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Mario Cilento

Chief of Staff
New York State AFL-CIO

Mario Cilento, a member of the Newspaper Guild-CWA since 1990, began working at the New York State AFL-CIO in 1992.

He served as Public Relations Director from 1992-1999. For the past twelve years he has served as Chief of Staff, coordinating the day to day and long-term political, legislative, communications and grassroots strategies of the 2 ½ million member organization, as well as the overall policy and development of the organization's staff departments.

He is also responsible for outreach, initiatives and strategies concerning the State Federation's Executive Board and affiliates.

In 1999, Mario led a coordinated statewide media and grassroots campaign highlighting the plight of New York's farm workers. The unprecedented media attention focusing on the working and living conditions of farm workers, coupled with the New York State AFL-CIO's legislative and grassroots efforts led to securing historic legislation providing farm workers a minimum wage equal to that of all other workers in the state.

In 2000, Mario was instrumental in creating and developing the New York State AFL-CIO's Arts and Entertainment Industry Committee. The purpose of the committee is to bring together unions from New York's entertainment industry to discuss and act upon issues of shared concern and interest. The committee has been successful in helping to secure legislation beneficial to the industry and its members, such as production tax credits and child welfare issues. It has also coordinated support amongst industry unions during contract negotiations.

In 2005, Mario created and developed "Working New York", a New York State AFL-CIO sponsored half-hour talk show designed to inform the general public of policies, issues and initiatives important to working men and women and their families. The show aired on Regional News Network (RNN) for five seasons, during which Mario served as Producer and Writer. "Working New York" won the labor movement's International Labor Communicators Award (ILCA) for Best Cable Television Program in 2009.

In June 2011, Mario was appointed to serve as a Commissioner on the New York State Insurance Fund. He also serves on the Executive Boards of the Workforce Development Institute, Working Theater, and the New York State AFL-CIO/Cornell ILR.

Mario graduated from Fordham University in 1990 with a Bachelors of Science Degree.