



LRC

THE COLLEGE OF PUBLIC & COMMUNITY SERVICE
Labor Resource Center

education
 research
 training

Labor Studies Capstone Day

What do privatization, the Boston Globe, changing labor laws, early childhood education, union organizing drives, and outsourcing have in common? (No, it's not the beginning of a bad joke!) They are all topics that graduating Labor Studies majors and advisees explored during the first **Labor Studies Student Conference: Graduates' Capstone Presentations of "The Future of Work in Massachusetts."**

On a beautiful Saturday in May, 17 graduating CPCS students who completed Labor Studies capstone projects gathered together with their families and friends, to share their own research and insights into the changing nature of work.

Six of the presenters were Labor Studies majors who developed their capstone projects as part of a new Labor Studies seminar: **Strategic Analysis for the Labor Movement**. These students explored important labor issues including the privatization of public services, the impacts of outsourcing on working families, the deregulation of overtime laws and

the erosion of the 40 hour work week, and the effectiveness of different organizing models in the health care and human services industries.

The other students developed group projects as part of the year-long **Labor Studies Critical Learning Seminar**, during which they explored an industry in depth. One group of students examined the print media industry, critically analyzed the changes being made at the Boston Globe, and developed strategies to help the business without outsourcing good quality unionized jobs. Two other groups of students who were part of the Early Childhood Education program at UMass Boston, took this opportunity to examine the industry in which they were preparing to work. Their examination of their own industry included analyses of wage structures, turn-over rates, new licensing legislation, and unionizing drives within the industry.

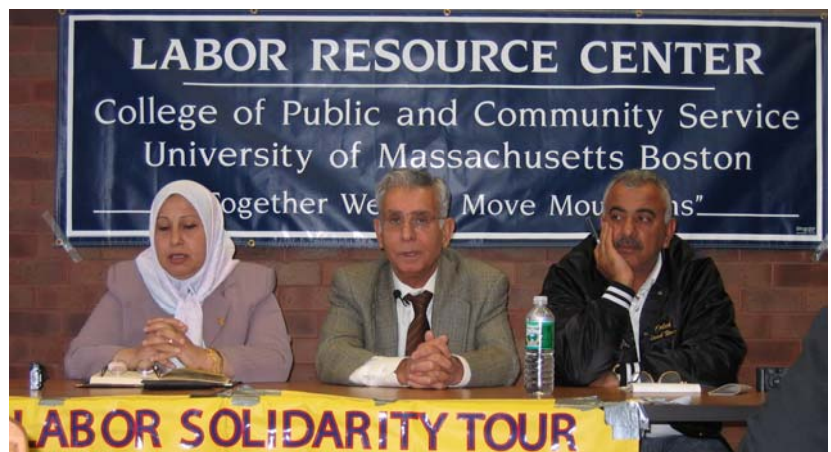
It was inspiring to hear the students' thoughtful reflections and pro-active strategies for improving work in Massachusetts.

The LRC Hosts Iraqi Labor Leaders

Over 70 people crammed into the Wheatley student lounge on June 14 to hear two Iraqi labor leaders give first-hand accounts of life in occupied Iraq, and to discuss the role labor is playing in trying to build a progressive, secular society in that war-ravaged country.

Hashmeya Muhsin Hussein, President of the Electrical Utility Workers Union (and the first woman to lead an Iraqi national union), and Faleh Abood Umara, General Secretary of the Southern Oil Company Union, spoke to a mixed audience of UMB students and employees, labor unionists

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From the left: Hashmeya Muhsin Hussein, Anwar Diab (interpreter), and Faleh Abood Umara.

Photo by Anneta Argyles.

Labor Resource Center

College of Public & Community Service
 UMass Boston
 100 Morrissey Blvd., W4-127
 Boston, MA 02125

617-287-7426 Phone
 617-287-7404 Fax
 lrc@umb.edu Email
 www.cpcs.umb.edu/lrc Web

Labor Studies Alum Profile: Robin Rich '95

I graduated from CPCS in 1995, after working on my degree for 22 years! Like so many UMass students, I had done some courses right after high school and then took courses over the years while I juggled work, family and union activities.

I absolutely loved everything about my learning experience at CPCS where the faculty helped me craft a major that combined community planning and Labor Studies into "Strategic Planning for Labor and Community Organizing". It was exactly what I'd been doing for years and what I hoped to get better at in the future. The course work, the "competency" system, and the incredibly devoted faculty allowed me to finish my degree long distance while still working at Bethlehem Steel in Gary, Indiana.

The program is not about memorizing and feeding back "what the teacher wants". It's about real reflection, real pursuit of finding answers to questions you want answered, and developing skills you actually need in the world.

After I graduated I started using my new skills



in the United Steelworkers' Firestone/Bridgestone contract campaigns as well as our public utility. Then I was able to start working full time for the Union as the District's Rapid Response Coordinator, developing internal mobilization networks in our local unions and involving members in political action for fair trade policies, universal health care and other campaigns. I served as a staff representative, and I am currently working on organizing drives and the Good-year Tire campaign. Last year I built an Interfaith Workers' Rights Coalition in a rural Illinois community, harkening back to my Liberation Theology course with Clark Taylor.

I am deeply grateful to my all my teachers at CPCS and the Labor Resource Center who are too many to mention. The concept of competencies, and the mission of catering to the needs of working adults involved in community service, needs to be expanded throughout this country's higher education system, not attacked and reduced.

Let's save this program!

- Robin Rich

Labor Studies Students in the News

- ◆ **George E. Noel**, former President of IBEW 1505, was appointed by Governor Patrick to serve as the Director of the Massachusetts Department of Labor.
- ◆ **James Nason** was elected Grievance Coordinator for the Massachusetts Corrections Officers Federated Union (MCOFU).
- ◆ **Joe McArdle** (LS 2007) has been hired as a Field Representative with the International Laborers Union of North America.
- ◆ **Jim Pimental**, recently hired as an organizer with the International Union of Bricklayers and Allied Craft Workers (BAC) Local 3, was quoted in the New Bedford Standard Times about organizing immigrant workers: *"These are men and women in this country who are workers whether they are here legally or illegally. They deserve to work in safe conditions and be paid a decent wage. No matter who it is. They're still human."*

***Congratulations to all of you.
You've done us proud!***

The LRC in the Community

- ◆ Luz Rodriguez of the **Committee to Support Immigrant Organizing** (CSIO), and Annetta Argyres (LRC) facilitated a workshop titled "Labor and Latinos" for the Gaston Institute's Fourth Latino Public Policy Conference (October 2006).
- ◆ **Akira Suzuki** from the Ohara Institute for Social Research at Hosei University, Tokyo, Japan, met with LRC's Tess Ewing to discuss his research into Central Labor Councils and their ties to community based organizations.
- ◆ The LRC and the Gaston Institute hosted a presentation by photo journalist **David Bacon** titled *Displacement and Migration—Who pays the price of Globalization?* His photos and writings can be seen on the web at <http://dbacon.igc.org>.
- ◆ The LRC's Annetta Argyres lent a hand in **Chris Hoeh's** (LS 1990) 2nd grade class as part of their role play about workers' rights, union organizing, and negotiations.
- ◆ During the spring 2007, the LRC hosted **Community Labor United's** second Civic Leadership Networking Institute.
- ◆ LRC Director Susan Moir says Thomas Estabrook's new book **"Labor –Environmental Coalitions: Lessons from a Louisiana Petrochemical Region"** is a "must read for all who work for a better and more just future."

Labor Researchers' Corner: *The Researchers' Roundtable*

The LRC and Community Labor United (CLU) are partnering to convene a series of **Researchers' Roundtable** meetings.

Through the Researchers' Roundtables we aim to provide:

- a **networking opportunity** for researchers, who often work in isolation, to get to know colleagues from other organizations;
- a **learning opportunity** for researchers who work on different types of projects with different methodologies to explore each others' approaches to research;
- a **working opportunity** for researchers to interact with each other about a specific research area in which they are currently working, or that they expect to be working in soon; and,
- a **collaborative opportunity** for researchers in labor and community to discuss ways in which we can work together on projects in the future.

Join us! We invite all union-based and community-based researchers to come together at the Researcher's Roundtables. And, we don't just mean people with the word "researcher" in their job title! You are a "researcher" if you've ever had to track down information or data for an organizing or policy campaign.

During our first meetings, we explored economic development research for unions, community groups and coalitions, with interesting and informative presentations by Elisabeth Daley of 1199SEIU and Mary Jo Connelly of CLU. We continued that discussion into our second meeting, in which we focused in on different approaches to researching the environmental and community impacts of development projects. As part of that discussion we heard about current efforts from Roseann Bongiovanni of the Chelsea Collaborative and Jeff Soth of the Massachusetts AFL-CIO.

For more information about the Researchers' Roundtable, and to make sure you are on our email list, please contact **Annetta Argyres** at the LRC: 617-287-7229 or anneta.argyres@umb.edu.

Iraqi Labor Leaders' Solidarity Tour *(from page 1)*

and community members. The LRC event was part of a "Solidarity Tour" of 13 US cities, intended to build support in the US for the Iraqi labor movement.

Faleh and Hashmeya spoke about the impact the occupation is having on Iraq's working people, government interference with the operation of unions, and the threat posed by the proposed draft Oil Law that the U.S. government is trying to impose on Iraq. The law would enable foreign multinational oil corporations (principally in the U.S.) to secure control over more than two-thirds of Iraq's oil for as long as 30 years.

According to Faleh, "We think the proposed oil law doesn't serve the interests of the Iraqi people at all. It emphasizes or confirms American hegemony over Iraqi oil fields."

Their message about the US occupation was also loud and clear. While they were glad that Saddam Hussein had been overthrown, both Hashmeya and Faleh stated forcefully that the US should withdraw from Iraq right away, and let the Iraqi people sort out their differences among themselves.

NOTE: For more information about the Solidarity Tour, Iraqi labor unions and the oil law, visit www.uslaboragainstar.org.



LRC Events

◆ Labor Studies Welcome Back Reception

Wednesday, September 5, 4:30-6:30 pm
Malcolm X Plaza, Wheatley 4th floor
Join students, faculty, staff and alum for light refreshments.

◆ Labor in Latin America: Fighting an Uphill Battle

Wednesday, September 12, 3 - 5 pm
Student Lounge, Wheatley 4th floor
Come to a presentation by labor economists Carlos Salas and Marcia Leite from two of the largest economies in the Americas — Mexico and Brazil. Light refreshments will be served.

◆ “Undoing the Silence: Six Tools for Social Change Writing”

Tuesday, December 11, 5 - 7 pm.
Student Lounge, Wheatley 4th floor
Prominent popular educator, activist and author, Louise Dunlap, will read from her book. Light refreshments will be served.

Don't miss out on any LRC news.

Bookmark our website on your computer!

WWW.CPCS.UMB.EDU/LRC

Welcome, Camille!

Please join us in welcoming **Camille Wilcox** to the LRC. Camille joins the LRC as the Administrative Coordinator. Drop by her office to say hello, or call her if you have any questions!

And join us in thanking **Jean Pishkin** for her many years of service to the LRC. We wish her all the best with her studies and work!



CONGRATULATIONS 2007 GRADUATES!



Labor Studies Majors and Advisees

FRONT ROW: Donna Kelly-Williams*, Kathy Piatelli*, Heidi Decarolis*, Dan Hamel*

BACK ROW: Sheila Sousa, Annemarie Madden, Jason Faria*, Susan Moir (LRC Director), Jim McCue*, Jim Green (Faculty), Wes Ritchie*, Joe McArdle*, MaryLu Love (Director of Early Literacy Partnership)

MISSING FROM PHOTO: Gerry Harrington*, Bethany Lyons, Josette Nicolas, Margaret Reid*, Melissa Ryan, Herminia Santiago, Kimberly Stevens, and Maria Weinstein.

* indicates a Labor Studies major