

Grassroots Use of the Internet  
Organizers' Collaborative Second Annual Conference  
Sterling Law Building, Yale University  
March 10, 2001

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Conference Hosts:

Organizers' Collaborative, Yale Law Students for Social Justice

Conference Co-Sponsors:

**Amistad Institute**

1430 Sterling Place  
Brooklyn, NY 11213

**Center for Nonprofit  
Technology**

151 First Ave. Suite 102  
New York, NY 10003  
www.cnpt.org

**Computer Professionals  
for Social Responsibility**

P.O. Box 717  
Palo Alto, CA 94302  
www.cpsr.org

**HumanRightsTech.org**

PO Box 31905  
Philadelphia, PA 19104  
www.humanrightstech.org

**LINC Project of the  
Welfare Rights Center**

275 7th Ave. Suite 1205  
New York, NY 10001  
www.lincproject.org

**moveon.org**

1141 Walnut St.  
Berkeley, CA 94707

**National Priorities Project**

17 New South St.  
Northampton, MA 01060  
www.natprior.org

**NetAction**

601 Van Ness Ave., No. 631  
San Francisco, CA 94102  
www.netaction.org

**Palestine Right of Return  
Coalition of Yale**

333 Cedar St.  
New Haven, CT 06520  
al-awda.org

**Peace Development Fund**

PO Box 1280/44 N. Prospect  
Amherst, MA 01004  
www.peacedevelopmentfund.org

**probono.net**

151 W. 30th St. 10th Floor  
New York, NY 10001

**Reason and Democracy**

800 Pacific Ave. #403  
Long Beach, CA 90813  
home1.gte.net/rad/

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Roxbury, MA 02119  
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**TechRocks**

2100 L St. Suite 210  
Washington, DC 20006  
www.techrocks.org

**Votermarch.org**

P.O. Box 731  
Grand Central Station  
New York, NY 10163-0731

**DemocracyMarch.org**

## Morning Agenda

- 9:15      **Plenary**
- Mobilizing the Grassroots: Using Email in Voter Rights Organizing  
Lou Posner, Voter March
  - Online Communication and Information Sharing in the Women's Movement  
Elizabeth Randolph, Women's Enews
  - Low Tech vs. High Tech: Where Do You Draw the Line?  
Audrie Krause, NetAction
  - Developing the Use of the Internet in Union Organizing  
Gaye Williams, Service Employees International Union
- 10:40      **Icebreaker**  
*Facilitator: Abigail Caplovitz, New York University Law School*
- 10:55      **Break**
- 11:00      **Workshops**
- Strategy**   ▫ Strategic Technology Planning for Social Change Organizations  
    Katrin Verclas, Techstrategy
- Collaboration**   ▫ Developing More Effective Progressive Portals  
    Josh Hilgart, People For the American Way
- Web**       ▫ Tips and Proven Methods for Developing and Maintaining your  
    Organization's Website  
    Sheeri Kritzer, Bisexual Resource Center
- Mobilization**   ▫ The Role of the Internet in Organizing the Largest Poor People's March  
    since Martin Luther King  
    Chris Caruso, HumanRightsTech
- Listservs**   ▫ Publishing and Promoting Listservs and E-Newsletters  
    Elizabeth Randolph, Women's Enews
- 12:30      **Lunch**

## Afternoon Agenda

- 1:30      **Plenary**
- Experiences Using Technology in Organizing  
Matt Eisenberg et al., Progressive Technology Project
  - From Open Source to Openlaw: Collaborative Development of Legal Arguments Online  
Wendy Seltzer, Openlaw Project, Berkmann Center for Internet & Society
- 3:00      **Break**
- 3:15      **Workshops**
- Strategy**    ▫ Appropriate Use of Technology for Empowerment and Engagement in Low-Income Communities  
    Dirk Slater, Welfare Law Center  
    Matt Eisenberg, Progressive Technology Project
- Collaboration**    ▫ Facilitating Collaboration through Shared Databases  
    Jonah Wittkamper, youthlink.org
- Web**            ▫ Using MyPHP PageTool for Nonprofit Staff To Modify Web Pages without HTML  
    Jamie McClelland, Media Jumpstart
- Nonprofit Web Tools Based on OpenACS  
    Talli Somekh, Musea Technologies
- Mobilization**    ▫ Lessons Learned at TechRocks: Online Messaging, Offline/Online Integration, Planning Re-Engagement, Building Relationships  
    Seth Merritt, TechRocks, Emediacy Program
- Actionnetwork.org: Online Activism Tools to Mobilize Grassroots Activists  
    Warren Moon and Benjamin Smith, Environmental Defense Fund
- Listservs**        ▫ Coordinating a Spontaneous National Protest Movement over the Internet  
    Zack Exley, Countercoup.org
- Building a Permanent National Organization over the Internet  
    Bob Fertik, Democrats.com
- Community**     ▫ A Community Technology Center: What Is It, and How Can It Serve Local Needs?  
    Darryl Heller, Amistad Institute
- 4:45      **Break**
- 5:00      **Closing Plenary**  
    Wrap-Up and Evaluation  
    Organizers' Collaborative Business (open)
- 5:45      **Conference Ends**

## Speaker and Workshop Presenter Biographies

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### **ABIGAIL CAPLOVITZ**

[apc211@nyu.edu](mailto:apc211@nyu.edu)

Abigail Caplovitz is a third-year law student at New York University. A former environmental consultant, Abigail has a background in geology, urban planning and law. While in college, she served on the State Board of Directors for ConnPIRG and directed its Long Island Sound Campaign. As the Urban Planning Graduate Assistant at NYU, Abigail helped obtain a \$5 million National Science Foundation grant to create the Institute for Civil Infrastructure Systems. She stayed with the institute through its first year, helping to set up the institution. In law school, her focus has been on housing law, criminal law, and particularly, policing. Recently, she co-authored two papers on policing with Professor Jerome H. Skolnick that have been accepted for publication.

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### **CHRIS CARUSO**

Human Rights Tech  
4832 Frankford Ave  
Philadelphia, PA 19124  
Phone: (215) 288-2242 Fax: (215) 288-2408  
[www.humanrightstech.org](http://www.humanrightstech.org)  
[chris@humanrightstech.org](mailto:chris@humanrightstech.org)

Chris Caruso is the founder and director of Human Rights Tech, a non-profit organization based in Philadelphia. Human Rights Tech leverages information technology to assist and encourage grassroots anti-poverty initiatives. Chris brings his ten years of experience as a community organizer and five years of experience working as an information technology professional together to help grassroots organizations learn to use the Internet as an organizing tool.

### **Volunteer Opportunities**

Volunteer technology trainers, graphic designers.

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### **RICH COWAN**

Organizers' Collaborative  
PO Box 400897  
Cambridge, MA 02140  
(617) 596-4957  
[rich@organizenow.net](mailto:rich@organizenow.net)  
[www.organizenow.net](http://www.organizenow.net)

Rich Cowan has a degree in computer science from M.I.T (1987) and eight years of experience working in political campaigns and social change organizations. He also worked for four years in the information technology division at Lesley College. Rich got the idea to create the Organizers' Collaborative while serving as founder of the Center for Campus Organizing, from 1991 to 1997. At CCO, Rich pioneered the use of the Internet in student organizing, creating a student email network reaching 600 campuses and organizing the "National Day of Campus Action Against the Contract With America," an event receiving widespread media coverage as a result

of participation on 110 campuses. From 1998-2000, Rich has served as a software consultant, working for several corporate and nonprofit clients in the Boston area.

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### **MATTHEW EISENBERG**

Progressive Technology Project  
1436 U Street NW, #201  
Washington, DC 20036  
Phone: (202) 387-9660  
[www.progressivetech.org](http://www.progressivetech.org)  
[info@progressivetech.org](mailto:info@progressivetech.org)

As a Program Associate for the Progressive Technology Project, Matt works directly with grassroots organizing groups, helping them plan for and use technology to serve their social change efforts. Before working at PTP, Matt was a Network Administrator at the University of Maryland, where he trained organizers in databases and the Internet, and was the lead programmer on a search engine designed for community organizers. Matt has a broad range of technology expertise, from network administration to programming to hardware and software setup and maintenance. He has a B.A. in International Relations with a concentration in conflict resolution from the University of Maryland.

### **Volunteer Opportunities**

We offer internships to students in the Washington, DC area. Please email [tharrell@progressivetech.org](mailto:tharrell@progressivetech.org) for Internship information or visit our web site.

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### **ZACK EXLEY**

GWBush.com, CounterCoup.org, TrustThePeople blob  
PO Box 1245 Murray Hill Station  
New York, NY 10156  
(917) 482-3487  
[real@gwbush.com](mailto:real@gwbush.com)

Zack Exley is the creator of GWBush.com, the site that caused George W. Bush say, "There ought to be limits to freedom." During the election crisis Exley created CounterCoup.org and an eGroup called TrustThePeople which were the organizing hub for protests in over 100 cities. Exley spent most of the 1990s working as a union organizer. He developed a shareware Visual Basic database application for union campaigns which is still in use. He is now being sued by AOL-Time-Warner for publishing a parody of CNNfn.com called CNNdn.com.

### **Volunteer Opportunities**

Need interns with a passion for making trouble. For more information contact: [real@gwbush.com](mailto:real@gwbush.com)

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### **BOB FERTIK**

Democrats.com  
PO Box 20594  
New York, NY 10021

[bob@democrats.com](mailto:bob@democrats.com)

Bob Fertik is co-founder of Democrats.com, the first independent news and community Web site for America's 100 million Democrats. Bob is a consultant to Democratic candidates and progressive causes, and co-founder of several feminist organizations, including Women Leaders Online.

#### **Volunteer Opportunities**

Always! In all areas.

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#### **DARRYL HELLER**

Amistad Institute, Inc  
330 Hinsdale Street  
Brooklyn, NY 11207  
(718) 771-8721  
[dmheller1@aol.com](mailto:dmheller1@aol.com)

Darryl Heller has spent the past 18 years as a political activist, human service provider, and community organizer, with the past six years focused on developing technology training models for inner-city community residents. Darryl the founder and President of the Amistad Institute, Inc., a NPO whose focus is creating replicable community development programs. He is currently working for a community development NPO in the South Bronx, continuing to develop Amistad, and attending Columbia University.

#### **Volunteer Opportunities**

Computer trainers.

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#### **JOSH HILGART**

People For the American Way  
2000 M Street, NW Ste 400  
Washington, DC 20036  
202-467-2374  
[jhilgart@pfaw.org](mailto:jhilgart@pfaw.org)

Josh Hilgart is the Online Communications Manager at People For the American Way. Previously, he conducted media research for Harvey Gantt for U.S. Senate and People For the American Way Foundation. Mr. Hilgart has a background in economics and political science.

#### **Volunteer Opportunities**

[cblock@pfaw.org](mailto:cblock@pfaw.org)

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#### **AUDRIE KRAUSE**

NetAction  
601 Van Ness Ave., #631  
San Francisco, CA 94102  
(415) 775-8674  
[audrie@netaction.org](mailto:audrie@netaction.org)

Audrie Krause is the founder and executive director of NetAction, a nonprofit organization dedicated to promoting use of the Internet for grassroots citizen action, and educating the public and policy makers about technology policy. She is a former journalist and longtime consumer advocate, and also serves as president of the Board of Directors of the California

Abortion and Reproductive Rights Action League (CARAL), and as a board member of the Institute for Global Communication (IGC).

#### **Volunteer Opportunities**

Volunteers should be familiar with technology applications; have prior volunteer or nonprofit organizing and/or advocacy experience; excellent comprehension and written communication skills; ability to work with limited supervision and meet deadlines; experience with FTP, knowledge of HTML 4.0 and ability to update pages by hand will be very helpful. Contact information same as above.

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#### **SHEERI KRITZER**

Bisexual Resource Center  
PO Box 1026  
Boston, MA 02117-1026  
(617) 424-9595  
[www.biresource.org](http://www.biresource.org)  
[biweb@biresource.org](mailto:biweb@biresource.org)

Sheeri Kritzer has been an active volunteer of the Bisexual Resource Center since 1999. She will be receiving her Master's Degree in Computer Science from Brandeis University in May 2001.

#### **Volunteer Opportunities**

Basic HTML skills to help update our website, [www.biresource.org](http://www.biresource.org). Basic office skills. A volunteer coordinator is also needed. For more information call (617) 775-7949 or write [biweb@biresource.org](mailto:biweb@biresource.org).

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#### **JAMIE MCCLELLAND**

Media Jumpstart  
39 Broadway, 10th Floor  
New York, NY 10006  
Phone: (212) 894-3386 Fax: (212) 616-4994  
[www.mediajumpstart.org](http://www.mediajumpstart.org)  
[jamie@mediajumpstart.org](mailto:jamie@mediajumpstart.org)

Jamie McClelland is co-founder of Media Jumpstart, a nonprofit worker-run collective committed to working closely with New York City's nonprofit community to strengthen the impact of their work through effective use of technology. Jamie is also a board member and producer with Paper Tiger Television, a nonprofit activist video collective.

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#### **SETH MERRITT**

TechRocks.org  
2100 L Street NW, Suite 210  
Washington, DC 20037  
(202) 785-1203  
[smerritt@techrocks.org](mailto:smerritt@techrocks.org)

Seth Merritt is Online Community Manager at TechRocks ([www.techrocks.org](http://www.techrocks.org)). He works to re-engage netizens who take action through our online action campaigns, and to develop community in the context of internet advocacy. Seth comes to TechRocks after three years at People For the American Way ([www.pfaw.org](http://www.pfaw.org)), where he developed and implemented web strategies, managed web

content, trained other staff to create web content, and provided technical support.

#### **Volunteer Opportunities**

We are always interested in having more groups and developers become a part of the ebase community. Ebase is a FREE relationship-management program designed from the ground up to meet the needs of small, resource-strapped non-profits and social change advocacy groups. Check it out at [www.ebase.org](http://www.ebase.org).

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#### **WARREN MOON**

Environmental Defense  
257 Park Avenue South, 17th floor  
(212) 505-2100  
[wmoon@environmentaldefense.org](mailto:wmoon@environmentaldefense.org)

Warren Moon has been working on Actionnetwork.org for the past 2 years. In that time Actionnetwork.org has grown from 2,000 activists and a few partners to over 650,000 activists and over 70 partner groups. Warren has also been working on Student Action Network (SAN), a coalition which allows student- or youth-run organizations to use Actionnetwork.org for their advocacy goals.

#### **Volunteer Opportunities**

We always need people to help us with recruiting for Actionnetwork.org. Handing out information and flyers at events or their schools.

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#### **NATHAN NEWMAN**

National Lawyers Guild  
(203) 777 9704  
(203) 777 9705  
[nathan@newman.org](mailto:nathan@newman.org)

Nathan Newman is a longtime labor and community activist. He has a Ph.D. in Sociology and is studying for a law degree from Yale University. He is the author of numerous articles on the economy and on technology, with a book on the role of government policy in shaping the Internet and regional economies to be published by Penn State Press. In the mid-1990s, he co-directed UC-Berkeley's Center on Community Economic Research which assisted community organizations with needed research and Internet training. He was also Project Director of Netaction from 1997-1999, where he wrote research reports and lobbied against Microsoft's monopolistic practices in the software industry. He is currently National Vice President of the National Lawyers Guild, representing law campuses across the country.

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#### **LOUIS POSNER, Esq.**

Voter March  
P. O. Box 731, Grand Central Station  
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[www.VoterMarch.org](http://www.VoterMarch.org)  
[Chairman@votermarch.org](mailto:Chairman@votermarch.org)

Louis Posner is founder and National Chairman of Voter March ([www.Votermarch.org](http://www.Votermarch.org)), a national internet-based grass-roots voter rights group, & owner of the Voter egroup [www.egroups.com/group/voter](http://www.egroups.com/group/voter)

and 50 state Voter egroups. He is also an attorney and CPA in New York City ([www.LawFind.com](http://www.LawFind.com)) and was the producer and host of the cable TV program "Your Legal Rights." Posner is listed in "Who's Who in American Lawyers," "Who's Who in America," and "Who's Who in the World."

#### **Volunteer Opportunities**

Website, Speakers, Entertainment, Media Committees.

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#### **ELIZABETH RANDOLPH**

Women's Enews  
395 Hudson Street, 5th floor  
New York, NY 10014  
(212) 413-7566  
[erandolph@nowldef.org](mailto:erandolph@nowldef.org)

Elizabeth Randolph is content manager of Women's Enews, a project of NOW Legal Defense and Education Fund. Fresh out of journalism school, Elizabeth joined Women's Enews in January 2001. She received her M.A. in journalism from New York University in December 2000. Prior to that, she was a freelance writer covering the Internet industry. She was also an analyst at Jupiter Communications, an Internet research firm based in New York, and editor of Digital Kids, a monthly newsletter. Elizabeth has written for Women's Enews, The Forward and AlleyCat News, among other publications. She received her B.A. in English literature in 1994 from Williams College.

#### **Volunteer Opportunities**

We need good writers. Send email with resume and writing samples to my email listed above.

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#### **WENDY SELTZER**

Berkman Ctr for Internet & Society at Harvard Law School  
Pound Hall 511  
1563 Mass. Ave.  
Cambridge, MA 02138  
(212) 715-7815  
[wendy@seltzer.com](mailto:wendy@seltzer.com)

Wendy Seltzer is a Fellow with Harvard's Berkman Center for Internet & Society, where she leads the Openlaw project, an experiment in developing public interest legal argument in an open forum on the Internet. Building on the model of open source software development, Openlaw brings lawyers and non-lawyers together as advocates for the public domain. Wendy is also a litigation and intellectual property associate with Kramer Levin Naftalis & Frankel LLP in New York.

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#### **DIRK SLATER**

Low Income Networking & Communications Project  
Welfare Law Center  
275 Seventh Ave., Suite 1205  
New York, NY  
(212) 633-6967  
[dirk@welfarelaw.org](mailto:dirk@welfarelaw.org)

Dirk Slater has been Circuit Rider for the Welfare Law Center's Low Income Networking and Communications (LINC) Project since May, 1998. As Circuit Rider, Dirk helps low-income organizing groups increase their capacity to conduct advocacy, public education, and membership and leadership development by utilizing technology. A major part of his work involves developing technology strategies with groups that are driven by the goals of their missions and campaigns. Dirk has written numerous articles about technology use in grassroots groups and his work with LINC has been featured in prominent articles appearing in the Dallas Morning News, and the Chronicle of Philanthropy. In April, 2000 he became the first recipient of the "Outstanding Achievement in Circuit Riding" award given by the Circuit Riders' Network, an affiliation of progressive non-profit technology assistance providers.

#### **Volunteer Opportunities**

We need help with developing websites for groups, training folks on how to maintain sites and doing outreach to groups about current campaigns, etc. Contact information same as above.

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#### **BEN SMITH**

Environmental Defense  
257 Park Avenue South, 17th floor  
212-505-2100  
[bensmith@environmentaldefense.org](mailto:bensmith@environmentaldefense.org)

Ben Smith is the Action Network project manager. Action Network ([actionnetwork.org](http://actionnetwork.org)) is an online activism community. Over 40 environmental and population groups use Action Network to send email and web-based action alerts to over 650,000 online activists around the country.

#### **Volunteer Opportunities**

We always need people to help us recruit new people for [Actionnetwork.org](http://Actionnetwork.org). Handing out information and flyers at events or their schools. Contact information same as above.

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#### **TALLI SOMEKH**

Musea Technologies  
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[talli@museatech.net](mailto:talli@museatech.net)

Talli Somekh first experienced the intersection of the Internet and activism in the early 1990s through activism against the war in Bosnia. Since then, he has studied the use of the Internet as a collaborative tool for social justice advocates from the Silicon Valley to the Far East. A graduate of Tufts University's College of Engineering, Talli recently founded Musea Technologies after recognizing a need for affordable, flexible and Open Source database solutions for non-profit organizations.

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#### **KATRIN VERCLAS**

TechStrategy  
34 Jenks Street  
Amherst, MA 01002  
(413) 256-1845 [kverclas@usa.com](mailto:kverclas@usa.com)

Katrin Verclas, an experienced strategist and techie, has worked for the last ten years as a tech manager and foundation program officer and is now running her own technology consulting organization with a focus on strategic technology planning for social change organizations.

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#### **GAYE WILLIAMS**

SEIU, the Service Employees International Union  
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Gaye Williams is the Assistant to the President for Communications and Technology for the Service Employees International Union (SEIU). With 1.4 million members, it is North America's largest and fastest growing union, and the largest health care workers union. SEIU also represent thousands of building service and public service workers in the U.S., Canada, and Puerto Rico. SEIU is engaged in a far-reaching, innovative program to help working families fully participate in our rapidly changing information age, by helping union members and their families gain access to computers and Internet service at home, receive training that will help workers get better jobs, and use new technology to strengthen working families' voice at work and in our communities.

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### **THANK YOU'S**

To Grace Belmont and Ben Gustafson for compiling this agenda, and for arranging rides.

to Laurie Geronimo and Brit Eckhart for arranging the food!

to Equal Exchange for coffee and to Café Adulis: 228 College St., for subsidizing our Ethiopian Lunch

To Ann Cherin for helping with conference planning and sign preparation.

To Brit Eckhart for conference outreach.

To Kevin Keenan for drumming up support for additional conference sponsors.

To Mazin Qumsiyeh, Steven Kobasa, and Ernie Miller for helping with housing.

To Resist ([www.resistinc.org](http://www.resistinc.org)) and 145 donors for helping to fund the Organizers' Collaborative.

And to Nathan Newman for lots of hard work on the ground in the midst of studying for his Bar Exams!