

UAW Local 2322 News

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Wanted to help fight conservative agenda: men/women, lesbian/gay/straight/bi, race/age unimportant, progressive/liberal.

Living in the 'Valley' we often seem to forget or overlook the reality that discrimination can and does take place in our little 'liberal' corner of Massachusetts. We'd like to believe we are beyond that here and that those types of attitudes exist in 'other' less progressive places than ours.

Well, the recent elections should serve as a wake-up call and put an end to our complacency. Once again the corner office of the Statehouse has fallen into the hands of what I think will prove to be another pro-business, anti-worker, fiscally (with money to help the poor and less fortunate, that is) and socially (religiously fundamentalist) conservative, rich white male.

Couple that with the shift in the balance of power that Congress has taken which amounts to a sharp right turn (while also shifting into reverse in a societally evolutionary sense) and we are headed for hard times concerning the rights and freedoms that make America what it is.

Now you might be thinking "yeah, thanks RP for brightening up my day you ray of sunshine you," but my point - and I do have one - is that we don't have to sit back and wait for Minister of Information Ashcroft, I mean Attorney General Ashcroft, to round us all up and throw us in detention camps for

violating his sanitized vision of the USA, i.e. — white, male, and morally offended by statues of females with exposed breasts. So if you believe in fairness and equality for ALL then we'd like to extend an

invitation to you to join two groups (or just one if you're really busy).

First is the AFL-CIO constituency group, *Western Mass Pride at Work*, which is a labor/worker organization whose aim is to promote and protect the rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgendered workers. As with all constituency groups you do not have to be a member of that particular group to join. You just have to believe in equal treatment and opportunity for everyone. We usually meet the second Thursday of the month at 6:30pm in the UAW 2322 office in the Potpourri Mall 243 King St Northampton. For more info please call Ron Patenaude 413-269-4787 or email at clayground@aol.com

Secondly, we would like to reestablish our Civil Rights committee in the local. With the probable passage of the Fatherland, I mean the Homeland, Security Act sparked by our governments' paranoia of anyone different than their vision of what an American looks like we're sure to see more willing subjugation of our rights and freedoms in the name of security after the horrific events of 9/11. We will need to be vigilant in guarding against abuses to peoples' rights who might be perceived to be a "threat" by some because of their ethnic origins or political beliefs. Additionally we need to renew the fight against institutionalized racism, sexism, and the socioeconomic prejudices of some of our not so enlightened citizens that DO threaten the values that make America a special place.

We would like to start having our Civil Rights committee meet prior to the PAW meeting at the local the second Thursday of the month at 5 PM. Anyone interested please contact Ron Patenaude at 413-269-4787, or email at clayground@aol.com. Thank you — we look forward to seeing you at future meetings.

-Ron Patenaude



MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

**FULL MEMBER MEETING SUNDAY
2/23/2003 AT 1PM FOLLOWED
BY AN END OF WINTER PARTY
FOR MEMBERS & THEIR FAMILIES
AT 3PM.**

**LOCATION: UPSTAIRS
AT BO'S BREW & PIZZERIA AT
172 SARGEANT STREET IN HOLY-
OKE**

**R.S.V.P. 1-800-682-0269 OR EMAIL
EMILYBC@HOTMAIL.COM**

**WE LOOK FORWARD TO SEEING
YOU THERE!**

Summary: The Study on GEO

The study on the Graduate Employee Organization (GEO) enabled the student body as well as the university as a whole to make more use of the stewards / organizers in making the university life more bearable to graduate students. The international students have appreciated that there are no constraints for participating in union organizing. Additionally, collegial feelings among GEO members have been enhanced to a higher level as hitherto. Working relationships among graduate employees and the administration will be more realistic for free and fair exchange of ideas and protocols. It has been a very enlightening study of the unionization of scholarly activities at the University of Massachusetts. The study has provided heuristic insight, and enhanced our understanding of how union stewards/organizers are incorporated in decision making. The impact of the union through the stewards has been phenomenal.

Six categories emerged from my study as they were subjected to grounded theory. The first one is the involvement of the members, the degree of which bears on all the remaining categories. The second category is bargaining, which is the life-blood of the union. Depending on

how involvement and bargaining are conducted, issues arise if there is unfair treatment to members. The third, fourth and fifth categories are chaos, frustration, and abuse. When involvement is strong, bargaining becomes fruitful, resulting in less chaos, frustration, and abuse in the union. With this achieved, the last category follows: positive changes for the Graduate Employee Organization (GEO). The following are the six theories as deduced from the study.

Theory 1 states that involvement of the members in the GEO union through the stewards has to encompass workable programs, feasible plans and maintain a dialogue to accommodate diversity that enhances solidarity in the academic labor movement.

Theory 2 states that bargaining is a trio of three enterprises of process: negotiations, funding, and timing whose main product is a non-damned contract to the labor movement.

Theory 3 states that chaos in GEO is a combinational characteristic of three attributes: departure from norms, confusion, and conflict that emerge from the turbulent nature of the organization, both intentional and unintentional.

Theory 4 states that GEO has no choice but to organize or die.

Theory 5 states that abuse is a cogent process that ditches a mark in the heart of the victims like a physical bruise that result in less union membership participation.

Theory 6 states that every thing becomes a political debate in the union.

Finally grounded theory has enabled me to see the other side of doing research with more motivation and vigor of intuition without knowing what is going to happen.

-Swai Fulgence

2003 UAW Leadership Institutes at Black Lake

This year's Leadership Institutes at Black Lake will consist of the following subjects & schedules:

Standing Committees — February 23-28
Cutoff date January 31, 2003

Worker-to-Worker — March 9-14
Cutoff date February 14, 2003

Standing Committees — March 9-14
Cutoff date February 28, 2003

Union Involvement — April 6-11
[English & Spanish]
Cutoff date March 14, 2003

Union Involvement — November 16-21
Cutoff date March 14, 2003

The core program "Take Back the Chairs" focuses on issues of wealth distribution in the economy, building solidarity & taking collective action in the workplace and society. Delegates will have either core in the morning and skill in the afternoon or the reverse. For more information on the workshops & registration, please contact Emily Cooney, emilybc@hotmail.com/ 413-584-4905

Open Positions on the Executive Board:

Two positions are currently open for nominations: **Recording Secretary & Financial Secretary**. The term of office begins February 23, 2003 and continues through May 2004. You must be a member in good standing of Local 2322 for one year at the time of the nominations to accept a nomination. Those elected to the positions of Recording Secretary & Financial Secretary will also be elected as delegates to the Area and State CAP Councils and Conventions.

Nominations & Elections will be held by the Joint Council during the first 15 minutes of the Full Member Meeting on 2/23/03 at 1pm.

The Local 2322 Executive Board

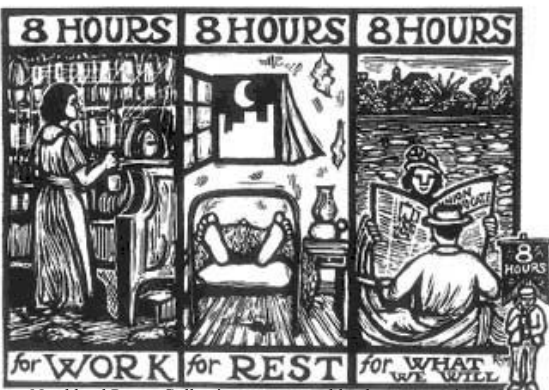
President—James A. W. Shaw

Vice President—Susan Carrier

Trustees—Swai Fulgence, Pat Duffy, & Nancy deProse

Sergeant at Arms—Tim Scott

Guide—Sarah Larkin



Local 2322 Staff Union

The twenty-one staff members employed in the service of UAW Local 2322 have recently formed a staff union through the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW). The executive board of Local 2322 unanimously voted to endorse the bargaining unit and to move forward with negotiating a contract between the staff and the leadership of the local. A bargaining committee was formed for the local at the December 16th Joint Council meeting and the staff union has elected its bargaining committee, as well as leadership and delegates to the IWW.

The local's staff has been pondering the formation of a union for some time, and we finally got the ball rolling in mid-October. A unanimous vote favored affiliation with the IWW, and one-hundred percent of the new bargaining unit signed recognition petitions. This overwhelming display of solidarity is something hardly seen in a union campaign—which goes to show that the union staff is strong, united, and politically 'with it.' As workers, we are responsible for servicing the membership, organizing, book-keeping, and running the day-to-day business of the local. The bargaining unit is made up of workers who are paid from a large variety of sources—the local itself, the UAW inter-

national, UMass, GEO's dental fund, and even federal work study. This is a large unit that, in the tradition of the IWW, would probably not stand up at the labor board, but does stand to represent everyone employed in the service of the membership of our local. The members of this new union seek to gain a stronger voice in the workplace—which will not only improve their own working conditions, but the strength and democracy of Local 2322. A stronger and united staff stands to serve the membership more effectively. As the AFL-CIO says; "Our Union works best when we say UNION YES!"

-Chris Fierro

Science and Engineering Organizing Caucus

The Graduate Employee Organization (GEO) is a labor union that aims to represent and organize all graduate employees at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst over issues of their employment and improvement of their working conditions.

Too often, Scientists and Engineers at UMASS feel excluded from the affairs of GEO. There are many issues, of which GEO is unaware, specific to these people that have not received the attention they deserve. The Graduate Employees in the Sciences and Engineering are less active in the union because of several work commitments. In our efforts to increase the representation and participation of these members, the GEO has reactivated the Science and Engineering Organizing Caucus (SEOC). The caucus was a force to reckon with 3 years ago with active involvement and we aim to achieve this goal. The Merriam-Webster defines a

Caucus as "any political group or meeting organized to further a special interest or to promote an agreed upon cause." Since the work and study environs of Scientists and Engineers are similar, 'Caucus' is an apt term for the group.

Constituents of SEOC

The SEOC consists of all the GEO members in the School of Natural Science and Mathematics, School of Engineering, School of Public Health, School of Nursing and College of Natural Resources and Environment (27 departments in total). Taking all the departments into account, about 40% of GEO members constitute this Caucus.

The Organizing Strategy:

The organizing for the SEOC was carried out as a series of mini-blitzes done consecutively for three straight weeks. With support from the GEO Staff, Stewards and

active volunteers, we had a face-to-face interaction with the Grad Employees at their work sites. We spoke directly to our members and it created a meaningful interest among them about SEOC. Many of them were excited about the caucus and threw in a lot of suggestions for us. All the participants in the mini-blitzes had a wonderful experience talking to people from outside their department and getting to know

them better. We tried to reach out personally to as many members as possible. We stressed the need for a caucus and invited them for the first social scheduled on the evening of Nov. 15th.

The First Social Event of the Caucus

The first SEOC social gathering was held at the Graduate Lounge (Campus Center) at 7:00pm. The event was a success with a good turnout of about 40 students in the Sciences and Engineering. We had a good discussion about the Intellectual Property (IP) rights issue of which many of the attendees were unaware. Their research may lead to a breakthrough technology, the rewards of which are not seen by the graduate workers. Overall there was a warm atmosphere at the event with people getting to know one another from other departments.

Where do we go from here?

With the response we had at the Social, we would like to maintain the enthusiasm showed by our members and work with continued vigor, aiming to make the SEOC a reckonable force in the Union. The Voice of the Scientists and Engineers will be heard. We scheduled a meeting in the first week of December and hope to reach out to many more members of the Union.

-Krishna Vallaru

Interested in joining the Science & Engineering Caucus? Contact Krishna at the GEO office— 413-545-5317



Here's to our Stewards!

Tune: Frosty the Snowman

Lyrics: Julie McCall

Here's to our stewards!

They're the Union's heart and soul

Every worker goes to these heroes

When injustice takes its toll

Here's to our stewards!

When the conflict is intense

If the boss gets rough, they will stand with us

They're our first line of defense.

There seems to be no end to grievance forms that they compile

And they're completely awesome when they defend the rank-and-file!

Here's to our stewards!

They know every contract clause

Bring the New Year in by awarding them

Our unanimous applause!

About this issue's writers:

Ron Patenaude—an involved member working for Providence. Ron brings energy in our Union to a new level.

Swai Fulgence—comes to us as an ardent trade unionist and educator from Tanzania. When times get tough, he always has wise words for his fellow union members.

Chris Fierro—joined our union as an RA Union Activist and has since become a dedicated GEO Member.

Krishna Vallaru—is a Graduate Student in Electrical & Computer Engineering, and works on the GEO staff.

Flo Stern—brings us a wealth of experience in organizing and in human services. She has been fighting most recently to keep several homeless shelters in the valley from closing.

Tim Scott—comes to us from the conservative state of Utah, the state that elected Senators like Orrin Hatch and Bob Bennett — the state that executed Joe Hill. Despite that background, today where there is a fight for workers' rights or a fight for social justice going on in Western Mass, it's there you'll find Tim Scott.

Write for our next issue!

Send articles, suggestions, photos, or upcoming events to the Local 2322 office, c/o Emily Cooney, or email them to

What's Going on Around the Union!

Cutchins Program—Residence

The contract negotiations are finally over, after almost 9 months of negotiating. The committee did a great job in a difficult atmosphere, given the state budget's slashing of mental health funds. A three year agreement was forged, with wage re-opens annually. Raises ranged from \$100-\$1200.

Hampshire Community Action Commission

Some of the many recent changes at HCAC include:

The National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) has found merit in a charge filed by the union regarding unilateral decision making, and not bargaining with the union over the bonuses the WIC workers were promised. The NLRB has ordered HCAC to arbitrate this claim along with a similar case at CCF and Head Start.

HCAC did not fill all the early childhood slots that AFC (head start) had given them, therefore there were 6 layoffs from management, and a possible 3 layoffs of union staff. This has not been thoroughly looked at, and the union will meet with management to assure the seniority clause in the contract.

The Union has met with management about a problem with the clarification (or lack thereof) of positions. Members working in teacher, assistant teacher, and director positions are being told they are listed in a different position, or promoted to a different position without receiving compensation.

HCAC has met with the union regarding combining FSA's from early childhood and the organizing department. We are currently looking at the issues of job titles and compensation... More to follow.

Providence Hospital

The union is again looking at the issue of holiday time off, and the posting of schedules. Let's remember, all evening shift employees are to be assigned only 1 out of 4 shifts (Christmas Eve, Christmas Day, New Year's Eve, or New Year's Day). Let us know if this is not happening.

Nonotuck

Nonotuck has been chosen to participate in an apprenticeship program, in conjunction with Holyoke Community College, which will move teachers into a Lead Teacher position. Participating teachers will receive an increase in wages, and the union is working with the Center to best implement this change.

-Flo Stern



Who is UAW Local 2322?

You are the Union

UAW Local 2322 is democratically controlled by its members. In fact, the strength of our union in the workplace, in your contracts, as well as within Local 2322, is dependent upon the active participation of the members.

Composition of the Union

Local 2322 is a diverse union comprised of various types of workers, with 15 different work places representing approximately 3,500 workers in Western Massachusetts. Our Local represents workers at;

Hampshire Community Action Commission, Nonotuck Community Childcare, Providence Hospital, Western MassCOSH, Springfield Action Commission, Cutchins School and Residential Programs, Service Net, Share Group, Springfield Day Nursery, Tri-County Youth Programs, Springfield Telemarketing Group, & Mt. Holyoke College as well as two separate bargaining units at UMASS, Amherst: Graduate Student Employees & a new unit of Resident Assistants.

Democracy in the Workplace

In your own specific workplace you and your co-workers nominate and elect your fellow workers to represent you at the bargaining table and then have the opportunity to decide the specific workplace issues you want to bargain over, with management, for your union contract.

You and your co-workers also nominate and elect your fellow workers to be union stewards to represent you in labor management meetings and grievances. You also elect representatives from your workplace to represent you within the Joint Council of Local 2322. The Executive Board officers of Local 2322 are democratically elected from its membership every three years.

The UAW International Union

The UAW is an International Union comprised of almost 1 million members throughout the United States and Canada. The UAW has many departments which provide assistance to its diverse membership. Although the UAW originally formed within the automotive industry during the 1930's, we have spent the last few decades organizing and representing workers from many different types of industries. It would be more accurate to refer to the UAW as the Union for All Workers.

-Tim Scott

Get Involved! If you want more information contact:

UAW Local 2322, 243 King St. Ste.110
Northampton, MA 01060

(413) 584-4905 (800) 682-0269
uaw2322@uaw2322.org