



THE LABOR RESOURCE CENTER

College of Public and Community Service, UMass Boston

education * research * action



LRC Welcomes New Director

The LRC is pleased to announce the hiring of a new director, **Dr. Susan Moir**, who joins us after almost 12 years at UMass Lowell, where she co-founded and was the

first Director of the Construction Occupational Health Program (COHP). While many LRC supporters know Susan already--she's been active in the Boston-area labor movement for many years--we recently asked her to sit down with us for a chat to describe her vision for the Center's future.

LRC: Welcome aboard! In some ways, coming to the LRC is a trip home for you since you got your BA from UMass Boston. How does it feel to be back?

SM: I was here from the opening of the campus in January 1974 until I graduated in 1976. Downtown I had just been another commuter, busy trying to juggle school while being a single mother. When we came out here to the Point, I found a community. It was here that I learned about feminism and socialism. I first began to really understand racism in America and how my people, working class ethnic families, had been bought off by social welfare programs designed for whites after World War II, how we had left our neighborhoods and our Black neighbors behind in the city and had become participants in perpetuating racism. This place changed my worldview and my life. I am so glad to be back. And everyday I step off the bus, I get a burst of energy from the big sky and being so close to the sea.

LRC: Can you tell us a little about what you'd like to see the LRC do in the coming months and years?

SM: We're here to provide education to students, what I think of as "jump starts with rigor," a solid program of training and education that workers, union members and community residents can really benefit from. I'd also like to see us develop a participatory

LRC Co-Sponsors Conference on 'Future of Work' in Massachusetts

This spring, hundreds of union members, academics and activists will converge on UMass Boston to explore an essential question: what does the future hold for work--and workers--in Massachusetts? The conference, funded by the state legislature and coordinated by the Labor Studies programs at the four UMass campuses, will invite cutting-edge researchers to explore how work is changing in the state. Topics to be examined include:

- ◆ The impact of capital mobility, outsourcing and offshoring on work in the state;
- ◆ Low-wage, temporary and contingent work;
- ◆ The downgrading of professional and technical work;
- ◆ Race, gender, ethnicity, immigration and the future of work.

The **Future of Work** conference will take place at UMass Boston, March 23-24, 2005. For more information, call the LRC at 617-287-7426 or email us at laborresourcecenter@umb.edu

research program, training students to do research that's useful for unions. At the same time, we have a real responsibility for training the next generation of labor leaders here in Boston. That means leaders who aren't just the sons and daughters of the current generation of leaders but a truly diverse group of workers who are empowered to lead by the solid education that they receive here at the Labor Center. It's an incredible opportunity and I can't wait to get started.



Spotlight on LRC Staff

Current LRC student Kurtis DuVal remembers the day he took his first Labor Studies course, Assessing Workers' Power with instructor Debi Osnowitz. "I've been a part of the workforce my whole adult



Research associate
Debi Osnowitz

life and everyday I experience injustice," says DuVal. "But that first course put a fire in my belly. Debi helped me understand that the labor movement--and there is a movement--starts with me." It's a sentiment you'll hear LRC students express repeatedly: Osnowitz's courses on worker power, contingent work and globalization are informative, useful to their work as union members and organizers, and even life changing. Students also praise her for her willingness to guide them through the often complex UMass system as well as helping them to balance the demands of work, school and life. For her part, Osnowitz remains humble to the end. "The students who come to the Labor Studies program are a pleasure to know and a joy to teach. They have a wealth of experience in life and at work."



Labor Extension: Real-Life Training for Workers and Union Members

Looking to sharpen your research skills? This fall, join UMass Boston Labor Extension coordinator Tess Ewing for the return of this popular class: **Strategic Internet Research for Organizing & Contract Campaigns**. This hands-on course offers union and community activists the chance to learn internet research skills to build their movements through strategic information gathering and campaign planning. Whether you're gearing up for a campaign or simply want to get better at finding facts when you need them, this is the course for you.

When: Nov. 15, 16, and 17th, 8:30am - 11:30am
Where: UMass Boston

To sign up, call Tess Ewing at 617-287-7352 or e-mail tess.ewing@umb.edu

Note: participants who successfully complete this course can use that credit towards a Labor Studies degree at UMass Boston

LRC Students: Preparing to Lead

If you haven't met these current LRC students, you will soon. These hard-working organizers and union members have done their homework and taken the tests; we predict that soon they'll emerge to join the next generation of labor leaders in Massachusetts.



Ellaina McDowell, '05, Field Representative, SEIU Local 509. McDowell likens her work as a field rep to working on a puzzle, and says that her education has allowed her to put all the pieces together. "I took a class in negotiation and it was very helpful in making me a better advocate for my members." McDowell has certainly impressed her teachers and fellow students at the LRC: last year she was the recipient of the Massachusetts AFL-CIO scholarship award. Congratulations Ellaina and keep up the good work!

Kevin Smith, Secretary Treasurer, Local 1952, Boston School Custodians, Painters District Council 35.

Smith is a brand new LRC student. After 14 years as a union official, he finally decided to take the plunge and pursue his BA in Labor Studies. "I can already tell that the classes here are going to make me a better organizer and negotiator." And when he's not studying for his Strategic Analysis class or advocating on behalf of local custodians, Smith is busy in the community: he's currently working to open a recovery center for addicts in Charlestown.



LRC Launches New Website



Need information about certificate programs labor studies courses or hands-on training for workers and union members? Visit the LRC's new website, part of the online College of Public and Community Service family. Find us at www.cpcs.umb.edu and click on Labor Resource Center. See you online!