

Labor Extension Bulletin

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

VOLUME 19 ■ NUMBER 1 ■ FALL 2017

Labor Education Under Trump

As the presidential election results poured in on the evening of November 8th, many in the labor movement found themselves grieving and confronting the profound uncertainty of what a Donald J. Trump presidency would mean for the labor movement and for working class people in general. After all, while Trump had made some rhetorical appeals to working class voters by proposing to bring back jobs in manufacturing and coal, this improbable candidate had built his brand by nurturing and emboldening the deep wells of racism, xenophobia and misogyny that have often acted to divide the working class.

Trump's victory came in large part from stoking the anxiety of white working class voters who faced a growing sense that the American Dream was slipping from their reach. And for many white workers in the traditional democratic strongholds of Iowa, Michigan, Pennsylvania and Wisconsin, the problems were real. Profound transformations in the global economy over the last 50 years have resulted in the loss of entire industries. Workers in those industries have, in turn, faced declining wages, fewer job opportunities, and declining health. At raucous campaign rallies across the US, Trump peddled his racist and xenophobic narrative that Black and immigrant workers were to blame for these declining wages and living standards.

There are few organized institutional fronts capable of confronting this narrative and providing an alternative economic analysis and vision. The labor movement is perhaps the best positioned to do so. It is one of the few places where training and political education can combine to offer an analysis that locates the source of the problem within an economic system that undermines the power of workers and provides gains to just a handful of people at the top. It is also one of the few places where workers can come together to form powerful collective identities.

In the 2016 election, while unions spent hundreds of millions of dollars to support democratic candidates, it was not enough to win the election. The decline of union density only goes part way toward explaining this loss. Even where unions were still present, many members still voted for Trump. Across the country almost 43 percent of union households voted for Trump. That number was even higher in key rust belt states.

In the nine months that have followed Trump's inauguration, it is clear that the fears of his presidency were not exaggerated. He has pulled together the most anti-worker cabinet in history,



UMass Boston Professional Staff Union members (holding flags) marched at the Women's March on Boston Common, Saturday, January 21, 2017, the day after Trump's inauguration.

has taken measures to reduce workplace rights and protections, and has taken fierce aim at the nation's immigrant workers. And there's his appointment of Neil Gorsuch to the Supreme Court, a decision that will almost certainly reduce the public sector to a national right-to-work –for-less zone.

While there may be an instinct to pull back in this moment, the need to dig in has never been greater. Labor education is central to this process. Through education we can challenge the existing narrative that uses working class people of color as scapegoats for economic policies which favor the 1%. To be effective in doing this however, labor educators must take clear aim at white supremacy by adopting an intersectional lens that moves beyond a narrow focus on economic issues to include an analysis of the damage done by racism and gender inequity to the working class. Labor educators must also prioritize advancing young leaders of color, for it's often those who stand at the margins that can best lead change. In this way labor education and labor educators can strengthen local organizing to build a powerful multi-racial coalition with people of color, young people and women in leadership.

Around THE STATE

Annual Awards Banquet: The UMass Dartmouth Labor Education Center

Thursday, October 19, 2017

Location: Venus de Milo, Swansea, MA

Cost: \$40 each

Contact: Kim Wilson, Director at kwilson@umassd.edu

Please join us for this annual event that gathers nearly 200 labor and community leaders and activists as we look back to honor our heroes and stand together in solidarity for the year ahead.

People's History Walking Tour of Boston

Saturday, October 28, 2017

Location: 73 Tremont St., Suffolk University (at the corner of Beacon and Tremont streets and directly across from the Omni Parker House)

Cost: Free

We will gather at Suffolk University at 9:30 am for a keynote address by Pat Reeve about the importance of labor and public history in this historical moment. The walking tour will begin at 11 am, and end at noon at a local pub. Please RSVP to laborresourcecenter@umb.edu.

Labor Center Reunion Brunch

Sunday, November 5, 2017

Location: University of Massachusetts Amherst, Campus Center

For more information: Clare Hammonds, chammonds@soc.umass.edu or 413-545-6166

North Shore Labor Council's Women's Committee Annual Solidarity Breakfast

Saturday, December 2, 2017

Location: 10 Church Street, Lynn

Cost: Free

Contact: Katie Cohen, northshorelaborcouncil@gmail.com or 781-595-2538

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

SAVE THE DATE: Labor Under Trump Conference

Friday, March 2, 2018 and Saturday, March 3, 2018

Location: University of Massachusetts Amherst, Campus Center

For more information: Clare Hammonds, chammonds@soc.umass.edu or 413-545-6166

SAVE THE DATE: The State of Labor in Boston Conference

Saturday, April 14, 9 am – 4 pm

Location: UMass Boston

Contact: Wally Soper@umb.edu or 617-287-7267

This conference will explore the challenges faced by working-class people in the greater Boston area and workers' struggles to organize and advance their interests. Please contact us if you would like to be a presenter at the conference.

We're going electronic!

Beginning with our next issue, we are launching an electronic version of the Labor Extension Bulletin. While we will still have a hard copy version for those of you who prefer to receive the newsletter by mail, you need to let us know that you want a mailed version. Please contact the Labor Extension program in your region to let us know if you prefer the electronic version, or if you prefer to receive a printed version in your mailbox.

The Resource Corner

Below are some of the many resources available on responding to the right-wing attacks on working people, including immigrants.

AFLCIO statements on Trump. <http://www.aflcio.org/Blog/Political-Action-Legislation/The-AFL-CIO-s-Response-to-Trump-s-Presidency>. For ongoing updates about Trump policies, google "response to Trump."

Massachusetts AG Healey New Hotline to Report Incidents of Bias-Motivated Threats, Harassment, and Violence <http://www.mass.gov/ago/news-and-updates/press-releases/2016/2016-11-14-hotline-to-report-bias-motivated-threats-harassment-violence.html>

Organizing Upgrade is a forum for innovative progressive and left organizers to engage in dialogue about big-picture political strategy. See Resource Guides at Post-Election 2016 Discussion: "Changed Terrain Demands A New Orientation" <http://www.organizingupgrade.com/images/CurriculumR2.pdf> and "2016 Election Curriculum: Power Point Presentations, Facilitator's Guides, Supplementary Resources" <http://www.organizingupgrade.com/index.php/strategylabs/2016-elections/item/1056-election-curriculum>

Political Resource Associates is a social justice think tank, which has produced investigative research and analysis on the U.S. Right to support social justice advocates and defend human rights. The "For Organizers" page under "Resources" is especially helpful. <http://www.politicalresearch.org/>

Portside <http://portside.org/> publishes articles on many relevant issues, such as an interesting discussion on the source of the Trump victory (see Fletcher, Olney, Needleman, Rand Wilson and others) and immigrant resistance, <http://portside.org/2017-01-02/facing-trump-presidency-souths-immigrant-advocates-build-networks-resistance>. Consider subscribing to receive daily articles at <https://portside.org/subscribe>

Sanctuary Movements is a growing movement of faith and immigrant communities in cities and college campuses around the commonwealth to protect students and immigrant families and to stand with immigrants facing deportation who face workplace discrimination or unjust deportation. See From Cities to Campuses: The New Sanctuary Movement for Trump's America <http://inthese-times.com/article/19706/from-cities-to-campuses-the-new-sanctuary-movement-for-trumps-america>

Program Notes

■ UMASS AMHERST

The UMass Amherst Labor Center welcomed sixteen new students to our residential Masters program this fall. This large cohort was possible only because of the support from the labor movement when the program was in jeopardy last year. The Labor Center will be hosting a brunch on November 5th, 2017 to thank all of the alumni and activists who fought to keep the program open.

In addition to our work with students, the UMass Labor Center released a Labor Day report on the State of the Labor Movement in Massachusetts. We are also conducting research to support work by the Massachusetts AFL-CIO and the Massachusetts Building Trades Council. As part of our growing research program, the Labor Center will be hosting a major conference March 2-3, 2017 on Labor Under Trump. This conference will bring together leading labor scholars from around the country to assess the impact of the Trump agenda on workers and workers' responses. This conference will be leading toward an edited volume.

■ UMASS BOSTON

We held our first annual Boston Labor Conference in April, to a full house of labor activists and academics. Many of the presentations from the conference will be included in an edited volume. The second annual Boston Labor Conference will be held at UMB on Saturday, April 14, 2018. In addition to the conference, we held many other events last year, from film screenings to guest speakers, bringing students and union activists together for discussions about how to build an economy and society for working people and families. In June, students joined LRC Director Steve Striffler and Professor Aviva Chomsky on a trip to Colombia to meet with leaders of mine worker unions and indigenous communities; there will be openings for more students to take part in a similar trip next June. Finally, thanks to many of you, we have raised enough funds to establish a permanent scholarship in memory of Professor Jim Green, and we're looking forward to a Boston Labor Tour this fall to continue to highlight and advance his work in labor and public history.

■ UMASS DARTMOUTH

At UMass Dartmouth we have continued to build multi-disciplinary connections on campus. We conducted an orientation with the Director of Experiential Learning and Internship Development. We have worked with a diverse group of interns who we recruited from the History, Political Science, Psychology, Crime and Justice and Sociology Departments. We continue to collaborate with the Fredrick Douglas Unity Center including writing up curriculum and facilitating a Training of Trainers for college and high school students who have facilitated discussions on social and economic justice at middle schools and churches in New Bedford and Fall River. Our annual celebration will be held on October 19 at the Venus de Milo in Swansea, MA. We will be recognizing Tom Clarke, originally of Western Mass, who is now an International Vice President of the UFCW. He has worked to support organizing within the seafood processing industry in New Bedford. We will also be honoring the newly founded Association of Seafood and Fish Processing Workers.

■ UMASS LOWELL

During this past fall, we have worked on projects in support of women's leadership. The first event was the North Shore Labor Council's annual women's breakfast, which was attended by an overflow crowd of over 100 women coming together shortly after the election to discuss ideas moving forward. (See Around the State for details of the upcoming breakfast.) We also worked on the annual Voices of Working Women (VOWW) luncheon. About 80 women from different departments and bargaining units came to discuss flextime and proposals for improvement. We hope to fight for some common language in our upcoming contracts. We developed curriculum for and led Advanced Popular Education Training of Trainers and Leadership Development for the WILD Summer Institute. We were part of the coordinating team of the 42nd Northeast UALE School for Women in Unions and Worker Organizations, which was hosted at UMass Amherst in July. Utilizing our Future of Work funding, we hired two graduate students for research projects – one developed a Lowell Labor History Walking Tour, and the other conducted an evaluation of a machinists training program.



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: www.umass.edu/lrrc/.

UMass Boston

Our BA Major and Minor in Labor Studies is continuing to grow, along with our Certificate in Labor Leadership. It's not too soon to be thinking about registering for the Spring 2018 semester. If you're interested in one course or the whole program, contact Wally Soper (617-287-7267 or wally.soper@umb.edu). Our spring courses will include: *Labor & Working Class History* (Labor 210, T/Th 9:30-10:45 am); *Labor & Migration* (Labor 222, T/Th 2-3:15 pm); *Labor, Community & Social Justice Organizing* (Labor 315, T/Th 11-12:15); *Race, Class & Gender at Work* (Labor 330, T/Th 12:30-1:45 pm); and *Globalization & Labor* (Labor 335, Thurs 5:30-8:30 pm). In addition, we will be offering a weekend intensive course on *Union Administration*, focusing on unions' legal obligations, communications, data management, and strike preparations. For more details about these classes or the program, 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

Introduction to Labor Studies will be offered as an undergraduate course the 2018 spring semester. In addition to regular popular service learning projects, we have added two new ones. One project is to help build the Lowell Education Justice Alliance (LEJA), which is building on the organizing around the ballot question to raise the cap on charter schools. The other is with the New England Joint Board (NEJB) who is organizing its newly organized campus workers to work with the student/faculty/staff movement to create a campus sanctuary at UMass Lowell. We are always looking to partner with unions and social justice organizations for service learning projects and internships.

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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...

- **Anger to Action: Moving Forward Toward Social Change**
UMass Dartmouth students, faculty, and administrators
- **Building strong(er) bargaining units**
SEIU 509 Faculty
- **Grievance handling**
SEIU 509 Faculty
New England Labor Leadership Initiative
- **Leadership Development Skills**
Women's Institute for leadership development (WILD)
NE School for Women in Unions and Worker Organizations
- **Member engagement and area representative training**
AFT Local 1895
- **Movement Building**
New England Labor Leadership Initiative

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

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

■ 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
Susan Winning: 978-934-3127 Fax: 978-934-4033
email: susan_winning@uml.edu

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

- **New England Labor Leadership Initiative**
- **Organizing training**
Resist Hate
- **Popular education for social change**
Women's Institute for Leadership Development (WILD)
- **Public sector unionism**
UMass Boston
- **Social justice unionism**
Mass Teachers Association
- **Strategic planning**
Mass. AFLCIO
New Lynn Coalition
North Shore Labor Council
- **Training of trainers for MLK Day Teach-in Facilitation**
College and high school students
Lynn E-Team