



Student Honored for Analysis of Retiree Activism

Alliance Educational Fund Awards Seidman Prize

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Washington, D.C. — The Alliance for Retired Americans Educational Fund today awarded its fourth annual Bert and Annabel Seidman Prize for Advancing Social Policy to National Labor College (NLC) student Ken Erdmann, a member of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers from Toledo, Ohio. Mr. Erdmann was awarded the prize for his senior project, *Retirement! Now the Work Begins*.

The prize, and its accompanying \$3,000 honorarium, encourages NLC students to research and analyze social policies that affect the older population. The winning entry focused on how to educate seniors on activism and involvement in their community, specifically discussing the work of the Alliance for Retired Americans in educating and mobilizing retirees.

Mr. Erdmann analyzed methods of both AARP and the Alliance, along with unions and church groups, to understand how they keep their seniors active. Particularly, he notes the importance of the baby boomer generation and how these new retirees can be utilized to further the labor movement. The paper reiterates the importance of educating seniors on issues that directly affect them. Issues that concern seniors, such as Medicare and Social Security, have been the primary motivators for retirees, many of whom have seen their economic security threatened over the past few decades.

The Alliance Educational Fund designed the prize to honor Bert and Annabel Seidman, whose lifelong passion for social justice and worker rights inspired their careers. Bert was the director of the AFL-CIO's Social Security Department for 33 years. After retiring, he was an expert consultant to the Alliance and the National Council of Senior Citizens, specializing in Social Security, pensions, housing, and health care. Annabel, a teacher and social worker, founded the National Nursing Home Information Service and was its director for 25 years. She was a strong advocate for senior citizens and people with mental disabilities.

“Ken’s paper embodied so many of the principles that drove our parents,” said Joan Seidman Welsh and Betsy Seidman Garaufis. “Volunteering was a way of life for them long before retirement, and their activism never let up, even into their eighties,” they said.

Alliance president Barbara J. Easterling said of Mr. Erdmann’s paper, "Bert and Annabel Seidman were deeply committed to helping workers and retirees with the important issues affecting their lives. This paper would resonate with them because Mr. Erdmann focused on union retirees continuing their activism in retirement and working to insure quality of life for all retirees through organizations like the Alliance for Retired Americans."

The Alliance for Retired Americans Educational Fund focuses on growing senior grassroots involvement in public policy issues; educating on public policy issues that affect retirees; researching and developing written materials that address public policy affecting retirees; and working with other not-for-profit organizations on issues that affect retirees.

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