

You Name It!

The As Yet Unnamed Monthly Newsletter of Local 2322, United Auto Workers

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Tight State Budget Impacts Salaries in Mental Health and Retardation

Most of the mental health and mental retardation agencies we represent are funded by the state. This includes ServiceNet, Northampton Center for Children and Families, Tri-County Youth Programs and to some extent Providence Hospital. Some of the raises unionized employees receive in these agencies is due to the “salary reserve” in the state budget each year

Many union contracts have language calling for increases and retroactivity when the “salary reserve” is included in the budget. **This year, the budget was passed without any money for “salary reserve” increases for employees making more than \$20,000/year.** That means all unionized employees in Mental Health/Mental Retardation.

In January, the Legislature will reconvene and propose supplemental budgets. The Union is working with our state legislators to try to get “salary reserve” money into one of those budgets. We need you to call them and let your legislator know that you are a voter in their district and that they need to put money back in the salary reserve line for DMH and DMR. To increase our power for better wages, we have joined together with unions and human services worker advocacy groups (SEIU and MassServe) to work towards better contracts and a living wage. If you have questions or would like to help in any way please call the union office and speak to James Shaw or Flo Stern.

You can find information about your legislator at <http://www.state.ma.us/legis/> or you can call: (617) 722-2500

Providence Hospital Union Members Gear Up for Negotiations

The mental health counselors at Providence Hospital are getting ready for contract negotiations. These counselors joined Local 2322 in 1998 and negotiated their first contract then. They made many important

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Welcome to Our First Monthly Newsletter

At our last Local 2322 meeting, we decided to establish the newsletter you are now holding in your hands. It will come out monthly, with an expanded quarterly edition. But we need your help to keep it going!

We need writers, cartoonists, and photographers. We also need some editors to help put together the newsletter every month. Please join the Newsletter Publishing Committee (NPC). Your commitment would be approximately one or two days per month.

Staff in the Local office will work hard to solicit articles and photographs. The NPC will meet once or twice per month to discuss what articles to publish and to lay out the newsletter. This month’s issue was edited by Nancy deProse, next month maybe by you!?

Please get involved. Contact Local 2322 President James Shaw at 584-4905 or 800-682-0259 or by e-mail at jamesawshaw@hotmail.com for more information.



You working on the next newsletter

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Next issue we need you as writers, editors, and layout crew! This is your local union—get involved!

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improvements at that time, including guaranteed pay raises, the restoration of shift differentials, and a legally binding grievance procedure which has saved the jobs of many employees falsely accused of wrongdoing.

Now the members at Providence are gearing up for a second round of negotiations so they can work toward even greater improvements. It won't be easy, but the members are ready to stick together.

As Providence prepares to sit down and bargain, their colleagues at Brightside for Families and Children are trying to organize into Local 2322. Providence and Brightside are both a part of Sisters of Providence Health Systems. The workers at Providence perform in-patient mental health for mostly adults, while Brightside is a residential mental health facility with a school for children ages 8 to 17. The workers at Brightside will vote on joining the union on Dec. 19 and 20th.

The Sisters of Providence have broken the law while trying to fight the union campaign at Brightside. They have also told many lies about the union. They have told the Brightside employees that their dues will double after they join and that they must pay dues on their overtime; that they will be forced by the UAW to strike; that all members are required to take a loyalty oath; and that our union's organizer (Tim Scott) makes more than \$100,000 per year. They have forced employees to sit through numerous mandatory meetings where managers (and even a nun, despite the Catholic Church's teachings about the importance of organized labor) spew anti-union lies and venom for hours.

At Providence, management has attempted to intimidate workers by forbidding them from wearing union T-shirts on premises, even though they have worn them for years. Providence counselors were showing their support for Brightside. Eleven counselors were suspended for a day without pay. Our Local has filed numerous grievances and Unfair Labor Practices with the federal government, which we are confident we will win. The Sisters of Providence administration will regret the day they began this battle. The union members will triumph!!!!

GEO/UAW Wins Historic Union Victory in Continuing Education at University of Massachusetts

After almost three years of rallies, membership drives, labor commission hearings, a sit-in and finally a threatened teaching boycott, graduate student instructors in the University of Massachusetts' Division of Continuing Education won the right to hold a union election. That vote, held November 7th, was unanimous (as many predicted), with over two-thirds of instructors voting.

The state Labor Relations Commission (MLRC) ruling that allowed the vote came in the midst of a campus-wide organizing drive. Department by department, graduate students voted to boycott their teaching appointments until their legal right to form a union was recognized by the University.

When the ruling came down, five departments—over 400 graduate students in total—had already held unanimous or near-unanimous votes to boycott the Division, and plans were already underway to hold votes in five more departments. Over half the courses offered by the Division would have been canceled.



"We had to be inventive," said Graduate Employee Organization (GEO) organizer and sociology graduate instructor Patricia Duffy. "Public employees can't strike, so we simply had to refuse to be employees."

Such inventiveness also carries risks. "We didn't know if we would get our jobs back if the boycott actually happened," Duffy said. "It was a hard decision, but we were out of other options." However, the decision by the MLRC negated the need for a boycott.

About 300 courses are taught by graduate students in the Division, a for-profit wing of the University that offers night classes and runs the University's summer and winter sessions. Over 80% of graduate instructors who teach in the Division signed cards saying they wanted to be part of GEO almost two years ago.

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Local 2322 United Auto Workers - Just Who Are We Anyway?

Local 2322 is a part of the United Auto Workers, a national union of workers in many professions. Auto manufacturing is a core part of the UAW, of course, but there are also tens of thousands of workers in higher education, human services, child care, health care, and publishing, too.

Our union, Local 2322, is diverse. We have members who do teaching and research, others are child care teachers, some are mental health counselors, and some even work as telefundraisers and telemarketers.

Here is a breakdown of Local 2322's membership

Workplace	Approximate # of members	Location	Type of Work
Graduate Employee Organization	2400	University of Massachusetts, Amherst	Teaching, Research, Student Support Services
Hampshire Community Action Commission	125	Throughout Hampshire County with Central office in Northampton	Human and Social Services including Head Start, Childcare, housing advocacy, WIC programs,
Imperial Home Décor Group	15	Adams	Custom Wallpaper Manufacturing
Mount Holyoke College	25	South Hadley	Housekeeping in the dorms
New Beginnings Childcare	20	Springfield	Childcare
Nonotuck Community School	8	Northampton, at the V.A. Hospital	Childcare
Northampton Center for Children and Families Residential and School Programs	50	Northampton and Springfield	Residential Mental Health Services and Special Needs School
Providence Hospital	90	Holyoke	Inpatient Mental Health and Substance Abuse Counseling
ServiceNet	210	40 Sites throughout Hampshire, Hampden and Franklin counties with Central office in Northampton	Residential Mental Health and Mental Retardation Services
Share	125	Amherst	Telephone fundraising for progressive, non-profit groups
Springfield Day Nursery	100	Springfield, East Longmeadow and West Springfield	Childcare
Springfield Tele-services Group	45	Springfield	Telemarketing
Tri-County Youth Programs	25	Northampton and Springfield	Residential Mental Health Services
Western Mass Coalition for Occupational Safety and Health (MassCOSH)	6	Springfield	Health and Safety Advocacy and Education
Total Members:	3144		

Continuing Education, Continued from page 2.

Instead of allowing an election at that time, the University retained a high-profile anti-union law firm Seyfarth & Shaw, which challenged the DCE instructors' right to organize before the MLRC.

The University had contested the union election on the grounds that Division graduate instructors were casual labor, but the state labor commission rejected that argument. The MLRC recognized that the line between Division and the University is strategic, at best. The Division is chartered by the University, shares profits with the University, offers University classes, and employs graduate instructors who teach in the University's regular session.

"Graduate instructors understood they were being outsourced," said economics Division instructor and GEO organizer Bob Reinauer. "Continuing Ed is a low-wage, non-union shop, paying half the wages and none of the benefits grad instructors would normally earn in their union jobs. The University's campaign was about undermining union rights and saving a buck, nothing more."

While GEO organizers are excited about their victory, many see the hard part as only just beginning. With contract negotiations scheduled for mid-February, graduate students see a tight budgetary climate and a hostile administration as obstacles still in their way. In addition to wages and benefits, graduate students who teach in the Division are also concerned about classroom quality, campus safety at night, childcare, and the effects of on-line education. Still, the instructors are optimistic.

"The University spent tens of thousands of dollars on anti-union lawyers, they fined and threatened our union activists, and we still won," Duffy said. "We'll organize until we get the wages and the respect we deserve, and the University knows that."



"If we pay them starvation wages— why do they need a lunch break?"

Would You Like to Be "In The Know?"

Members who have access to e-mail can sign up for our new e-mail list for union members. On this list, we post information about the local, such as newspaper stories about our union, or announcements about upcoming events (like rallies or meetings).

If you would like to join, please send an e-mail to uaw2322@uaw2322.org.

We recognize, also, that many members do not have access to e-mail. If you do not have access to e-mail, please contact Local President James Shaw and we will develop a plan for getting the information to you.



UAW Provides Educational Opportunities for Members at Black Lake

During the spring, Black Lake, in Northern Michigan, hosts the Leadership Institute, an intense labor-education training program for members led by the UAW Education Department. Along with the Workshop Topics below, the core curriculum includes: "Taking Action in a Global Economy" and "Diversity."

Workshop Topic	Date of Session	Register by
Union Involvement	Feb. 24-Mar 1	January 25
Standing Committees	March 10-15	February 8
Leaders in Action	April 7-12	March 8
Union Involvement (English/Spanish)	April 21-26	March 22
Leaders in Action	May 12-17	April 12

Call the UAW office at 584-4905 to sign up.

