



Chicago Teachers Union Officers



Karen GJ Lewis was elected president of the 30,000-member Chicago Teachers Union on June 11, 2010. A member of CTU since 1988, Mrs. Lewis taught high school chemistry in the Chicago Public Schools for 22 years. She believes that students, parents, teachers and community members are educators' natural allies. Her goal is to truly improve Chicago Public Schools and stand firmly against the privatization of public education. The only National Board Certified Teacher to lead a U.S. labor union, she also serves as executive vice president to the Illinois Federation of Teachers and as vice president of the American Federation of Teachers. Karen is a product of Chicago Public Schools, having attended Kozminski Elementary School and Kenwood High School, until accepting early admission at Mount Holyoke College. She later transferred to Dartmouth College, where she earned the distinction of being the only African American woman in the class of 1974. Mrs. Lewis comes from a family of educators -- her father, mother and husband, John Lewis, who is now retired, all were CPS teachers.



Jesse Sharkey, a history teacher at Senn High School, also served as the Union Delegate. During 2004 campaign he was involved in mobilizing hundreds of parents, launched a website, put a ballot initiative up in the 48th ward, and built relationships with dozens of community organizations and religious groups to oppose the establishment of a military academy at Senn. That experience taught him that we can defend our public schools against privatization. He studied history and education at Brown University (Bachelor of Arts, 1992 and Masters of Arts in Teaching, 1997) where he studied and worked with many of the leaders of the Coalition of Essential Schools. Prior to becoming the Vice-President of the CTU in June 2010, he taught Social Studies for 10 years in the Chicago Public Schools at Senn



Michael E. Brunson is first and foremost, an educator. He spent most of his time teaching in primary grades in Chicago Public Schools (CPS). He was a strong advocate of the Local School Councils in the Chicago public schools and served as Recording Secretary of South Side United, an organization whose main goal was to network local school councils on Chicago's South Side. He became a member of the Caucus of Rank and File Educators (CORE) in 2009 after working with its members in the Grassroots Education Movement (GEM) coalition. He later was elected Recording Secretary of the Chicago Teachers Union on the progressive CORE slate in the historic 2010 Chicago Teachers Union elections.



Kristine Mayle, a middle school special education teacher, became active in the Chicago Teachers Union when her school, De La Cruz Academy was targeted for closure in 2008. She served as delegate during the school's final year and worked with teachers, parents and community members from neighboring schools to organize against the closure. After the closure of De La Cruz, Kristine taught at Eberhart Elementary School before becoming Financial Secretary of the CTU, where she is also the liaison to several committees, including Rules and Elections, Special Education, Women's Rights, and PSRPs. Kristine studied English and Comparative Literature (Bachelor of Arts, DePaul University, 2000). After feeling unfulfilled working in the private sector, she realized that her true calling was in education and returned to DePaul for their Elementary/Special Education Dual Certification Program (Master of Arts in Teaching, DePaul University, 2006).