

Eras of Dan's Organizing Work: A Chart

The following chart reflects a chronology of major campaigns and organizing initiatives in Dan Leahy's life, spanning over 60 years of dedicated work. This chart is a chronological list of Dan's fights with established (and illegitimate) power, his fights to build people's power through strategy and collective action. This chart represents a set of visions of what is possible, what is necessary, what people wanted, and what Dan learned from it all. It is also a list of trials. Trials that were won and lost, victories that were shared and applauded, and defeats that could almost make one lose faith. Dan describes organizing as immediate and tangible, but also as part of a bigger picture of power relations. This chart is a way to see more clearly the eras of Dan's organizing life and some of the lessons he learned and carried forward.

YEARS	ERA	LOCATION	WHAT HAPPENED
1955-60	Seminary	Lake Washington, WA	Learned that he did not, in fact, want to become a priest. But also, if you know the rules, you can successfully break them.
1961-65	Seattle University	Seattle, WA	Graduated as an Economics & Philosophy major. Loved the discipline of the ROTC and learned about coordinating events from organizing Homecoming.
1965-67	Turkey LETTERS <i>archived at American University</i>	Comakli	Lived in Comakli, Turkey as a Peace Corps member for a two-year tour. Learned that the Peace Corps' definition of community development meant moving people out of subsistence farming into a wage and market economy. Learned war was not just a policy, it's fundamental to the U.S. reality.
1967-71	Education at NYU	New York City	Attended NYU on a fellowship for International Comparative Public Administration. Studied the National Welfare Rights Organization and wrote about the NWRO theory of power and a description of their campaigns. Learned that wealth is different than income and poverty reforms are about controlling poor people. Learned that studies which collect information about people never come back to the people, committed to getting the information back to them.
1969	Vietnam War	New York City	Refused the draft in 1969 and participated in DC anti-war protests. Participated in the takeover of Courant Hall at NYU and learned about using the institution's assets for movement work. Anarchists took over the NYU press and turned it into a movement printing press for two weeks. Lin Dodge, WW2 resister who was in prison with Elijah Muhammad, argued that they should do the same with the federal computer, use it rather than blow it up.
1972-73	Save Our Homes, Tenant Organizer	Brooklyn, NY	Quakers hired Dan for \$300 a month to organize tenants to protect their housing from the Methodist Hospital expansion plan. Learned to research the enemy and learned the

			importance of who owns the land in the community you are organizing. Learned from the Quakers: <i>"Is the action you take a movement building action? Does it bring people in?"</i>
1973-76	Human Affairs Program (HAP)	Ithaca, NY	Directed the Human Affairs Program (HAP) at Cornell University. Learned how to leverage the university system to build legitimate social programs and convene community, students, labor, and civic leaders. HAP organized through "sections" on public utilities & energy, housing, prisons, welfare rights, women, African-American issues, labor, training institutes, etc. Dan helped organize two statewide coalitions: the People's Power Coalition and the Labor Action Coalition of New York. Produced <i>Organizer's Notebook on Public Utilities & Energy</i> .
1978	Chelan Public Utility District Study	Eastern Washington	Hired to write a study of the Public Utility Districts (PUD)'s relationship to its public. Coincidentally, learned that each PUD had a share in the Washington Public Power Supply System (WPPSS) proposed five nuclear plants. The energy from these plants were destined to provide energy to aluminum companies and private utility monopolies. Read every set of PUD commission minutes from 1930 to the present.
1979-81	Citizens Party PAPERS archived at Library of Congress	National	Organized the structures to build a new political party. Studied the ballot access laws in every state; created an office, hired staff; set up bank accounts, filed with the Federal Election Commission; recruited an Advisory Committee; created a framework for the formation of local Citizens Party chapters with strict affirmative action requirements – if their membership did not reflect the socioeconomic character of their territory they had to submit a plan to get accurate representation. in 1981, organized a successful convention with significant representation from Black, indigenous, and women delegates. Elected executive board member at the convention and returned to Wenatchee, WA and organized a regional formation in CA, OR, and WA.
1980-83	Organizer, Progress Under Democracy (PUD)	Eastern Washington	Organized the Electrical Ratepayer Rebellion against WPPSS nuclear power plants, building on non-partisan public institutions. Formed a minor political party to recruit, train, run, and elect a majority of PUD Commissioners throughout the state. This led to the cancellation of four out of five nuclear plants in Washington State. Experienced the possibility of electoral revolts. Learned that judicial decisions follow popular revolt when the Washington Supreme Court ruled that PUDs do not have the right to sign an open-ended debt agreement.
1984	Professor, The Evergreen State College	Olympia, WA	Taught undergraduate political economy classes and graduate Masters in Public Administration program classes from 1984 to 2008. Learned that the first thing students want to do is get out of the classroom. Helped masters students design and implement application projects and saw his job as setting up learning opportunities for students. Loved his students.
1987-97	Executive Director, Labor Education & Research Center	Olympia, WA	Organized and directed a Labor Center for rank and file union members all over Washington State. Ran the Summer School for Union Women, New School for Union Organizers (year-long cohorts), and the African-American Leadership Conference among other programs to train and educate union members on how to organize. Supported participants to go back

	Archives at The Evergreen State College		into their unions to organize for structural change. While Dan was director, over 6,000 people participated in the Center's programs.
1993-2014	Coordinator, Trinational Coalition	Olympia, WA Mexico DF Canada	Organized the Future of Public Education Conference in 1993 and delegates from Mexican, Canadians and U.S unions participated. Developed platform and Dan proposed North American Public Schools Commission to counter NAFTA's efforts to privatize and squash public education. Coordinated the Trinational Coalition for Defense of Public Education from 1996-2009.
1995-on	Founder and Comandante, Heroico Battalion of San Patricio	San Patricio, Jalisco Mexico	The Heroico Battalion of San Patricio was formed when Irish soldiers switched sides in the Mexican-American War of 1847 and fought with the Mexican army against the unjust invasion of Mexico. Dan re-established the Battalion in 1995, sponsored the March 17 th Parades in San Patricio, and leveraged existing institutional assets to redistribute funds to the town and educate Evergreen students on the history of Mexico and social movements. Mary Robinson, president of the Republic of Ireland, wrote statement in support of the Battalion in 1997 its 150 th anniversary.
1996	Candidate for Superintendent of Public Instruction	Olympia, WA	Ran for one of the only non-partisan statewide offices, Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction. Learned that if you want to win in Washington state, you have to start east and go west, not west to east. Lost in the primary but lifted up the resistance to privatization attacks on education and the true purpose of education to build a better society.
1999	Shut Down of the World Trade Organization	Seattle	Organized Trade, Labor & the Environment Conference (Oct 1999) and convened tribal members, unions, students, and environmentalists to learn about the WTO and the Millennium Summit. Supported the lead organizers during the five days they shut down Seattle and the Ministerial. Organized Post-Shutdown WTO Forum at Olympia Film Society – 750 people wanted to know what happened. Produced <i>Voices from the WTO: First-hand narratives from the people who shut down the World Trade Organization</i> , published April 2000. The WTO was delegitimated.
ONGOING	Organizer Westside Neighborhood Fights	Olympia, WA	Organized over half of 850 single family homes on Olympia's south westside. Called themselves the Decatur Raiders (2000-2015) and stopped the opening of Decatur Street to automobile traffic. Successfully stopped the opening of a 7-11 convenience store on the corner of Harrison and Division, making it possible for community members to turn it into a community park instead.
2003-05	Director, Alliance for Sustainable Jobs & the Environment	Seattle, WA	Directed Alliance for Sustainable Jobs & the Environment, a labor and environmentalist coalition started after the WTO shutdown. Organized the March to Miami (2004) with a traveling bus (the Blue Green Machine) with organizers coordinating 30 events in 10 states from Olympia to Miami. Participated in the Root Cause march led by the Coalition of Immokalee Workers and got out of the stadium before the police shut everyone in.

2011	Organizer, We are Wisconsin - Recall Walker campaign	Madison & Milwaukee, WI	Worked to organize in Wisconsin to recall Governor Walker after the occupation of the Capitol by teachers and farmers. Organized educational forums; block walking; organizing trainings; reports on candidates and state budget cuts; and learned once again that the Democratic Party's function is to destroy social movements and evaporate after elections.
2015	Ireland	County Cork	Studied the 100 th anniversary of Easter Uprising in 2016. Participated in the Kinsale Men's Group in County Cork. Toured the Jameson Distiller. Learned that Yellow Spot is the best whiskey made in Ireland (and probably the world.)
2014-17	Stopped the Oil Trains	Pacific Northwest	Organized the Oil Train Solidarity Summit at Evergreen's Longhouse, a true convergence of forces affected by the oil trains - firefighters, indigenous tribal leaders, civic leaders, and environmentalists. Stopped the plan to transport crude oil on above-ground 120 unit trains from the Bakken oil fields of North Dakota to a proposed marine transfer site in Vancouver, Washington. Got two new Port Commissioners elected who did not renew the lease and stopped the new transfer site. Organized road trips to map the train routes and study the vulnerabilities of the rails. Visited mayors along the routes to mobilize them and kept them informed.
2016-20	Volunteer, Refugee Camp Support	Greece	Traveled three times to the Greek island of Lesbos to support the refugee camp taking in 850,000 people from Syria and Afghanistan. Stunned by the immensity of the crisis and the infrastructure to care for people.
2018	75 th Anniversary	Olympia, WA	Convened 100 of his closest friends from all over the world for three days of good food, good conversations, great tributes, and a lot of Jameson.
2007-22	Member, Project South	Olympia to Atlanta and back again	Taught a class (at Evergreen) on, and participated in, the first U.S. Social Forum (2007) in Atlanta. Supported the organizers and People's Movement Assembly process to build the second USSF in 2010 in Detroit. Participant in the Southern Movement Assembly and organized Bridge actions to support the nurses and a Juneteenth Action for George Floyd & Black Lives in solidarity with Project South's Southern Spring in 2020.
2020-22	Organizer, West Side Neighborhood	Olympia, WA	Organized monthly zoom calls during pandemic. Developed a synthesis of a collective vision to produce a statement of principles about sustainable community development on the Westside. Organized 111 letters from the Westside neighbors to the City to support the Habitat for Humanity proposal to build permanent housing on the Eastside. They won.