

In the Past 4 months...

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

- **Shrink, Shift, Shaft**
Democratic State Issues Convention
- **Speaking Up! Speaking Out!**
Western Mass Women's Fund
- **Bargaining Training**
SSEA
- **Skills for Community Organizing**
Community Service Program for Grades 6 – 12
- **Campaign Strategy**
Gompers, Murray, Meany
- **Leadership Skills**
NE Regional Summer Institute
- **Teaching Techniques**
NE Regional Summer Institute
- **Union Approach to Work and Family**
NE Regional Summer Institute
- **Civil Liberties: What's Happened to Them Since 9/11?**
NE Regional Summer Institute
- **Stewards Training**
WILD
- **Building Labor and Community Coalitions**
WILD
- **Developing Leadership Skills to Mobilize for Political Action**
WILD



**UMass Boston
Labor Extension Program**
CPCS Labor Resource Center
100 Morrissey Boulevard
Boston, MA 02125-3393

To Contact the UMass Labor Extension Program:

■ UMass Amherst Labor Extension Program

Labor Center, Gordon Hall
418 N. Pleasant St.
Amherst, MA 01002-1735
413-545-6166
Fax: 413-545-0110
email: dmelcher@lrrc.umass.edu

■ UMass Dartmouth Labor Extension Program

Dubin Labor Education Center
285 Old Westport Road
North Dartmouth, MA 02747
508-999-8781
Fax: 508-999-9168
email: kwilson@umassd.edu



■ UMass Boston Labor Extension Program

CPCS Labor Resource Center
100 Morrissey Blvd.
Boston, MA 02125-3393
617-287-7352
Fax: 617-287-7404
email: tess.ewing@umb.edu

■ UMass Lowell Labor Extension Program

1 University Ave.
Lowell, MA 01854
978-934-3127
Fax: 978-934-4033
email: susan_winning@uml.edu

- **Stewards Training**
Lowell School custodians' chapter of SEIU 888
- **Introduction to Basic Workers Rights (Spanish)**
Merrimack Valley Project Workers Center
- **Everything You Wanted to Know About Unions But Were Afraid to Ask**
(in Spanish) WILD
- **Developing Leadership Skills to Mobilize for Action**
(in Spanish and English) WILD
- **Economic Development CLC Meeting**
SE Mass and North Shore CLC Committees

"Let's do it after November second."

CONTINUED FROM FRONT PAGE

- Work with your local WIB (Workforce Investment Board), to influence the kinds of jobs that come into your area, the tax breaks that employers get and the training opportunities for workers. There are open slots for labor representatives on some WIBs, but anyone can participate on the committees where much of the work is actually done.

Of course, we can't keep up the same level of political action forever as we have going now. We're not Eveready bunnies. But if union members stay involved, even at a much lower level, we can make a big difference in the conditions we live and work under.

Labor Extension Bulletin

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

VOLUME 5 ■ NUMBER 3 ■ FALL 2004

“Let’s do it after November second.”

That is a commonly heard refrain these days among labor people. It is impressive to see how many Massachusetts unionists are putting in long hours working on electoral campaigns here in state, or tramping through New Hampshire on weekends, or even taking leaves from their jobs to work as volunteers in one of the battleground states. Union members understand well the high stakes in this coming election, and are getting politically involved more than ever.

In general, union members are better informed and more active politically than the rest of the population. Members of union households are about twice as likely to vote as members of non-union households. We are more apt to be aware of the candidates’ stands on issues that affect us—and less apt to be swayed by a blow-dried haircut and political doubletalk. Because of this, labor still has clout in politics despite our declining numbers. We still have numbers, but we also have the information and the organization to make the best use of our numbers.

In this anti-labor climate, however, working on the election of good candidates is not enough. When November third rolls around, we



Merrimack Valley CLC activists, including WIB member Sue D’Amore (left) meet with Sue Parsons after the Workforce Solutions Group meeting (see Spotlight) showing a way for union activists to be involved in politics in addition to campaign election work.

can’t afford to hang up our political hats and say, “Whew! That’s enough until the next election.” Labor needs to continue to exercise its clout in between.

If the bad guys win, our work will be cut out for us: we will need to mobilize time and again to fight defensive actions against anti-worker legislation, regulations and appointments as we do today. But even if our candidates win, we need to stay involved, to keep their feet to the fire and remind them who put them in office. The Right Wing does not fold up its tent and go home; they will continue to put pressure on whoever is in office to implement their agenda. We need to do the same—but do it more and better. We need to keep up the pressure on our elected leaders to implement pro-labor legislation policies on all levels, from municipal through state to federal.

So what can we rank-and-file union members or local leaders do to affect public policy? Isn’t that what the AFL-CIO and many unions have hired staff to do? There are many ways for members to make a difference. Here are just a few:

- Join your union’s Committee on Political Education
- Run for local office yourself.
- Find out about the MA AFL-CIO’s legislative agenda for this year, and educate your members about it
- Work in labor and community coalitions to pass pro-labor legislation. For example, see the article on the Workforce Solutions Group.

UMass Receives Funding for Future of Work Project

The UMass Labor Studies Programs have just received major state funding for a project on The Future of Work in Massachusetts. Work is undergoing a rapid transformation in our state. Job loss continues, expanding into technical and professional jobs, and work reorganization, new technology and the intensification of work are altering the nature of those jobs that remain. Unions, as well as policy makers and leaders of community and civic organizations, need resources to assist them in evaluating, analyzing and responding to these changes. The Future of Work project will bring the University’s resources to bear on these issues through research, regional discussions, a statewide conference, a publication, a web page, and the development of interactive teaching tools. Research findings and ideas generated by regional discussions will be presented at an April conference and available through a Future of Work web site. Labor Extension will be developing teaching materials for college classes as well as union and community groups on the future of work in Massachusetts. For further information contact the extension coordinator in your area.

Around THE STATE

Mass. Organizes

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

Cost: free

Location: Plumbers Local 12, 1240 Mass. Ave., Boston
Roundtable discussions on topics of interest to union organizers.
For information, contact Tess Ewing, 617-287-7352 or Kathy Casavant, 781-324-8230

Tearing Down the Walls:

Organizing for Change on Campus and in the Community

Saturday, October 16, 3 - 9 pm

Cost: TBA, nominal

Location: UMass Dartmouth, Group 6

Come to learn new organizing skills and meet other community members and students working for social change. Workshops will include: art and social change, one on one organizing and public speaking, protest/event planning and organizing 101.

Contact: Kim Wilson 508-999-8781

Bangladeshi Women Garment Workers Speak

Wednesday, October 20, 12:30-1:30 pm

Cost: Free

Location: UMass Amherst, Gordon Hall, 3rd Floor, 418 N. Pleasant St., Amherst, Mass

Two teen-aged garment workers, members of two NGOs that work with them, and representatives of the National Labor Committee will describe working conditions in Bangladesh and a new campaign to raise workers wages by \$.25/hour.

Contact: Dale Melcher 413-545-6166

What Could the 2004 Elections Mean for Labor and the Environment?

Wednesday, October 20, 7:00 pm

Cost: Free

Location: Main Auditorium, UMass Dartmouth

Join UMass Dartmouth students, and community members to

discuss and analyze how the results of the November elections could affect labor and the environment and what we can do about it.

Contact: Kim Wilson 508-999-8781

Arnold M. Dubin Labor Education Center Banquet

Thursday, October 21, 6:00 pm Cocktails, 7:00 pm Dinner

Cost: \$40.00 per person

Location: Venus de Milo, Rt. 6 Swansea

This annual event draws hundreds of union activists from SE Massachusetts and around the state. This year we are honoring Congressman Stephen Lynch and several rank and file activists and officers.

Solidarity School

Jobs with Justice and UMass Labor Extension

November 11 - 14

Cost: \$180.00

Location: Sandwich

This annual, residential school offers the opportunity for union and community activists to come together to reflect and analyze our work, network, and come up with new strategies. This year's school comes immediately after the election and we will use the experience and outcome of the election to guide us in our discussions and strategic planning.

Contact: Jobs with Justice at 617-524-8778

Strategic Internet Research for Organizing & Contract Campaigns

November 15, 16, and 17th, 8:30 am - 11:30 am

Cost: TBA

Location: UMass Boston

This popular series returns for union and community activists to learn internet research skills to build our movements through strategic information gathering and campaign planning.

Contact: Tess Ewing, 617-287-7352

The Resource Corner

Unions and labor councils engaged in economic development work would be well served to investigate the websites of *Good Jobs First* and *Working for America*. Good Jobs First (www.goodjobsfirst.org), founded by Greg LeRoy, works with organizations to help them hold subsidized businesses accountable for family-wage jobs and other effective results. GJF tracks corporate accountability innovations in all states to develop "best practices" that can then be employed elsewhere. Many reports are available for free download from their website, including *No More Candy Store: States and Cities Making Job Subsidies Accountable*.

The AFL-CIO Working for American Institute

(WAI)(www.WorkingforAmerican.org) is a union-sponsored, non-profit organization dedicated to creating good jobs and building strong communities. WAI is helping create "high road partnerships" based on an economy that "competes in today's global marketplace on the basis of innovation, quality and skill." A wide range of material—action briefs, brochures, and many resource guides (including *WAI's Economic Development: A Union Guide to the High Road*)—are available for free or a nominal cost, from their website, as well as an extensive bibliography of additional resources.

Two CLC Economic Development Committees Meet

On August 23rd, the Economic Development Committees of the North Shore and SE Massachusetts meet together in Boston to network, share experiences and start to discuss future opportunities for our work. These committees have worked, or are planning to work, on building labor/community coalitions to make government and business accountable for the types of jobs created from public money. Labor initiated economic development projects can address a wide spectrum of issues, while we met primarily to discuss accountability for companies that receive tax breaks. Harneen Chernow, Director of Education & Training at the Massachusetts AFL-CIO, helped greatly with the planning and facilitation of this meeting. We hope to meet again, and to have other Labor Councils join us in possible skill building workshops and to continue networking to build our Committees and integrate economic development work with Labor Council goals.

Program Notes

■ UMASS AMHERST

Union women's summer schools were a major focus of UMass Amherst extension activities this summer. We taught stewards training at WILD and three different workshops at the NE Regional Summer Institute for Union Women—leadership skills, a union approach to work and family issues, and teaching techniques. That still left time to prepare for an expanded undergraduate course on women and work for the Fall, deliver Shrink, Shift, Shaft, a workshop that looks at the right-wing political agenda, for the Democratic State Issues Convention, do bargaining training for the SSEA, representing employees of the City of Greenfield, and begin planning for the four-campus Future of Work in Massachusetts project (see article on page 1.)

■ UMASS BOSTON



The big news at UMass Boston's Labor Resource Center is that we have hired a new permanent Director. Dr. Susan Moir, brings with her excellent credentials in both labor and the academic world. For many years, Susan was a school bus driver in Boston and an activist and leader in the Boston School Bus Drivers' union, USWA Local 8751. There, she organized a Health and Safety Committee that did important work on ergonomics for bus drivers. Almost 12 years ago, Susan was hired to be the first Director of the Construction Occupational Health Program (COHP) at UMass Lowell. The COHP partnered with the Building Trades Unions to conduct health and safety research on the Big Dig. As Director, Susan carried out research projects, communicating the results to workers and others through newsletters and fact sheets written for non-scientists. She also conducted popular education programs with construction workers. While at UML, Susan took great advantage of the tuition benefit for employees, earning first her Master of Science in 1999 and then her Doctor of Science in 2004. Susan brings vision and energy, as well as experience, to her new job at UMass Boston, and we all look forward to working with her.

■ UMASS DARTMOUTH

The UMass Dartmouth Labor Extension Program continues to work with MassCOSH on addressing SE Mass immigrant worker health and safety problems. We have met several times with workers from the Guatemalan community and are organizing together using non-traditional strategies to fight for fairer and more safe jobs. Other work on safety and health involves the new opportunities posed by the extension coordinator joining the Governing Board of the Alliance for a Healthy Tomorrow, a statewide organization seeking preventive action on toxic hazards. Work linking students to the Labor Education Center continues with successful grant writing with two student organizations for organizing projects and we are working together planning an October 16 conference entitled, "Tearing Down the Walls: Organizing for Change on Campus and in the Community". Our program is fortunate to be able to work with the other three Extension Programs on programs like planning a meeting on economic development strategies for labor councils and planning the annual Solidarity School with Jobs with Justice.

■ UMASS LOWELL

Spring work began with the North Shore Education Conference, with a focus on educating members to combat the Right Wing. Collaborating with Neighborhood Legal services in Lawrence, we successfully piloted 2 sessions of the Labor Extension Workers Rights curriculum, in Spanish, with the Merrimack Valley Project's Workers Center project. Planning is now underway for a 3 session series in the fall, including training new facilitators drawn from the participants of the first series. Early summer, WILD was the focus of energy—developing a version of the SEIU political education "Shrink, Shift, Shaft" curriculum (see spring newsletter) and training teachers. At the annual North Shore Labor Council picnic/retreat, we facilitated an evaluation and planning session. With our increasing focus on economic development work, we held a joint meeting of the North Shore CLC and Southeastern Mass. economic development committees, and are active participants in planning the Merrimack Valley forum for the Workforce Solutions project.

Farewell Nancy DellaMattera!

Good-bye and good luck to sister coordinator Nancy DellaMattera. Nancy returned briefly to UMass Lowell, after a two-year leave of absence working on a labor council leadership development project for the national AFL-CIO. She is re-locating to San Jose, California at the end of September, to join her longtime partner who was offered an excellent (and sudden) job opportunity. We will miss Nancy greatly. Anyone wishing to contact Nancy, please contact Susan Winning at 978-934-3127 for contact info after Oct. 1st.

S P O T L I G H T

Workforce Solutions Group

An important coalition organization has been formed to reform the workforce development system. The AFL-CIO is a partner with the Workforce Investment Association, The Women's Union and the Organizing and Leadership Training Center and the Workforce Solutions Group. Other partners include community-based organizations, employer groups and education advocates. This is a 14.3 million dollar project to be completed over five years and funded with private and public money to build public and political support for workforce development reform that increases workers' skills, advances families to self-sufficiency and promotes job creation and economic growth. This work will take place in several stages, the first is in regional conferences planned for this Fall that will identify the problems and begin the process of setting a legislative, budget and policy agenda for the 2005 legislative session and beyond. We are fortunate to have Susan Parsons, a seasoned labor movement activist, to coordinate this project for the Massachusetts AFL-CIO. Several of the regional meetings have been scheduled and for information on these and the on the project in general, contact Sue Parsons at 781-324-8230.