



Public Services International

The Public Service International (PSI), the Global Union Federation for public sector workers, established the **Heinz Kluncker and Jerry Wurf Award** to honour two trade unionists who played an important role in the history of PSI. The Award provides a scholarship for public sector trade unionists to participate in the Global Labour University (GLU) Master program.

Jerry Wurf and Heinz Kluncker became as newly elected Presidents of their unions, ÖTV and AFCSME, members of the PSI Executive Board in 1964 and were influential in changing the policies of PSI in a more progressive direction.

Heinz Kluncker(1925-2005) was elected President of PSI in 1973 and until his retirement in 1985 a force for renewal of the organisation of PSI. He was given the title Honorary Life President of PSI. Heinz Kluncker was the President of the German Public Sector Workers Union ÖTV for nearly 20 years and a key trade union leader in his country. Under his leadership the union won the struggle for the 40 hour working week for all public sector employees. Heinz Kluncker was the first German trade union leader who established a critical dialogue with eastern European trade unions during the Cold War. Strongly believing that opening up to the closed eastern societies was essential for a change, he was a strong defender of democratic rights in his own country and showed also internationally a passionate commitment to trade union rights as a human right for every worker.

Jerome (Jerry) Wurf (1919 – 1981) was president of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) from 1964 to 1981. Through energetic organizing and aggressive bargaining, AFSCME grew rapidly under his leadership from about 220,000 members to just over one million in 1981.

Wurf was extremely active in the American civil rights movement. He helped establish the first New York state chapter of the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE) in the late 1940s. He was a close associate of Martin Luther King, Jr., and King was attending an AFSCME sanitation strike when he was assassinated in 1968. "Let us never forget that Martin Luther King, on a mission for us, was killed in this city. He helped bring us this victory," Wurf later said.