



LERC STAR Fund

Since 2008 the LERC Strategic Training and Action Research (STAR) Fund has supported special projects and activities that address vital current issues of interest to working Oregonians.

- LERC's first STAR Fund project taught a contingent of unionists about best practices for promoting green jobs and educating fellow union members about climate change and the green economy.
- Subsequently, the STAR Fund supported several projects aimed at young workers. These have included the Musicians Union's effort to establish a minimum wage in Portland area clubs, an Oregon Nurses Association program to prepare young nurses to assume positions of leadership, and curriculum and training aimed at building greater generational unity within unions.

This visit of Saket Soni and Kris Rondeau continues the STAR Fund's commitment to sponsor activities that raise awareness, stimulate critical thinking, and inspire action on issues that affect Oregon's workers both on the job and in their communities.

Co-sponsored by:

Wayne Morse Center for Law and Politics

AFSCME Council 75

Oregon State AFL-CIO

Oregon Action

Oregon Education Association

CAUSA

UO Center for the Study of Women in Society

UO Center for Latino/a and Latin American Studies

UO Multicultural Center

Portland Jobs with Justice



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HOPE IN HARD TIMES:

Kris Rondeau



Saket Soni

A CONVERSATION WITH TWO OF AMERICA'S LEADING ORGANIZERS

Eugene • January 17, 2012

Portland • January 18, 2012



Economic crisis. Increasing concentration of power and wealth in a handful of individuals and businesses. A disappearing middle class. Deteriorating environment and growing poverty...

As labor and community activists, we ask:

What path can lead to a more just, equitable & sustainable society?

In the midst of this crisis and the social ferment it has engendered, unions and community groups are joining forces, seeking ways to overcome historic tensions, unite diverse groups of people, and inspire them to act and create change.

In January 2012 the Labor Education and Research Center at the University of Oregon will contribute to this dialogue by hosting two of America's most gifted organizers, Kris Rondeau and Saket Soni. These two individuals will share their insights and spark our creative thinking about organizing strategies that can turn the current crisis into a movement-building opportunity.

2 LOCATIONS — 2 DATES

EUGENE

TUESDAY, JANUARY 17, 2012

7:00 P.M.

UO KNIGHT LAW CENTER, ROOM 175
1515 AGATE ST
EUGENE OR

PORTLAND

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 18, 2012

7:00 P.M.

UO WHITE STAG BUILDING — EVENT ROOM
70 NW COUCH ST
PORTLAND OR

Kris Rondeau is the director of AFSCME New England Organizing Project. She has been a union organizer and contract negotiator for over three decades. Rondeau believes creating relationships and community building is the foundation for every healthy organization. Her approach has been called the model of new unionism.



After a long organizing effort, she and her dedicated team of organizers and activists navigated the Harvard Union of Clerical and Technical Workers (HUCTW) to victory in May of 1988. John Hoerr's book, *We Can't Eat Prestige*, captures the history, spirit and strategy of this campaign and highlights Kris's innovative methods of organizing.

Since the creation of HUCTW, Kris and her team have organized 30,000 workers, mostly women in the service sector industries of healthcare and higher education, including the University of Minnesota, the University of Illinois, and UMASS Memorial Medical Center in Worcester, Massachusetts.

She speaks about and teaches her model of organizing to a variety of organizations nationally and internationally.



Saket Soni is an Organizer and the Director of the New Orleans Workers' Center for Racial Justice. The Center was formed after Hurricane Katrina to organize African-American and Immigrant workers and residents across the colorline.

Along with the members and organizers at the Center, Saket has crafted and led strategic campaigns on international labor trafficking, human rights conditions in detention centers, ICE collusion with employers, and the enforcement regime in the post-Katrina Gulf Coast.

He is also Executive Director of the National Guestworker Alliance, which works to improve conditions for minority workers, day laborers, guest workers and others who are exploited by corporate giants promising good wages and delivering treacherous working conditions, abuse and wage theft.

Soni has brought together workers and community members to fight for the basic rights of exploited foreign student interns at a Hershey's plant in Pennsylvania, and for abused guestworkers in Mississippi, Tennessee and across the South.