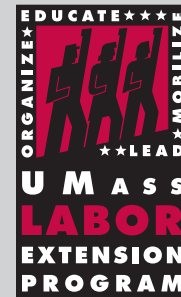


UMass Amherst
Labor Extension Program
Labor Center, Thompson Hall
200 Hicks Way
Amherst, MA 01003-9277
A105196



In the Past 6 months...

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

- **Member Organizing Workshop**
Professional Aviation Safety Specialists (PASS)
- **Chapter Leadership Initiative**
SEIU Local 888
- **Advanced and Basic Stewards Training**
SEIU 509 Public and Private Sector Chapters
- **Advanced Stewards Training**
- **Building Labor-Community Campaigns That Succeed**
- **Community Labor Coalitions**
- **Legal Rights in the Workplace**
Women's Institute for Leadership Development (WILD)

To Contact the UMass Labor Extension Program:

<p>■ UMASS AMHERST LABOR EXTENSION PROGRAM Labor Center, Thompson Hall, 200 Hicks Way Amherst, MA 01003-9277 www.umass.edu/lrrc Clare Hammond: 413-545-6166 Fax: 413-545-0110 Check website for email address.</p>	<p>■ UMASS DARTMOUTH LABOR EXTENSION PROGRAM Dubin Labor Education Center, 285 Old Westport Road North Dartmouth, MA 02747 www.umassd.edu/labored/ Kim Wilson Venancio: 508-999-8781 Fax: 508-999-9168 email: kwilson@umassd.edu</p>
<p>■ UMASS BOSTON LABOR EXTENSION PROGRAM CPCS Labor Resource Center, 100 Morrissey Blvd. Boston, MA 02125-3393 www.umb.edu/lrc Annetta Argyres: 617-287-7229 email: anneta.argyres@umb.edu</p>	<p>■ UMASS LOWELL LABOR EXTENSION PROGRAM 600 Suffolk St., 5th Floor, Suite 503 Lowell, MA 01854 www.uml.edu/laborextension/ Susan Winning: 978-934-3127 Fax: 978-934-4033 email: susan_winning@uml.edu</p>

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

- **Leadership Development for Advanced Leaders**
- **Shaping Our Message: How to Talk Union in Challenging Times**
UALE NE Women's Summer School 2013
- **Public Speaking**
- **Treasurers and Financial Training**
UMass Boston Union Administration Intensive
- **Six-Week Stewards Academy**
Various unions in southeastern Massachusetts, in one group

Austerity or Shared Prosperity: Which Do You Choose?

Austerity is the neoliberal economic policy of cutting public spending in order to fix budget deficits. Not a new concept, austerity was imposed during the 1990s on many Central American countries and more recently on parts of the European Union, and it is becoming the accepted norm in the United States. Often our national economy is compared to a household budget in order to explain why "belt tightening" is needed; clearly, in your household budget, if you didn't have enough income to cover your bills, you would cut any extraneous expenses. But, as Noble Prize-winning economist Paul Krugman explains, "an economy is not like an indebted family. Our debt is mostly money we owe to each other; even more important, our income mostly comes from selling things to each other... So what happens if everyone simultaneously slashes spending in an attempt to pay down debt? The answer is that everyone's income falls." (www.nytimes.com/2012/06/01/opinion/krugman-the-austerity-agenda.html)

We've seen the effects of austerity abroad, including continued and deepening recession, higher levels of unemployment, increased poverty, and the destruction of public services. And we haven't been immune to this in the U.S. Working people (mostly public sector employees and construction workers) have lost their jobs, the cost of public transportation has increased, the quality of education has worsened as teacher layoffs and classroom crowding increase, and houses have been allowed to burn due to fire department cuts. (See the Huffington Post's series "A Thousand Cuts: Life Under Austerity Measures.")

But despite the clearly damaging effects these policies have on communities, and despite learned economists' explanations of how austerity weakens our economy and grows our national debt, politicians here and abroad continue to push it. Why? Who benefits from austerity? Three key groups appear to benefit from austerity: big corporations whose taxes have been cut, allowing them to amass more profit; big banks whose regulations have been weakened, again allowing them to increase their profits; and politicians who are ideologically opposed to public services, public sector workers, and unions. As one professor of political science at Columbia University put it, "Austerity policies are liter-



ally a redistribution from the bottom of the income spectrum to the top." (www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/07/23/austerity-wall-street_n_1690838.html; 7/23/12, "Austerity's big winners prove to be Wall Street and the Wealthy" by Zach Carter)

There is an alternative, though—shared prosperity. As described in the AFL-CIO resolution passed at the 2013 convention, shared prosperity means "a world where all those who work share in the wealth we create, where our rights are honored in the places where we work, and where our nation and our world prosper because we prosper together" (aflcio.org/about/exec-council/conventions/2013/resolutions-and-amendments/resolution-6-shared-prosperity). Sound like a pipe dream? Actually, it's an achievable economic and political vision. The Occupy Movement's "99%" motto highlighted the inequality in our society, a society in which the top 1% of Americans take home 22% of the nation's income, the median income in American households (adjusted for inflation) hasn't increased in almost 25 years, men who have only a high school diploma make almost 40% less than they did in the 1970s, and nearly 1 child in 4 lives in poverty. But, this isn't the way things have to be. As another Nobel-winning economist,

Around THE STATE

North Shore Labor Council Women's Committee

Women's Solidarity Breakfast: Rise Up Saturday, November 16, 10 a.m. – Noon

Cost: Free

Location: 10 Church Street, Lynn, MA

Contact: Rebecca Hornstein, 781.595.2538

Join union and community women to enjoy a hearty breakfast and to hear stories from low-income women fighting for social and economic justice.

Mark your calendar!

Women's Institute for Leadership Development (WILD)

Summer Institute

June 20 – 22

Location: UMass Dartmouth

More details to come

The Resource Corner

Useful Websites

The following are useful websites to use in educating and organizing around austerity and shared-prosperity issues:

Inequality.org, a project of the Institute for Policy Studies, offers accessible data and charts documenting the growing wealth and income divide.

Center on Budget and Policy Priorities (www.cbpp.org) is a policy organization working at the federal and state levels on policies and programs that affect low- and moderate-income families and individuals. Their website offers detailed information on the impact of budget cuts.

Institute for Women's Policy Research (www.iwpr.org) offers numerous reports detailing how rising inequality coupled with cuts in state services affects the lives of women.

Program Notes

■ UMASS AMHERST

At UMass Amherst big changes are under way as Clare Hammonds starts as professor of practice, a role for which she will be doing both labor extension and applied research. This year has been busy already. We have taught leadership skills at WILD and at the Northeast Regional Women's Summer School. We also did a program on legislative advocacy for the Massachusetts Early Childhood Educators Union (MECEU) as well as workshops on Workers' Rights for the Commonwealth Works Program. A highlight of the fall has also been the launch of several research projects aimed at supporting unions and workers' organization in the Valley. In particular, one large project brings together multiple community partners to investigate low-wage work in the region. Project participants expect to release a report on their findings in spring 2014.

■ UMASS BOSTON

This fall the Labor Resource Center (LRC) is pleased to be hosting Dr. Motsomi Marobela, a Fulbright Scholar from the University of Botswana's School of Management. The focus of Dr. Marobela's research is the 2011 strike of 90,000 government workers in his homeland. He led us in a cultural celebration of Botswana's independence in early October, and in November he will present his research, "Industrial Relations in the Global Economic Crisis: Lessons from the Botswana Public Sector Strike." Also, this fall, the LRC hosted a *Thinking Big/Moving Forward* labor breakfast seminar titled, "Worker-Ownership, Coops, and Unions: Building Power at Work." The seminar featured keynote presentations by Mary Hoyer, co-chair of the Union Coops Council, and R. Dennis Olson, senior research associate with the UFCW, as well as a panel of workers from worker-owned coops in Massachusetts. Our next seminar in this series, to be held in March 2014, will examine the issues surrounding women and diversity in the construction workforce. Finally, we're happy to report that our Certificate in Labor Leadership is alive and well. In the spring, we will offer courses on organizing and bargaining strategies. For more information about the certificate program, please contact Wally Soper at 617.287.7267.

■ UMASS DARTMOUTH

We are happy to announce that the 2014 Women's Institute for Leadership Development (WILD) Summer Institute will be held at UMass Dartmouth! Our labor extension coordinator is a new member of the WILD Board. This summer and fall have been months of planning for our program. We have designed three new, multiday trainings for Southeastern Massachusetts workers. The six-week Stewards Academy is under way with students from across the area, and we are fortunate to have several local labor leaders on hand as inspiring guests. In the early spring, we will present an employment law series for union staff and officers, as well as other interested people. Later in the spring, we plan to offer a grab-bag series on topics for union activists. We are also considering offering a spring conference on unions and the Affordable Care Act. Please contact us if you would be interested in such a conference.

■ UMASS LOWELL

We had a busy summer teaching at the WILD Summer Institute and the Northeast Regional Summer School for Union Women. We continue to do support work with the Merrimack Valley and the North Shore labor councils. The North Shore Labor Council (NSLC) legislative dinner this fall honored Charley Richardson for a lifetime of contribution to the labor movement. With our Future of Work money, we have hired a research assistant who is working with the New Lynn project on research to support the project's campaign for a linkage agreement in Lynn to fund job training. The annual women's committee breakfast will focus on the range of fightback strategies that low-income women are employing. We are working on developing service-learning projects for the core course for the Work, Labor, and Society program, which will run this spring semester. The first of the Charley Richardson scholarships were awarded to two students this fall. We continue to build the fund so we can award more scholarships in fall of 2014.

S P O T L I G H T

Did you know the state minimum wage has not increased since 2006? This injustice is being addressed through an exciting grassroots campaign. Across the state, a coalition of over 75 organizations has been working hard to gather signatures for a ballot initiative to raise the MA minimum wage and allow earned sick days for all workers. Legislation has been filed on these issues in the past, but this time grassroots labor and community organizations have taken the issues into our own hands

by organizing a ground battle to collect the 200,000 signatures needed to get these issues on the 2014 ballot. The ballot initiatives call for all workers to earn up to 40 hours a year of paid sick time, for the minimum wage to be raised to \$9.25 in 2015 and to \$10.50 in 2016, and of critical importance, for the minimum wage to be adjusted for inflation in the future. For more information, check out the RUM website at: <http://raiseupma.org/>.



Welcome, Clare!

Clare Hammonds joined the Labor Center in fall 2013 as a professor of practice, taking over for long-time labor educator Dale Melcher. In addition to her role as the Labor Extension coordinator, Clare will also be conducting and coordinating applied research at the Center. Prior to coming to UMass, Clare worked as a researcher and labor educator for the Massachusetts Early Childhood Educators Union (MECEU). She also conducted research for a variety of other labor organizations, including the United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW) union and the Massachusetts Nurses Association (MNA).

In her new role, Clare is enthusiastically committed to bringing together education and research to support economic and social justice movements in the Pioneer Valley and beyond. In her free time, Clare can be found at CrossFit and enjoying the outdoors with her new puppy.

Austerity or Shared Prosperity

Continued from p. 1

Joseph Stiglitz, recently pointed out in the *New York Times*, while America's widening income and wealth inequality is part of a trend in the Western world, it is "not universal, or inevitable" (opinionator.blogs.nytimes.com/2013/10/13/inequality-is-a-choice). Instead, he describes how decreasing taxes for the rich and easing regulations in the financial sector have led to increased inequality.

So, if policy changes can create inequality, could they also create shared prosperity? Stiglitz and the AFL-CIO say "YES!" Re-creating

a progressive tax system under which the wealthiest and corporations pay their fair share, increasing the minimum wage, and strengthening workers' rights to collectively bargain are three specific goals that all working people—unionized or not—can work together to achieve. Implementing these policies can help us build an economy of shared prosperity.

The only question now is, will you choose to help?

Interested in training for your union, Executive Board, or Central Labor Council or community organization about austerity or shared prosperity? Contact a Labor Extension Program near you!