

Labor Extension Bulletin

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

VOLUME 13 ■ NUMBER 3 ■ FALL 2011

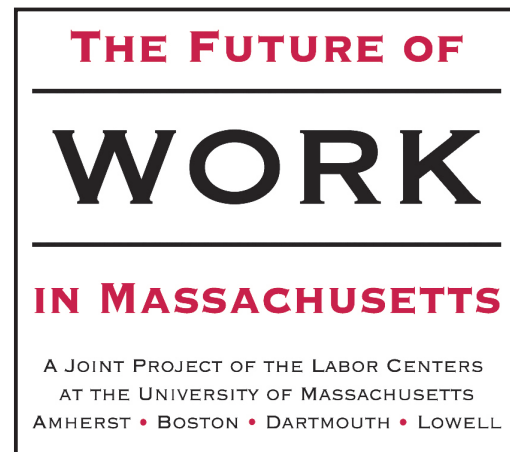
UMass Labor Centers Present Three Conferences for Analysis and Action!

Things are looking pretty bleak these days for the labor movement and all working people. We need to come together to take action, but need to take the time to reflect and analyze before moving forward. UMass Labor Extension, working with our host Labor Centers, is offering three conferences this Fall. The root purpose of all is praxis: a concept central to popular education, the approach to labor education used by the UMass Labor Extension Program. Praxis begins with action, moves to reflection on that action, and then to planning for new action. In the words of Brazilian educator Paulo Freire, praxis is reflection and action upon the world in order to transform it. Bill Fletcher, former director of the AFL-CIO Education Department, emphasized the need for praxis at a gathering at the UMA Labor Center in 1999. After noting the labor movement's poor record of reflecting and summarizing its experiences, Fletcher remarked, "we are content to act and then move on, and indeed, to forget. And, in the absence of summation, we get mythology."

This September the Massachusetts labor movement and its community partners have an opportunity to reflect on our practices, to summarize what we've learned and to think critically about the directions we want to take. Three conferences, all connected by the theme of the Future of Work in Massachusetts, are being held at UMass Amherst, UMass Boston and UMass Dartmouth.

The first is Defending the Public Sector: Looking at the Impact of Race and Class and Forming Strategy for the Fight-back. It will be held on Saturday, September 10 from 9 am – 2 pm at UMass Dartmouth's Woodland Commons. The cost is \$10 with lunch included. We will be joining trade unionists from across the state, and from Wisconsin, to examine the economic and social conditions that have led to the current crisis, and to work together to formulate a strategy for fighting back. This event includes two morning workshops, lunch, and an afternoon panel on the privatization of public K-12 education and higher education.

The second conference is The Future of Work in Massachusetts: What's Labor's Agenda for Economic Development? This conference will be held Thursday evening and Friday, September 22 & 23 at UMass Amherst's Campus Center. It is free with pre-registration. This conference will bring together labor leaders, community activ-



ists, and researchers and academics to examine some interesting projects from Massachusetts and beyond, such as labor involvement in worker coops, high-road manufacturing strategies, and building sustainable and green, and consider how to deepen labor's involvement in economic planning and development in the Commonwealth.

The third conference is The Future of Labor Organizing in Higher Education, to be held on Friday evening and Saturday, September 30 & October 1 at UMass Boston's Campus Center. The registration cost is \$200.00. This interactive conference will bring together higher education workers, activists, union leaders and staff, and our allies, nationally and internationally, to: analyze the trends in the higher education industry in the US and the implications for union organizing; examine national and international efforts to craft a more expansive vision of higher education that works for all stakeholders; and explore building union mutual aid and support networks. The conference is co-sponsored by SEIU Local 615, the Massachusetts Teachers Association, the American Federation of Teachers MA, and the Labor Resource Center at UMass Boston.

We hope to have great participation from Massachusetts's labor and community activists. Please speak to your local Labor Extension Coordinator for more detailed information. These three September conferences provide a great opportunity for us to reflect and then to plan for new action together.

Around THE STATE

Defending the Public Sector: Looking at the Impact of Race and Class and Forming Strategy for the Fight-back **Saturday, September 10 from 9 am – 2 pm**

Cost: \$10 with lunch included

Location: UMass Dartmouth's Woodland Commons.

Contact: Diane Cruz 508-999-8007

Join trade unionists from across the state, and from Wisconsin, to examine the economic and social conditions that have led to the current crisis, and work together to formulate a strategy for fighting back. The event includes two morning workshops, lunch, and an afternoon panel on the privatization of public K-12 education and higher education.

North Shore Labor Council Legislative Dinner **Wisconsin 14 Labor Hero Senator Jon Erpenbach** **Saturday, September 17, 6:30 P.M.**

Cost: tickets \$45 NSLC delegates, \$50 non-delegates

Location: Montvale Plaza, 54 Montvale Ave, Stoneham, MA

Contact: Aliza Levine, 781-595-2538

When Wisconsin Governor Scott Walker proposed a bill to strip collective bargaining rights for public employees, Senator Jon Erpenbach and 13 other Democratic State Senators took a stand on behalf of working people. While tens of thousands of workers gathered at the state capital to protest the bill, the Wisconsin 14 prevented its passage by leaving the state—hiding out in Illinois for three weeks even as law enforcement was sent after them.

Future of Work in Massachusetts: Labor's Agenda for Economic Development

Thursday evening and Friday, September 22 and 23

Cost: Free with pre-registration: space is limited

Location: Campus Center, UMass Amherst

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

This conference will bring together labor leaders, community activists and researchers and academics to examine an economic agenda for the labor movement. We will examine some interesting projects from Massachusetts and beyond, such as labor involvement in worker coops, high-road manufacturing strategies and building sustainable and green, and consider how to deepen labor's involvement in economic planning and development in the Commonwealth.

The Future of Labor Organizing in Higher Education: an international conference

Friday, September 30, 5-9pm and Saturday, October 1, 8 am – 7 pm

Cost: \$220 (scholarships are available)

Location: UMass Boston Campus Center

Contact: Anneta Argyres, 617-287-7229

This interactive conference will focus on the changing nature of the higher education industry in the US and abroad, and explore strategies and tools to strengthen workers' and students' voices to build a higher education system that works for all stakeholders. The conference is co-sponsored by SEIU Local 615, the Massachusetts Teachers Association, the American Federation of Teachers-Massachusetts, and the UMass Boston Labor Resource Center.

Arnold M. Dubin Labor Education Center Annual Awards Banquet

Thursday, October 20, 6:00

Cost: \$40.00 a ticket

Location: Venus de Milo, Swansea

Contact: Diane Cruz 508-999-8007

Our annual award dinner honors our labor heroes. This year we recognize the contributions of Sandy Felder, Veronica Turner, and three state representatives.

Choral performance by A Besere Velt, community chorus of the Boston Workmen's Circle

A Bread and Roses Centennial Fundraiser

Sunday October 23, 4:00 - 6:00PM

Cost: TBA

Location: Temple Emanuel, Andover, MA

Contact: breadandrosescentennial.org/ or Susan Winning at 978-934-3127, Susan_Winning@uml.edu

Join the Bread and Roses Centennial Committee in the fall fundraiser as they host A Besere Velt chorus to commemorate the strike of 1912. Seating limited.

Strategic Corporate Research Workshop

Monday October 24th and Tuesday October 25th

Cost: \$150 for the two-day workshops covers lunch and all materials; \$125 for 2d, and \$100 for 3d and subsequent members of the same organization. Hotel rooms extra.

Location: UMass Amherst

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

This two day workshop provides an introduction to strategic corporate research in support of organizing and bargaining. We will explore the uses of corporate research and review a model for conducting this kind of research. The workshop also provides an overview of the electronic resources available and gives participants hands-on experience using online databases and resources. It will be taught by UMass Amherst Labor Center faculty member Tom Juravich, who has more than a decade of experience conducting and teaching strategic corporate research. Contact Dale Melcher for more information, to register and to reserve hotel rooms.

The Resource Corner: Permanent Community-Labor Coalitions

Jobs with Justice is a national network of local coalitions that bring together labor unions, faith groups, community organizations, and student activists to fight for working people. Jobs with Justice builds long-term, formal coalitions of organizations and individuals. As a national network of local coalitions, Jobs with Justice is able to run national campaigns that are based in the grassroots. Jobs with Justice seeks strategic fights that build power for working people and address the root causes of the problems facing workers & communities. <http://www.jwj.org/>

Massachusetts Jobs with Justice represents working people in Massachusetts, along with our sister coalition, Western Mass Jobs with Justice. <http://www.massjwj.net/>

The Partnership for Working Families is dedicated to building power and reshaping the economy and urban environment for workers and communities. They are committed to expanding and connecting community and worker organizing for quality jobs, affordable housing, shared prosperity, and a healthy environment. Through strong alliances with environmental, labor, faith-based and civil rights organizations, they are organizing toward an economic expansion that rises above environmental and economic exploitation.

<http://www.communitybenefits.org/index.php>

Community Labor United (CLU), based in Massachusetts, is part of the Partnership for Working Families network. CLU combines the joint power of community-based organizations and labor unions to advance the interests of low and middle-income working families in Massachusetts. Their strategic campaigns promote quality jobs, secure healthcare, affordable housing, and climate justice. <http://massclu.org/>

Program Notes

■ UMASS AMHERST

This has been a busy summer for the Amherst Labor Center. We offered workshops on leadership skills, framing our message and advanced grievance handling at the WILD Summer Institute and the Northeast Regional Summer School for Union Women. We continued to work with our LEP colleagues to train MTA staff in popular education theory and practice. The workshop on framing and messaging is particular relevant as unions face an onslaught of negative publicity and shifting public opinion, and participants were enthusiastic about gaining some tools to shape and promote our own messages. We are planning for our September *Future of Work conference on Labor's Agenda for Economic Development*, which will bring together labor leaders, community activists and university researchers to examine best practices and consider a proactive approach to economic development. Finally, we will again this fall teach an undergraduate course on Women and Work.

■ UMASS BOSTON

The Labor Resource Center hosted a lively presentation and discussion about the fight in Ohio against "SB5", a state bill to limit bargaining rights of public sector works in Ohio, as our spring Thinking Big/Moving Forward Seminar. Check out the video clips of lively flash mobs in Ohio at our website: <http://www.cpcs.umb.edu/lrc/TBMFjune2011ohiofightback.htm>. We hosted our second LRC donors' cruise. LRC supporters, students and staff enjoyed good company, snacks and beautiful weather for our annual evening outing around the Boston Harbor islands.

Labor extension has been participating in an exciting effort to organize domestic workers. As the organization of work changes, more and more workers fall outside the parameters of the NLRA and state laws. New ways of organizing these workers are needed. Domestic workers—people who clean residential homes, nannies and other caregivers—are among the most oppressed and exploited workers today, and they are unrepresented by unions. Following the lead of domestic workers in New York, who organized to pass a "Domestic Workers Bill of Rights", Boston area domestic workers have established the Mass. Coalition of Domestic Workers. The challenge is to form a new kind of union that can effectively fight for their rights in this uncharted terrain. We are proud to be part of this pioneering effort.

■ UMASS DARTMOUTH

UMass Dartmouth Labor Extension has continued our coalition building work around improving transit in New Bedford and Fall River. Please read this Bulletin's Spotlight for details on this effort. This October 20th we are holding our annual awards banquet and this year we are especially happy to be able to show our recognition and respect to Sandy Felder of the AFL-CIO and Veronica Turner of SEIU 1199 Massachusetts. Please join us. For more information on the dinner call Diane Cruz at 508-999-8007. Our worker photography project has ended with a gallery show in June and we are now looking for venues for the traveling exhibition. For short video interviews from the photographers, please visit: <http://www.southcoasttoday.com/apps/pbcs.dll/section?category=MEDIA02> and scroll down the page to Video: A Look Behind "Work in Progress" project. If your union or organization would like to host the exhibition, please call Kim Wilson at 508-999-8781.

■ UMASS LOWELL

In early summer we finalized curricula for WILD Summer Institute workshops and trained new facilitators to teach, and then taught workshops at the Institute itself. Much of the spring and summer has been spent setting up service learning projects for the core course of the new *Work, Labor, and Society* interdisciplinary minor here at UMass Lowell. We have set up a range of service learning experiences, including union and labor council placements, as well as work with youth and adult training and job readiness programs that are looking for ways to provide workers rights information. As part of our work with the New Lynn Coalition, we used some Future of Work funding to fund a graduate student to research jobs and the economy in Lynn. The report was officially released in early August at an event attracting over 90 community and labor activists. We continue to work with the Bread and Roses Centennial committee, as the centennial year of 2012 gets closer and closer.

S P O T L I G H T

People First

People First is a project of the UMD Labor Education Center, Greater SE Massachusetts Labor Council and the Community Economic Development Center of SE Mass. This labor-community coalition has been in place for special projects for the last twelve years. Our current focus is on making public transportation more responsive to riders with better hours, more service coverage, and increased accessibility in Fall River and New Bedford. We also hope expanding transit jobs would be a byproduct. We have worked directly with the two locals of the Amalgamated Transit Union, in concert with the ATU's progressive leadership, on working with the community. The UMD Labor Education Center has been able to hire a summer intern



Mayor Flanagan (L) of Fall River listens to the concerns of a bus rider while a city councilor and Eric Carvalho of the ATU look on. The meeting was organized by People First of the Greater SE Massachusetts Labor Council with the Community Economic Development Center and the UMD Labor Education Center. Photo Credit: Carl Chaves

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UMass Amherst

Labor Extension Program

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In the Past 4 months...

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

■ **Advanced Grievance Handling**
NE Summer School for Union Women

■ **Advanced Leadership Skills in Spanish and in English**

WILD Summer Institute

■ **Building Support for the Public Sector: Re-framing the Debate**
UAW Region 9A

■ **Economic Refugees: Immigration & the Growing Divide**
WILD Summer Institute

■ **Framing the Message**
NE Summer School for Union Women

■ **Labor-Community Partnerships**
Amalgamated Transit Union Regional Conference

■ **Leadership Skills**
NE Summer School for Union Women
WILD Summer Institute

■ **Popular Education: Teaching to Change Training of Trainers**
Massachusetts Teachers Association

■ **Speaking up! Speaking Out**
WILD Summer Institute

■ **Workplace Violence: Sexual Harassment and Bullying**
WILD Summer Institute

To Contact the UMass Labor Extension Program:

■ **UMASS AMHERST LABOR EXTENSION PROGRAM**

Labor Center, Thompson Hall, 200 Hicks Way
Amherst, MA 01003-9277

Dale Melcher: 413-545-6166 Fax: 413-545-0110
email: dmelcher@lrrc.umass.edu

■ **UMASS BOSTON LABOR EXTENSION PROGRAM**

CPCS Labor Resource Center, 100 Morrissey Blvd.
Boston, MA 02125-3393

Tess Ewing: 617-287-7352
email: tess.ewing@umb.edu

■ **UMASS DARTMOUTH LABOR EXTENSION PROGRAM**

Dubin Labor Education Center, 285 Old Westport Road
North Dartmouth, MA 02747

Kim Wilson: 508-999-8781 Fax: 508-999-9168
email: kwilson@umassd.edu

■ **UMASS LOWELL LABOR EXTENSION PROGRAM**

600 Suffolk St., 5th Floor, Lowell, MA 01854

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email: susan_winning@uml.edu

Spotlight *(Continued from p. 3.)*

to further this work supported in part by the University of Massachusetts' Future of Work Research Initiative. With the help of our intern, Siggie Meilus, we have gathered over 1300 post-cards of bus riders and a commitment from over 30 organizations to demand better service. We have held public meetings and gained support from elected officials. For a fifteen-minute video about the campaign, visit: www.atu.org/media/multimedia/video/atuthecommunity3. A sixty-minute video is being developed which will be used for public access TV and other purposes. For more information, please call Kim Wilson at 508-999-8781.