

In the Past 4 months...

The UMass Labor Extension Program Has Provided Trainings On These Topics...

- **Developing Women's Leadership in a New Labor Era**
United Association of Labor Educators
- **The Economy and You: Economic Literacy for a New Generation of Union Leaders**
Open enrollment class, UMass Boston
- **Educational on Employee Free Choice Act Merrimack Valley Building Trades Council Merrimack Valley Central Labor Council**
AFSCME SUMMUP
- **Massachusetts Public Sector Labor Law**
Open enrollment for Merrimack Valley unions
- **Stewards Training**
IBEW 2321
- **Strategic Planning**
North Shore Central Labor Council

To Contact the UMass Labor Extension Program:

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- **Solidarity Knows No Borders: Labor Views on Future Immigration**
United Association of Labor Educators Conference
- **Teaching Politics and the Economy**
United Association of Labor Educators Conference

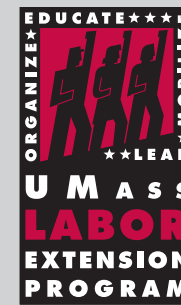
- **Understanding the Economy**
WILD in the Winter and various unions
- **Worker's Guide to the Economy**
SE Mass Community

Labor Extension Bulletin

VOLUME 11 ■ NUMBER 2 ■ SPRING 2009



UMass Amherst
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A105125



Labor Extension Bulletin

A Publication of the University of Massachusetts Labor Extension Program
UMASS AMHERST ■ UMASS BOSTON ■ UMASS DARTMOUTH ■ UMASS LOWELL

VOLUME 11 ■ NUMBER 2 ■ SPRING 2009

Where is the Outrage?

Globaly we are facing the worst recession since the 1930s, with vast numbers of working people losing their jobs and homes. Workers in many countries held large and sometimes militant demonstrations on May first, protesting their government's handling of the crisis. But here in the US, all has been quiet. Of course, we have never celebrated May Day as international workers day; we have our Labor Day in September. But could there be another reason for the lack of protest? Could it be that too many of us have bought the idea, so prevalent in our media, that the only way out of the crisis is for unions to give up our hard-won gains?

For a short time after the financial crisis hit, public attention—and disgust—was focused on CEOs with their bloated salaries and bonuses and their corporate jets. But recently the discussion has turned more to blaming unions for our economic troubles. Autoworkers are castigated for making use of the benefits they have been able to win over decades of hard struggle. The bailout that passed so easily for Wall Street (with no belt-tightening demanded of its high-paid executives) was not forthcoming for the automakers, whose blue-collar workers are being forced to



Workers Protesting in France

shoulder a hefty share of the burden. Locally, the employees of the Boston Globe have, as of this writing, been asked to give up \$20 million or lose their jobs. Big Capital is using this economic crisis as an opportunity to make the US a "union-free environment".

Even with the most pro-labor administration in the White House that this country has seen in decades, the labor movement here is going to have to use every means at our disposal to pull through this economic crisis in good shape. We must counter the corporate propaganda machine with our own message:

the way out of the recession is to put more resources into the hands of working people, not less. As President Obama acknowledged in January, unions are part of the solution, not part of the problem. We need to mobilize our members to take part in everything from contract campaigns to political action to organizing drives.

Labor Extension can help. We offer workshops on the economic crisis—how we got into it, and how to get out of it—on organizing, political and member mobilizing and more. We will work with unions to prepare for changes that will happen when and if the Employee Free Choice Act passes. Contact your local coordinator for details.



There are some bright points for labor and working people. Hilda Solis, the daughter of union members, the first Latina, and a longtime champion of working people, has been appointed Labor Secretary. Mary Beth Maxwell, the executive director of American Rights at Work, will be her senior adviser. The National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) will see two experienced worker advocates Craig Becker and Mark Pearce fill vacancies, joining longtime Board member Wilma Liebman, the new Board chair.

Already the Obama administration has revoked the Bush executive order on regulatory review restoring integrity to rulemaking and protecting worker safety. They overturned the Bush administration's ban on project labor agreements (PLAs) on federally funded construction, and

moved to prevent federal contractors from being reimbursed for union busting propaganda campaigns. The President also signed the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act.

Positive news in Massachusetts includes the appointment of Harris Freeman, visiting professor at UMass Amherst Labor Center and faculty at WNEC School of Law, and former machinist, toolmaker and union member (UAW, MSP, IAM), to the Commonwealth Employment Relations Board (CERB).

And public sector workers scored a victory as Governor Patrick signed an Executive Order to protect the safety and health of state employees. The order sets up safety and health coordinators and mandates labor/management health and safety committees, and record-keeping of injuries, illnesses and fatalities.

Around THE STATE

Organizers' Roundtable

Second Tuesday of the month, 9:30-11:30 am

Cost: Free

Location: IBEW Local 103

Contact: Bill Corley, 617-436-3710, John Drinkwater, MA AFL-CIO, 781-423-8230

Roundtable discussions on topics of interest to union organizers
Please note: The Roundtable usually does not meet during July and August. Check with Bill or John before coming during summer months.

23rd Annual WILD Summer Institute

Friday through Sunday, June 26-28

Cost: \$220/person for double, \$250/person for single

Location: Bentley University, Waltham, MA

Contact: WILD at 617-426-0520 or info@wildlabor.org

Theme: *Creating the Future We Want to See*

WILD is an inspirational educational program that provides women with the vision, confidence and skills to become more effective leaders and organizers in the labor movement in Massachusetts. Participants take leadership skills, as well as their choice of various skill-building workshops.

34th Annual UALE Northeast Regional Summer School for Union Women

Sunday through Friday, August 2-7

Cost: : \$615.53/person for double, \$658.03/person for single

Location: Stony Brook University, SUNY

Contact: Dale Melcher, 413-545-6166 or dmelcher@LRRRC.umass.edu

Theme: *Union Women: Opportunities and Challenges*

This five-day program brings together union women who are rank-and-file members, staff and officers to strengthen their knowledge of the American labor movement, understand its present challenges and issues, and develop skills that will prepare them to be more active union members and leaders.

The Center for Popular Economics 2009 Summer Institute

Sunday through Friday, July 12-17

Cost: see www.populareconomics.org/Programs.html for details

Location: World Fellowship Center, Conway, NH

Contact: Emily Kawano, 413-545-0743 or programs@populareconomics.org

Theme: *After the Economic Meltdown: Building the Solidarity Economy*

This week-long intensive training in economics is for activists, educators, and anyone who wants a better understanding of economics. Trainings are participatory and build on the knowledge and experience of participants. You don't need a background in economics to participate!

Conference on Leadership Building and Social Justice Economic Development

September 12, 2009, 9am to 2pm

Cost: \$20.00

Location: UMass Dartmouth Woodland Common

Contact: Kim Wilson 508-999-8781

With keynote speaker Greg LeRoy, director of Good Jobs First, this conference will offer workshops on developing and sustaining strong union leaders and activists as well as workshops on labor and community alliances for economic development. We will have a common session to discuss how these areas are intertwined in building strength for strong leaders in organizations and justice in the community.



S P O T L I G H T

MassCOSH was a key leader in advocating for the Executive Order just signed by Governor Patrick which takes critical steps to protect the health and safety of state employees. Working with the State Action for Safety Coalition, MassCOSH is developing training materials and fact sheets to help state employee unions play a leadership role in health and safety committees to implement the State Executive Order.

MassCOSH will be partnering with UMass Labor Extension to do training about this.

Western MassCOSH just released an updated version of *Hurt on the Job: A Guide to the Massachusetts Workers Compensation System* (see Resource Corner). Their Alliance for Injured Workers program takes hotline calls and runs support and information sessions for injured workers.

Both MassCOSH and Western MassCOSH offer training for unions in health and safety organizing and education to strengthen the capacity of unions to mobilize and organize for safe and healthy working conditions.

For more information see www.masscosh.org/ or email Western MassCOSH at WMassCOSH@verizon.net.

Program Notes

■ UMASS AMHERST

Amherst LEP offered an open enrollment workshop on Understanding the Economy, with Mark Brenner from Labor Notes. We continued working with the Hampshire Franklin and Pioneer Valley labor councils and participated in organizing and observing Workers Memorial Day in Northampton. Since the state of the economy is such a key issue for labor a workshop on understanding the financial crisis with proposals to stimulate the economy, taught by Gül Ünal, from CPE, was offered at WILD in the Winter West. Along with Susan Winning we led a workshop on developing women's leadership at the annual UALE meetings. We taught labor education in January for our ULA students and this spring for our residential masters students. Finally we continued to plan for both the WILD Summer Institute and the NE Regional Summer School for Union Women.

■ UMASS BOSTON

In March, the UMB Labor Resource Center kicked-off its new "Thinking Big/Moving Forward" discussion series with an event co-sponsored with the UMB Center for Social Policy and the Massachusetts AFL-CIO. Titled "Creating a New Social Contract for 21st Century Workers", this event featured UMB Professor Randy Albelda's recently published research, "Bridging the Gaps between Earnings and Basic Needs in Massachusetts," followed by a facilitated discussion with MIT Professor Tom Kochan. The Labor Resource Center plans to hold "Thinking Big/Moving Forward" discussions twice a year.

On another front, we just finished up a very successful short course on "The Economy and You: Economic Literacy for a New Generation of Union Leaders", taught by UMB Economics professor Marlene Kim. This course was open to both union activists and CPCS students. We also plan to put on more of these collaborations between Extension and the undergraduate program in the future.

■ UMASS DARTMOUTH

The UMass Dartmouth Labor Extension Program has been working with the Future of Work project in presenting a semester long Sociology class based on the curriculum developed from this funding. Part of this class involved a tour of the Allegheny Specialty Metals factory by USW Local 1357 as we discussed the effects of lean production on worker solidarity. We also organized three classes led by Dr. Marlene Kim on a worker's guide to the economy, which was attended by 20 people. Thanks Marlene! This Fall Labor Extension is offering a worker photography training and show in collaboration with the New Bedford Zeiterion Theater. We would also like to announce a special conference on September 12, 2009 at UMass Dartmouth which will blend developing leaders with fighting for social and economic justice in local economic development projects. Please contact Kim Wilson if your union would like to participate in these Fall activities.

■ UMASS LOWELL

Budget cuts continue to impact our program, with the elimination of director Charley Richardson's position in early April. Although forced into retirement, Charley will continue to work part-time on issues related to technological change, work restructuring, the "tricks and traps" of joint labor management programs, and continuous bargaining strategies. Our program is still threatened with elimination, with all university funding slated to end in April 2010, but we continue to provide programming for our region as we struggle for our existence. We hosted a standing-room-only event at UMass Lowell with author and economist Robert Kuttner, discussing "Obama's Challenge: Getting the Economy Working for Working People". We participated in Lowell women's week, hosting "Holding Up Half the Sky: Women, the Recession and the Economic Stimulus" led by UMass Boston economist Randy Albelda. We organized a luncheon on *Sustaining Ourselves in Challenging Economic Times*, with the enthusiastic attendance of over 80 female staff and faculty.



The Resource Corner

TWO NEW BOOKS ON THE WORKERS COMPENSATION SYSTEM

Every eight minutes in America, someone dies from a work illness or injury—more deaths than from most diseases.

Depraved Indifference: the Workers' Compensation System, a new book by Patrice Woeppel, dissects the system that destroys the health and life of workers, while throwing most of the costs onto families and taxpayers. See www.patricewoeppel.us for ordering information.

If you are hurt or injured on the job an updated edition of *Hurt on the Job: A guide to the Massachusetts Workers Compensation System* is now available from Western Mass COSH

and The Alliance for Injured Workers. "It provides some of the best, most accurate and up to date information that anyone dealing with workers compensation would need to know," said Bob Madore the Regional Director of UAW Region 9a. *Hurt on the Job* can be ordered from the Alliance website: www.afiw.org and will soon be in bookstores.

