

Moving Forward on Organizing Is Subject at Union Leadership Retreat

"Changing to Organize" has become a familiar slogan in the labor movement. In recent years, more and more unions have rallied around the call to change themselves into lean, mean organizing machines. Unfortunately, that is easier said than done. Despite all the hard work and good intentions, unions in this country lost members last year. Union membership decreased by 0.4% nationally in 2000. As Massachusetts was not exempt from this trend.

What do we need to do to turn these numbers around?

On Wednesday, March 21, leaders from a dozen Massachusetts unions spent a day together at the LIUNA District Council facilities in Hopkinton to do some hard thinking about this issue. The top elected officers and organizing directors from public and private sector unions; manufacturing, service and construction industries, debated different approaches and shared best practices. Based on a similar program that the national AFL-CIO has offered to international union presidents, the Mar. 21 Leadership Retreat was modified to fit the needs of our local Massachusetts labor movement. The program was the result of a collaboration between Labor Extension, the MA AFL-CIO, and the state office of the national federation.

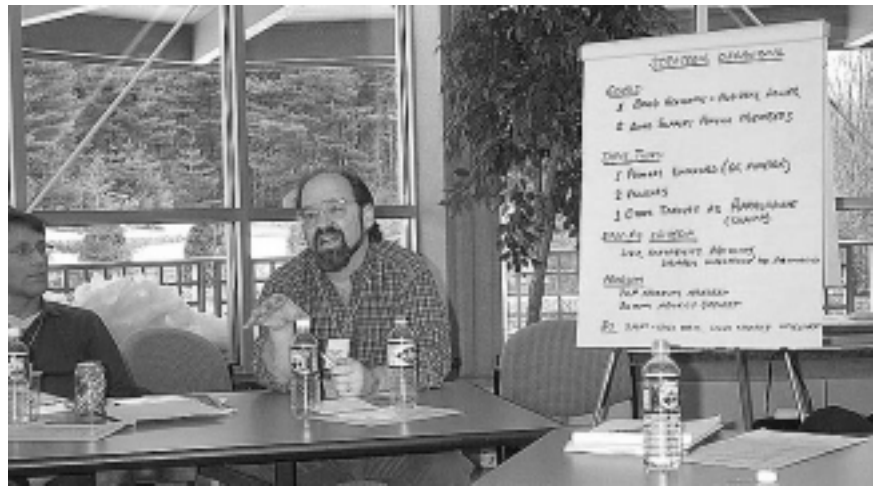
Mass. AFL-CIO Bob Haynes set the tone for the day when he emphasized that the labor movement must organize or die. He said that the state federation stands ready to help unions' organizing efforts in any way it can.

The rest of the program was divided into separate discussions of some of the tough questions that confront union leaders trying to "change to organize". The topics were: Obtaining Resources for Organizing; Overcoming Resistance; Involving Members; Building an Organizing Staff; and Developing an Organizing Strategy. Each discussion began with a presentation by a union leader who had some good experience or thinking to share. Presenters were Tony Caso, Executive Director of AFSCME Council 93; Frank Borges, Secretary-Treasurer of SEIU 285; Kathy Casavant, Secretary-Treasurer of the MA AFL-CIO; Ralph Harriman, Business Manager of Painters DC 35; and Jeff Crosby, President of IUE-CWA Local 201.

The presentations were followed by lively discussion, either in



Stan Lichawala, President of IBEW Local 1505, makes a point as Deb Sullivan, IBEW 1505, Steve Asadoorian, MFT, and Joe Kanan, CWA 1365 look on.



Jeff Crosby, President of IUE/CWA Local 201, discusses organizing strategies.

small groups or all together. In order to encourage participants to speak openly about their problems, a strict rule of confidentiality was imposed. The strategy worked well; one participant noted that what she liked best about the program was that "we were able to be honest about our failures and what we need to change."

Response to the Retreat was very positive. At the end of the day, several people suggested ideas for follow-up programs: repeats of the retreat on a regular continuing schedule; a Leadership Retreat just for construction trades; and "membership organizing and leadership (re)training" were some of the proposals made by participants. LEP and the AFL-CIO will definitely put our heads together to figure out how best to follow up on this very successful day.

Register Now!!!

Building Union Power in a Changing Economy AFL-CIO/UALE Education Conference - Boston, MA April 26-29, 2001

This is a joint conference of the National AFL-CIO and the United Association for Labor Education (UALE). Labor researchers, activists and educators from the U.S. and other countries will be in Boston for the conference which will focus on the challenges unions face in a changing economic environment and the strategies being developed to confront them. Registration fee: \$175 for union members and UALE members; \$200 for non-members; Inquire about one day rates and student rates.

General sessions, workshops, roundtables and papers will develop these themes:

- * The impact of corporate power on union bargaining, organizing, and political strategies
- * The anti-union character of the "new" economy: what must we learn?
- * Fighting the low wage economy: living wage, bargaining and organizing approaches
- * Linking activists within communities and across borders
- * Key bargaining issues - and strategies - in a changing workplace
- * 21st century unions: high tech communications, leadership development, rigorous self-study
- * How unions are changing internally to meet the challenges of immigration
- * Labor education under pressure: challenges, innovations and continuity

For more information call the Labor Extension Program nearest you. The UALE website address is: <http://www.uale.org>

UMass Amherst
Labor Extension Program
Labor Center
Draper Hall
Amherst, MA 01003
(413) 545-6166
Fax: (413) 545-0110

UMass Boston
Labor Extension Program
CPCS Labor Resource Center
100 Morrissey Blvd.
Boston, MA 02125
(617) 287-7352
Fax: (617) 287-7404

UMass Dartmouth
Labor Extension Program
Labor Education Center
285 Old Westport Road
North Dartmouth, MA 02747
(508) 999-8781
Fax: (508) 999-9168

UMass Lowell
Labor Extension Program
1 University Ave.
Lowell, MA 01854
(978) 934-3256
Fax: (978) 934-4033

Find out what is happening with UMass Labor Extension online! Our website is <http://www.umass.edu/lrrc/lrrc-extension.html>

AROUND THE STATE.....

AFSCME 1776 Stewards Training

Wednesdays - March 28, April 4, 11, 18, 25, May 2, - 3:30-5:30 PM

This is a closed enrollment program for AFSCME 1776. The six sessions will cover the roles, responsibilities and rights of stewards, grievance handling, mobilizing members and health and safety. To register contact AFSCME 1776 at 413-545-2831.

Free Trade Area of the Americas Teach -In

Wednesday - April 4, 1-3 PM

Cost: FREE
Location: Coburn Hall, UMass Lowell
Co-sponsored by the Graduate Employees Union-UAW, UMass Lowell Labor Extension Program, Department of Work Environment, Department of Regional Economics and Social Development. This secret trade deal could endanger public education, public health and living standards in the U.S. and around the world. Speakers Elaine Bernard (Director, Harvard Trade Union Program) and Benjamin King (Professor, MIT) will explain the grown global concern over these and other issues in the FTAA. For more information contact Nancy DellaMattera at (978) 934-3127.

Mass. Organizes

Tuesday - April 10, 9:30-11:30 AM

Cost: FREE
Location: IBEW Local 103
Organizing Immigrant Worker
For Information, contact Tess Ewing at (617) 287-7352; Sandy Felder at (617) 557-5488; or Wally Soper at (508) 650-9732.

UMass Dartmouth Workers' Memorial Day Road Race

Saturday - April 14, race start 10:00 AM, must register by 9:30 AM

Cost: \$12.00
Location: UMass Dartmouth Athletic Center
Co-sponsored by Labor Education Center and Department of Athletics.
This annual event commemorates SE Massachusetts workers killed on the job in the past year and provides vital support to the Center's education work.

Pioneer Valley Central Labor Council Education Conference

Friday - April 20, 8:30-2:30 PM

Cost: \$25.00
Location: Ms. Clancy's - 315 Cottage Street - Springfield
The theme for this year's education conference is *People Power an Public Policy*. Following a program of speakers and workshops, participants will move to a community/labor action in downtown Springfield. For more information or to register contact Irene Kimball, PVCLC, 9413) 732-7970

Labor & Globalization: What Next After Quebec?

Wednesday - April 25, 6:30-8:30 PM

Cost: FREE
Location: TBA
Co-sponsored by UMass Labor Extension Program, WILD, Jobs with Justice, Harvard Trade Union Program.
Come hear a report from labor activists just returned from the front lines of the April 21 Free Trade Area of the Americas Summit in Quebec! We will strategize about local involvement in the growing global movement against this 34-nation trade deal that many call "NAFTA on steroids." This event is part of a week-long series of events in Boston entitled *Northeast Global Alternatives 2001*. For more information contact Nancy DellaMattera at (978) 934-3127 or Russ Davis at (617) 524-8778.

"Crafting Work-Family Policy: the Prospects for Paid Family Leave in Massachusetts

Wednesday - May 2, 5:30-7:30 PM

Cost: FREE (Please register in advance)
Location: UMass Boston
Speakers to include Kathy Casavant, Secretary-Treasurer, Mass. AFL-CIO
Co-sponsored by UMass Boston Labor Resource Center and Women's State-wide Legislative Network. For more information contact Heather Gonzalez at (617) 287-7426.

Outdoor Party to Celebrate Beginning Fall River

Labor History Mural

Sunday - May 6, 2:00 PM (TENTATIVE, call (508) 999-8781 to confirm)

Cost: FREE
Location: UNITE Hall, 38 3rd St., Garment Workers Sq., Fall River
We're thrilled to invite any interested trade unionist to celebrate with us as we begin the creation of the first of two large outdoor murals that will belong to the labor movement and tell our history. Come for music and food - and to help paint!

Mass Organizes

Tuesday - May 8, 9:30-11:30 AM

Cost: FREE
Location: IBEW Local 103
Topic: TBA
For Information, contact Tess Ewing at (617) 287-7352; Sandy Felder at (617) 557-5488; or Wally Soper at (508) 650-9732.

MA AFL-CIO Gompers-Murray-Meany Educational Institute

Wednesday, May 23 - Friday, May 25

Cost: call the Mass. AFL-CIO
Location: Seacrest Inn, Falmouth
"New Strategies for Building the Labor Movement"
Stand-alone day at Gompers-Murray-Meany - Thursday, May 24
For information about registering for whole conference or for Thursday only, contact Dora at MA AFL-CIO 617-227-8260, ext. 15.

WILD Summer Institute

June 1-June 3

Cost: \$180
Location: Fitchburg State College, Fitchburg, MA
The theme for this years WILD Summer Institute is "Women of All Colors Say "Basta, Ya!"/Mujeres de Todos los Colores Dicen "enough Already." The Institute brings together a multiracial, multicultural group of women from unions, organizing drives and workplace organizing projects around the state for an intensive and exciting, educational program. Participants attend workshops on leadership skills, anti-racism work, and skills development, as well as plenary sessions and celebrations of women's abilities and achievements. Childcare and scholarships available. For more information contact WILD at 617-426-0520.

Mass Organizes

Tuesday - June 12, 9:30-11:30 AM

Cost: FREE
Location: IBEW Local 103
Topic: TBA
For Information, contact Tess Ewing at (617) 287-7352; Sandy Felder at (617) 557-5488; or Wally Soper at (508) 650-9732.

Mass Organizes

Tuesday - July 10, 9:30-11:30 AM

Cost: FREE
Location: IBEW Local 103
Topic: TBA
For Information, contact Tess Ewing at (617) 287-7352; Sandy Felder at (617) 557-5488; or Wally Soper at (508) 650-9732.

We've Gone Electronic!!! Would you like to receive e-mail announcements of new programs and events sponsored by LEP? Did you say YES? Contact the nearest Labor Extension Program by emailing your name and address.

Amherst: dmelcher@lrrc.umass.edu
Boston: tess.ewing@umb.edu
Dartmouth: DCruz@umassd.edu
Lowell: LEP@uml.edu

PROGRAM NOTES

UMass AMHERST Labor Extension Program

Neither snow, nor sleet, nor freezing winds . . . This winter UMass Amherst offered a week-long Arbitration Training to the APWU, the seven-session Common Sense Economics study group, co-sponsored by the Hampshire Franklin Labor Council and the Center for Popular Economics, Media Strategy for Labor Activists in Springfield, Boston and Lakeville, co-sponsored by the Mass AFL-CIO Communications Committee, Bargaining Training for GEO/UAW 2322 and MSP/MTA, and Challenges for Stewards, for AFSCME SUMMUP. We participated in the Mass AFL-CIO's Organizing Leadership Retreat, a Leadership Conference for AFSCME SUMMUP, and as a panelist at the Mount Holyoke College Frances Perkins conference. Finally we wrapped up Winter with *WILD in the Winter* and a workshop on Standing Up to Discrimination. We're looking forward to Spring and the AFL-CIO/UALE Joint Education Conference and Gompers Murray Meany. See you there!

UMass BOSTON Labor Extension Program

In a change of pace from its usual fundraising efforts, the UMass Boston Labor Resource Center has commissioned Philadelphia artist Josh Sarantitis to produce an original work of art celebrating the past and present importance of labor in Massachusetts. The work will be produced as a limited edition print, which we will sell to raise the funds necessary to keep the Center alive another year. Notecards will also be printed to make the artwork more widely available. We hope to have the prints ready for sale by late April. The Center will also sponsor a reception in early June which will showcase local pro-labor performing artists as well as the Sarantitis work. For more information, contact Heather Gonzalez at 617-287-7426.

UMass DARTMOUTH Labor Extension Program

Our winter in Labor Extension has been a blend of organizing education and more non-traditional community building and public theater used for education. We presented two internet trainings for organizers, as well as a semester-long, for-credit, weekly class on internal and external organizing for SEIU and UFCW members. In addition, Labor Extension worked closely with community organizers to plan a conference in New Bedford attended by representatives of over thirty small community organizations. Finally, we developed a six-stop tour for performance artist and scholar Charles Pace which is outlined on the back page of this newsletter.

UMass LOWELL Labor Extension Program

The UMASS Lowell Labor Extension program just completed a 5 session "contract campaigns" class attended by 25 members from 10 local unions. Also this winter we have worked with delegates from the North Shore Labor Council to conduct two sessions entitled "Globalization and the North Shore". These 1 hour 15 minute sessions were held during the regular council meeting and addressed the local impacts of global forces- such as the increasing movement of capital and people across national borders. The sessions focussed on the effects of NAFTA and the possible future effects of the Free Trade Area of the Americas and what we can do about it. Also on the FTAA: we worked with the Northeast Labor Committee for Global Justice to develop a 15 and 30 minute speakers outline on the FTAA and train local union members to give this presentation at their local unions and other organizations. So far at least 12 presentations have been planned.

SPOTLIGHT Northeast Labor Committee for Global Justice

This newly formed and growing committee of over 62 unions from Massachusetts, Maine and New Hampshire is organizing and educating labor activists about a new trade deal coming down the pike: The Free Trade Area of the Americas. Staffed by Jobs with Justice, this committee has taken on the immediate task of organizing dozens of local union members to "Get on the Bus" to Quebec on April 20 to protest the latest round of negotiations of this 34 -nation trade treaty which is planned to take effect in 2005. A speakers outline (designed to brief union activists on the FTAA and specific action steps), a 15 minute video entitled "Danger Ahead", and an E-mail network updating and connecting this local committee to anti-FTAA activities around the world are other significant efforts of this committee. Local unions can join the committee, obtain information about FTAA, get a speaker, find out about upcoming committee meetings and sign up for the bus to Quebec (leaving Friday night, April 20 and returning Sunday, April 22), by contacting Cassie Watters, Jobs with Justice (617-524-8110).



At a recent meeting of the Northeast Labor Committee for Global Justice at IBEW Local 1505 in Woburn, representatives of the following unions and organizations continued to plan for actions around the April 21 summit in Quebec: IUE Local 201 (Lynn, MA); CWA Local 1365 (Andover, MA) Greater Portland ME CLC; Jobs with Justice; UAW Local 1596, MA; AFT (Lynn, MA); IBEW 1505 (Woburn MA) and United For a Fair Economy.

The Resource Corner

The FTAA (Free Trade Agreement of the Americas) is due to be signed April 20 in Quebec City, Canada. Here are some of the many resources available to help us educate ourselves and our members before Quebec City and beyond about the impact of globalization. Check them out:

Everything you wanted to know but were afraid to ask about FTAA:
www.stopftaa.org
www.tradewatch.org/FTAA/factsheet.htm

"FTAA for Beginners," a two-hour participatory workshop
This workshop describes the FTAA and what it will do to our communities, starting with what people know - NAFTA. It includes NAFTA case studies; a race, gender, and class analysis of NAFTA; and a framework of expanding corporate globalization. It ends with a strategy planning session where participants identify local allies for a long-term anti-FTAA campaign. \$25 for trainer's guide and handouts, +\$25 for 2-x-3 foot flip charts postpaid, from United for a Fair Economy, 37 Temple Place, Boston MA 02111, 617-423-2148 ex. 24, info@ufenet.org

FTAA "Campaign of Inquiry" Packet
Background on the FTAA, action points, and more
www.tradewatch.org/FTAAftaahome.html or contact: Alesha Daughtrey, Public Citizen's Global Trade Watch, 215 Pennsylvania Ave. SE, Washington DC 20003

Video: "Danger Ahead"

This video, featuring our own Jeff Crosby, President of IUE 201 and the Northshore Central Labor Council, brings the impact of globalization into our work here at home - in our workplaces, our unions and our communities. Available for \$15 from Western Mass JWJ, 640 Page Blvd., Springfield MA 01104, 413-348-3288, or JWJ, 3353 Washington St., Jamaica Plain MA 02130, 617-524-8778.

Video: "This Is What Democracy Looks Like"

A co-production of the Independent Media Center and Big Noise Films. "This is What Democracy Looks Like" is a 70-minute documentary capturing the tide of events that transformed the Seattle WTO protests into the beginnings of a new movement.

www.thisisdemocracy.org/index2.html

Actor Portraying Frederick Douglass Visits SE Mass Union Member For Mural Project

Frederick Douglass, foremost abolitionist and New Bedford resident, was also a union man! Douglass will be a central figure in the New Bedford Labor History Mural, sponsored by the UMass Dartmouth Labor Extension Program, and this tour served to educate about the upcoming mural creation. His spirit came back to life during Black History Month in two SE Mass break rooms for union members as well as in several schools and other public venues. Labor Extension brought the performance artist and scholar Charles Pace to our area with the support of a grant from the Massachusetts Foundation for the Humanities and the UMass Dartmouth Student Senate.

The two half hour performances for UNITE and UE union members on their lunch break provided a unique opportunity to trade unionists to learn, in an innovative way, about a liberator who also supported worker collective action. Pace, as Douglass, delivered a monologue that included his story of expecting to work as a skilled laborer in the shipyards of New Bedford but being unable to because the white workers refused to work with him. Later Douglass became the president of the Colored National Labor Union. Pace's technique is to speak in character, take questions as Douglass, then take questions as Pace the scholar. For instance, at Riverside Manufacturing where approximately 95% of the workers are Portuguese immigrants, a member asked "Douglass" how he felt about immigrant workers in New Bedford. Pace answered in detail about the groups of immigrant who lived in New Bedford when he arrived in 1838 and Douglass' relationship with them and the abolitionist movement.

The two unions who hosted Pace, UNITE and the UE, did extensive education work with members to make sure everyone knew he was coming and what it was about. At Riverside Manufacturing, where 600 UNITE members make designer suits in New Bedford, the workers had already raised \$1,000 for the mural project about six months ago so they knew about, but needed more background on Douglass. Several stewards talked around the plant about the visit and the union representative translated a flyer about the event into Portuguese three days beforehand. The day before the visit, the local paper ran a story about Pace that the union copied and distributed. The day of the event more flyers were posted around the plant. Most importantly, the union leadership talked one on one about the performance's importance. When Pace arrived there were 600 workers there to hear him start his monologue with "I am a working man."



To help educate about the Labor History Mural Project, the performance artist Charles Pace portrays Frederick Douglass to UNITE members on break at Riverside Manufacturing in New Bedford.



UMass Lowell
Labor Extension Program
1 University Avenue
Lowell, MA 01854

In The Past 6 Months ***The UMass Labor Extension Programs Has Provided Trainings On These Topics....***

Arbitration Training

APWU

Common Sense Economics Standing Up to Discrimination

Media Strategy

Bargaining Training

MSP/MTA

GEO/UAW 2322

Challenges for Stewards

AFSCME SUMMUP

Stewards Training

AFSME 1776

Parliamentary Procedure, Part 2

Pressmen Local 3

Discrimination & Sexual Harassment

E-Team

Pressmen Local 3

Immigrant Workers Rights (in Spanish)

Guatemalan Immigrant Workers Group

Workers Rights

Northeast Action Conference

Contract Bargaining: GEO

UMass Graduate Employees' Organization

Corporate Research on the Internet

New England Laborers Organizing Fund

Immigrant Workers and Amnesty

SEIU Local 285 E. Board

Labor History: Frederick Douglass

UNITE

UE

Globalization/Free Trade Area of the Americas

North Shore Labor Council

Women's Institute for Leadership Development

Northeast Labor Committee For Global Justice

Union Leadership

AFSCME SUMMUP

Workers Rights

IUE/CWA 201 & Essex County Community Organization

Organizing

Mass AFL-CIO

Contract Campaigns