

A Philip Randolph Institute
54th National Educational Conference

“Using Our Strength & Power Thru Action...We Were Built for This!”

August 5 - 10, 2025
Chicago, Illinois

Submitted by: Toni Tuck-Newsome
Date: 8/12/2025

This year's conference focused on health care and the state of our economy.

Johnny McInnis, President of the Greater Boston APRI Chapter, brings together members in Boston, Springfield, Fall River and other communities throughout Massachusetts. Active members of the A. Philip Randolph Institute Greater Boston Chapter include the Boston Teachers Union, the Carmen's Union, United Steelworkers, IBEW, and Unite Here, among others.

Johnny presented information on the 340B program. In 1992, Congress launched the 340B Drug Pricing Program to help hospitals and clinics serve low-income and uninsured patients. This program was meant to help make medicine and health care services more affordable for low-income patients by allowing certain healthcare providers to purchase steeply discounted drugs. However, the number of participating entities and discounted purchases has grown significantly, yet the benefit seen by patients has not kept pace. It's a broken promise to our communities.

In 2023 the growth in the discounted purchases through the 340B program was \$66 billion with 87% of purchases being by hospitals. Comprehensive reforms are needed to realign the 340B program to ensure patients and providers caring for underserved community's benefit. To do this they must ensure a direct patient benefit, prevent abuse by middlemen and verify the program is working.

Reverend Al Sharpton said “It's been thirty years since Congress created the drug discount program, and it rightly enjoys bipartisan support. But making sure the program is improving health equity, not doubling down on a system that enriches already wealthy neighborhoods at the expense of the poor underserved communities, should be a top priority.”

Levar Stoney, Mayor of Richmond Virginia said “Inadvertent loopholes have been utilized, increasing profit margins for the hospital system while they have reduced services in one of our predominantly Black Communities. It is immoral to benefit off the backs of Black and Brown residents under the guise of healthcare, and it must cease immediately.”

In order to fix the 340B program for the people who need it, health systems should be required to use their 340B profits to help low-income patients afford medicine and many don't even include prescription assistance in their financial aid policies. As a result, abuse of the 340B program is rampant.

We must demand real reform to ensure 340B benefits the communities it was meant to help vulnerable populations in underserved areas. Discounts should go to patients, not corporate profits.

To make matters worse, some state lawmakers are pushing legislation that would hand more power to chain pharmacies, allowing them to profit from discounted medicines while doing nothing to help those in need. And the health systems who profit are encouraging them. This approach is severely misguided and only deepens health inequities.

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Submitted by: Janice M. Amoako
Date: 8/18/2025

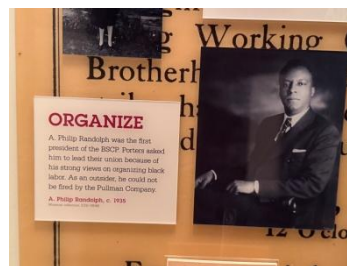
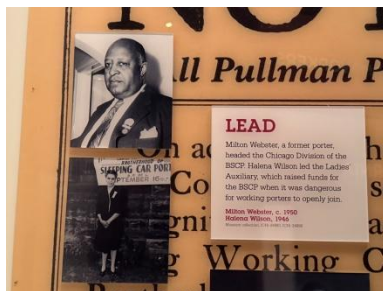
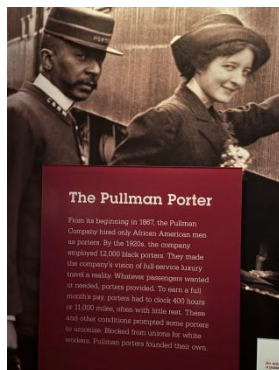
This year is the 60th Anniversary of the A. Philip Randolph Institute and we are celebrating the organizational milestones through ACTION that clearly shows that we will not back down and that we will continue to FIGHT! Therefore, the theme for this Conference is; **“USING OUR STRENGTH & POWER THRU ACTION...WE WERE BUILT FOR THIS!”**

APRI's founder, A. Philip Randolph played a crucial and powerful role in Chicago's history. The first all-Black labor union – the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters (BSCP) was led by A. Philip Randolph.

In a time where unions and the right to organize is under fire, we are reminded of the words of our Co-founder, Bayard Rustin, “The proof that one truly believes is in action.”

We were encouraged to continue organizing and mobilizing our communities for the action needed to combat the ongoing social inequalities.

I traveled to the Chicago Museum to view information on the Pullman Porters. These are some of the images I captured:



Our Health Matters

Kidney Disease: Causes, Diagnosis and Treatments

This session was presented by Dr. Laura Williams of Ardelyx.



Ardelyx is a company that's dedicated to advancing patient care. They believe in working closely with patients and their caregivers to set new standards in product innovation and community engagement.

Dr. Williams discussed Chronic Kidney Disease and the fact that it is a global health crisis. She began her discussion by stating some sobering facts:

- 37 million Americans have kidney disease, that's about 15%
- African Americans has a 3 ½ or higher risk of developing kidney failure than any other population
- 110,000 Americans begin hemodialysis each year
- About 360 people begin dialysis treatment every 24 hours
- A typical in-center hemodialysis patient spends 12 hours a week hooked up to a dialysis machine
- 13 people die each day waiting for a transplant

Chronic Kidney Disease affects over 1 in 7 U.S. adults. Most cases end in kidney failure – and the only options are dialysis or a transplant. For patients already fighting for their lives, government red tape is dangerous and unacceptable. Patients are doing everything they can to survive. And we should be helping them, not adding to the problem!

Scan the QR code and urge policymakers to restore patient access to innovative therapies.



There were several more speakers who covered other topics such as:

The Power of Black Labor in the Current State of this Country, EJ Jenkins, Black Labor Week, Founder

What's at Stake in the Union ... Tariffs, Peter Greenburg, IMAAW, Director of International Affairs