

UPDATE

I'm home :) :)

Hi everyone, I home now. They released me yesterday. It feels soooo good to be home. Have to go real slow and a bit of a recovery road ahead of me, but as Dorothy in the Wizard of Oz said, there's no place like home :).

I'm receiving cards and e mails which keeps my spirits up, thanks so much. BCC is so full of such wonderful caring people. I am so happy to be a part of the family. Our Union, AFSCME Local 1067 sent me a beautiful fruit basket on behalf of everyone. (YUMMY!) Hubby and my family are taking great care of me. The final outlook, looks very promising to be successful. I will be starting chemo for ovarian cancer in about 2 weeks or so. I admit I was taken back a bit when I received my diagnosis for the strange symptoms I had, came on so quick and with such a vengeance. But under the right medical care and speed of the docs, we were able to attack back and start paving the road into the right direction.

My stay at Bay State was very comforting and supportive. The nurses were great and my doctors very well educated and great bedside manners.

Again, thanks to all of you for having me in your thoughts and prayers. You will always be in mine. I'll be checking my e mail every couple of days and every so often send an update. God bless all of you :). Denise Brown

1.5% Pay Raises - First Pay Period in July

The 1.5 % pay raise that is for first pay period in July is coming. The state budget was passed and the departments are waiting for the state to process the funds to the separate agencies. Once this happens the schools will be told to start the process and pay the 1.5% raise. This will take place in two parts. The first will be the 1.5% raise ASAP then in the next pay period the retro will be in the check. This has been the way it has been done over the many years that we have to wait for the budget.

Each college has been notified how to do this by the BHE and if there are any questions about it please let me know and I will talk to them.

It should be in the late August or early September pay.

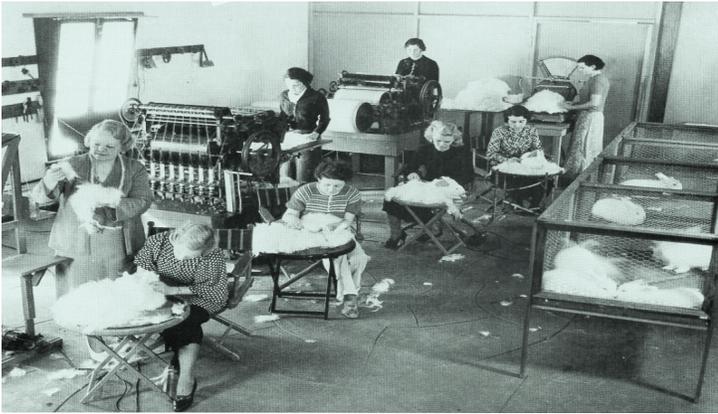
Primary Election Day

Thursday, 09-06-2012



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Los Angeles Labor History Tour

By Cathy Ashton Delegate, AFSCME International Convention

A pre-convention activity at the AFSCME International Convention was the LA Labor History Tour. On this tour, we saw another side of LA other than its beaches, Rodeo Drive, Beverly Hills and the glitz and glamour of Hollywood. Our first stop was the UCLA Labor Center. The UCLA Labor Center is a program of the Institute for Research on Labor and Employment, a department of UCLA. "Its mission is to promote research, education and policy change to improve the lives of workers, students, and our communities". At the Center we heard brief presentations by some of the staff including director, Ken Wong. Facts we learned; LA has the largest disparity between wealth and poverty than any other city in the US. It has more sweat shops than NYC. The largest employer is Wal-Mart, and they provide no health or retirements benefits. We also heard speakers from the LA Black Worker Center, an organization whose mission is to change public policies and corporate practices in LA in order to advance economic justice for African American workers, their families and their communities. Lastly, we heard from United We Dream Network which is a national network led by immigrant youth that organize and advocate for access to higher education and legal status for all. They were celebrating Pres. Obama's announcement to grant temporary relief to DREAM Act beneficiaries.

Before leaving the Labor Center, we had a wonderful box lunch. The tour continues with sites along South Central Ave. such as the historic Dunbar Hotel. The Dunbar housed black entertainers who could not stay in the hotels they worked. Also pointed out to us were some of the sweatshops in the garment district. Beautiful showrooms on the ground level, however, windows were covered up on the upper levels so the workers could not see outside.

The final activity of the tour was a picket of two of LA's carwashes. The boycott was sponsored by CLEAN Carwash Campaign and Carwash Workers Organizing Committee (CWOC-USW) AFL-CIO. The car wash industry in Los Angeles area has over 500 carwashes which employs about 10,000 workers. This industry has become part of the underground economy of LA and is now America's newest sweatshops. These carwashes are routinely violating basic labor laws. Workers are subjected to health and safety hazards such as constant exposure to water and to dangerous chemicals without protective gear. We picketed for about 90 minutes and were very instrumental in turning some patrons away and directing them to support union carwashes. To learn more about these organizations please visit their websites: UCLA Labor Center – www.labor.ucla.edu and CLEAN Carwash Campaign – www.CleanCarswashLA.org.

I am grateful for the opportunity to be one of your delegates and to have had the entire Convention experience. However, the Labor Tour was a humbling experience. To know that in 2012 workers are still being treated unfairly, unethically and unlawfully is appalling. That is why we organize and fight. When we fight, we win!



Mass. lawmakers save hospital, reject gov's plans



BOSTON—The 150-year-old Taunton State Hospital that was on Gov. Deval Patrick's chopping block has gotten a reprieve as Massachusetts lawmakers voted to override his veto and keep the psychiatric hospital open.

The Massachusetts Senate on Thursday rejected Patrick's budget veto to close the hospital in southeastern Massachusetts. The House of Representatives overrode the veto on Wednesday.

Senators also shot down the governor's proposals on restrictions for welfare purchases and requiring proof of state residency when registering a vehicle. The House also rejected the two proposals the previous day.

With the override, lawmakers ensured that \$5.1 million to support 45 beds at the hospital will remain in the new state budget. The funding was included as a compromise between the House and Senate's budget proposals.

Since January, the fate of the hospital has been in limbo, as the Patrick administration announced it was closing Taunton State Hospital, saying it was antiquated and not cost effective. He and House leaders suggested moving most of the hospital's patients to a new state hospital opening in Worcester.

As a compromise, Taunton Democrat Sen. Marc Pacheco pushed to keep the hospital open with 72 beds and to study the state's mental health system.

"I'm very pleased with both vetoes and the language for an independent study," Pacheco said Thursday. "It's a clear message from the legislature that the budget is about more than (money)."

Senators struck down the governor's proposal to cut the list of businesses that would not be allowed to accept cash assistance purchases, saying the amendment would weaken the Legislature's budget proposal. Patrick's proposal would still allow the cards to be used at nail salons and jewelry stores — points of purchase lawmakers wanted to eliminate.

Patrick told reporters Thursday that while he shares the concerns of lawmakers when it comes to protecting the integrity of the state's welfare system, his proposal would have created a practical way to combat fraud. He said he also was concerned with some of the "demeaning" comments made during the Legislature's debate.

"It's one thing to talk about how we assure that these programs are used to their intended purposes, but it's not necessary for us to go the extra step to make it seem like there is fault associated with being poor," he said.

The governor also defended his vehicle registration amendment, saying it would not go against public safety. He amended a state budget provision requiring anyone seeking to register a car in Massachusetts to provide proof of legal U.S. residency, which immigration advocacy groups oppose. The governor is calling for simply requiring vehicle owners to prove state residency.

The residency language is part of a broader measure that would allow applicants for motor vehicle or trailer registration to present a driver's license, identification card or Social Security number to the Registry of Motor Vehicles as proof of ID. It would also allow Motor Vehicles to grant exemptions for out-of-state college students, military personnel, elderly residents and disabled people.

Advocates for immigrants had urged Patrick to veto the provision attached to the fiscal 2013 budget.

By Shannon Young

Changes coming to community colleges

By Chris Camire

BOSTON — In his State of the State Address six months ago, Gov. Deval Patrick took aim at the state's community-college system.

Saying the schools needed to do a better job training 240,000 unemployed workers for nearly 120,000 job openings, the governor unveiled a plan to remake the community-college system by unifying the state's 15 campuses under the Board of Higher Education.

The board would set new curriculum standards and guidelines for selecting presidents for the colleges. Patrick said that if the 15 different colleges have 15 different missions, they can't be aligned with the state's job-creation plans.

After much debate, including strong opposition from college leaders, Patrick is scheduled to sign a state budget today that tightens his control over community colleges but allows the schools to retain much of their autonomy.

The legislation gives the governor the power to appoint the chairman of a college's board of trustees, includes funding incentives tied to student performance, and gives the state oversight of the hiring and firing of college presidents.

It does not unify the schools into a centralized system, however, a move being cheered by area community college presidents.

Middlesex Community College President Carole Cowan, who criticized Patrick's initial plan as a recipe for halting the progress two-year colleges have made to better prepare students to enter the workforce, said she is pleased with the end result.

"What I felt was each side got the items that were most important to them," said Cowan. "Colleges maintain local control. The local board of trustees will maintain control over the cost of tuition. Those were items that were very important for the colleges."

Cowan categorized other changes as minor.

For example, the state Board of Higher Education will now issue guidelines for the search, selection, appointment, pay, evaluation and removal of community college presidents. The board will also appoint a voting member to assist with presidential searches.

"My appointment was not finalized until the Department of Higher Education weighed in," said Cowan, who became the school's leader in 1990.

Daniel Asquino, president of Mount Wachusett Community College, took issue with giving the governor the power to appoint a chair for each community college's board of trustees, unless the chair comes from the local region. Currently, a governor appoints trustees, but then the trustees choose the chair.

"I just think boards operate best when they get to select their own chair," said Asquino. "They know better. Local community leaders work with each other. They know who best has the skills to lead the board."

But Asquino raised no objections to provisions in the bill calling for state education officials to develop a funding formula for the campuses based partly on performance data.

"As long as it is objective, I respect accountability," said Asquino. "Any institution needs to be accountable."

The state will increase spending on two-year schools by \$11 million, including \$5 million for a grant program focused on raising graduation rates and consolidating administrative tasks across campuses.

Another \$2.3 million will help schools establish worker training programs within three months of a request by an employer.

The community-college overhaul was proposed in the wake of a report released by the Commonwealth Corp. last year that found community colleges are not properly training enough students for high-demand jobs in the health-care industry. Commonwealth Corp. is a quasi-public agency targeting job creation and workforce training.

The report also found that community colleges have failed to create uniform standards for academic performance.

Asquino believes any issues the administration had with the community-college system could have been worked out with college leaders and state education officials and outside the legislative process.

"It ended up being a question of who is going to win this battle, said Asquino. "No one won the battle."



BCC president: Governor's criticisms of community colleges off the mark

The \$32.5 billion fiscal 2013 budget signed on Sunday by Gov. Deval Patrick did not include a number of initiatives meant to overhaul the state's community college system, much to the relief of school presidents like Bristol Community College President John Sbrega. But the harsh criticism lodged against the state's 15 community colleges by the Patrick administration in the last six months has unduly tarnished the schools' reputations, according to Sbrega.

"It really saddens me that there's been a lot of misinformation and mudslinging against the community colleges, and I'm afraid it will stick in peoples minds that the schools are broken in this state and that's not the reality," Sbrega said.

In January, Patrick took aim at the locally controlled community college system in his State of the Union address, maintaining the schools were not doing enough workforce development and that each had a different mission.

The governor proposed sweeping changes, including unifying the colleges under the state Board of Higher Education and consolidating schools into a single line item in the state budget.

Sbrega said the governor and his advisors decided to overhaul the Bay State's community college system after the release of two reports late last year by the Boston Foundation and the Commonwealth Corporation.

No college presidents were involved in the research in either report, nor were they invited to discuss the governor's concerns with Patrick's advisors, Sbrega said.

The House Ways and Means Committee rejected most of Patrick's plan and offered a less sweeping proposal. In the end, the FY 2013 budget provides funding incentives for student performance in workforce programs and gives the governor the power to appoint the chairs of each community college's board of trustees.

For the later, Sbrega argues that ability is already in place, as the governor appoints the trustee positions for each community college.

New curriculum standards and guidelines for selecting college presidents are also in place, but Sbrega noted that when he was hired 13 years ago as BCC president, it was the Board of Higher Education that had the final say.

"And the critics complain that president's salaries are too high, but it is the state board that decides. It is not at all the way the critics have painted us," Sbrega said.

As for performance incentives, Sbrega said he welcomes the funding, since, he said, BCC is a leader in workforce development. On Monday, BCC unveiled the site of the school's new Workforce Center, a place

Keller @ Large: Outrage Over Speaker Fees At BHCC

BOSTON (CBS) – Bunker Hill Community College in Charlestown is a blue collar commuter school, where students sometimes attend midnight classes after work in order to get their education.

Resources for students and the part-timers who do most of the teaching are scarce, so it's no wonder they are outraged about the school's decision to spend big money on celebrity speakers.

Left-wing filmmaker Michael Moore was at the school last fall as part of an eight-year-old speaker series run by the school's office of Diversity and Inclusion that often includes big-ticket celebrities.

The school wouldn't readily disclose what it paid to New York Times columnist Gail Collins, but her standard fee is from \$15,000 to \$25,000. Documentary-maker Ken Burns commands \$40,000 and up. And according to the college, that's what Michael Moore got, \$40,000, plus expenses.

So what's the big deal? After all, shouldn't a college campus be a place to hear interesting viewpoints? For some, the more pertinent question is: Shouldn't the basic needs of students and faculty come first?

"I'm disgusted," says Mark Damien Carroll, a former Bunker Hill faculty member who says he had to buy basic supplies for his graphic arts students. He's appalled at the speaking fees.

"It's absurd," he says. "You have adjunct professors who can barely get to work and make a living."

A group of faculty and students assembled by the college say the fees are well worth it.

"They bring a personal experience that we see an example in," said on student supporter.

"I looked at Michael Moore as a big role model," said another student.

"If you take it across the amount of students we have, 14,000, that's not a lot of money," says faculty member Bryan Craven.

Even though \$40,000 is more than what two adjunct faculty members make, Craven says, "It's still well worth it, for what the students get out of it."

Moore actually donated a quarter of his fee back to the college when he saw officials raising money from his audience for Bunker Hill's student emergency assistance fund. To some, that was yet another example of Moore's value as a role model.

Boston Unions Stand Up for Exploited Workers

07/20/2012 [Mike Hall](#)

Painters and Allied Trades (IUPAT) District Council 35, working with other area unions, the Greater Boston Labor Council and community groups, helped expose the exploitation of a group of Philadelphia workers hired by a subcontractor to renovate the Boston Marriott Copley Place hotel. Earlier this week, the workers were awarded \$31,000 in back pay. State Attorney General Martha Coakley says the workers were paid only \$4 an hour, half the state's minimum wage. The attorney general's office was alerted to exploitation by the unions.

The 37 workers were from Victory Outreach Church, an evangelical ministry that specializes in rehabilitating people struggling with substance abuse. The church often arranges for its members to perform labor as part of its recovery program. They were hired in November by subcontractor Installation Plus.

The renovation company that subcontracted the work to Installation Plus cooperated with the investigation and agreed to the back pay settlement, says Coakley. She says:

Employers are required to pay employees a fair wage for a day's work, We enforce these laws not only to protect workers, but to level the playing field for all businesses who play by the rules.

Below is the schedule of upcoming educational programs by Western Mass. Coalition for Occupational Safety & Health.

For registration or to get more information please call (413) 731-0760 or email westernmasscosh@verizon.net.

Western Massachusetts Coalition for Occupational Safety and Health

An Injury to One is an Injury to All

SCHEDULE OF EDUCATIONAL PROGRAMS

NOTE: ALL SCHEDULES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE.

AUGUST

OSHA-10	AUG 20 & 21	640 PAGE BOULEVARD, SPRINGFIELD
NON-DISCRIMINATION	AUG 20 & 21	HOTEL NORTHAMPTON, NORTHAMPTON

SEPTEMBER

OSHA-10 CLASS	SEP 5 & 6	640 PAGE BOULEVARD, SPRINGFIELD
HAZWOPER	SEP 10 -14	640 PAGE BOULEVARD, SPRINGFIELD
CONFINED SPACES	SEP 17 & 18	640 PAGE BOULEVARD, SPRINGFIELD
MOLD REMEDIATION	SEP 21 & 22	640 PAGE BOULEVARD, SPRINGFIELD

OCTOBER

OSHA-10 CLASS (OSHA 7600)	OCT 1 & 2	640 PAGE BOULEVARD, SPRINGFIELD
SCAFFOLD USER (4 HR)	OCT 5	640 PAGE BOULEVARD, SPRINGFIELD
DISASTER SITE WORKER	OCT 15 & 16	640 PAGE BOULEVARD, SPRINGFIELD
MOLD REMEDIATION	OCT 25 & 26	640 PAGE BOULEVARD, SPRINGFIELD

NOVEMBER

OSHA-10 CLASS	NOV 12 & 13	640 PAGE BOULEVARD, SPRINGFIELD
FALL PROTECTION	NOV 15	640 PAGE BOULEVARD, SPRINGFIELD

DECEMBER

OSHA-10 CLASS	DEC 4 & 5	640 PAGE BOULEVARD, SPRINGFIELD
HAZWOPER	DEC 10 -14	640 PAGE BOULEVARD, SPRINGFIELD