



**Speakers**  
**May 20, 2009 Public Launch**  
**First Amendment Lounge, National Press Club**  
**9:30 – 10:30 am**

**Paul E. Almeida**  
**President**  
**Department for Professional Employees, AFL-CIO**

Paul E. Almeida is president of the Department for Professional Employees, AFL-CIO (DPE), a coalition of 24 national unions representing some 4 million highly skilled professional and technical workers.

Prior to joining DPE in 2001, Almeida served as president of the International Federation of Professional and Technical Engineers (IFPTE), a position he held since 1994. During his tenure as IFPTE president, the union was one of the AFL-CIO's fastest growing organizations.

Almeida received his degree in engineering from Franklin Institute of Boston and was employed by Stone and Webster Engineering Corp. in Boston from 1971 to 1994.

Almeida serves on several AFL-CIO policy committees, including vice chair of the immigration committee; and member of the education and training, legislative/public policy, international affairs, organizing, strategic approaches, and women workers committees.

**Ann Converso, RN**  
**President**  
**United American Nurses, AFL-CIO**

United American Nurses (UAN) President Ann Converso, RN, worked for 30-plus years as an acute medical/surgical and I.V. therapy nurse at the VA Western New York Healthcare System at Buffalo.

Converso was elected vice president of the UAN in 1999 and became president in October 2007, culminating years of hard work to build a national union for staff nurses.

As UAN president, Converso advocates for the interests and agenda of the organization's 55,000 staff nurse members who provide bedside care every day. She is the only RN to serve as a vice president on the AFL-CIO Executive Council, and continues to be a strong voice for nurses in the federal sector.

**Mark S. Frankel**  
**Director, Scientific Freedom, Responsibility and Law Program**  
**American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS)**

Dr. Mark Frankel is the director of the Scientific Freedom, Responsibility and Law Program at the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS).

Frankel is a AAAS Fellow who has supervised the production of such resources as *Neuroscience and the Law: Brain, Mind, and the Scales of Justice* (2004); *Human Inheritable Genetic Modifications: Assessing Scientific, Ethical, Religious, and Policy Issues* (2000); and *Stem Cell Research Applications: Monitoring the Frontiers of Biomedical Research* (1999).

Frankel's research includes studying the impact of information technology on human subjects; developing a research agenda for the U.S. voting system; efforts to promote research integrity; and the legal implications of advances in genetics and neuroscience. He is also editor of the AAAS quarterly newsletter *Professional Ethics Report*.

Frankel serves as staff officer to two AAAS committees, the Committee on Scientific Freedom and Responsibility and the AAAS-American Bar Association National Conference of Lawyers and Scientists.

**Mary W. Ghikas**  
**Senior Associate Executive Director**  
**American Library Association**

Mary W. Ghikas is senior associate executive director of the American Library Association (ALA), a nonprofit organization headquartered in Chicago. The ALA strives to provide leadership for the development, promotion and improvement of library and information services and the profession of librarianship.

Ghikas works with 11 ALA specialty divisions, five program offices (accreditation, diversity, intellectual freedom, literacy and outreach, and human resource development and recruitment), conference services and information technology. She previously held management positions in a number of organizations – public, private and nonprofit.

Ghikas is a member of the ALA, the Illinois Library Association, the World Future Society, the Association Forum of Chicagoland and the American Society of Association Executives, where she serves on its Executive Management Section Council. She graduated from UCLA with a bachelor of arts in history and a master of library science.

**Glenn S. Ruskin**  
**Director, Office of Public Affairs**  
**American Chemical Society**

Glenn S. Ruskin joined the American Chemical Society (ACS) in May 2005 and serves as director of the Office of Public Affairs, which houses the society's government affairs and communications programs.

Ruskin leads the ACS efforts to promote sound public policies that advance science and the chemical enterprise with policymakers, as well as communication efforts designed to increase public awareness and appreciation of chemistry's critical role in addressing society's most pressing issues.

Ruskin has more than 27 years of senior management experience in the public and private sectors, including government affairs, public relations, corporate communications, media relations, litigation communications and environmental affairs.

His private sector experience has largely focused on the challenges and complexities facing the chemical manufacturing industry. His public service includes working on Capitol Hill for a New Jersey congressman and for a small New Jersey city, where he was responsible for urban, economic, transportation and residential development.

**Randi Weingarten**  
**President**  
**American Federation of Teachers, AFL-CIO**

Randi Weingarten is president of the more than 1.4-million-member American Federation of Teachers (AFT). She also serves as president of New York City's United Federation of Teachers, AFT Local 2.

Soon after her election as AFT president, Weingarten launched major efforts to place education reform and innovation high on the nation's agenda. In September 2008, she led the development of the AFT Innovation Fund, a groundbreaking initiative to support sustainable, innovative and collaborative reform projects developed by members and their local unions to strengthen our public schools.

Weingarten is known as a reform-minded leader who has demonstrated her commitment to improving schools, hospitals and public institutions for children, families and their communities. She has fought to make sure teachers and school-support personnel are treated with respect and dignity, have a voice in the education of their students, and are given the support and resources they need to succeed in the classroom.