principles for union organizing. This session will highlight pre-bargaining approaches to amplify member voices, along with communication and organizing methods during negotiations to keep members engaged and well-informed.

**Liz Schroeck**, *President, Rochester Education Association*

**Roger Winn**, *Organizing Chair, Rochester Education Association*

**Jenny Schneider**, *Bargaining Team Member & Elementary Trustee, Rochester Education Association*



## BREAKOUT SESSION II DESCRIPTIONS

Thursday, December 5, 2:20 pm – 3:30 pm

### Organizing & Empowering Members at the Bargaining Table and Beyond

Providence II & III

Our members are not only experts in educating students, but they know their individual role and work better than anyone. This training explores the benefits and huge wins you can have as an association when you bring members to the bargaining table. Article bargainers help the bargaining team craft language and join the team at the table as experts to share powerful stories and their interest in making real change to education and educators.

**Brooke Williams**, *President, Jefferson County Education Association*

**Richard Sanchez**, *Organizing Action Team Chair, Jefferson County Education Association*

**Steven Kelley**, *CEA Board Member, Jefferson County Education Association*

### Growing Leaders Through Intentional Programming

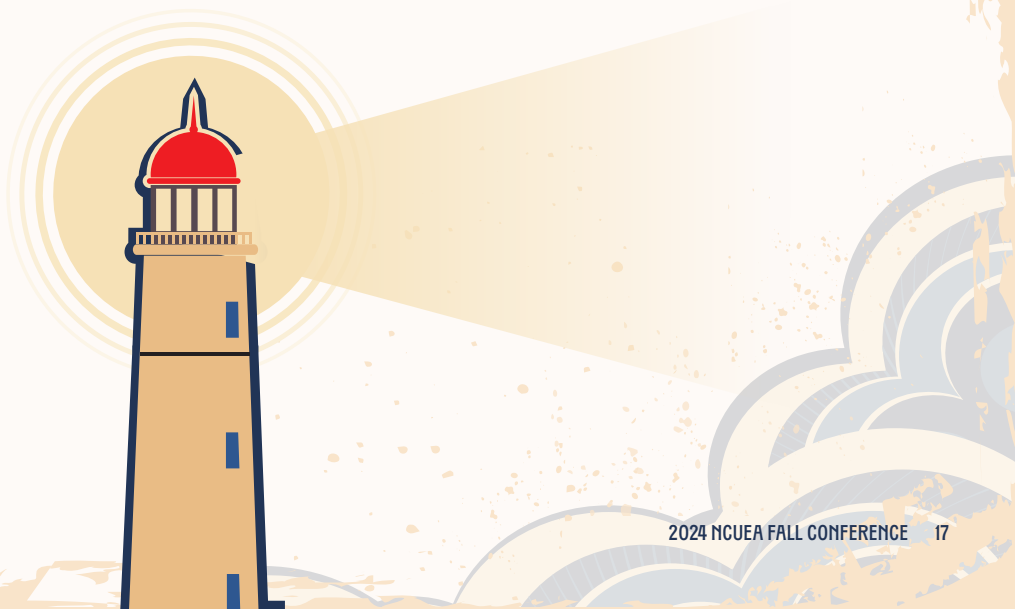
Waterplace I

Participants will learn how to help members connect their interests and passions to the union. Green Bay Education Association's Emerging Voices has been an instrumental part of growing the leadership of our organization and helping members become more involved. Participants will engage in specific activities that can be implemented at the local level to strengthen the organization.

**Brent Bergstrom**, *President, Green Bay Education Association*

**Audrey Vandeyacht**, *Certified, Green Bay Education Association*

**KoBao Kong**, *Paraeducator, Green Bay Education Association*



## BREAKOUT SESSION II DESCRIPTIONS

### Collaboration Across the District

#### Newport & Washington

The session will provide an overview of the Labor Management Collaborative work that has occurred within the Cherry Hill School District (New Jersey) over the past year. The Cherry Hill School District worked under the NEA/NJEA Labor Management Collaborative to help build competencies that could be utilized within a structure for all schools. These competencies were used as the guiding tool for the work that was started in the district over the course of the past school year.

**Steve Redfearn**, *President, Cherry Hill Education Association*

**Laurie Parker**, *NEA Director (NJ), Cherry Hill Education Association*

**Kwame Morton**, *Superintendent, Cherry Hill School District*

### Navigating the Shift: Understanding Autopay for Your Local Association

#### Bristol & Kent

This session is designed to help local associations understand and adapt to the recent mandate from the governor requiring the implementation of autopay for educator education associations. As this significant change occurs, it is crucial for leaders to be prepared for the shift. This session will guide participants through the implementation process of autopay, outline the necessary steps, and provide a timeline for the rollout and what to expect. By the end of the session, participants will leave equipped with valuable resources, insights, and the confidence needed to embrace a plan that meant to destroy our locals but instead opened the door for us to build stronger locals.

**Elizabeth Marable**, *President, United Education Association of Shelby County*

**Dr. Danette Stokes**, *President, Tennessee Urban Education Association Council*

**Fran Linn**, *Organizational Specialist, NEA*

## BREAKOUT SESSION II DESCRIPTIONS

### How Local PACs Can Win and What Comes Next

Waterplace II & III

Hear the story of how our local PAC wins school board elections and the strategies we employ to build and maintain relationships with sitting board members. We will tackle some real-life scenarios together and prioritize, collectively brainstorming the best possible action plans for all of our locals to not only win school board elections, but also the steps to take after those elections to have a working partnership going forward.

**Cassie Lyles**, *President, Better School Kentucky PAC, Jefferson County Teachers Association*

### Building Coalitions: The Power of Donor Alliances

South County

We know we can't fight every battle alone. Building or joining a broad coalition of educators, unions, community groups, and other progressive organizations is the best way for us to fight back and win big for public education and our democracy. This session will explain what a "donor alliance" is, offer a national landscape of existing donor alliances, discuss the power of a donor alliance, and provide an opportunity for group discussion on coalition building.

**Maddie Shepard**, *President, Jefferson County Teachers Association*

**Meghan Rouse**, *Executive Director, Commonwealth Alliance Donor Table*

### A Conversation with Jack and Jennifer of *The Education Wars*

Narragansett

Join them for a deeper dive into their new book *The Education Wars* and a conversation about the wave of state accountability system changes across the country. What do trends in evaluating school quality mean for public schools and the communities they serve? Together with Jack and Jennifer, participants will continue the conversation about modern day threats in public education and the importance of "measuring what matters."

**Jack Schneider**, *Author, The Education Wars*

**Jennifer Berkshire**, *Author, The Education Wars*

## BREAKOUT SESSION III DESCRIPTIONS

Friday, December 6, 10:45 am – 12:00 pm

### Artificial Intelligence: Leading Education into the Future

Narragansett

As artificial intelligence (AI) continues to become more powerful and integrated into society, it is only going to continue to have a major impact on the education sector. From administrators to classroom teachers to support professionals, AI will influence how we educate students and prepare them for the future. In this session, learn more about AI and its applications, and dive into the brand-new NEA policy statement and report on AI.

**Justin Thompson**, *Senior Program & Policy Analyst, NEA*

**Angie Powers**, *President, Olathe NEA*

### The Power of H.O.P.E.: Having Options for People to Engage

South County

The phrase “we are stronger together” is a staple of our work. Tulsa Classroom Teachers Association is engaging with members, parents, and community partners to combat the national teacher shortage. As the district continues to work on the revolving door of recruitment, we are engaging together to make it known that retention of staff is the better option for creating winning school systems. This session will showcase what it takes to show that retention matters. We have infinite hope that the teacher shortage can be reversed by focusing on strategies to retain the workforce who seem to be leaving in droves.

**LeeAnne Jimenez**, *Vice President, Tulsa Classroom Teachers Association*

### Building Strong Communities with Restorative Practices

Waterplace II & III

Building and strengthening relationships and community is a critical component of school culture. Restorative practices, with their positive impact on the learning environment, are an essential process for creating a positive school culture, building social capital, and resolving relational issues. Participants will learn practical strategies for building healthy relationships with students, families, and colleagues.

**Tyree Rivers**, *Climate and Culture Systems Consultant, Columbus Education Association*

**Chaka Diop**, *Climate and Culture Systems Consultant, Columbus Education Association*

## BREAKOUT SESSION III DESCRIPTIONS

### **Educator Voice: The Secret Weapon Against Anti-Public Education Forces and Disinformation**

**Waterplace I**

Powerful anti-education actors have spent decades setting the stage to dismantle the education system as a whole. These groups and individuals are constantly evolving their attacks to use mis- and disinformation against schools, educators, unions, and students. For educators, knowing how to stand up to these attacks and effectively counter disinformation is critical. And educators have one of the most powerful tools against disinformation: their voice. As trusted community members, educators can leverage their voices to shut down disinformation. Come learn about the proven tactics to dispel disinformation, including from NEA members who participated in a successful counter-disinformation program during the 2024 election. Become empowered to use your educator voice to stop disinformation where it occurs—whether at a school board meeting, in the grocery store, or online.

**Katherine O'Connell**, *Senior Communications Strategist, NEA*

### **Power of Storytelling: Using Your Authentic Voice to Galvanize and Inspire**

**Blackstone**

Everyone loves a good story, and educators have the best stories. Participants in this session will explore ways to use stories from their personal experiences as educators to help advance student success, public education, and education professions. Session participants will gain a deeper understanding of how personal stories have the power to change attitudes, perceptions, and behavior, and win support for public education.

**Mary Ellen Flannery**, *Senior Writer/Editor, NEA*

### **Enhancing Membership: The Value of NEA Member Benefits in Recruitment and Retention**

**Bristol & Kent**

While many are aware of the ways member benefits improve individual and family lives, we'll focus on how they serve as essential tools for attracting new members and keeping current ones engaged. Learn about specific programs that meet the needs of educators and discover practical strategies for communicating their value. By the end of this session, you'll understand how NEA Member Benefits contribute to building a strong, supportive community of educators.

**Michael Gavin**, *Affiliate Relations Specialist, NEA Member Benefits*

## BREAKOUT SESSION III DESCRIPTIONS

### Driving Local Strength and Growth: Applying the YRO Seven Strategies

Providence I & IV

In this session, participants will learn about what is new with the NEA YRO Program, including our revamped Seven Key Strategies and changes in the YRO "CIVIS" Dashboard that can help locals track and drive membership recruitment and retention. Don't miss this opportunity to hear case studies from local leaders that have successfully implemented the Seven Key Strategies.

**Estaban Flemons**, *President, Phoenix Union Classroom Teachers Association*

**Heather Schmitt**, *President, Paradise Valley Education Association*

**Aliss Lugo**, *Organizational Specialist, NEA*

### Empowering Educators: Strategic Organizing for Collective Action

Newport & Washington

In this interactive session, participants will explore practical, innovative, strategic organizing principles and practices with proven results. Participants will engage with each other about the importance of relatability, engagement strategies, personalized 1:1 discussions, creating impactful flyers, and leveraging social media platforms. Focusing on effective communication, outreach tactics, and inclusive engagement practices, attendees will acquire the skills necessary to mobilize their peers, expand their membership base, and ultimately garner the essential support required to address and resolve the core issues central to their cause. Participants will gain a renewed sense of purpose and a comprehensive roadmap for positive change that emphasizes championing the values of solidarity and unity in organizing for a brighter future.

**Maggie Hansford**, *President, Prince William Education Association*



## SPEAKER BIOGRAPHIES



**Dr. Denisha Jones**  
Author, *Black Lives Matter at School*

Dr. Denisha Jones is a member of the national Black Lives Matter at School steering committee and co-author of *Black Lives Matter at School: An Uprising for Educational Justice*. Prior to working as an academic and education justice organizer, Denisha worked as a kindergarten and preschool teacher in Washington, DC. Currently, her research and work focus on utilizing the BLM at School curriculum as cultural citizenship and documenting the value of play as a tool for liberation.



**Jennifer Berkshire**  
Co-Author, *The Education Wars*

Jennifer Berkshire has been writing and podcasting about education for more than a decade. Her interest in the intersection of politics and education began when she took a part-time job editing the statewide newspaper for AFT Massachusetts. Berkshire went on to start a humorous blog chronicling the follies of the education reform movement. Along the way, that morphed into something more serious, and her strong opinions have now appeared in *The New York Times*, *The Nation*, *The New Republic*, *The Baffler*, and many other publications. The creator and co-host of the education policy podcast “Have You Heard,” she teaches in the Education Studies Program at Yale and the Prison Education Program at Boston College. She is the author of two books on education: *A Wolf at the Schoolhouse Door: The Dismantling of Public Education and the Future of School*, and *The Education Wars: a Citizen’s Guide and Defense Manual* (both with Jack Schneider).



**Jack Schneider**  
Co-Author, *The Education Wars*

Jack Schneider is the Dwight W. Allen Distinguished Professor at the University of Massachusetts Amherst, where he directs the Center for Education Policy. He is the author of six books, the latest of which is *The Education Wars: A Citizen’s Guide and Defense Manual*. In addition to his academic research, he writes frequently for the public in outlets like *The Nation* and *The Washington Post*; he also co-hosts the education policy podcast “Have You Heard” (with Jennifer Berkshire).



**Hahrie Han**  
Author, *Undivided: The Quest for Racial Solidarity in an American Church*

Hahrie Han is a professor of political science at Johns Hopkins University, as well as the inaugural director of SNF Agora, an institute dedicated to strengthening global democracy. She writes for *The New York Times*, *The Washington Post*, and *The New Republic*, and is the author of four scholarly books. The daughter of Korean immigrants, she lives in Baltimore.

## SPEAKER BIOGRAPHIES



**Marcia Howard**  
*Teacher President,  
Minneapolis Federation  
of Teachers*

Marcia Howard has been an English teacher at Roosevelt High School in Minneapolis, MN, since 1998. After the lynching of George Floyd, she became one of the key leaders in the ongoing occupation of the site, now known as George Floyd Square. As an activist and rank and file member of the union, she helped lead the historic educators' strike of 2022, which ushered in unprecedented gains in the following years. Marcia Howard was elected the president of the teacher chapter of Minneapolis Federation of Teachers and Educational Support Professionals, Local 59 in 2024.



**Catina Taylor**  
*ESP President, Minneapolis  
Federation of Teachers*

Catina Taylor is a Special Education Assistant with 26 years of experience, currently serving as the two-term president of the Educational Support Professionals chapter of MFT59. Her career in education is driven by a deep care for people and a commitment to keeping students engaged. She previously spent five years as lead ESP organizer, and eight years as a building steward. In addition to her work in education, she holds a degree in medical assisting and has spent 10 years serving in the medical field. A proud mother, wife, and caretaker, Catina enjoys basketball and football, and has a passion for traveling. Her diverse background and caring nature make her a strong advocate for both students and her community.



**Grant Schuster**  
*Steering Committee  
Member, NEA  
Community Schools*

Grant Schuster is a 29-year middle school teacher in Anaheim, California. He is in his second year as the CTA/NEA Coordinating Director on the CTA Board and in his fourth year serving CTA on the NEA Board. He spent six years as president of the Anaheim Secondary Teachers Association focused on building organizational power through strong school sites and building relationships with student, parent, and community groups. He worked with similarly motivated locals building the California Alliance for Community Schools, which has organized around our collective power to fight privatization and promote the reimagining of public schools.

In his board position, he works to provide locals with access to the program, staff, and monetary resources of both CTA and NEA to support local organizing and coalition building.



## SPEAKER BIOGRAPHIES



**Cecily Myart-Cruz**

*President, United Teachers Los Angeles*

Cecily Myart-Cruz is a teacher, activist, and the first woman of color in UTLA's history to serve as president of the union.

Cecily has been an educator for 28 years, at both elementary and middle school levels, most recently at Angeles Mesa Elementary. Before being elected UTLA President, Cecily served as UTLA West Area Chair and UTLA NEA Vice President. As Area chair, she organized boycotts of over-testing and worked with the community, parents, students, and educators to demand collaborative administrators centering the health and well-being of school sites. Cecily is no stranger to taking direct action, whether it is fighting against co-locations by charter operators, demanding Ethnic Studies for our students, working for the end of the criminalization of youth, or leading local and statewide lobbying efforts for more funding. As the UTLA NEA Vice President, she engaged members and worked with community partners to bring resources to schools, including Honey Shine Inc.—mentoring and self-esteem program for young girls of color.



**Cassandra Curiel**

*President, United Educators of San Francisco*

Cassandra Curiel is the president of United Educators of San Francisco. She has been president since July of 2021, leading the union to prioritize member-leader development through organizing training and re-establishing worksite leadership structures to exercise the contract. During her tenure, UESF members have received over \$200 million dollars in salary and wage increases as a result of high-participation contract campaigns that focused on solidarity across the membership. She led the last bargain with a sizeable team of over 70 members and made incredible progress to improve working conditions.



**Mika Hunter-Twietmeyer**

*President, Durham Association of Educators (DAE)*

Last year, DAE successfully reached majority after a massive organizing campaign and was one of the fastest growing NEA affiliates of 2023. Over the past decade DAE has transitioned from a service-oriented model to an organizing model focused on strengthening internal structures and developing rank-and-file leaders. Since this transition, DAE has pushed the boundaries of union activity in the South. Using a variety of strategies, DAE has been able to prevent salary claw-backs, secure the largest budget increase in history, and run a massive electoral canvassing program. Currently, DAE is in the process of formalizing union recognition and a Meet & Confer Policy. Collective bargaining for the public sector is prohibited in North Carolina. However, public employers can still use an alternative framework for union recognition called Meet & Confer.

## SPEAKER BIOGRAPHIES



### **Ingrid Walker-Henry**

*President, Milwaukee Teachers' Education Association*

Ingrid Walker-Henry is the president of the Milwaukee Teachers' Education Association (MTEA). She is a 24-year teacher in Milwaukee Public Schools (MPS) and her MTEA and MPS roots run deep. She has a mother and aunt who are retired teachers, and a child and other relatives who attend MPS.

Ingrid has been in union leadership since 2013. During this time, MTEA members and leaders have:

- Won cost of living increases over multiple years
- Reinstated salary schedules (demolished after Act 10)
- Made Board policy changes for students (art, music, recess, playtime)
- Passed two referendums for funding in 2020 and 2024
- Started Community Schools in response to a state legislated takeover
- Defeated a state-legislated takeover of Milwaukee Public Schools
- Acquired rep time for all grades including Special Education teachers
- Protected English Language Learners from punitive literacy laws

Ingrid is proud to be a member of MTEA, a fighting union that works to win for students and public education workers.



### **Adrian Reyna**

*Executive Vice President, San Antonio Alliance  
Founding member of PODER, the Social Justice Caucus of the Alliance*

Adrian Reyna is a lifelong resident of San Antonio and 3rd generation public school educator in the San Antonio Independent School District. 12 of those years were spent as a U.S. History teacher at Longfellow Middle School, but he is now in his second year as a "Teacher on Special Assignment" assisting the Human Capital Management Transition Team and acting as a liaison between district leadership and SAISD's democratically elected employee union, the San Antonio Alliance of Teachers and Support Personnel. Reyna is proud to fight in coalition with school workers, students, families, community organizations, and other unions across our community as we win the schools our students deserve, including:

- Biggest compensation package in over 25 years
  - District-wide implementation of a culturally responsive/sustaining teaching framework
  - District-wide committees with workers, parents, students, community members
  - 6 schools saved from closing
- And, in the midst of school closures secured:
- > a job guarantee for all displaced staff
  - > retention bonuses for all displaced staff
  - > pay protection for all displaced staff
- A community agreement to protect affordable housing and district resources instead of billionaire developers

## SPEAKER BIOGRAPHIES



### PROVIDENCE STUDENT UNION LEADERSHIP TEAM

Providence Student Union builds student power to improve our education and well-being. We envision a true “union for students” that increases young people’s collective power and ensures our frustrations, demands, and dreams are heard. At PSU, young people grow as leaders, organizers, and advocates for justice in all forms, today and throughout their lives. The PSU Leadership Team

is a youth-led student collective that allows Providence students to cultivate strong and effective leadership and decision-making skills to improve the quality of their education and their school environments. Students will use tools and organizing strategies provided by PSU to lead statewide campaigns, make decisions for the organization, and build a healthy, safe, and collaborative student community in Providence Public Schools and beyond.

### YOUTH FACILITATOR LEADS



**Maya Hiwasaki-Ohira**  
**'26 (They/them)**

Maya is currently a junior at Classical High School and a Leadership Team Co-Director. They first discovered the Providence Student Union after attending the Know Your Rights Conference in 2022 and were interested in PSU's work. Maya is committed to ensuring student voices are heard in school district decisions, and advocating for their well-being and rights. In their free time, Maya likes to read, listen to music, and hike!

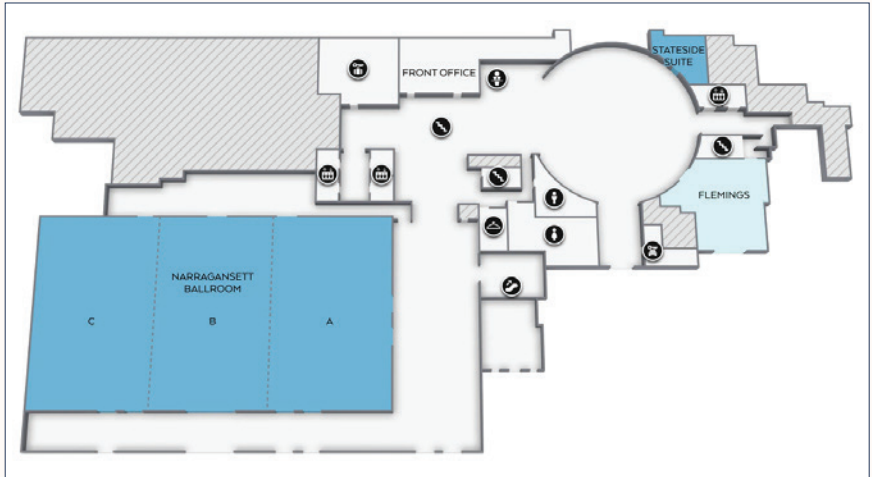


**Juan Angel Del**  
**Castillo '25 (He/him)**

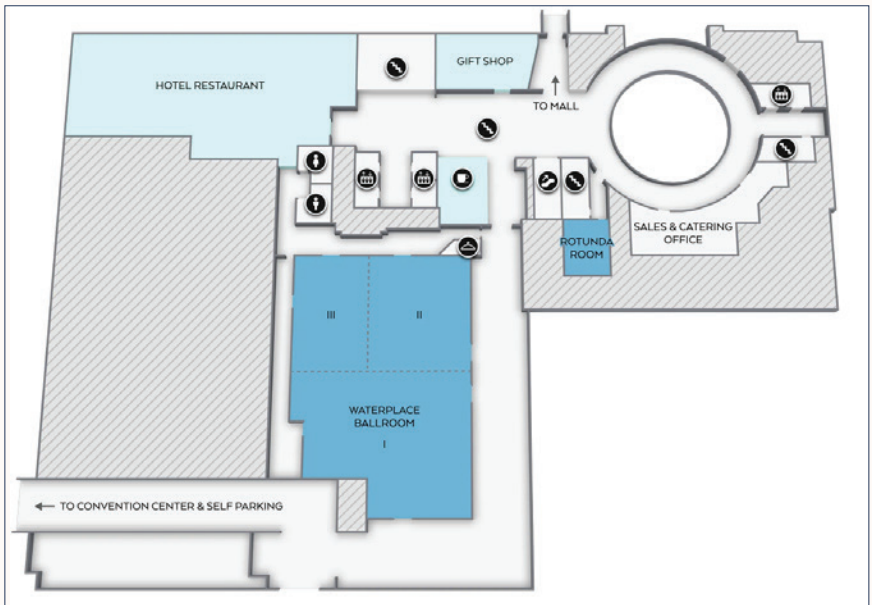
Driven by the legacy of his grandfather, a courageous activist murdered when Juan was only 10 years old, at 18 he has become an international human rights activist, even while being diagnosed with Asperger's. Over the course of 7 years, he has faced serious persecution, but his work has been recognized by the Senate of Bolivia, where he has promoted laws against discrimination, rape, and murder. His activism has extended to Bolivia, Canada, and the United States, where he attributes each success to his faith, IDMJI, demonstrating that disobedience is a fundamental part of social progress.

# HOTEL MAP

## FIRST FLOOR

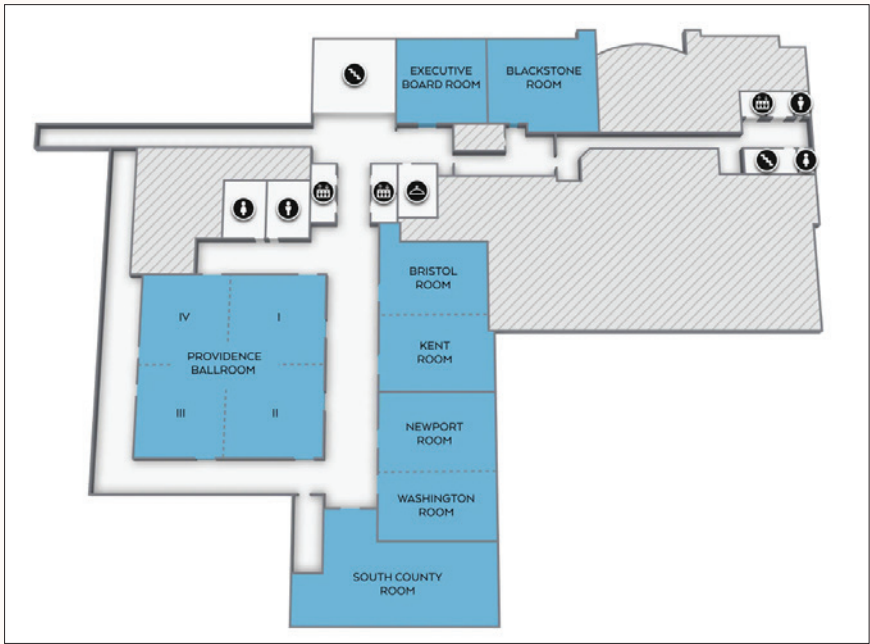


## SECOND FLOOR



# HOTEL MAP

## THIRD FLOOR





**SAVE THE DATE**

**NCUEA SUMMER MEETING**

**June 27 – 30, 2025**

Hilton Portland Downtown & The Duniway,  
Portland, OR





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