

Labor Extension Bulletin

A Publication of the University of Massachusetts Labor Extension Program

UMASS AMHERST ■ UMASS BOSTON ■ UMASS DARTMOUTH ■ UMASS LOWELL

VOLUME 21 ■ NUMBER 1 ■ SPRING 2019

#MeToo in the Labor Movement

In late 2017, women in Hollywood began coming forward with stories of sexual harassment and sexual assault at work, prompting thousands of other women to share their stories with the hashtag #MeToo. The Me Too movement had been developed by activist Tarana Burke in 2006 as a way to address the epidemic of sexual violence against Black women as adults and as children. While the 2017 movement was largely dominated by wealthy white women at first, the campaign spread like wildfire and initiated conversations about gender, race, class, and who gets to tell their story – and it’s no surprise that it has become a key issue in the labor movement in the past year.

One key aspect of this fight has been to focus on worksites where sexual violence is especially pernicious, often because of the solitary nature of the work and the factors – like poverty and immigration status – that keep workers in those industries relatively hidden from the public eye. From SEIU janitors in California who began the #YaBasta/End Rape on the Night Shift campaign, to UNITE-HERE hotel workers in Chicago and their #HandsOffPantsOn campaign, to agricultural workers across the country who have pushed back against rape and assault in the fields, women (and men) in the labor movement have driven the #MeToo movement to represent working class women, immigrant women, and people of color. The National Council for Occupational Safety and Health (COSH) has begun a campaign called “Our Turn/Nuestro Turno” to fight for justice in the workplace for all low-wage workers at risk of sexual violence. Many of these campaigns have resulted in both improved contract language and new laws; see the Resource Corner for more details.

Most union contracts contain basic protections against sexual harassment and discrimination in hiring and promotion based on sex and gender, but allegations of daily harassment have been notoriously difficult to prove – all the more so for women and men in the most precarious forms of employment. Many unions use state and/or federal regulations against harassment and assault as starting points and use collective bargaining to strengthen laws that may be tepid or at risk of revision. For example, Massachusetts law requires most employers to provide unpaid domestic violence leave for victims of intimate partner violence, stalking, and sexual assault who have no earned time (sick, personal or vacation) available. The Institute for Women’s Policy Research reports that in a recent poll, 64 percent of those who identified as victims of domestic violence reported that their ability to work was affected by the violence. Using the law as a starting point, a local may negotiate for this leave to be treated more like bereavement or jury duty leave: paid, without a requirement to use up other earned time first.



Also in Massachusetts, Ballot Measure 3 in 2018 sought to overturn the law banning discrimination against transgender individuals seeking to use public facilities. While the measure lost by a large margin and the law banning discrimination remained in place, unions may use this momentum to seek stronger contractual protections for transgender men and women in the workplace, including trans-friendly healthcare plans and a strengthened non-discrimination clause in the contract. That way, even if the law changes, workers still have the protection of their contract.

Some unions have taken action to create new norms. A group called the Oregon Women Labor Leaders (OWLL) created an “Agreement” and asked women and men in unions across the state to sign on and post in their workplaces a list of actions they will take to foster an environment of gender equality – including fostering women’s leadership, “interrupting oppressive behavior,” and supporting policy and contract provisions that support women in particular. Like many of the examples above, OWLL is deliberately intersectional in its approach – which is to say, it recognizes that harassment and abuse based on gender is inseparable from identities of race, age, religion, disability, and more.

Perhaps the most challenging task for the labor movement as it intersects with the #MeToo movement is confronting its own power structures and politics. Members may feel reluctant to come forward for fear of weakening the power of the union – or they may be pressured not to by leadership. What should unions do when a member accuses a leader of harassment? Or a staff person? Or another member? One thing is clear: unions must take any and all allegations of harassment and assault seriously. This means that leadership should develop procedures for how to deal with each of these scenarios in a way that is transparent and unbiased, and respects both the accuser and the due process rights of the accused.

(Continued on Back)

Around THE STATE

Book launch and discussion with Bill Fletcher, Jr. **Thursday, February 14, 2019, 4-6 pm**

Location: UMass Boston

Join award-winning journalist and lifelong social justice advocate, Bill Fletcher, Jr., for the launch of his first work of fiction: *The Man Who Fell From the Sky*, a crime novel. Bill will discuss his novel's exploration of racism and inequality through the eyes of a young journalist of Cape Verdean descent who investigates a murder in a small Cape Cod community in 1970 while covering anti-Viet Nam War protests and the Black Panthers.

To register, email Wally.Soper@umb.edu.

Bill Fletcher: Racial Identity and Labor's Struggle for Equality **Friday, February 15, 2pm to 3pm**

Location: Grand Reading Room, Library, UMass Dartmouth

Cost: Free

Contact: Camilo Viveiros, cviveiros@umassd.edu

The Labor Education Center, the Fredrick Douglass Unity House and Black History Seasons will present this thought provoking discussion led by labor journalist Bill Fletcher. More information is available in the program notes.

WILD in the Winter

Saturday, March 23rd from 9am to 1pm

Location: Best Training Center, 2201 Washington St, Roxbury, MA

Cost: \$10

Contact: Joanie Parker, joanie@wildlabor.org

Join other women from around the region to explore timely issues of importance to women. Spanish translation and childcare available

UMass Dartmouth Revived Legislative Breakfast

Saturday, March 31, 8:30am to 11am

Location: Woodland Commons, UMass Dartmouth

Cost: TBA but no one will be turned away

Contact: Kim Wilson at kwilson@umassd.edu

Join us at this informational event cosponsored with the Greater SE Mass Labor Council. Attendees will have the opportunity to speak directly with local elected officials about issues of working people in SE Mass and beyond. US Representative Joe Kennedy will be in attendance.

2019 Boston Labor Conference

Saturday, April 6, 2019, 9:30 am – 4 pm

Location: MA Archives & Commonwealth Museum (220 Morrissey Blvd., Boston MA)

This year's conference will explore four themes: Where do we go from here?

Elections, Legislation and Organizing; Labor and Inequality in Boston and Massachusetts; Strikes, Lockouts, and Workplace Power; and Right-wing Populism, Race, and the US Working Class. Join us for interesting presentations and lively conversation!

To register, email Wally.Soper@umb.edu.

Earth Day Book Talk and Discussion

Monday, April 22nd at 6:30pm

Location: Great Southeastern Mass Labor Council, 560 Pleasant Street, New Bedford, MA

The UMD Labor Education Center is cohosting this event with Erik Loomis, URI Historian and author of the "A History of America in Ten Strikes" and "Out of Sight: The Long and Distributing Story of Corporations Outsourcing Catastrophe".

Fall River Labor History Walking Tour

Saturday, April 27, time TBA

Location: Quequechan River Rail Trail, Fall River

Contact: Camilo Viveiros, cviveiros@umassd.edu

Join the second annual labor history walk. Meet students portraying mill workers and owners, abolitionists, and others. Don't miss the opportunity to experience living history along the banks of the Quequechan River.

WILD Summer Institute "Using Our Voices, Building Our Power"

June 21 - 23, 2019

Location: Worcester State University

For more information, contact Joanie Parker at Joanie@wildlabor.org

"Visions of Labor: Film and Worker Voices"

Friday and Saturday November 9-10, 2019

Location: UMass Amherst, Campus Center

Contact: Clare Hammonds at chammonds@soc.umass.edu

"Visions of Labor: Film and Worker Voices" conference is designed to employ the power of film to inspire, energize, and spur creative action on movement issues and organizing in all forms—from unions to worker- and community-based movements to electoral politics. Workshops and plenaries will use a set of films as a medium to convey ideas that will be central to all discussions. The films will be organizing tools and will, for the most part, substitute for panels and speakers.



Academic Offerings

UMass Amherst

UMass Amherst offers a unique multi-disciplinary program leading toward an MS degree in labor studies. We offer a two-year residential master's program as well as a limited-residency format for trade union officers, staff, and activists. To learn more about our program, please visit our website at: <http://www.umass.edu/lrcc/>.

UMass Boston

Our BA Major and Minor in Labor Studies is continuing to grow, along with our Certificate in Labor Leadership. Now's the time to start thinking about taking courses for next fall. If you're interested in one course or the whole program, contact Wally Soper (617-287-7267 or wally.soper@umb.edu). Our fall courses will include: Labor & Working Class History; Labor and Migration; Work & Society; Sports & Inequality; Globalization & Labor; Labor and the US Economy. In addition we offer Field Placements for students wanting to get experience working in the labor movement. For more details about these classes or our programs, visit our website: umb.edu/lrc.

UMass Dartmouth

At UMass Dartmouth, we are reaching deeper to work with students through creating credit internships and offering career opportunities for students in the labor movement. We are also continuing to participate in classes as guest speakers and we are now working to create service learning projects connecting students to organized labor and low income workers. For more information, visit www.umassd.edu/labored/workwithstudents. To participate, call Camilo Viveiros, at 508-910-7108

UMass Lowell

The interdisciplinary labor studies minor continues to grow. The Introduction to Labor Studies class is offered again this spring, taught by Labor education director Susan Winning, who is also faculty for the Labor Studies Internship. We always look for new service learning projects and internship opportunities for the students. During the upcoming spring, we plan to go through the process of adding Labor Studies as a concentration in the Bachelor of Liberal Arts program.

Program Notes

■ UMASS AMHERST

The Labor Center residency program continues to thrive welcoming twelve new students this Fall. Many of our students are supported through our internship program where students work directly with unions around the state. After a successful conference last Spring, the presented papers have been brought together in an edited collection *Labor in the Age of Trump*, which is now under contract and should be available at the end of the this year. The Labor Center is also thrilled to announce that we have received a \$15,000 grant from Mass Humanities to support, "Visions of Labor: Film and Worker Voices." This project, in Mass Humanities' words, "aims to help local workers see their work lives as worthy of attention and part of a historical trajectory in which they are agents." The project also includes a three-day digital storytelling workshop, a conference featuring documentaries and feature films along with newly-created digital stories about the lives of workers, and a website to showcase the videos.

■ UMASS BOSTON

The Fall was a busy time at the Labor Studies program. We held our 2nd annual James Green Memorial Lecture and People's History Walking Tour, which featured Margaret Sullivan, the Boston Police Department Archivist, who is working on a community research project uncovering the lives of the police officers who participated in the 1919 Boston Police strike. To get involved in the research project, visit: blogs.umb.edu/bpstrike1919/getting-involved. We also co-sponsored the "Inside Chinatown" photography exhibit, and look forward to next year's exhibit featuring Boston-based workers. Now we're gearing up for a Valentine's Day visit with Bill Fletcher, Jr., and our Boston Labor Conference on April 6th (see the Around the State section of this newsletter for more details).

■ UMASS DARTMOUTH

The Labor Education Center recently held our annual meeting of labor and community supporters. We shared the news of the successful five-year review of the Center which was presented to the UMass President. The highlight of the meeting was presentations from two students connected to the Center. Sade Smith won one of the prizes in the undergraduate journal and Winona Glascock had portrayed an English factory worker in last year's labor history walk. Our work continues in education around worker rights. We now have a joint project with our community partner, the Community Economic Development Center, to provide training of trainers of Central American women. This spring, we will continue to work with interns, earning credit from various departments. We also welcome Bill Fletcher on February 15. He will speak about issues of race through the lens of his new mystery novel which is set in our area. We will be cosponsoring a talk, and other events, with organizations of students of color on campus, and especially Cape Verdean students as the protagonist is Cape Verdean.

■ UMASS LOWELL

We have been busy with our community partners. Bread and Roses planning for 2019 has begun, with Elizabeth heading up the "Lawrence History Live" committee. She joins the Merrimack Valley Project on their workers and immigrants' rights campaigns. North Shore Labor Council work included organizing the annual Women's committee solidarity breakfast and supporting the NSLC annual strategic planning session. We are leading a lead a strategic planning process for the New Lynn Coalition. We have led strategic planning sessions with the MVCLC, and continue to work with the Lowell Education Justice Alliance (LEJA). Within the University, Elizabeth is working to build a PHENOM chapter, and with LEJA, we'll participate in the *Fund our Future* Campaign. We are working to establish a University wide flextime policy, and are participating on a task force with the Center for Women and Work to develop a better policy and contract language on Sexual Harassment. We have launched our student internship program, and hired two interns to work with our community partners during the spring semester.

The Resource Corner

TOOLS FOR LABOR TO ADDRESS SEXUAL HARASSMENT

National AFLCIO: Anti-Discrimination and Anti-Harassment Policy and resources for State, Area and Central Labor Bodies, including some training and education resources, fact sheets and reports. See: <https://aflcio.org/about-us/afl-cio-anti-discrimination-and-anti-harassment-policy>

For Code of Conduct: <https://aflcio.org/sites/default/files/2018-02/Code%20of%20Conduct.pdf>

International unions:

SAG-AFTRA. https://www.sagaftra.org/files/sa_documents/sag-aftra_code_of_conduct_f2_2_0.pdf

Service Employees International Union-United Service Workers West, *Rape on the Night Shift* campaign. <https://www.reveal-news.org/article/a-group-of-janitors-started-a-movement-to-stop-sexual-abuse/>; "100 women Walk" https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Emtc3I_zowg

Hands Off, Pants On: UNITE HERE Local in Chicago hospitality and tourism industry – see report, ordinances and other resources. <https://www.handsoffpantson.org/>

National Council for Occupational Safety and Health new *Our Turn* initiative. Our Turn, convened by the National Council for Occupational Safety and Health (COSH), supports

low-wage and vulnerable workers who are uniting to put an end to sexual harassment and violence in their workplaces and win dignity and respect on the job. <http://coshnetwork.org/our-turn>

Other Sources:

Avendaño, Ana. (*Labor Studies Journal*, 2018, Vol. 43(4) 245–262). Sexual Harassment in the Workplace: Where Were the Unions?" by. Article documenting the problem and suggesting some solutions. <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.1177/0160449X18809432>

Workplaces Responds to Domestic and Sexual Violence Resource Center; various resources and tools. <https://www.workplacesrespond.org/>

<https://onlabor.org/top-10-things-unions-can-do-right-now-to-address-sexual-harassment-in-the-workplace/>

Institute for Women's Policy Research: <https://iwpr.org/> Various articles and research, including Sexual Harassment and Assault at Work: Understanding the Costs. <https://iwpr.org/publications/sexual-harassment-work-cost/>

Labor Notes: multiples articles and resources, including *Stopping Sexual Harassment: A handbook for union and workplace activists*. This organizing manual published in 1992 highlights a range of tactics that unions and other workers can use to fight sexual harassment, including training sessions, contract language, job actions -- and more. Updated article - <http://labornotes.org/2018/02/stopping-sexual-harassment>

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UMass Amherst

Labor Extension Program

Labor Center, Thompson Hall

200 Hicks Way

Amherst, MA 01003-9277

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In the Past 6 months...

The UMass Labor Extension Program has provided trainings on these topics...

- **Bargaining for the Common Good**
Massachusetts Teachers Association (MTA)
- **Coalitions and developing collective bargaining campaigns**
MTA, AFT, AFSCME
- **Cooking Up Collective Action**
MTA
- **Development vs. Gentrification**
UMB
- **Popular Education for Social Change Training of Trainers**
WILD
- **Organizing to build power in the workplace**
IBEW 2321
- **Setting priorities & strategy development**
SEIU 509 Private Sector
- **Strategic Planning**
Lowell Education Justice Alliance (LEJA)
Merrimack Valley CLC
New Lynn Coalition
North Shore Labor Council

To Contact the UMass Labor Extension Program:

■ UMass Amherst Labor Extension Program

Labor Center, Thompson Hall, 200 Hicks Way

Amherst, MA 01003-9277

www.umass.edu/lrrc

Clare Hammonds: 413-545-6166 Fax: 413-545-0110

email: chammonds@soc.umass.edu

■ UMass Boston Labor Extension Program

Labor Resource Center, 100 Morrissey Blvd.

Boston, MA 02125-3393

www.umb.edu/lrc

Annetta Argyres: 617-287-7229

email: anneta.argyres@umb.edu

■ UMass Dartmouth Labor Extension Program

Arnold M. Dubin Labor Education Center, 257 Union Street

New Bedford, MA 02740

www.umassd.edu/labored

Camilo Viveiros: 508-910-7108 Fax: 508-910-7120

email: cviveiros@umassd.edu

■ UMass Lowell Labor Extension Program

Department of Sociology, Dugan Hall 205Q, 883 Broadway

Lowell, MA 01854

www.uml.edu/LaborEducation

Elizabeth Pellerito: 978-934-3137 Fax: 978-934-4033

email: Elizabeth.Pellerito@uml.edu

Contact the UMass Labor Extension Program at <http://umasslep.org>

#MeToo in the Labor Movement

(Continued from Front Page)

This may or may not involve getting the boss's disciplinary procedure involved: there may be cases where the union has no choice because the employer has also been notified, and there may be cases that are egregious enough (for example, involving violence or threats of violence), with substantial evidence, that the union feels it has an ethical obligation to notify the employer in order to protect other current and future members who work with the perpetrator. In other cases, members may agree to a

restorative justice process internal to the union, in which the perpetrator acknowledges wrongdoing and, in consultation with the affected parties, agrees to solutions to make amends for the damage done to the community.

No group can anticipate every case that occurs, but open and transparent discussion among stewards and leaders, with internal bylaws and policies that have been voted on, will go a long way to maintain members' confidence that their union stands for justice for all members.

Spotlight on Labor Law

Massachusetts Equal Pay Law of 2018 and Collective Bargaining

A new Massachusetts Equal Pay Law went into effect on July 1, 2018, mandating that your employer can't pay you less than they pay an employee of a different gender who does comparable work. Some key elements of the law:

PART 1: Comparable Work

- Comparable work" is work that requires similar skill, effort, and responsibility, and is performed under similar working conditions. Differences in pay are only allowed under certain conditions:
 - A seniority system
 - The geographic location of the jobs
 - Production, sales, or revenue-based systems of pay
 - Job-related differences in education, training, or experience
 - A merit system
 - Differences in travel required by the jobs

PART 2: Ban on Salary History

- If you are applying for a new job, the employer can't ask you how much you have been paid in the past until after making you a job offer that includes compensation
- Employers can't refuse to consider you for a job based on how much you earned in your last job

PART 3: Transparency

- As an employee, your employer can no longer prohibit you from discussing your salary with other employees. You are allowed to talk to your colleagues about how much money you make and how much they make.

Enforcement:

- You can't be retaliated against for exercising your rights under the law
- If you think your rights have been violated, you can contact the Civil Rights Division of the Attorney General's Office, the Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination, or you can hire a private attorney.

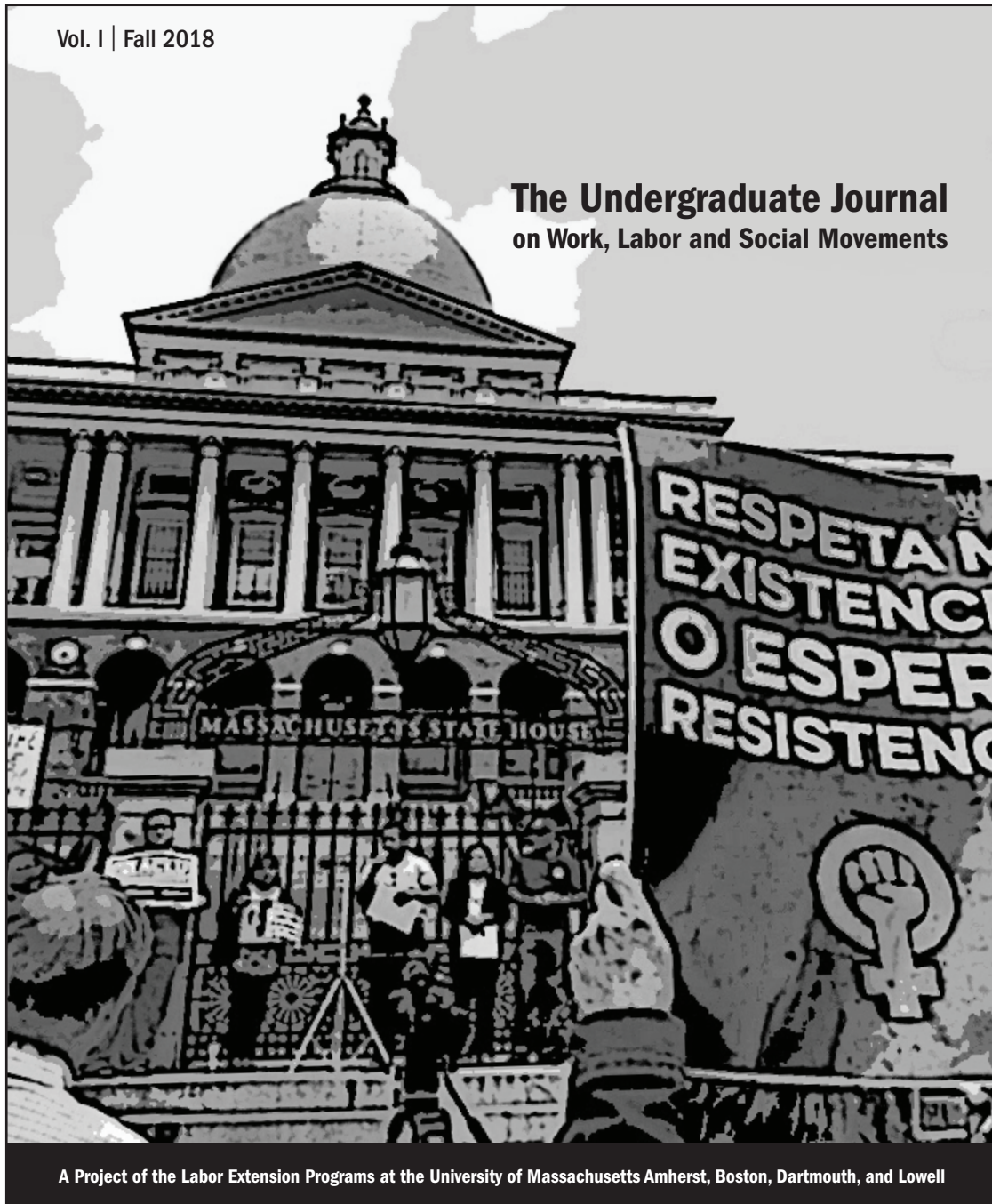
What should unions do?

- start an informational campaign to make sure employees know their rights
- ask for a company-wide salary review (conducted by a joint labor-management committee or an outside firm) on gender equity in salaries,
- incorporate a process within the contract for individual salary review to resolve matters internally, knowing that if the matter is not resolved the employee may still go to the attorney general.

For more information: <https://www.mass.gov/massachusetts-equal-pay-law>; <http://sandulligrace.com/equal-pay-for-men-and-women-doing-comparable-work-a-new-massachusetts-law-takes-effect/>

Announcing Publication of New Journal

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A Project of the Labor Extension Programs at the University of Massachusetts Amherst, Boston, Dartmouth, and Lowell

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