Empowering Leaders

The Kalmanovitz Initiative develops creative ideas and practical solutions for working people that are grounded in a commitment to justice, democracy, and the common good. Its work is focused around two key themes: Empowering Leaders and Incubating Innovation.

Incubating Innovation

Drawing on Georgetown’s distinctive identity as an arena of policy formulation and debate, the Kalmanovitz Initiative fosters innovative approaches aimed at creating equitable, sustainable, and empowering workplace relations in a fast-changing economy. It supports research, policy development, and innovation, and works to translate experience into compelling new visions, creatively reframing debates about labor’s future, and instigating reforms in policies and practices.
Putting Minds and Hands to Work

Georgetown University’s Kalmanovitz Initiative for Labor and the Working Poor develops creative strategies and innovative public policy to improve workers’ lives in a changing economy. The Initiative draws on Georgetown’s distinctive identity – its commitment to intellectual excellence, grounding in the Catholic and Jesuit traditions, history of inter-religious cooperation, global reach, and prominence as an arena of policy debate in the nation’s capital – to advance prosperity, broadly-shared economic justice, and respect for the dignity of labor. The report that follows outlines the work of the Initiative during 2011-2012 as it focused on two key objectives: empowering leaders and incubating innovation.

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Executive Director

**Joseph A. McCartin** is a historian of the U.S. labor movement and 20th century U.S. social and political history. He is Professor of History at Georgetown University, where he has taught since 1999. His research focuses on the intersection of labor organization, politics, and public policy. His first book, *Labor’s Great War: The Struggle for Industrial Democracy and the Origins of Modern American Labor Relations*, won the 1999 Philip Taft Labor History Book Award. His new book, *Collision Course: Ronald Reagan, the Air Traffic Controllers, and the Strike that Changed America*, examines the origins and implications of the 1981 PATCO strike of air traffic controllers. It won the Richard A. Lester Award for the Outstanding Book on Industrial Relations and Labor Economics published in 2011. His current research explores the impact of public sector labor organization on politics, government, and private sector labor relations. He is a member of the steering committee of Catholic Scholars for Worker Justice, the editorial committee of *Labor: Studies in Working-Class History of the Americas*, and he serves on the board of Interfaith Worker Justice.

Research Director

**Jennifer Luff** is a historian of U.S. labor and working class history and politics with substantial experience working in the American labor movement. She received a Ph.D. in American studies from William & Mary, and has held fellowships at New York University, University of California, Los Angeles, and the Newberry Library. Before completing her Ph.D., Jennifer coordinated campaigns in manufacturing, health care, and the service sectors for SEIU, the United Steelworkers, the AFL-CIO, and Change to Win. She is Contemporary Affairs editor of *Labor: Studies in Working-Class History of the Americas*. She is the author of *Commonsense Anticommunism: Labor and Civil Liberties Between the World Wars* (2012).
Staffing

Policy Director

**Katie Corrigan** has almost fifteen years of experience working on federal legislation. Through early 2011, Corrigan served as Director of Workplace Flexibility 2010, an initiative at Georgetown Law that helped set the stage for a national dialogue on how to make workplace flexibility a standard in the American workplace. Before directing Workplace Flexibility 2010, she was Visiting Professor of Law and Assistant Director of Georgetown's Federal Legislation and Administrative Clinic where she represented Catholic Charities USA among other non-profit clients. She was legal counsel on disability policy for Senator Tom Harkin on the Senate Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee, serving as the lead Senate staffer on a range of disability legislation. She also worked as a legislative counsel at the American Civil Liberties Union, where she defended individual privacy rights and led coalition efforts that included organizations from across the political spectrum. Katie Corrigan is a graduate of the University of Pennsylvania and received her law degree from Georgetown.

Faculty Fellow

**Denise Brennan** is an anthropologist who writes about migration, trafficking into forced labor, and women’s labor. She is an associate professor and chair of the Department of Anthropology. She is the author of *What’s Love Got to Do with It? Transnational Desires and Sex Tourism in the Dominican Republic* (Duke University Press) and just completed a book on the resettlement of trafficked persons in the United States, *Life Interrupted: Trafficking into Forced Labor in the United States* (Duke University Press forthcoming). She is currently conducting field research for a book on how families cope with detention and deportation, *Shattered Families: Detention, Deportation and the Assault on Immigrants in the United States*. She has been a board member of Different Avenues, Project Hope International, and HIPS (Helping Individual Prostitutes Survive), organizations located in Washington, D.C. that work to protect and empower sex workers.
Program Coordinator

Sarah David Heydemann is a graduate of Georgetown University, where she majored in English and minored in Justice and Peace Studies and Philosophy. While at Georgetown, she was an active member of the Georgetown Solidarity Committee (GSC), Georgetown’s student-labor solidarity organization, and participated in campaigns supporting workers’ rights on campus and around the world. Her senior thesis project documented a comprehensive history of GSC through interviews and archival research. Before joining the KI, she worked both with DC Jobs with Justice and UNITE HERE Local 25. She also serves as a facilitator for two different programs: a community course on the female experience in DC and Georgetown’s “A Different Dialogue” discussion on social class.

Program Officer

John Tremblay joined the KI staff in 2010 as Program Officer. He is a graduate of the University of Virginia, where he studied Spanish and Foreign Affairs. John has substantial experience in issues affecting the working poor. During college, he worked with the immigrant community in Charlottesville as a medical interpreter and an ESL teacher. More recently, John comes to the KI from the Washington Lawyers’ Committee for Civil Rights and Urban Affairs, where he worked as a legal assistant in the Immigrant and Refugee Rights Project. In this capacity, John’s work included outreach to and advocacy on behalf of immigrant workers on the issue of wage theft.
Administrator

**Jesslyn Cheong** joined the KI staff in November 2012 as Administrator. She is a 2011 graduate of Georgetown University’s School of Foreign Service, where she studied International Politics. During college, Jesslyn worked as an intern at the International Center for Journalists and as a tutor for D.C. Reads and the D.C. Schools Project. She also worked as a student administrative assistant at the KI, and she provided support to the Working Lives Oral History Project, compiling and editing multimedia and

Research Consultant

**Seth Newton Patel** is bilingual in English and Spanish and is a labor veteran with years of experience working as a lead organizer with the American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) and UNITE-HERE. He received his Masters in Conflict Resolution at Georgetown. Seth coordinated the KI’s field research operation, including research for the Collective Bargaining Project and Working Lives Oral History Project.

Graduate Assistant

**Pedro Cruz** is currently a Ph.D. student in Spanish and Portuguese. He is bilingual in English and Spanish. He is also a seasoned organizer who has worked with SEIU in California and with Jobs with Justice in DC. For the KI, he worked with Sarah David Heydemann in devising and implementing the Day Laborer Exchange Program (see below) and is helping the KI devise an educational program on the problem of wage theft in conjunction with community and labor organizations.
Graduate Assistant

Michael Paarlberg is a doctoral student in the Government Department working on a dissertation examining comparative labor standards and regulatory regimes. Before entering graduate school, Mike spent several years in the research department of the Service Employees International Union, where he specialized in research on employment issues in the health care sector. Mike was co-author of the Center for American Progress report, “Making Contracting Work for the United States: Government Spending Must Lead to Good Jobs.” He conducts research and analysis for the Kalmanovitz Initiative.

Undergraduate Assistant

Taylor Griffin is a junior in the College, majoring in Government and minoring in African American Studies and French. She is a Patrick F. Healy Fellow and an active member of the Georgetown NAACP, student judicial hearing board, and gospel choir. In the summer of 2012, she interned in the office of Congresswoman Nancy Pelosi. Taylor assists with event logistics and publicity, and she manages the KI’s mailing list.
The Kalmanovitz Initiative draws upon the resources of a great university to educate and engage a new generation of leaders dedicated to a just, democratic, and inclusive economy.

Empowering Leaders

Bridging Campus and Community

Day Laborer Exchange

The Kalmanovitz Initiative’s Day Laborer Exchange program finished its third year, having doubled in size from its inception in 2009. Working with DC Jobs with Justice, students received training in English as a second language and then taught day laborers basic language skills including terms related to wages, skill requirements, and legal protections. Students also met several times over the course of the semester to reflect on their experience and discuss topics like labor and immigration. A number of veterans of the program went on to work or intern for unions in 2012.

Domestic Worker Exchange (Pilot)

The Domestic Worker Exchange builds on the Day Laborer Exchange model. The KI partnered with CASA de Maryland, a workers’ center, to conduct outreach to immigrant domestic workers at bus stops, parks, and other community locations, providing them with information about their rights on the job and CASA de Maryland’s services.

Worker Justice DC Alternative Spring Break Trip

In collaboration with Georgetown’s Center for Social Justice, the Kalmanovitz Initiative sponsored its third and largest alternative spring break on worker rights. Students stayed at a hostel in downtown DC and engaged with worker issues from multiple angles – visiting workplaces, including day laborer meeting spots; learning about the challenges of worker organizing first hand by going to rallies and picket lines; and meeting with policymakers at the local and national levels to understand how law and policy frame workers’ realities on the ground. This year applications to the program more than doubled and seventeen students attended the trip.
Educating for Impact

Undergraduate Student Fellowships

Each year the Kalmanovitz Initiative supports undergraduate fellows to work on academic projects. Each undergraduate fellow receives a stipend and the guidance of a mentor. The 2011-2012 undergraduate fellows included Bryan Woll, a senior who is a double major in economics and peace studies. Bryan’s paper, “Through No Fault Of Their Own: Unemployment Insurance Provision and the Incumbency of State Government Partisanship in the United States, 1960-2004,” analyzed economic and political data to uncover clues about how unemployment benefits change over time. Another undergraduate fellow, Sarah Henningsen, was an anthropology major who did an ethnographic study of day laborer sites in the DC region titled “Conversations from the Corners: Undocumented Immigrants, Low-Wage Labor, and Life on the Margins: The Realities of Organized and Disorganized Day Labor.” This student had participated in the KI’s Day Laborer Exchange the year before, and that experience gave her the idea and initial background for her research project. Both fellows have gone on to service work and organizing with the working poor.

Innovative/Experiential Courses

Experiential learning opportunities help students put ideas into practice.

In fall 2011, Katie Corrigan, the Kalmanovitz Initiative’s Policy Director, and Georgetown Law Professor Nina Pillard taught an experiential learning course titled Work Law in Flux: Labor and Employment in the 21st Century. Law students approached issues from the ground up, working inside law or policy offices that use a range of legal and policy strategies to advance work law. The class produced a number of students who have gone or plan to go on to work for unions or other worker advocacy organizations.

Jennifer Luff taught a course on Working Class Lives that trained students to conduct oral histories of workers in the District of Columbia.

The Kalmanovitz Initiative also launched a database that connects interested students with professors who share the Initiative’s mission.
When one early twentieth-century labor activist observed that “the boss’s brain is under the workman’s cap” he was calling attention to the vast amount of untapped knowledge of work and the workplace stored up in the experience of workers. The “Working Lives Oral History Project” proceeds on the premise that this is still true and that today’s workers have much to teach us about what makes for a good workplace, and about how best to improve workplaces in ways that enhance both productivity and workers’ wellbeing. The project has begun with an intensive study of Washington, D.C. janitors and a campaign they led in the 1980s and 1990s that improved janitorial work in the city: “Justice for Janitors.” The program has conducted videotaped interviews with janitors, their employers, and union strategists who participated in the campaign.

These interviews are being readied for an online archive that will be available for students, researchers, and working people themselves who want to study the history of that movement and apply its lessons. Subsequent research projects will examine other low-wage workers and their strategies for improving their jobs.

The online archive will be open in November 2012.
Drawing on Georgetown’s distinctive identity as an arena of policy formulation and debate, the Kalmanovitz Initiative fosters approaches aimed at creating equitable, sustainable, and empowering workplace relations in a fast-changing economy.

Translating Experience Into Vision

Practitioner Fellowships

In the course of their daily work, labor activists and strategists accumulate deep insights into the broader challenges and opportunities facing working people. But day-to-day responsibilities rarely permit sustained reflection to develop thoughts into coherent ideas and proposals. The Kalmanovitz Practitioner Fellowship offers practitioners the opportunity to think about, discuss, and refine their ideas into concrete and creative products. In 2011-2012, Practitioner Fellows included an immigrant rights advocate, a leader on work-family policy, the political director of a major union, the national policy director of a major Los Angeles-based non-profit, and a longtime leader of progressive and labor organizations.

The Kalmanovitz Initiative was proud to support the following fellows:

Madeline Janis
Leveraging Federal Policy for Community Jobs

Madeline’s 2012 fellowship explored how national policy can better support community-based efforts to create good jobs and a healthy environment. She looked at how federal regulation can support major Los Angeles-based initiatives around key sectors of the economy. Madeline also worked with allied organizations to design initiatives that can be coordinated with groups from other US cities that want to
advocate for national regulations and policies to support local campaigns.

Madeline is the founder and, until February 2012, was the Executive Director of the Los Angeles Alliance for a New Economy (LAANE), a non-profit agency that conducts research, education and advocacy around issues affecting low-income working families in Los Angeles. She currently serves at the National Policy Director at LAANE. She holds a law degree from the University of California, Los Angeles School of Law.

Donald Cohen
Debunking Attacks on Labor Regulation

Donald’s 2012 fellowship explored the consistent rhetoric used over the last 100 years to fight against consumer, environmental, and labor protections and built out effective counter-narratives to those attacks. His research looked at past legislative and regulatory battles around workplace safety, minimum wage, family leave, consumer and product safety, and environmental protection.

Donald has been an organizer and leader of progressive and labor organizations for nearly thirty years. He was the leader of the California universal health care movement in the early 1990s. He later developed a political program for the San Diego-Imperial Counties Labor Council, AFL-CIO, and founded a labor-connected non-profit, the Center on Policy Initiatives (CPI) that served as the research, policy, communications, and community alliance building arm of the labor movement. Donald is the developer and leader of the Cry Wolf Project, which creates new tools to better respond to criticisms of progressive policy. Donald is also the Chair of In the Public Interest, a resource center on privatization and responsible contracting, and is on the board of directors of Green for All, the Ballot Initiatives Strategy

Netsy Firestein
Achieving Paid Family and Medical Leave

Netsy used her 2011 fellowship to explore what it would take to make a campaign for paid family and medical leave a high priority for federal and state policy makers. Netsy researched other successful national campaigns on disability rights, early childhood education, and LGBT issues, in order to understand the innovative, key strategies that propelled them to victory. Her research resulted in presentations at the AFL-CIO and Columbia University and helped lay the foundation for paid leave strategies at the national level.
Netsy is the founder and Director of the Labor Project for Working Families. The Labor Project is a national non-profit organization working with labor unions to negotiate and advocate for better work/family policies, including child care, paid family leave, elder care, and flexible work hours. Netsy has over 20 years of experience working with labor and work/family issues. She has worked with many local and international unions and labor/management committees on developing work/family contract language and programs. Netsy does trainings around the country on labor and work/family issues and is the co-author of numerous articles on these issues. She holds a Masters in Social Work from Columbia University.

Pilar Weiss
Organizing the Unemployed

Pilar spent her 2011 fellowship conducting an investigation and analysis into the potential for organizing the unemployed into a political force. Her research question came from her observation that organizing and political campaigns failed to account for the growing ranks of the unemployed. Pilar’s research included interviews with organizers who had or were trying to organize the unemployed and with historians and economists who have studied unemployed organizing during the Great Depression, in post-industrial steel towns, and other historical periods or locations with high unemployment.

Pilar is currently the Civic Engagement Director at the New Organizing Institute (NOI), where she works with organizers across the country building locally-based electoral campaigns that put the power back into the hands of voters. Pilar’s work at NOI focuses on increasing access to practice-based research and new technologies among field organizers, increasing the capacity for volunteer-based voter registration, and building long-term civic engagement capacity around issue-based campaigns. Prior to joining NOI, Pilar spent a decade running political organizing campaigns for UNITE HERE. Pilar served as UNITE HERE’s National Deputy Director of Politics and Communications as well as the Political Director of the Culinary Workers Union Local 226. Pilar holds a Masters in Public Health from UC Berkeley.
Edgar Aranda-Yanoc
Getting Justice for Immigrant Workers

Edgar’s 2011 fellowship focused on alternative grassroots and social media strategies to enforce wage theft judgments. He researched wage theft practices in Virginia and across the region and identified a range of media and organizing strategies that could help overcome employers’ unwillingness to comply with judicial orders for wage theft claims. Edgar examined the use of transparency mechanisms—such as social media and public disclosure campaigns—as a means to educate the public on the prevalence of wage theft and shift the norms of acceptable business practices.

Edgar currently works with Virginia Legal Aid Justice Center’s Immigrant Advocacy Program as a Community Advocate and Educator where he promotes the employment rights of immigrant workers in Virginia. He also serves as the Chair of the Virginia Coalition of Latino Organizations (VACOLAO) and is a member of the Executive Committee of the Board of the National Day Laborer Organizing Network (NDLON). Edgar was the recipient of the 2010 Linowes Leadership Award presented by the Community Foundation for the National Capital Region. He earned an LL.M. degree in 2006 from Temple University Beasely School of Law where he received the Professor Samuel Gyandoh Award for outstanding professional and personal service to the law school community. Prior to his work in the United States, he was a practicing lawyer in Peru.
Reframing Thinking: Conferences


As the world economy struggled to cope with and recover from the "Great Recession," this conference hosted by the Kalmanovitz Initiative in conjunction with America's leading academic journal of labor history, Labor: Studies in Working-Class History of the Americas, gathered more than fifty top scholars from four continents. These scholars discussed the present crisis in light of other crises that have afflicted working people over the past two centuries, putting the present recession in perspective. The conference marked the last public appearance by the renowned labor historian David Montgomery of Yale University. Selected papers from the conference are set to be published by the University of Illinois Press as Workers in Hard Times: Nineteenth-Century Panics to the Twenty-First Century Great Recession.


Organized in collaboration with the Murphy Institute of the City University of New York, this conference brought together a group of scholars and practitioners to present and examine the latest research on interventions and strategies to deal with the proliferation of low-wage work, such as raising the minimum wage and unionization, investing in primary and secondary education and job training, “living wage” laws and stepped-up labor and employment law enforcement. Participants included Peter Edelman and Harry Holzer, Georgetown University; Richard Freeman, Harvard University; Cathy Ruckelshaus, National Employment Law Project; Michael Piore, Massachusetts Institute of Technology; Jennifer Gordon, Fordham University School of Law; John Schmitt, Center for Economic and Policy Research; Ruth Milkman, City University of New York; and Heather Boushey, Center for American Progress, among others. The papers from this conference will be published as a book by the Russell Sage Foundation.

LRAN Conferences, June 6, 2011, and June 12, 2012

The Kalmanovitz Initiative hosted two conferences of the Labor Research and Action Network (LRAN). The first, on June 6, 2011, resulted in the launching of LRAN, which aims to create a space for the generation and exchange of fresh ideas and thinking among labor leaders, activists, scholars, and students. The June 2012 LRAN conference focused on two intersecting areas of work: innovative organizing campaigns (broadly defined, not limited to union initiatives) that are either informed by cutting edge research or raise challenging questions researchers ought to explore further; and new research that sheds light on critical organizing issues. Each conference drew over 100 activists and scholars.
Labor Lab Series

We Are One Georgetown: Celebrating Workers’ Contributions to Campus Community

This evening recognized the Georgetown Aramark workers’ successful campaign—supported by students, faculty, and faith leaders—to form a union in the spring of 2011. Student groups including the Georgetown Solidarity Committee, the NAACP, Georgetown College Democrats, MEChA, and EcoAction were actively involved in building a community of support around the workers at Leo’s and other campus food service providers. The community continued to stand behind the workers as they used their collective voice on the job to negotiate their first contract with Aramark. Worker and student panelists shared stories of what it meant to come together as a union, and what it meant to be one Georgetown.

Co-sponsored by the Georgetown Solidarity Committee, Georgetown MEChA, Center for Social Justice and Georgetown College Democrats.

Food Justice: Growing a Movement

Food is fundamental to our lives, but the political economy of food—how it’s produced, distributed, and consumed—is often invisible. In recent years, farmworkers, food workers, environmentalists, and community activists have joined together to understand how food systems structure our lives, and what we can do to change them. The tomato fields of South Florida have been a seedbed for the emerging food justice movement. The Kalmanovitz Initiative brought Barry Estabrook, author of *Tomatoland*, to Georgetown University to discuss the political economy of tomatoes with Greg Asbed and Gerardo Reyes of the Coalition of Immokalee Workers.
The PATCO Legacy and the Future of Collective Bargaining

In 1981, the nation’s air traffic controllers walked out on strike. Newly-elected president Ronald Reagan fired them all, changing the course of American politics. Thirty years later, former air traffic controllers joined historian and KI Executive Director Joseph A. McCartin to talk about the PATCO strike’s legacy—and what it can tell us about the future.

An Evening with Poet Laureate (and former auto worker) Philip Levine

The Kalmanovitz Initiative was delighted to host the nation’s 2011-2012 Poet Laureate Philip Levine for a public reading. Levine, a Detroit native, worked in auto factories in his youth, an experience that shaped his poetic voice. “I believed even then that if I could transform my experience into poetry, I would give it the value and dignity it did not begin to possess on its own,” he recalls. “I could embrace it with some degree of joy.” Levine is a recipient of the Pulitzer Prize and the National Book Award. The Librarian of Congress, James H. Billington calls him “one of America’s great narrative poets,” someone whose “plainspoken lyricism” has illuminated “the hard work we do to make sense of our lives.” Levine joined us to read a selection of his poetry and discuss his life’s work with Maureen Corrigan, book critic for NPR’s Fresh Air and critic-in-residence and lecturer at Georgetown. After the reading and discussion, Mr. Levine held a book signing.

In an interview with the Library of Congress, Levine later said about Georgetown University and the Kalmanovitz Initiative:

I didn’t know there were still little groups of people coming to college to learn how to make our society more equitable and democratic.

I’d thought of Georgetown as the home of basketball, the place where John Thompson and his son raised great centers like Ewing, Mutombo and Mourning.

It is much more, for the place has a powerful social conscience, and the folks there take their ethical and civic duties very seriously. This may be one side of Christian faith that we need more of, the side committed to hope, charity and humility – when those virtues are harnessed to intelligence, energy and willpower, you get something astonishing.

I went away asking myself if I were doing enough to enrich my community and help my fellow citizens. I was humbled.
Listening to Occupy DC

In a few short months, the Occupy Wall Street movement spread around the world and changed the terms of the political debate. What does the Occupy movement mean and what are the possibilities for its future? Where does Occupy fit within the larger world of social justice activism in the US and here in DC? And what can labor unions and workers’ organizations learn from Occupy?

The Kalmanovitz Initiative held a panel discussion to talk about these questions with activists from Occupy DC. Veteran activist Heather Booth, founder of the Midwest Academy and member of Democratic Partners, and Columbia University political scientist Dorian Warren commented, along with Occupiers James Ploeser and Vasudha Desikan.

Wisconsin On: The Politics of Collective Bargaining in the Public Sector

A little over a year ago, about a thousand people stood outside the Wisconsin State Capitol to protest Governor Walker’s proposal to limit state employees’ right to collective bargaining. Within a week, tens of thousands of people—teachers, firefighters, students, veterans, and activists—continued the protest inside, gathering in the Capitol rotunda and capturing the nation’s attention. By spring, the Wisconsin Budget Repair bill had passed, the mass protest had subsided, and local unions were assessing their options under the new legal regime. But the events of February 2011 reverberated beyond the borders of Wisconsin, triggering a nationwide dialogue on collective bargaining. By the fall, Ohio voters repealed Governor Kasich’s bill—SB 5, a similar rewrite of the state’s public employee collective bargaining law—by a fair margin, and a recall of Governor Walker was underway. And many believe the events in Madison sparked a revival of the American labor movement and a renewed appreciation of the right to engage in collective bargaining. But fierce debates on the role and value of public sector bargaining continued in state capitals across the country.

The Kalmanovitz Initiative hosted a panel discussion of the history, law, and politics of collective bargaining in the public sector. Speakers included Craig Becker, former Member of the NLRB; Mahlon Mitchell, State President of the Professional Fire Fighters of Wisconsin; Joseph P. Rugola, Executive Director of the Ohio Association of Public School Employees and International Vice President of AFSCME; and Eleanor Clift, Contributor for Newsweek and The Daily Beast.
A Hammer With Which To Shape It: Art and the Human Voice in the Global Labor Struggle

On March 19, 2012, Mike Daisey delivered a long-scheduled talk at Georgetown as part of the Kalmanovitz Initiative’s Labor Lab series.

As Jennifer Luff, KI’s Research Director, noted in her opening remarks, when we invited Mike Daisey to speak at Georgetown, “we wanted him to help us think about the power that art has to make what is invisible, visible; to give voice to the voiceless; to create a human connection across the international supply chain, linking consumers to workers on the other side of the world.” Daisey’s show “The Agony and the Ecstasy of Steve Jobs” brought broad media attention to the experiences of factory workers in China and helped audiences envision the people who build our laptops and cell phones. Thus the title of the talk was “A Hammer With Which to Shape It: Art and the Human Voice in the Global Labor Struggle.”

Of course, during the final days before March 19, the context of Mike Daisey’s talk changed quite radically. As Luff explained, “On Friday, March 16, the ‘This American Life’ show retracted its January 6 story [based on ‘The Agony and the Ecstasy of Steve Jobs’], and the radio show ‘Marketplace’ also aired a report contradicting Daisey’s account. ‘This American Life’ concluded that Daisey was not honest in what he told the show about his research in China.”

And although, as our Executive Director Joe McCartin noted, this series of events “left us scratching our heads and scrambling a bit,” we moved forward on the premise that “... unexpected events provide unexpected opportunities, and we believe the events of the past several days offer us the opportunity for an unusually deep and searching discussion...dealing with such things as truth, power, and social justice, the kinds of things that deserve deep discussion at a great university.”

99% Spring: Whose Streets? Labor, Civil Disobedience and Social Change

Thousands of people trained this spring to engage in massive direct actions to protest rising inequality. What was this movement about, and what did it mean? How had—and should—the labor movement engaged with the 99% movement? Stephen Lerner, a leading organizer and one of the planners of the 99% Spring, shared his thoughts on the origins and directions of the movement, in conversation with Michael Kazin, Georgetown Professor of History and co-editor of Dissent.
The Collective Bargaining Project is an effort to rethink the vision and practice of collective bargaining and to revive and reshape the once compelling American ideal of industrial democracy in light of post-industrial realities, the pressures and challenges of the global economy, increasing income inequality, and weakened government regulatory power in the workplace.

In 2011, the project began by documenting and analyzing the investment in labor organizing over the past 25 years, analyzing the strategies and tactics of worker organizing campaigns in a range of industries and labor markets (see diagram above), and articulating certain principles and challenges that can help shape public policy debates. In 2012, the Kalmanovitz Initiative began sharing its preliminary research and analysis with small audiences of labor practitioners to get their feedback. In 2012-2013, the Initiative will convene a series of working groups to discuss its findings and to embark on a sustained collaborative strategic discussion focused on rebuilding mechanisms that allow workers to negotiate effectively with their employers.
Under the rubric of the Collective Bargaining Project, the Kalmanovitz Initiative established a new related project in collaboration with Professor Richard Freeman, a leading labor economist at Harvard. The “Harvard-Georgetown Working Group on the Market Democracy” will look at expanding and using open government data and internet-based information to empower citizens to help regulate markets and press governments and firms toward reforming economies. The first meeting of this group took place on July 2-3, 2012, at Georgetown.

Core Labor Standards and Sweatfree Purchasing: Building Mechanisms that Elevate Labor Standards

Following the lead of universities like Georgetown, a growing number of state and local governments want to stop purchasing apparel (e.g., uniforms for police and athletics) that is made in sweatshops. The Kalmanovitz Initiative has worked to widen this movement. Through its collaboration with Georgetown Law’s Harrison Institute for Public Law, we have funded legal work necessary for the creation of a Sweatfree Purchasing Consortium, a group currently composed of 12 state and local governments that are attempting to pool their purchasing power to reward employers who elevate the labor standards of their workers by buying goods from those employers. This year the Harrison Institute developed a Model Sweatfree Purchasing Code for local governments that includes proposed labor standards and a mechanism for assessing living wages in different countries. The model policy can be found at http://buysweatfree.org/model_policy.

The Kalmanovitz Initiative also funded Professor John Kline’s research on the Alta Gracia factory in the Dominican Republic. That factory serves as a model that could support the expansion of sweatfree procurement efforts at the state and local level.
The Jesuit Colleges and Universities Just Employment Policy Initiative: Advancing a Vision of Justice in Higher Education

Over the past several years, several Jesuit colleges and universities, including Georgetown, have implemented or moved toward the implementation of policies meant to protect the rights of workers whether directly or indirectly employed (i.e., as subcontractors in such fields as food service). The Kalmanovitz Initiative seeks to expand these isolated initiatives into a comprehensive approach behind which all Jesuit colleges and universities can unite.

Working with colleagues at the Loyola University of Chicago, Loyola University of New Orleans, and St. Joseph’s University, in 2012 the Kalmanovitz Initiative convened a network of representatives from seventeen of the 28 institutional members of the Association of Jesuit Colleges and Universities (AJCU) who share this vision. The Kalmanovitz Initiative is leading the collaborative efforts of this multi-university team in drafting a set of model principles and policies that draw from these recent initiatives on Jesuit campuses. This collaborative team will present these model principles and policies at the gathering of 28 AJCU delegations to be held at Creighton University in August 2013. The team will use that gathering to advance these principles and policies toward an endorsement by the AJCU and formal adoption by the individual member campuses of the AJCU. Having advanced this vision of just employment through the AJCU network, the KI hopes to extend this approach more broadly across higher education, working through such networks as the Association of Catholic Colleges and Universities, and the Campus Compact.
Other Highlights

“I didn’t know there were still little groups of people coming to college to learn how to make our society more equitable and democratic. I went away asking myself if I were doing enough to enrich my community and help my fellow citizens. I was humbled.”

U.S. Poet Laureate Philip Levine on discovering the Kalmanovitz Initiative

Jobs with Justice of Washington, D.C., honored the Kalmanovitz Initiative and Program Coordinator Sarah David Heydemann with the “I’ll Be There Award” for the outstanding work of the Student/Day-Laborer Exchange Program in raising awareness of workers’ rights among the immigrant workers of Washington, D.C.

Worker Justice DC Alternative Spring Break participant Emily Oehlsen (class of 2013) was named recipient of Georgetown University’s McTighe Prize and addressed the 2012 Georgetown New Student Convocation about how walking on a picket line with hotel workers changed her life. She was also nominated for a Rhodes Scholarship.

2012 Undergraduate Fellow Bryan Woll went on to join the Jesuit Volunteer Corps and to organize on behalf of the homeless in Brooklyn, New York.

2010 DC Worker Justice Alternative Spring Break Leader Vail Kohnert-Yount was elected Vice President of the Georgetown University Student Association.

Executive Director Joseph A. McCartin won the Richard A. Lester Prize from Princeton University for Outstanding Book in Industrial Relations and Labor Economics published in 2011 for Collision Course: Ronald Reagan, the Air Traffic Controllers, and the Strike that Changed America. During 2011-12, he was sought out for his expertise on labor issues by numerous media outlets, including MSNBC, the Diane Rehm Show of National Public Radio, and The New York Times. He published widely read articles in the Los Angeles Times, the New York Times, The New Republic, CNN.com, and numerous scholarly journals.


Policy Director Katie Corrigan received the 2012 Federal Employees with Disabilities Award for Demonstrating a Commitment to Workers with Disabilities.
Looking Ahead

During 2012-13 the Kalmanovitz Initiative will expand its programs to empower a new generation of leaders committed to a just and democratic workplace and deepen its efforts to incubate the innovations that can help build a productive and fair economy.

The Initiative will, among other things: roll out its oral history website; broaden its engagement with Georgetown’s Harrison Institute for Public Law by incorporating that clinic and its student researchers into the work of the Collective Bargaining Project; further its collaboration with the Labor and Worklife Program of Harvard University Law School as it builds the network associated with the Harvard-Georgetown Working Group on Market Democracy; and unveil and actively promote its plan to achieve a Jesuit Just Employment Policy.

The Initiative will also conclude a staffing reorganization as Program Officer John Tremblay moves on to study law at Boalt Hall, University of California at Berkeley, and Program Coordinator Sarah David Heydemann moves on to an exciting new organizing opportunity in New York City. Jesslyn Cheong will assume the Program Officer duties for 2012-13, applying her considerable communications and programming skills to building the KI’s internet presence. Two former Georgetown students and former Worker Justice DC Alternative Spring Break trip leaders have joined the staff to fill the vacancies created by the departures of Sarah and John and the promotion of Jesslyn: Nick Wertch (above left, class of 2009), an experienced field organizer and a recent Fulbright Student Research Fellow, will take up the work of organizing student programming and community outreach; and Rachel Milito (right, class of 2012), a multilingual graduate who has benefitted from organizing experience in Washington, DC, and Central America, will take up the work of Office Administrator.

With its programming maturing, its relationships with collaborators and allies solidified, its visibility increasing, and its office rejuvenated by the entry of experienced, talented, and enthusiastic young staffers, 2012-2013 promises to be the Kalmanovitz Initiative’s most productive year yet.