

## USFWC Workshop Outline

### **African American Women in Worker Cooperatives: Then and Now**

**Session:** Session 3: Saturday afternoon (4:15PM)

**Description:** Participants will learn about the history of African American women's involvement in the cooperative movement, and in Black-owned cooperatives and worker owned cooperatives in particular. Participants will explore the successes of existing co-ops, and ways to measure economic and non-economic impacts of worker cooperatives on women members, their families and communities. Participants will exchange ideas about how to increase women of color's participation in worker cooperatives; and ways to increase publicity and promotion of worker cooperatives among women of color. Part presentation and part small group activities with report back. Participants will work on strategies or scenarios to empower women more in cooperatives, to measure success and economic impacts, and to promote worker cooperatives for women of color.

**Coordinator and Presenter:** Jessica Gordon Nembhard

- I. Introductions (10 minutes) – participants will introduce themselves; Jessica Gordon Nembhard will introduce herself and discuss the objectives and outline of the workshop.
- II. History of Black women in the US cooperative movement (20 minutes) – JGN will discuss her research about Halena Wilson of the International Ladies Auxiliary of the Brotherhood of Sleeping Car Porters and consumer's cooperation; Ella Jo Baker and the Young Negro's Cooperative League; and Fannie Lou Hamer and Freedom Farm Cooperative; and recent women-owned cooperatives such as Freedom Quilting Bee, and Cooperative Home Care Associates. Audience will contribute information they have.
- III. Small group discussions (30 minutes) – participants will divide into small groups of 3 or 4 members each to discuss a scenario about gender inequality in their own cooperative, why to start a women-owned cooperative, race and gender issues in the effectiveness of a cooperative, women's leadership in a cooperative, or balancing home and work responsibilities in a cooperative.
- IV. Report back from small groups (15 minutes)
- V. Wrap up ( 15 minutes) - Summary of small group discussions. Discussion of ways to increase Black women's participation in cooperatives, ways to increase publicity about and promotion of cooperatives among women of color, ways to measure the impacts of cooperatives on Black women and to mitigate issues of discrimination or inequality, potential of cooperatives to empower women economically and socially.