

PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT: Larry Duncan, 312-226-3330 • lduncan@igc.org
Labor Beat, 37 S. Ashland Ave., Chicago, IL 60607

DATE: April 13, 2010

LABOR BEAT CABLE-TV SERIES DONATES ITS COLLECTION TO REUTHER LABOR ARCHIVES

Labor Beat, the Chicago-based cable-tv series, proudly announces that its entire existing, as well as ongoing new media, show collection will be housed at the archives of the Walter P. Reuther Library of Labor and Urban Affairs at Wayne State University in Detroit.

With over 500 twice-monthly shows produced from 1986 to the present, Labor Beat's documentation of Chicago-area, Midwest, national and international labor news and issues presents a unique and highly valuable resource for working class studies. This archive is a collection of edited programs using exclusive videography not available anywhere else, and not re-packaged network footage.

The Walter P. Reuther Library of Labor and Urban Affairs is the nation's preeminent repository of labor history and the largest labor archive in North America. It is the ideal home for these labor video chronicles. This priceless trove of scenes, interviews and stories of union and working class struggles in the late 20th and early 21st centuries will now be protected and catalogued for perpetuity by the internationally renowned Reuther labor archive.

The range of the subject matter of Labor Beat videos speaks to the epic scope of labor's struggles over the last quarter century: from strikes, important union conventions, major struggles such as the Illinois War Zone battle, national union election campaigns, historic speeches, to only scratch the surface. This vast collection shows the depth, creativity, and energy of the working class in its fight for its independent interests.

The shows are created by talented rank-and-file and independent media videographers and editors. Dubbed "Chicago's rank-and-file forum", the series has been financially supported by video sales and contributions from unions and rank-and-file members, and not corporate-sponsored grants or liberal funders. Receiver of numerous awards, Labor Beat has been described as "the best known labor TV series on public access in the country" by Alliance for Community Media.

The Labor Beat series, creating two new shows per month, is regularly cablecast in Chicago, Evanston, Rockford, Peoria, Urbana, IL; and in St. Louis, MO and Princeton, NJ. It is also streamed on the Internet. The collection at the Reuther Library will be of the full, broadcast-quality masters and will be digitized and eventually made available for viewing through the Reuther Library website or on site at the Library Archives.

"Labor Beat is a priceless resource for labor educators and anyone who teaches labor history or social movements generally," says Helena Worthen, Clinical Associate Professor of the Labor Education Program at University of Illinois, Urbana/Champaign. "When I set out to do a labor extension class, I'm always carrying a clutch of Labor Beat videos. Their documentaries are short and well-edited, just right for use in a classroom situation to give students a sense of what it was really like. Thanks to the Walter Reuther Archives for making the commitment to ensure that this precious material will be cared for."

"The Reuther Library is extremely pleased to be named the official archives for Labor Beat," says Mike Smith, Director of the Walter Reuther Library. "We are committed to preserving the history of the American Labor movement, from all perspectives. Labor Beat not only documents important labor actions in the Midwest, it records historical moments that are often ignored by the mainstream media. This is important work and the Reuther is proud to be the home of the Labor Beat archives and to preserve this work for future researchers."

Labor Beat: www.laborbeat.org

Walter P. Reuther Library of Labor and Urban Affairs: www.reuther.wayne.edu



#

