JOBS TO MOVE AMERICA

PUBLIC GOODS FOR THE MOST PUBLIC GOOD



Photo courtesy of the A. Philip Randolph Pullman Porter Museum

Hi Maria,

Black history is not just something we commemorate; it's something we carry forward.

This month, I want to reflect on a great Black labor leader whose commitment to worker empowerment and organizing changed my life and the lives of many Black workers. His vision lives on through the establishment of the A. Philip Randolph Institute dedicated to ensuring Black workers have a voice in the labor movement.

A. Philip Randolph was one of the most consequential labor leaders in American history. As the organizer of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters, Randolph led the first African American union to win a collective bargaining agreement against a major corporation, the Pullman Company. At a time when Black workers were systemically excluded from labor protections, the Brotherhood proved that dignity, fair wages, and safe working conditions were not privileges—they were rights worth fighting for.

That victory didn't just change one company; it reshaped expectations of what workers deserved. For Black workers in particular, whose labor had long been exploited to build wealth they were denied access to, it marked a turning point in the fight for dignity and justice.

My connection to the A. Philip Randolph Institute location in Pittsburgh is not symbolic; it's formative. The Institute stands as a living testament to how Black workers organized, resisted, and shaped the labor movement—and how that legacy continues to guide our work today.

Through the Tony Mazzocchi Center (TMC), I've completed my OSHA 10 outreach training, served on the SERT (Specialized Emergency Response Trainers) team, and received my HAZWOPER (Hazardous Waste Operations and Emergency Response) certification, equipping me to support workers not just in narrative, but in safety, preparedness, and power on the ground.

That principle is especially urgent in the South. For generations, Black workers in the South have labored in industries fueled by public dollars—manufacturing, infrastructure, and transportation without seeing those investments translate into safe jobs, fair wages, or pathways to opportunity. Too often, public dollars have flowed to corporations with little oversight, leaving workers vulnerable and communities behind.

At Jobs to Move America, our campaigns aim to change that equation.
We organize across the South and beyond to ensure public dollars create public good. That means campaigning for government investments to come with real standards: safe working conditions, fair pay, access to training, and protections against discrimination.

It also means fighting for Community Benefits Agreements and holding corporations accountable when they take from our communities without investing in them.
In addition to organizing and campaigning, we are committed to equipping workers with the knowledge, skills, and tools they need to advocate for themselves on the job. From education on worker rights to safety training, we aim to ensure that when public dollars are invested, workers are prepared not only to fill jobs but to shape the standards of those jobs.

In many ways, this work is a modern continuation of Randolph's legacy. Just as the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters challenged a powerful corporation to recognize the humanity of Black workers, today's campaigns challenge corporations that benefit from public investment to honor the workers who make their success possible.

Black workers didn't just participate in the labor movement; they molded it. Today, in the South, they are once again at the center of pushing labor forward.

Black History Month reminds us that progress has never come from passive remembrance. It has come from organizing. From training. From campaigning. And from demanding that systems built on our labor finally work for us.

We stand on the shoulders of giants, and we continue to move history forward.

In solidarity,



Larry Hodge
Organizing Manager, Southern Program

Join us in the fight for good jobs and healthy communities.

Donate Today

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