



Vol. XLII, No. 3
MAY-JUN 2017

Label Letter

Union Label & Service Trades Department, AFL-CIO

Starving for a Union: Yale Graduate Students on Hunger Strike to Gain Recognition

Twenty-three graduate students were arrested on May 11 at Yale University in New Haven, Conn., after blocking streets in downtown New Haven. The students were protesting the University's refusal to recognize their recently certified student teachers' union – UNITE HERE Local 33. May 11 was "move-out" day for Yale undergraduates, which gave the action increased impact and visibility.

Eight members of the union went on a hunger strike on April 25 to draw attention to the University's stance and plan to continue their protests and fast "indefinitely."

Graduate students at Yale have been pushing for union representation since the early 1990s and an August 2016 ruling by the National Labor Relations Board allowing for students at private universities to pursue union representation cleared the

way for the UNITE HERE Local 33 election.

After the ruling, eight departments at Yale voted to unionize. Yale has refused to recognize the elections and is appealing the NLRB decisions.

Union members believe that Yale is stalling because there are two vacancies on the NLRB that will be filled by the White House. New NLRB members appointed by this White House will likely overturn last summer's ruling allowing the grad students to unionize.

Meanwhile, other graduate students around the nation are forming unions or are seeking elections. Graduate student workers at American University voted to affiliate with Service Employees International Union in April. American did not contest the election and the members are seeking their first contract.

UNITE HERE!

Camille Lepre, a spokesperson for American, said via email that the university "respects the choice of the majority of the graduate students who voted, and it does not intend to file a legal challenge to the election results. We look forward to engaging in a constructive dialogue with the union about issues related to our graduate students."

A union vote at Harvard University proved inconclusive, as did a vote at Cornell University. Graduate

CONTINUED ON PAGE 6

CWA Engages in Three-Day Strike at AT&T

Nationwide, members of Communications Workers of America (CWA) working for AT&T walked off the job on Friday, May 19, protesting the company's failure to present serious proposals at the bargaining table. Approximately 37,000 workers in 36 states and DC walked off the job at 3pm on Friday with half of the workers coming from the AT&T wireless section. The wireline and DIRECTV workers made up the other half of the striking workforce. This was the first time AT&T wireless workers have gone on strike.

The strike closed a number of retail locations over the weekend. The workers are demanding wage increases that cover rising healthcare costs, job security against outsourcing, affordable healthcare and a fair scheduling policy.

"We will no longer stand by as AT&T hems and haws at the bargaining table, keeping its own workers from achieving the American Dream they once promised," said Dennis

CONTINUED ON PAGE 5





THE *Best* SUMMER

IS UNION-MADE



SUNSCREEN AND OUTDOOR PROTECTION

Coppertone (USW)
Bain De Soleil (USW)
Chapstick (USW)
Claritin (USW)
Chlor-Trimeton (USW)

FIRST AID

Bactine
Solarcaine

SPORTING EQUIPMENT

American Athletic (Russell) portable and stationary basketball backboards (UAW)
Bell Sports (UFCW)
BARE brand (USW)
Standard Golf (IAM)
Winchester Ammunition (IAM)
Savage Arms (IAM)
Doughboy Pools (PACE)
Aqua Chem pool care products (UFCW)
Swimline Water Sports (IBEW)
Lifetimer Boats (IAM)

Vic Francks Boat Co. (IAM)
Mercury Marine Power (IAM)
Champions Choice (UFCW)
MacGregor (IBB)
Louisville Slugger (UAW)
Top Flite Golf Balls (IBB)

LAWN AND GARDEN

John Deere 7000, 8000, 9000 series tractors (IAM and UAW)
Amerequip Corporation (IAM)
American Road Machinery Inc. (IAM)
Ashland Industries (IAM)
Beall Manufacturing (IAM)
BLOK LOK (IAM)
Bobcat of New York (IAM)
CA Lawton Co. (IAM)
Carmanah Design and Manufacturing (IAM)
Eagle Iron Works (IAM)
Edwards Equipment Co. (IAM)
Gledhill Road Machinery (IAM)
Gradall Industries (IAM)

Greenlee Textron Co. (IAM)
H and H Manufacturing (IAM)Toro (IAM)
Briggs and Stratton Corp (USW)
Bonanza Fertilizer (UFCW)
Lawn Boy (UAW)
Asplundh Tree Experts (IBEW)
Architectural Plywood Inc. (CWA)
VIM Fertilizer (UFCW)
SK Hand Tool Corporation (IAM)
Channellock Tools (IAM)

OUTDOOR FURNITURE AND FIXTURES:

Klear-Vu chair pads /cushions (UNITE HERE)
Stonco Outdoor Lighting (IBEW)
Kim Lighting (IBEW)
Architectural Area Lighting (IBEW)
Richardson Seating Corp. (Chemical Workers and Novelty Workers)
Algoma Net Company Hammocks (UFCW)
Thermador (IBB)
Weber Q Series Grill (Novelty Workers)

WALK IN MY SHOES

Wendy Karkos - IAMAW Local S6 *Bath Iron Works – Sandblaster*

In May, it will be a year that I've been with Bath Iron Works as a sandblaster. I came in as a general laborer. It's an L4 position where you assist other trades. You learn plasma cutting and torch cutting and grinding. You assist other trades and you learn a little bit about what each trade does. It gives you the opportunity to try things out and see what you want to do.

It's a difficult job without a doubt... I've always been somebody to challenge myself, that person where GIRLS don't do that...well oh yea, I'll show you that they do. That's been my thing so when the position came up...it seemed like it would be a challenge, something to see if I'd like to do. Keep up with the boys I guess.

I love my job. I love the crew that I work with, they're like family. It's definitely a young person's job. I won't do it forever. It was a lot to learn. A lot of stress at the beginning.

There's different levels of sandblasting I suppose but this is massive. We blast the entire units to get them ready for paint. So you know you get a three-inch hose, blasting out steel grit sometimes 120/150 pounds of pressure which is enough to blow you right over...which had happened. You learn to do what you must do. Sometimes you are up on a three- to four-foot aluminum horse when you're getting ready to blast and it could blow you off. So you learn ways to make sure you're not blown off. I had to learn this stuff the hard way.

It's a lot of physical strength so I had to struggle in that area. These guys here automatically have that strength...I got the mental strength but not so strong, I had to work up to it. Probably the first month I was at home almost in tears...your body hurts in EVERY place it could.

But once you get it, it gets easier you know...you stop fighting the job, you learn to do stuff that works WITH you. Like I said you brace yourself or you're even using the line itself up against something to blast because with all that pressure, it's difficult to control. But it's awesome. You work really hard and when you are done you are exhausted but you know you feel like you earned you day.

This is my first job being in a union. This has been a huge change to me all together, prior to this in aviation I was a contractor, so it's completely different. As far as benefits I had to do all that on my own. So it's nice to know that you have the union to back you up when and if I ever need them. The benefits are great, I love my job here.

I like blasting, it's been a good experience and you're proud of yourself when you are done at the end of the night...EXHAUSTED but you feel like you did your job. AND you're working ...and in blast it's different than any other department. You're working next to guys who are sweating the same time as you are because it can get 115/120 degrees inside the full hood. They're working as hard as you are, they are going to help you out whether you are a girl...they do the same thing for the other guys. They're a family, they've got each other's backs. ■



Spotlight the Label

**AFT — AMERICAN FEDERATION
OF TEACHERS**



The American Federation of Teachers, an affiliate of the AFL-CIO, was founded in 1916 and today represents 1.6 million members in more than 3,000 local affiliates nationwide.

Five divisions within the AFT represent the broad spectrum of the AFT's membership: pre-K through 12th-grade teachers; paraprofessionals and other school-related personnel; higher education faculty and professional staff; federal, state and local government employees; and nurses and other healthcare professionals. In addition, the AFT represents approximately 80,000 early childhood educators and nearly 250,000 retiree members.

The AFT is governed by its elected officers and by delegates to the union's biennial convention, which sets union policy. Elected leaders are President Randi Weingarten, Secretary-Treasurer Loretta Johnson and Executive Vice President Mary Cathryn Ricker, along with a 42-member executive council.

Many well-known Americans have been AFT members, including John Dewey, Albert Einstein, Hubert Humphrey, Pulitzer Prize-winning author Frank McCourt, Nobel Peace Prize winner Elie Wiesel, former Senate Majority Leader and Ambassador to Japan Mike Mansfield, former Health and Human Services Secretary Donna Shalala, and former United Nations Undersecretary and Nobel Peace Prize winner Ralph Bunche. ■

Union Vitamins Workers Join UFCW Local 1625

Late last year, workers at Union Vitamins in Clearwater, Fla., joined UFCW Local 1625 and became the first union-made vitamin manufacturer in the country. Union Vitamins workers produce vitamins and health supplements, including: vitamin C, vitamin E, calcium, omega 3 pure fish oil, multi-vitamins and other products.

“Why buy nonunion-made products when one can buy 100 percent pure union-made vitamins and supplements that save you time and money?” said Jim Harper, president of Union Vitamins. “Union Vitamins will demonstrate to other corpo-

rations how they can become union, make quality products, beat foreign competition, and maintain healthy profitability. Union Vitamins is an industry role model for value, efficiency and good health, all under the banner of union workers.”

“We created Union Vitamins to ensure our family atmosphere will remain in place here, and to ensure that all employees are always treated with fairness,” added Harper.

“We are excited and pleased that UFCW Local 1625 has partnered with Union Vitamins, a company that produces the

finest vitamins in the world,” said UFCW Local 1625 President Ed Chambers. “We are proud to report that these vitamins are 100 percent union-made. We look forward to growing together and helping our members prosper in this new venture.”

To find your union-made vitamins, go to: <http://unionvitamins.com>. ■



Missouri AFL-CIO Working to Take So-called 'Right to Work' Law to Ballot Box

The Missouri AFL-CIO and a coalition of local unions called “Preserve Middle Class America” are looking to gather enough signatures to place Missouri’s recently passed “right-to-work” to work law on the ballot in November 2018.

The coalition wants to give voters the chance to weigh in on the issue after it was pushed through the GOP-controlled Legislature this year and signed into law by Republican Gov. Eric Greitens. The coalition must gather enough signatures by August 25 to stop the law from taking effect and to place it on the ballot. Missouri residents can call a referendum on a new law by collecting signatures totaling five percent of voters from two-thirds of the state’s congressional districts.

The new law, which was set to go into effect Aug. 28, would allow employees in unionized workplaces to opt out of paying union dues for the cost of being represented. Greitens says the change will boost the state’s economy by attracting more businesses, a claim the facts show is not true.

Efforts to pass a right-to-work law last year were stymied when Missouri’s former governor Jay Nixon vetoed the bill.

The referendum needs 140,000 signatures to get on the ballot, but the coalition is aiming to get around 300,000 to be safe.

There are over 260,000 union members in Missouri, Ryan Burke, senior field representative with the AFL-CIO, who conducted a signature-gathering training at IBEW Local 1, said. “If you all just do your job, go back to your locals and your friends and family and collect your signatures, we can get there.”

Since 1914, Missouri voters have had the chance to vote on 26 referenda – 24 laws were overturned because of those votes. According to a poll conducted by the Missouri AFL-CIO, a plurality of voters opposed right-to-work, and the plurality grows when voters are informed of what the law does.

According to the Labor Tribune, other states that have passed right-to-work have lower wages, fewer benefits and more dangerous workplaces. They also, on average, have seen smaller median income growth than Missouri. In fact, two of Missouri’s RTW neighbors – Kansas and Oklahoma, lost jobs last year while Missouri created more new jobs than all its right-to-work neighbors. ■

Union Label Building New App

The Union Label and Service Trades Department, AFL-CIO, is in the process of building a new App for iPhone and Android devices to help union members and conscientious consumers find union-made products and services. In addition to offering a database of products, the App will have links to all of our affiliated unions and push notifications to alert users when companies are added to the 'Don't Buy' list.

The Department is working to reach out to all of our affiliated unions to help us update our existing database of products and to add new products and services. If you have a product you would like to see listed, please visit our website at www.unionlabel.org and add it today.

The new App is expected to launch in late summer or early fall. ■

ARE YOU ON OUR E-MAIL LIST?

Have you joined our blast e-mail list? Have you visited us on facebook or twitter? The ULSTD is active on social media, posting union news and product information we believe is important to union members. If you haven't already, find us on facebook, and make sure you sign up for our email list on our website at unionlabel.org to receive important news right in your inbox. ■



Workers Demand a Fair Contract at AT&T

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Trainer, Vice President of CWA District 1. “Despite being the largest telecom company in the country with nearly \$1 billion a month in profits and the CEO earning \$28 million, AT&T continues to pinch its workers’ basic needs and stand in the way of high-quality service its customers pay good money for. This is a warning to AT&T: there’s only one way out of this now—a fair contract—and we’ll settle for nothing less.”

IT'S ABOUT FIGHTING A SYSTEMS THAT'S BEEN RIGGED AGAINST US

The workers are committed to putting an end to unnecessary frustration and poor service because of AT&T’s lack of investment in its core business, said CWA. And, according to CWA, may need to engage in a longer, open-ended strike, if necessary, to get AT&T to commit to a decent contract.

“As a father, striking is not an easy decision for me. But to make sure I can give my kids the future they deserve, we must take a stand against any and all attempts to skimp on good jobs and financial security,” said Mark Bautista, an AT&T wireline worker from El Sobrante, Calif. “And our fight for a fair contract is about more than just my co-workers and me—it’s about fighting a system that’s been rigged against us and way too many others for far too long. On the picket lines, I’ll be chanting ‘No Contract, No Peace,’ until I lose my voice.”

AT&T workers are demanding that AT&T commit to bargaining that addresses wage increases that cover rising healthcare costs, job security against outsourcing, affordable healthcare, and a fair scheduling policy.

AT&T makes \$1 billion a month in profits, but, according to CWA, it uses low-wage contractors, which eliminates good jobs and hurts customer service. In addition, the company’s retail workers’ take home pay has plummeted in the last year after AT&T unilaterally changed its commission plan. Since 2011, AT&T has eliminated 12,000 call center jobs in the U.S., closing and downsizing call centers across the country. Rather than keeping those good-paying jobs here at home, AT&T has contracted with third party vendors operating in countries with low wages and weak labor protections.

A recent report from CWA shed new light on AT&T’s sprawling web of 38 third-party call centers in eight countries. The use of third party call centers, says CWA, bring down wages and compromise the quality of service for AT&T customers. AT&T workers and CWA representatives met with call center vendor employees in the Dominican Republic in early May and learned that the workers there face anti-union backlash when they attempt to improve their working conditions.

CWA currently has charges against AT&T Mobility pending with the National Labor Relations Board because the company is refusing to provide the union

with information about several important issues, including the number of calls going to contractors and overseas. This information is necessary to negotiate basic job security for call center workers. The company has also refused to provide information related to vacation, sick days, training, job transfers and benefits.

In late March, AT&T wireline workers in California and Nevada, who have been working without a contract for over a year, went on strike to protest the company’s changing of working conditions in violation of federal law. The strike ended when the workers won an agreement with the company that it will no longer require employees to do work outside of their expertise and classification.

More than 2,300 DIRECTV technicians in California and Nevada and hundreds of workers at AT&T East who manage the 911 dispatch system for AT&T have been in negotiations for their first contract since last year. Also covered under the wireless workers’ contract are nearly 800 DIRECTV call center workers in three states and more than 600 CRICKET retail workers. ■



Carrier to Lay Off 600 Despite Trump Claim

Carrier, which had been in the spotlight for threatening to send 1,100 jobs at the end of 2016 to Mexico, is now slated to lay off 600 workers before the end of 2017.

President Trump famously claimed that he had saved the jobs of those 1,100 workers following a visit to the Indianapolis-based manufacturer's plant. Trump had applauded United Technologies, Carrier's parent company, for cutting a deal with him and agreeing to keep 1,100 jobs that

were slated to move to Mexico in America's heartland.

During the press conference at Carrier in 2016, Trump said: "that big, big beautiful plant behind us... will be even more beautiful in about seven months from now. They're so happy. They're going to have a great Christmas. That's most important."

It's been six months since he made that claim when the company announced that at least 600 employees at the factory will

still be laid off, with the final 290 job cuts coming just ahead of Christmas.

Trump added: "And that these companies aren't going to be leaving anymore. They're not going to be taking people's hearts out. They're not going to be announcing, like they did at Carrier, that they're closing up and they're moving to Mexico, over 1,100 jobs."

When making his claim, Trump also insulted the Steelworkers local president in a tweet: "Chuck Jones, who is President of United Steelworkers 1999, has done a terrible job representing workers. No wonder companies flee country!"

In a filing seen by CNN in May, the company announced it would be making an initial 338 job cuts in July, four in October and a further 290 jobs on December 22, just three days before Christmas.

Of those 1,100 jobs Trump bragged about saving late last year, 300 had reportedly never been threatened with a move to Mexico—meaning a total of 800 jobs were supposedly saved. ■



Photo by: TheSupermat CC BY-SA 3.0
<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0/>, via Wikimedia Commons

Harley Davidson Moving Some of Its Production to Asia

Harley Davidson announced in late May that it is expanding its manufacturing to Asia, opening an assembly plant in Thailand at the end of 2018. IAM International President Bob Martinez called Harley-Davidson's plans a "slap in the face to U.S. workers who built an American icon."

The Thailand plant will assemble bikes from components assembled in the United States, but Martinez and other union leaders representing U.S. workers are skeptical that the company will keep its promise.

The IAM represents Harley workers in Milwaukee, Kansas City and York, PA.

In April, Harley Davidson said it was cutting 118 jobs at its plant in York, as the company moves the production of all cruiser motorcycles to Kansas City. That leaves only salaried employees and contractors at the York plant.

The layoffs, which will begin June 23, affect 110 hourly employees represented by the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers. The remainder are salaried employees and contractors.

"Harley-Davidson is going overseas and taking American jobs with it," said Martinez. "While other companies think about moving work home, Harley-Davidson is doing the opposite. It's a slap in the face to the U.S. workers who built an American icon."

"Harley-Davidson is laying off U.S. workers monthly while continuing to hire temporary workers. It should discontinue its plans and focus on U.S. workers who have made it so great."

"What part of 'Made in America' does Harley-Davidson not understand?"

Martinez was quoted in the New York Times and the Milwaukee Journal-Sentinel. ■

HUNGER STRIKE

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

student organizers at Duke University withdrew their union bid.

Students at Columbia University and Loyola University at Chicago have formed unions. Graduate teaching and research assistants at The New School recently received permission from the NLRB to proceed with a union election.

Several private institutions have challenged the NLRB's decision and their students' right to collective bargaining.

In seeking a first contract at American, one of the graduate students commented on an article about their vote: "The SEIU is doing valuable work standing up for academic labor, a historically marginalized and exploited workforce, and we're grateful for all the organizational help they've provided. It's our union and our victory." ■

AFL-CIO NATIONAL BOYCOTTS MAY-JUN. >>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>



HOSPITALITY, TRANSPORTATION & TRAVEL

SUBMITTED BY UNITE HERE!

Please support the workers in these hotels by continuing to boycott the following properties:

- **ANCHORAGE, AK:** Hilton; Sheraton
- **Hilton LAX**—This includes the Crowne Plaza Hotel LAX, Yokoso Sushi Bar, the Landing Restaurant, Century Taproom, and the Boulevard Market Cafe.
- **CALIFORNIA:** Hyatt Regency Santa Clara, Hyatt Regency Sacramento, Hyatt Fisherman's Wharf San Francisco, Hilton Long Beach, Le Meridien San Diego
- **RHODE ISLAND:** Renaissance Providence Downtown Hotel
- **SEATTLE:** Grand Hyatt Seattle and Hyatt at Olive 8 Seattle

FOOD

SUBMITTED BY United Steelworkers (USW)

→ PALERMO PIZZA

SUBMITTED BY Bakery, Confectionery, Tobacco Workers and Grain Millers International Union (BCTGM)

→ Mondelez International Snack Foods (those made in Mexico)

LEGAL

SUBMITTED BY American Federation of State, County & Municipal Employees

- Gleason, Dunn, Walsh & O'Shea
- McDonald, Lamond, Canzoneri and Hickernell

When some labor disputes with businesses cannot be resolved, the AFL-CIO supports its affiliates by endorsing their boycotts. A boycott is an act of solidarity by voluntarily abstaining from the purchase or use of a product or service.

POLICY GUIDELINE FOR ENDORSEMENT OF AFFILIATES' BOYCOTTS

The AFL-CIO Executive Council has developed policy guidelines that regulate how the federation endorses boycotts undertaken by its affiliates. To get AFL-CIO sanction, boycotts should be directed at primary employers.

THE GUIDELINES INCLUDE THESE PROVISIONS:

- All requests to the national AFL-CIO for endorsement must be made by a national or international union.
- Any affiliated union with a contract in force with the same primary employer will be contacted by the AFL-CIO to determine whether there is an objection to the federation's endorsement.
- Affiliates will be asked to provide the AFL-CIO with background information on the dispute in a confidential information survey. Prior to endorsement of the boycott, the executive officers, or their designees, will meet with the national union's officers, or their designees, to discuss the union's strategic plan and timetable for the boycott, or other appropriate tactics, and to discuss the federation's role.
- The national or international union initiating the boycott is primarily responsible for all boycott activities; the AFL-CIO will provide supplemental support.
- Boycotts will be carried on the AFL-CIO national boycott list for a period of one year, and the endorsement will expire automatically at the end of that time. National and international unions may request one-year extensions of the listings for actions where an organizing or bargaining campaign is actively in place.

*(These guidelines were adopted by the
AFL-CIO Executive Council in April 2011.)*

In This Issue...

Starving for a Union.	1
Do Buy	2
Walk in My Shoes.	3
Put a Union Label On It!.	4
Harley Davidson Moving to Asia.	5
AFL-CIO National Boycotts	7
The South's New Detroit Workers Need Union Representation	8

PERIODICALS
POSTAGE PAID
WASHINGTON, D.C.

TIME VALUE

Downloadable versions of *Label Letter* are posted on our website: www.unionlabel.org. With the exception of copyrighted material, permission to reprint is hereby granted, but credit to source will be appreciated.

EndNotes

By Rich Kline, *President, UL&STD*



Label Letter

Union Label & Service Trades Dept., AFL-CIO
815 16th St. N.W. • Washington, D.C. 20006

www.unionlabel.org

E-mail: ULSTD@unionlabel.org

Vol. XLII, No. 3 • ISSN 0161-9365



Label Letter is published bimonthly by the Union Label & Service Trades Department, AFL-CIO. Subscriptions to members only. USPS #424-530. Periodicals postage paid at Washington, D.C. Postmaster: Send corrections of address to Room 209, 815 16th Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20006. Phone: 202-508-3700.

RICH KLINE, President and Editor

VICE PRESIDENTS: Bernie Evers, James B. Wood, George Galis, Nicole Rhine, Bruce R. Smith, Otis Ducker, Joe Sellers, Dora Cervantes, Mike Linderer, Lorretta Johnson, Patrick Kellett, Salvatore J. Chilia, Steve Bertelli, Thomas Miller, Debby Szeready.

The South's New Detroit Workers Need Union Representation



Atrocious working conditions in non-union auto parts plants are described in a scathing article in Bloomberg Businessweek called "The New Detroit" from its March-April cover story. The cover photo was of a one-armed victim of an industrial accident beside this line: "The South's manufacturing renaissance comes

with a heavy price."

The article describes workers who are "poorly paid, barely trained and under relentless pressure, and they are being maimed and killed."

Bloomberg Businessweek reports that while Alabama boasts of itself as the "New Detroit," "it also epitomizes the global economy's race to the bottom" seeking low-margin

orders in competition with Mexico and Asia.

A former OSHA official says the supply chain includes Bangladesh, Georgia and Alabama and the auto parts suppliers' workplaces are marked by "high turnover, training is scant, and safety is an afterthought."

The article describes numerous rotten conditions and industrial accidents.

One worker who was injured at a non-union plant now commutes to General Motors Co., where the United Auto Workers represents the workers. He says the training is done "the right way" and that "they don't throw you to the wolves." Oh, yes, his pay rose from \$12 an hour to \$18.21.

The so-called New Detroit needs the UAW so it can raise its standards and to properly treat, train and pay its workers. ■