

Upcoming Events!

Bread and Roses Labor Day Festival

Monday, September 3
Lawrence Heritage State Park,
Lawrence, MA
www.breadandrosescentennial.org

Pioneer Valley Central Labor Council Legislative Breakfast

Friday, September 7
1599 Memorial Drive,
Chicopee, MA
8:30 am
(Contact the office if you'd like to attend)

GEO Benefits Fair

Thursday, September 6
10:00 am-3:00 pm
GEO Office at UMass,
201 Student Union

GEO Membership Meeting

Thursday, September 20
6:00-8:00 pm
UMass Campus Center

Film: "Farewell to Factory Towns"

Thursday, September 27
7:00-9:00 pm
2 Congregational Church,
Greenfield
A featured event of the
Education and Solidarity
Committee!



Holding Our Elected Officials Accountable

By Ron Patenaude, President

Sisters and Brothers,

I am writing to remind you, with the elections approaching, of UAW President Walter Reuther's famous remark that, "There's a direct relationship between the bread box and the ballot box, and what the union fights for and wins at the bargaining table can be taken away in the legislative halls." The growing disparities between the rich and poor and a shrinking middle class demonstrates that is truer now than ever before.

We have allowed ourselves as working people to be divided and misled. We need to get back to working together to elect representatives whose beliefs, values, and goals reflect our own, not corporations.

Politicians claim they know us and understand our struggle to make a decent, fair living so we can house and feed our families. I have a hard time believing that people who make many

times what our members do have a clue what the lives of working people are like.

That said, there are some principles and concerns of working people like us that Democrats are more likely to support than Republicans, such as protecting Social Security, Medicare, and making the rich pay their fair share of taxes (Mitt Romney is bragging he's never paid less than 12%...really?)

While unions are quite successful at helping win elections, our biggest failure is not holding our elected officials accountable after we help get them elected. We should be doing this from day one, every day year-round, not just in the weeks or months leading up to an election. We need to research and educate ourselves in order to know which candidates' positions are most in line with the needs of working people, rather than the rich.

The UAW also has a long, proud, and storied history of support for Civil and Human Rights. We should seek out and support those representatives who believe all people deserve respect, dignity, and a society where all have equal access to affordable education, good jobs, housing, and a decent standard of living, no matter the color of their skin, ethnic origin, sexual orientation, gender, or religion.

We will be posting opportunities for our members to participate in labor walks, phone banks, and other support efforts for candidates that our union has endorsed. I hope you'll participate and help get them elected, but also push them. Tell them what matters to us as working people, and, most of all, hold them accountable. If they vote the right way, call them to thank them; if they vote wrong, call them and give them hell. President Reuther would expect nothing less of us.



Historic Protection for International Employees Achieved in Post-Doc Contract

By Ryan Quinn, Vice President/Service Rep.

Before their first union contract was ratified in March, 63% of postdoctoral researchers at UMass Amherst faced a terrifying possibility: termination and deportation without just cause. Almost two-thirds of the postdoctoral researchers, or postdocs, at UMass are international employees, which means that if they were fired, their visas automatically expired. Deportation coupled with at-will employment - where an employee can be fired for any reason or no reason at all - meant that a postdoc who had

a disagreement with her supervisor could potentially face deportation.

The new postdoctoral researcher contract at UMass Amherst includes a very important provision to address this problem: "investigatory leave". Investigatory leave means that an employee being investigated for an alleged violation of policy can remain on payroll, and in the country. This is a significant victory for international postdocs, who would not be able to take advantage of a traditional

grievance process, where an employee who is fired must endure long delays between grievance steps before getting their job back; international postdocs would be required to leave the country before their grievance could be heard. With their new union contract, international postdocs can have their grievances heard fairly and quickly, without fear of losing their visa status before their side of the story is heard.



Paid Union Meetings Ensured for Workers at NCYF

By Nancy Fish, Servicing Rep.

The Residential Counselors (RC's) at the Northeast Center for Youth and Families (NCYF) have the right (see Contract Article below) to meet with their Union Representative every month during their paid staff meeting. The union meeting is between 30-45 minutes each month at all three of the residential programs in Springfield, MA. This time is extremely valuable for the UAW Residential Counselor's at NCYF. At these meetings the Steward and the Representative have an opportunity (during the paid work-day!) to talk about Union issues, trainings, updates, planning agenda for Labor/Management, bargaining strategies and hear what the UAW members have to say.

Propose a Union Meetings article in your next contract. For more information contact Nancy Fish at nancy@uaw2322.org.



Time Off When You Need It

By Court Cline, Servicing Rep.

As a worker in Massachusetts, you have three different laws that give you the right to take time off from work for the birth or adoption of a child, to take care of seriously ill family members, to recover from their own serious illnesses, or to take care of routine family responsibilities. This time off is unpaid, but it can be used concurrently with any accumulated paid leave and usually must be requested in advance.

The Family and Medical Leave

Act (FMLA) is a federal law guaranteeing covered workers up to 12 weeks of unpaid leave to care for newborns, newly adopted children and seriously ill family members, or to recover from their own serious illnesses.

The Massachusetts Maternity Leave Act (MMLA) allows covered female workers to take up to eight weeks following the birth or adoption of a child.

The Small Necessities Leave

Act (SNLA) allows workers to take up to 24 hours per year off from work to go to their child's education-related school activities, or to accompany a child or elderly relative to medical or dental appointments.

More information can be found under the Employment section of www.masslegalhelp.org. If you have specific challenges in your workplace, you should contact your shop steward and/or your union representative at UAW Local 2322.

In Memory of David Jarnes: Dedicated Community, Labor, and LGBT Activist

By Ron Patenaude, President

It is with great sadness that we pass on the news that our friend David Jarnes passed after a long and courageous battle with cancer on Monday June 30, 2012. David was a personal friend to many of us, and a long-time community, labor, and LGBT activist and advocate.

David was retired after having

worked at the Massachusetts Department of Mental Health for many years, and was a proud member of SEIU 509. David was also a member of the Ward 6 Democratic Party in Springfield, and was one of the co-founders of Western Mass Pride at Work, an LGBT constituency group within the AFL-CIO. David was an avid sports fan, and loved all of his alma mater

UMass teams along with the Boston Red Sox. David played for many years in the Gay Softball League and enjoyed Doo-Wop music, which he showcased in an annual local radio show which he hosted. David is survived by his husband John Jarnes-Masseti, his sister Lorraine Freeman, and many friends who will miss him greatly.

UAW 2322 Member Profile: Thomas Herndon

By Ryan Quinn, Vice-President/Servicing Rep.

Name: Thomas Herndon

Shop: Graduate Employee Organization

Where are you from?

I was born and raised in Austin, Texas. When I was 18, I felt like getting out of Texas for a little bit, and did my undergraduate at the Evergreen State College in Washington State. While there, I studied Economics, Political Economy, Social Theory, Popular Education and Social Movement history.

What brought you to UMass?

I came to UMass because of the graduate program in economics. UMass is one of the oldest,

and only, places you can study Economics in a heterodox framework – as opposed to the orthodox free-market framework. The department pays special attention to the issues of class, inequality and social justice, and I thought that this was a good fit for my interests.

How have you been involved in the UAW and other organizations?

I started being involved in my union as the Steward for the Economics department, and participated heavily in the healthcare campaign. Since then, I have also participated on the GEO bargaining committee, the GEO steering committee,



and as a trustee on the E-board at the local. I have enjoyed my involvement, and encourage others to become involved.

What is your vision for UAW Local 2322?

My vision for our local is that it can continue to be a strong institution supporting the move-

ment for social justice in the Western Massachusetts. We should be a constant source of fresh troublemakers fighting for justice in the different campaigns, as well as an institution that can help us all grow as organizers and activists.

What hobbies do you have?

My main hobby is playing music. Austin was a very musical town to grow up in, and I started playing the bass at age eleven. Since then, I have also branched out to guitar, drums and piano, but bass is still my main instrument. I tend to play jazz, funk, and other groove oriented styles of music, but have definitely been known to rock out as well.