

NJFAC NEWSLETTER

September 2015

The National Jobs for All Coalition is poised to turn a corner. With new leadership, exciting new projects, and a stunning new website we are in a better position than ever to pursue **our version of the American Dream: a living-wage job for all.**

For too many Americans, unemployment has turned that American Dream into a nightmare. Despite the drop in the August unemployment rate to 5.1%--and pundits' claim that we're at "full employment, millions of people are still jobless and almost as many are laboring year-round, full time for less than the paltry four-person poverty level. Since the recession many jobless workers have dropped out of the labor force. If the rate of participation in the labor force were at its pre-recession level, official unemployment in August 2015 would have been 7.2% instead of 5.1%. **Together we must change this.**

We can't stress enough that the official unemployment rate conceals more than it reveals. It's the job of NJFAC to educate and convince the public that unemployment is a much bigger problem than they are led to believe by the official rate. **With our new, much more user-friendly, soon-to-be opened website**--designed by a leading graphic artist--NJFAC will continue to "tell the whole story" of unemployment even better than it has since its founding. Our "**whole story**" includes those excluded from the official count--"the hidden unemployed:--those who want full-time work but are forced to work part-time and those who want a job but aren't actively looking, perhaps because they've become discouraged, or can't find decent, affordable child care, or lack transportation. The Hidden Unemployed are greater in number than the official unemployed: 12.5 million in August 2015, compared to 8.0 million, the official number. Easily accessible on our website will be more of the "whole story"--analysis of the **Problem of Unemployment**, its **Solution** and what actions you can take to achieve this American Dream. One new feature of the website will be an aid to action--a **Calendar of Events** taking place across the country that will provide ideas and encouragement to everyone eager to Act on behalf of Living-Wage Jobs for All.

In August Social Security celebrated its 80th birthday, having come a long way since 1935--from providing benefits to a portion of retired and unemployed workers to nearly universal coverage. **Yet, Social Security still lacks the keystone of economic security.** You guessed it--**a living-wage job for all who want to work.** (Take a look at my [Huffington Post](#) blog, "[Social Security at Eighty](#)").

For the first time in over 40 years, there's a bill pending in Congress that would fill the jobs gap and create full employment-- H.R. 1000, the Humphrey Hawkins Full Employment and Training Act, introduced by ranking member of the House, Rep. John Conyers, Jr. (MI). We're proud to report that Philip Harvey, a member of the NJFAC Executive Committee contributed significantly to the version of H.R. 1000 that was introduced in the current 114th Congress. (For a summary of the Bill, see Quick Facts & Key Points Concerning H.R. 1000 on the NJFAC website).

NJFAC is the Prime Sponsor of mid-October "Town Hall" Meetings in Dayton and Columbus Ohio. Featuring Rep. Conyers, these **Town Hall Meetings**--co-sponsored by a long list of labor, religious, health care reform, and full employment organizations ---will include hearings on the impact of long-term employment and poverty on communities and will focus on raising wages, achieving affordable health care, and job creation. Organized by NJFAC's Outreach Coordinator Logan Martinez, these Town Hall Meetings in high unemployment areas of Ohio are pilot programs. NJFAC intends to hold similar Town Hall Meetings in cities across the country.

It's a long time since the 1930s. Most Americans now alive are not fully aware of how greatly the New Deal work programs gave the unemployed jobs and changed the face of this nation. One estimate is that without their improvements to infrastructure the US might not have won World War II, not to mention reforestation, soil conservation and other environmental sustainability programs. Lest we forget, the **Living New Deal**, a nonprofit based at the University of California Berkeley, is documenting these contributions by mapping thousands of New Deal sites all over the country. By informing the public about the programs that not only rescued the unemployed during hard times but that continue to serve the nation today, the Living New Deal helps us to advance the goal of **jobs for all.**

We are proud to announce that a number of distinguished advocates of “jobs for all” have joined our Board of Directors. These new members increase our diversity, our knowledge resources, and our prestige. See **“Meet Our New Leaders” on the website.**

With this new leadership, the Town Hall Meetings, and our collaboration with the Living New Deal, NJFAC is better equipped than ever to lead the struggle for full employment. We urge you to work with us and to donate or pledge generously so that we can move ever closer to an American Dream that includes living-wage work for all--and an end to the nightmare of unemployment.

Trudy Goldberg, Chair