

APRIL/MAY NEWSLETTER

**WESTERN MA AREA
LABOR FEDERATION**
640 Page Blvd, Springfield, MA
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**AMHERST DPW ASSOC. MEMBERS AT THE
AMHERST TOWN COUNCIL**

AMHERST DPW ASSOCIATION FIGHTS FOR RESPECT, FAIR WAGES, AND SAFETY

Over the past month, Amherst DPW Association workers have rallied multiple times, demanding a fair contract after over a year of negotiations with the Amherst Town Manager.

ADPWA is an independent union with around 60 members. Over the past several months, the ALF, pro-union town councilors in Amherst, and the union have worked together to pressure the Town Manager to come back to the bargaining table.

ADPWA members have emphasized low pay compared to neighboring towns and egregious safety issues in the DPW building.

"Fifty percent of our non-supervisory staff has been here less than three years. The town refuses to acknowledge that that's an issue," said **Andrew Brace, ADPWA President**, "There's a wide range of responsibilities. A lot of stuff that we do is out of sight, but we're doing things every day that keep the town running.

And what the town is doing is a disservice to the staff and it's a disservice to the residents."

The ADPWA also highlighted egregious safety issues in the Town DPW building. One worker noted that "if the building were an apartment, the administration of this town would be considered slumlords."

Workers described water draining into the building through light fixtures, collapsing ceilings in work areas, poor ventilation in welding areas, and state reports of toxic mold. Almost a decade of inaction by the town has left workers concerned for their safety.

After multiple public rallies and a letter writing campaign organized by the WMALF, the town manager came back to the table. At the most recent rally, the union reported significant movement by management. **(Cont. Page 3)**

In this newsletter you can expect:

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**Event
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UPCOMING AREA LABOR FEDERATION EVENTS

Monthly Delegate & Assembly Meetings

April Delegates Meeting

- Date: Monday, April 13th
- Time: 6:30 pm (5:30 to observe board meeting)
- Location: Holyoke Public Library Community Room
- Topics: 2026-28 Board Elections, May Day, and more!

May Delegates Meeting

- Date: Monday, May 18th
- Time: 6:30 pm (5:30 to observe board meeting)
- Location: Holyoke Public Library Community Room
- Topics: Endorsement recommendations for state and federal elections

April PV Assembly Meeting - May Day Sign Making Party!

- Date: Monday, April 27th
- Time: 5:30 - 7:30 pm
- Location: 640 Page Blvd, Springfield, MA
- Join us for a May Day sign-making party! Bring your friends, family, and co-workers to connect. Food provided.

Training & Solidarity Actions

Contract Campaigns Training

- Date: Monday, April 13th
- Time: 9:30 am to 3:30 pm
- Location: 640 Page Blvd, Springfield, MA
- **RSVP required, limited slots:** wmalf.org/edu

Workers Memorial Day

- Date: Wednesday, April 29th
- Time: 12 - 1:30 pm
- Location: Teamsters Local 404, 115 Progress Ave, Springfield, MA 01104
- Join us to honor those we've lost in workplace accidents and fight for safer jobs.

May Day March in Holyoke

- Date: Friday, May 1st
- Time: 4:30 pm
- Location: Gather at Heritage & Dwight St.
- March with us to demand a fair contract for Holyoke Teachers, defend democracy, and demonstrate working class power!
- Register or co-sponsor at mayday.wmalf.org



mayday.wmalf.org

Sign up using the QR Code to the Right.



AND
MORE...

SHOW UP FOR YOUR UNION SIBLINGS

The Labor Movement is powerful when we show up for each other. By signing up for the WMALF's mobilization program, you make a commitment to show up for your union siblings. **When unions in your area need public support, we will reach out to you.** If your union needs support, reach out to organizer@wmalf.org.

Sign up using the QR Code to the Right.



IMMIGRANT SOLIDARITY ORGANIZING IN NASE-MTA

By Ian Petty, Northampton Teacher, member of Northampton Association of School Employees (NASE) and WMALF Delegate.

On January 23rd, a coalition of community organizers, labor unions, and faith groups in Minnesota came together to fight against the occupation of their state by ICE agents, and unions around the country joined in solidarity actions. The night before, the Northampton Association for School Employees (NASE) called for members to wear blue and for a lunchtime meeting at the high school. Despite the short notice, 20-30 educators showed up to discuss how we could defend our students, schools, and community. Soon after, NASE unanimously passed a resolution standing in solidarity with our immigrant community, opposing rising militarism, and establishing an Immigrant Solidarity Subcommittee.

Organizing for immigrant solidarity looks a lot like any other kind of rank-and-file union organizing. In classrooms across the district, there are now signs that read “Everybody is Welcome Here” and “Educators United for Immigrant Rights.” These signs are critical to letting students and staff know that they are not alone, in the same way that buttons and pins build our solidarity during contract fights.

Handing out the signs is also an opportunity for one-to-one member conversations that deepen our relationships with each other and build our capacity for collective action. We have also been reviewing our district protocols around ICE presence at or near our schools, and are

organizing to ensure that they are as strong as possible and that each building is prepared to enact them. Just like when preparing for a rally or job action, plans build confidence.

Our next step is to create a rapid response network for communicating information and coordinating action within our union, whether it is responding to reported ICE presence or supporting community needs. This is modelled on the same 1-10 networks that make our contract action teams powerful. The organizing we are doing for immigrant solidarity is building on existing union structures and that organizing strengthens those structures in turn.

Finally, we are connecting with unions across the valley who are also organizing for immigrant solidarity. The Springfield Education Association has been invaluable in sharing their resources and experience. The MTA has been hosting trainings for locals to build skills and share lessons in ICE identification, partnership with LUCE and immigrant organizations, and creating rapid response teams. This kind of cross-local connection is critical to building the labor-community coalition that will be necessary to defend our communities, take the fight to bigger bosses, and abolish ICE.

The all-out mobilization in Minneapolis was built on years of labor and community organizing, and concerted solidarity between the two. We should take inspiration from their action and lessons from their organizing, starting by organizing within our locals and then reaching out to the movement ready to fight authoritarianism and austerity.

AMHERST DPW FIGHTS FOR RESPECT (CONT. FROM COVER)

The Area Labor Federation has been organizing support from other unions and the community, while ALF endorsed town councilors Amber Cano-Martin and Jill Brevik helped organize support from inside local government.

“Until you get a fair contract, I will be by your side standing with you”, Cano-Martin said while speaking to the crowd, adding, “You’ve come to the council and it’s time for us to act. We need to build a town that lives up to our values. Every worker has the right to fair pay and safe working conditions.”

While negotiations haven’t concluded, the union’s gains so far show the power of solidarity. APDWA built a strong base within their unit, turning out over 2/3rds of its membership to meetings and rallies. With community showing up with them, the town manager is under the spotlight.

To stay up-to-date with the fight, follow Amherst DPW Association on Facebook, or @westernmass.alf on Insta-gram!

AREA LABOR FEDERATION TO MAKE ENDORSEMENT RECOMMENDATIONS IN STATE, FEDERAL ELECTIONS

Over the next few months, the Western Mass Area Labor Federation will be making recommendations on endorsements for state and federal candidates. Final decisions about endorsement will be made by the e-board of the Massachusetts AFL-CIO on **June 5th**.

The Area Labor Federation will conduct interviews with candidates who complete the Mass AFL-CIO questionnaire by May 1st

Endorsement Recommendations are made by the COPE Committee of the Area Labor Federation. Members of the E-Board serve on the COPE Committee, though other delegates may be appointed. Contact organizer@wmalf.org if you are delegate and interested in learning more about the COPE committee.



From 1199 SEIU

The care that Personal Care Attendants (PCAs) provide is essential to the health and wellbeing of nearly 60,000 elders and people with disabilities. Governor Healey's FY28 budget proposal includes \$100 million in cuts to the PCA program that will result in less care for who rely on PCAs to live at home independently and with dignity.

Limiting access to the PCA program would not only impact the health of people with disabilities and elders, it may also force caregivers to leave the profession if their hours are cut. And these cuts will exacerbate the significant waitlist for the state homecare program.

Massachusetts should be a leader in homecare; we cannot go backwards.

Please send your state legislator a message (using the draft email provided and adding your own thoughts) by using the code below. Ask your elected representative to reject the Governor's budget cuts, and instead invest fully in the PCA program. Urge them to invest in people with disabilities and elders, and those who need these essential services. **Send a letter using the QR code below!**



BAYSTATE FRANKLIN NURSES TO HOLD INFORMATIONAL PICKET APRIL 7 AS COMMUNITY SUPPORTS FIGHT FOR PATIENT SAFETY AND KEEPING CARE LOCAL

GREENFIELD, Mass. – Registered nurses at Baystate Franklin Medical Center (BFMC), represented by the Massachusetts Nurses Association (MNA), will hold an informational picket on Tuesday, April 7 from 4:30 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. outside the hospital at 164 High St. as part of their ongoing fight for a fair union contract that protects patients, nurses, and access to local care.

“We will proudly picket outside the hospital on April 7 alongside our community. Our negotiations directly impact nurses, our families, patients and the broader Franklin County community,” said **Suzanne Love, BFMC RN and Co-Chair of the MNA Bargaining Committee**. “Without a strong contract, it becomes harder to recruit and retain the experienced nurses our patients depend on and to ensure safe, high-quality care close to home.”

Main Negotiation Issues

- Ensuring safe, high-quality patient care.
- Maintaining strong staffing protections (nurse-patient ratios).
- Securing competitive wages to recruit and retain union nurses.
- Contractual protection for nurses who are sick or injured.
- Keeping care local in Franklin County and keeping BFMC a union hospital.

“Our ability to provide safe patient care is under threat because of the increasing disparity in wages between Baystate Franklin nurses and nurses at other hospitals in the region,” said **Marissa Potter, BFMC RN and Co-Chair of the MNA Bargaining Committee**. “We need a fair union contract that ensures safe staffing and supports recruitment and retention so we can maintain high-quality, local care.”

Why Local Union Nurses Matter

At rural community hospitals like Baystate Franklin Medical Center, safe patient care depends on a permanent nursing workforce that knows the community and can manage a wide range of needs without extensive specialty support. While larger urban hospitals have IV teams, wound care nurses, NICUs, and round the clock pharmacies, in rural hospitals well-trained nurses pivot between all these roles and others, several times each shift.

Baystate Franklin nurses have experience stepping into these types of roles every day. That versatility is critical in more rural settings. Baystate’s insistence on using a non-union float pool to bring in nurses from Baystate Medical Center in Springfield undermines this care model. These float nurses are not accustomed to the realities of rural hospital care. This can create gaps in care, increased safety risks, and strain on local staff.

BFMC nurses are calling on Baystate to invest in their permanent union workforce to preserve access to safe, community-based patient care.

Community Petition Gains Momentum

BFMC nurses are urging community members to stand with them by signing a public petition calling on Baystate Health to agree to a fair contract that protects patients and preserves local access to care. **Community members can sign the petition at: www.massnurses.org/FranklinCommunity (or use the QR Code Below!.**

“We, community members of Franklin County and beyond, are calling for a fair union contract for the nurses of Baystate Franklin Medical Center (BFMC) that protects safe staffing levels, supports nurse recruitment and retention, and preserves access to high-quality local care,” **the community petition says.**

Founded in 1903, the Massachusetts Nurses Association is the largest union of registered nurses in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Its 26,000 members advance the nursing profession by fostering high standards of nursing practice, promoting the economic and general welfare of nurses in the workplace, projecting a positive and realistic view of nursing, and by lobbying the Legislature and regulatory agencies on health care issues affecting nurses and the public.



HOLD THE LINE



FOR SAFE JOBS

Elevating workplace safety and health issues is more important than ever. At a time of deep division, the desire for a safe and healthy workplace is something that unites people, and is important for our organizing, bargaining and advocacy.

This is an urgent moment to hold the line against attacks on worker health and safety. This Workers Memorial Day, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) and the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health turn 55 years old, and the Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA) is nearly 50 years old.

The laws creating these agencies promised every worker the right to a safe job—our fundamental right. These laws were won because of the tireless efforts of the labor movement, which organized for safer working conditions and demanded action from the government to protect working people. Since then, unions and their allies have fought hard to make that promise a reality—winning protections under the law that have made jobs safer and saved lives.

But all of that is under attack. After years of underinvesting, the Trump administration has fired agency staff, defunded and outright decimated or eliminated federal job safety agencies.

The situation is dire. EACH DAY, more than 380 workers are killed and more than 8,600 suffer injury and illness because of dangerous working conditions that are preventable.

Job safety inspections have never been so few. As of 2025, the United States now has the lowest number of OSHA inspectors and conducts the lowest number of OSHA inspections ever.

It now would take the federal OSHA 191 years to inspect every workplace once, and Congress only allows the agency to spend \$3.85 protecting each worker it's responsible for. Cuts to independent hazard investigations and coal mine inspectors take us back decades and harm workers. When no one is watching, many employers fail to do the right thing. Funding and staffing cuts will make oversight on businesses nearly impossible.

Our hard-won workplace safety protections are being stripped away. Working people have fought for our rights for decades and still do every day. But now, accelerated deregulatory attacks—such as the removal of OSHA coverage, weakening mineworker silica protections and destroying the regulatory process altogether—threaten the gains we have won, and will prevent OSHA and MSHA from setting needed job safety standards that raise the floor for everyone.

Our job is not finished. We must protect the rights we have won and keep fighting for safer working conditions. Our nation's job safety laws are dangerously weak, allowing scores of employers to violate the law without consequence or repercussion. OSHA penalties still are too low to be a deterrent. Employers retaliate against workers who speak

out against unsafe working conditions. Workers still cannot freely join a union without retaliation threats from their employers. Black, Latino and immigrant workers are killed on the job at higher rates than others. Heat, workplace violence, infectious diseases and chemical exposures are dangerous and unaddressed hazards.

Together on this Workers Memorial Day, we don't just mourn; we must step forward to hold the line and confront the moment we are in. We must hold employers accountable to keep workers safe. We must demand more—not fewer—government resources to do this. We must demand dignity at work.

Across the United States, workers will organize for strong health and safety standards from employers and governments to improve working conditions. A seat at the bargaining table can be a matter of life or death in the workplace, securing a better livelihood and safer future for workers and our families.

We will hold the line in the halls of government and on the shop floor to protect our fundamental right to a safe job. Our nation's strength depends on safe workplaces and workers who can return home to their families at the end of each shift.

AFL-CIO

AMERICA'S UNIONS

OBSERVE WORKERS MEMORIAL DAY | APRIL 28 | AFL-CIO

WORKERS MEMORIAL DAY • APRIL 28

As we grieve those we have lost from unsafe working conditions, we must hold the line against worker health and safety attacks. We must:

- Defend hard-won safety and health protections and workers' rights from attacks.
- Demand increases in job safety staff and funding to write strong standards and for strong enforcement of all job safety laws.
- Hold our elected leaders accountable for any actions that weaken workers' right to a safe job.
- Win new protections against heat illness, workplace violence, exposure to asbestos and other toxic chemicals, and other preventable hazardous exposures.
- Increase efforts to protect Black, Latino and immigrant workers who are disproportionately affected by and especially targeted for speaking up against unsafe working conditions.
- Guarantee all workers have a voice on the job to raise safety concerns and the right to freely form a union without employer interference or intimidation.
- Pass the Protecting America's Workers Act to provide OSHA protection to the millions of workers without it, stronger criminal and civil penalties for companies that violate job safety and health laws, and improved anti-retaliation protections.

Springfield Workers Memorial Day

- **Date:** Wednesday, April 29th
- **Time:** 12 - 1:30 pm
- **Location:** Teamsters Local 404, 115 Progress Ave, Springfield, MA 01104

Join MassCOSH, Teamsters 404, and the WMALF (AFL-CIO).

Plan and Share Your Workers Memorial Day Event

- Organize a campaign to demand stronger safety and health protections using our digital toolkit. Demand that elected officials put workers' well-being over corporate interests.
- Organize an event at your workplace to hold the line for safe jobs for every worker and hold your employer accountable for keeping you safe.
- Hold a candlelight vigil, memorial service or moment of silence to remember those who have died on the job, and highlight job safety concerns in your community.
- Host events with members of Congress in their districts. Involve injured workers and family members who can speak firsthand about the need for strong safety and health protections, the ability to speak up against unsafe working conditions, and to join together in union to keep workplaces safe. Invite local religious and community leaders and other allies to participate in the event.
- Conduct workshops to train and empower workers to report job safety hazards and exercise workplace rights. Invite union members, nonunion workers and community allies to participate.
- Create a new memorial site at a workplace or in a community where workers have been killed on the job.
- Create and share a photo and storyboard campaign on social media to remember workers who have been killed on the job.
- Invite the press to your Workers Memorial Day events to increase public awareness of the dangers working people face on the job.
- Continue to hold our leaders and employers accountable to provide safe working conditions. As a labor movement, we mourn for the dead and fight for the living on April 28 and every day of the year.

Order Workers Memorial Day posters and stickers for your event. An event planning toolkit is coming soon, including state safety and health profiles and sample communications materials.

MOURN FOR THE DEAD. FIGHT FOR THE LIVING.

AFL-CIO

AMERICA'S UNIONS



2026 WMALF LEGISLATIVE BREAKFAST HIGHLIGHTS UNION ISSUES

On March 6th, around 270 union members from dozens of unions joined roughly thirty federal, state, and municipal elected officials at the annual Western Mass Area Labor Federation Legislative Breakfast.

Elected speakers included **Sen. Ed Markey, Gov. Maura Healey, and State Auditor Diana DiZoglio**. Union speakers included **Mass AFL-CIO President Chrissy Lynch, WMALF President Jeff Jones, and Maya McCann-Som of UAW Local 2320**. During our public sector panel, **Rich Couture, President of AFGE Council 215** discussed issues facing federal workers, while **Paulena Bergeron of 1199 SEIU** high-

lighted the dangerous billionaire tax-cut ballot measures. **Riley Hernandez, President of SEA**, and **Jennifer Shiao of PSU-MTA** discussed issues in education.

The private sector panel featured **Jerry Dunn, Business Manager of IBEW Local 7, Caroline Miklovich and Rose Totter of MNA, and Drew Weisse, Organizing Director of UFCW Local 1459**.

IATSE Local 53 provided professional audio-visual support for the Legislative Breakfast, while the facility and catering staff were members of **Unite-HERE New England Joint Board**.



Gerard L. Pellegrini Scholarship
HELPING UNION FAMILIES RISE

GLP SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

Gerard L. Pellegrini was a renowned trial lawyer who established a reputation for excellence in representing working people in Massachusetts.

The Gerard L. Pellegrini Scholarship recognizes his commitment to working people by awarding grants to members of locals affiliated with the Western MA Area Labor Federation, or members' spouses or legal dependents. A total of \$5,000.00 in grants will be made. Four (4) \$1,000.00 grants will be awarded to students who will attend (or are attending) college. One (1) \$1,000.00 grant will be awarded to a person engaged in building trades apprenticeships.



APPLY ONLINE NOW!
Deadline June 1, 2026

