



New IARA Executive Director Jeanne Cameron

Report from President Barbara Franklin

On March 31, the founding convention of IARA's 501(c)(4) organization was held at the Workers United hall in Chicago. Nearly 80 members participated in the event and heard from keynote speaker Robert G. Reiter, the Secretary-Treasurer of the Chicago Federation of Labor. The Officer and Board of Director elections were also held. I was honored to be re-elected as President. The other officers that were re-elected include Homer K. Spaulding, as Executive Vice President; Katie Jordan, as Treasurer; and Jane Russell, Secretary.

After over five years of serving as IARA's Executive Director, Emily Stuart, will leave her position at the end of August to attend graduate school. I am excited to announce that IARA's Board of Directors has hired Jeanne Cameron as our incoming director. Jeanne, a Chicago native, is a seasoned labor organizer with ten years of organizing experience with UNITE-HERE in Seattle. Jeanne began training with Emily in July.

I'm thrilled to announce we will be honoring Congresswoman Tammy Duckworth at our annual Senior Power Lunch on Tuesday, September 15 at the Elks Lodge at 495 Lee Street in Des Plaines. Buy your tickets today by calling our office at (312) 427-2114.

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Illinois Alliance Members Lobby Congress in Washington, DC

The Alliance for Retired Americans held its 2015

Legislative Conference in Washington DC July 6th through the 10th.

Members of the Alliance traveled from as far as Hawaii and Puerto Rico, with 35 chapter organizations in attendance. The Illinois delegation had an energetic group of 17 IARA members from all regions of the state.

The conference had a jam-packed agenda, including several action sessions. The topics included "Politics and Advocacy in Action" and "Trans Pacific Partnership: Latest Update and What We Do Next."

Many high profile speakers spoke at the event, including the President of the AFL-CIO Richard Trumka, Senator Bernie Sanders and House Minority Leader Congresswoman Nancy Pelosi. Senator Elizabeth Warren also gave a rousing speech on the need to continue to strengthen the safety net for retirees in the United States.

On Thursday July 9, the Alliance lobbied Capitol Hill. The Illinois delegation met with the offices of Senator Durbin and Kirk and 8 offices of the House of Representatives. Congressman Danny K. Davis

(7th District) and Congresswoman Robin Kelly (2nd District) met with members of their district in person on the need to protect and strengthen Social Security, Medicare and Medicaid. IARA members also spoke with their elected officials on their concerns about the Trans Pacific Partnership and how the trade pact could impact seniors.



IARA's delegation with Congresswoman Robin Kelly during a lobby visit on Capitol Hill.



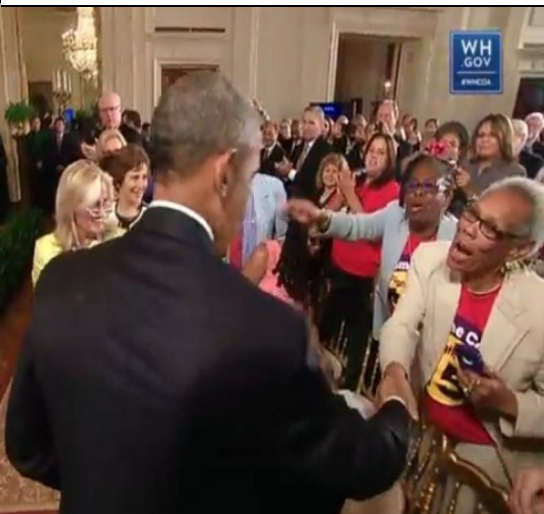
IARA's delegation with Congressman Danny K. Davis during a lobby visit on Capitol Hill.

IARA Treasurer, Katie Jordan, Speaks at White House Conference on Aging

The White House Conference on Aging (WHCOA) occurs every ten years to develop solutions to challenges that older Americans face. IARA's Treasurer Katie Jordan was a delegate at the most recent WHCOA, which took place at the White House on July 13, 2015.

Katie Jordan spoke at the event, calling on Congress and the White House to support more resources for home care services for seniors. She said, "everyone should have access to the services they need so they can live in their own homes with dignity and independence. And the home care workers that provide these services should not be paid poverty wages and denied decent benefits to do this important work."

President Obama delivered remarks and noted that this country's greatest triumphs are Medicare, Medicaid and Social Security. "Together we declared that every citizen of this country deserves a basic measure of security and dignity," said President Obama. "That choice saved millions upon millions of our people from poverty, allowed them to live longer and better lives."



IARA Treasurer Katie Jordan shakes President Obama's hand at the White House Conference on Aging.

Seniors Fight for a Responsible State Budget

IARA members have mobilized across the state to call on Governor Rauner and the Illinois General Assembly to enact a fully funded, yearlong budget that preserves critical services for seniors, children and families.



IARA members and home caregivers with SEIU protest in front of state lawmakers' offices in Champaign.

In May, when the Illinois General Assembly began to consider the budget, IARA partnered with SEIU Healthcare Illinois/Indiana, to hold two senior lobby days at the capitol in Springfield. On May 14 and May 21, nearly 50 seniors met with their state legislators to ask them to fully fund programs for seniors, including the Community Care Program (CCP). Governor Rauner has proposed massive cuts to CCP, which serves nearly 76,000 seniors in Illinois, allowing them to remain independent and in their homes.

On June 10, IARA members took the fight for a responsible budget to Governor Rauner's office doorstep at the Thompson Center in Chicago. Over 30 seniors delivered "senior survival kits" to his office to demonstrate the critical need to preserve programs. IARA board member Beatrice Lumpkin said "The cuts to home care services and heating and cooling assistance will cause seniors to have to choose between rent, groceries and their health care."

On July 14, as the summer began to heat up, IARA partnered with the Champaign County Health Care Consumers to urge state legislators to reinstate funding to the Low-Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP). This spring, the Governor chose to discontinue funding to LIHEAP during the ongoing budget standoff in Springfield. Nearly 25 seniors held a protest in front of state Senator Chapin Rose and Representative Adam Brown's office to call on them to bring back funding. Barbara Franklin IARA President, said "seniors with low-incomes need the extra help to pay their cooling bill during this summer. Governor Rauner and the Illinois General Assembly need to fund this essential program now."

IARA members rallied in front of Governor Rauner's office at the James R. Thompson Center in Chicago to call on him to stop the cuts to home care services for seniors.

