

# WORKING TOGETHER

Monthly Newsletter of Locals 34 & 35

APRIL 2001 Volume 1, Number 6

## Unions Meet, 1200 Vote to support Hospital workers & Grad teachers

A new banner was unveiled in Woolsey Hall on March 28, as 1200 enthusiastic union members gathered for a historic joint Local 34-Local 35 membership meeting. The banner carried the name of our new coalition, the Federation of Hospital and University Employees, and it emphasized the theme of the evening and the key to our success: solidarity.

Presidents Laura Smith and Bob Proto were joined on stage by an impressive crew of committee members from the Yale-New Haven Hospital and GESO organizing drives. "We want to double our salaries, and we are going to do that by being here today and by coming back together on April 20!" said Laura Smith.

Yale-New Haven Hospital worker Monica Osborn spoke about her own experience with Yale. When she started at YNHH in 1992, she was making \$8.00/hr. Nine years later, she is making only \$11.00/hr, and she pays about \$1500 a year in medical insurance for herself and her family. "Better jobs make for a better community," Monica said. "We must all demand that Yale agree to card-check neutrality."

GESO organizer Brendan Walsh spoke of his commitment to the struggle to organ-



ize a graduate teachers' union at Yale. He explained why he has decided to stay at Yale and organize the union, giving up a top-of-the-line faculty job offer from the University of Chicago after finishing his doctoral studies. "GESO has already made improvements in the lives of graduate teachers at Yale, but we can do more."

"This is our time!" announced the Reverend David Lee of Verack AME Zion church, quoting the slogan on our new banner. "All of you who are fighting for card-check neutrality from Yale and for better jobs in our community should know this: We in the community support you.

A ten-billion dollar corporation like Yale cannot continue to pay poverty wages and exploit its workers. Yale has met its Waterloo in the Federation of Hospital and University Employees. It is indeed our time!"

The climax of this exciting and boisterous meeting was a vote to support the grad-

uate teachers and the YNHH workers. "Freedom of association and the right to form a union are basic human rights," said President Smith. "We expect Yale to respect those rights. The following motion is before you: The members of Local 34 and Local 35

support the right of graduate teachers and Yale-New Haven Hospital workers to form their own union." The motion was seconded by President Proto, and the response was overwhelm-

ing. Everyone stood in support of the motion, and Woolsey Hall echoed with the sounds of supportive applause and cheering. Many in attendance had never seen a union meeting so big or so exciting. Get used to it. Because, with all four locals standing together, we can truly say "This is our time!"

***"We want to double our salaries, and we are going to do that by being here today and by coming back together on April 20!"***

Laura Smith  
President, Local 34

### A Peek Inside:

**PARKING, PARKING!**  
Researchers' AIDS drug petition  
Airport Settles with Union  
A Women's Forum  
Grad Union Extravaganza  
The Members Speak

*"We must indeed all hang together, or, most assuredly, we shall all hang separately."* -Benjamin Franklin, July 4, 1776, at the signing of the Declaration of Independence

# The Members Ask . . .

**1. I heard that the parking situation around the medical school will change soon. What's happening?**

Yale has just received an eviction notice from the State of Connecticut for Lot #2 and the spaces Under the Air Rights Garage. The eviction is effective September, 2001. The State plans to expand Route 34 towards Ella T. Grasso Boulevard. This means Yale needs to find a new home for 1000 spaces.

On top of this, Yale is building two new buildings in the medical area, which will generate significant parking demand:

- "Congress Ave. Building" (600-1800 spaces)
- "Amistad St. Building" (600 spaces)

This means that Yale needs another 2000-3000 parking spaces in the medical area just to break even. To fix the parking crisis, Yale would need even more.

Yale plans to build a 950-space parking garage next to the Nursing School (at 100 Church St. South). Yale claims this small garage will handle everything, and plans to move everyone who now parks Under Air Rights into this new parking lot. This parking lot will not open until the Summer of 2002. There is no interim plan.

Yale estimates that the Congress Avenue Building will need only 130 spaces—not 600-1800 required by pending zoning code amendments. By arguing away 470 spaces, they claim to provide enough room for both new buildings. They also assign 450 of the spaces now in Lot #2 to a phantom lot, whose location is "to be determined."

Yale's new buildings, their inadequate proposed parking garage and the state's development of the Route 34 corridor could dump at least 1,000 additional cars onto already jam-packed neighborhood streets.

**2. Is there any way to get the cost of parking reduced or eliminated?**

Yes, and it is quite simple: Locals 34 & 35 can negotiate universal free parking in the upcoming contract. Of course, we can only do this with strong member support for the union program.

The best way for you to get free parking is to come to the Federation-wide march and rally on Friday, April 20!

**3. Is there any way to influence Yale's overall parking plan, and to get Yale to create more parking that is closer to my workplace?**

Yes. Yale is accountable to the City for creating workable parking arrangements. So the City can make Yale change parking that is too far away, or too small. If we get involved with the city planning process, we can make Yale parking more convenient and less dysfunctional.

The City Plan Commission has agreed to hold a public workshop on the Yale medical area parking plan. Over the summer and fall, Yale must create a completely new medical area parking plan. The city must then approve this plan.

The more people who come and voice concerns with the current situation or worries about Yale's future plans, the more pressure on Yale to come up with a parking plan that works for everyone, especially the employees.

Come to the city's "Public Workshop" on the Yale parking plan, air your concerns about parking, and make your voice heard!

**4. What about the Central & Science areas? Can they be included?**

Yes. The city is at the very beginning of the process. To include the parking in the Central/Science area, people would need to turn out to the workshop to articulate problems with parking on central campus, and advocate for a comprehensive re-negotiation of the parking plan throughout Yale's entire campus.

The parking situation on the central campus has significant problems. Their plan never demonstrates that they supply enough parking to satisfy the zoning code requirements. This flaw means that Yale

provides parking that is too far away from a given workplace. If the zoning code were followed, Yale would have to provide more, closer parking.

The problem on the Central/Science area is going to get worse before it gets better. Each new building adds more demand into Yale's parking lots. Yale has announced plans to build a new Arts building on York St, a new bio-engineering building on Prospect & Trumbull, and two new buildings on

Science Hill: a new chemistry building on Edwards & Prospect, and a new biology building on top of Lots #18 and #22 at the corner of Humphrey & Whitney.

One of Yale's new buildings—the Environmental Science Building—is almost completed, but Yale has not submitted a plan for any additional parking to meet the increased need.

**Do you want Free Parking?**  
Come to the Federation Action on Friday, April 20!

**Do you want more, better, closer parking?**  
Come to the City Plan Commission's Public Workshop on the Yale Parking Plan  
**Wednesday, April 25**  
**6:00pm, City Hall**

**Two Events, One Program**  
*More, closer, free parking*



Spaces needed



Spaces provided

# The News in Brief

## Women's forum on Economic Justice

A group of about 80 women from community groups in New Haven and the surrounding towns got together on Saturday, March 10th at Gateway Community College for a Women's Forum on Economics, sponsored by the Connecticut Center for a New Economy. The focus of the conference was to brainstorm about economic issues that impact on housing, education, and healthcare for our families.

Presentations were made by representatives from the various groups in attendance, including the New Haven Federation of Teachers, Local 34, GESO, and the workers currently organizing for a union at Yale-New Haven Hospital. The large group then broke into smaller groups for more in-depth discussions. When asked for her impressions at the close of the conference, Local 34 President Laura Smith said, "After our discussion, it was overwhelmingly clear that the best way to effect changes in important social issues is through better jobs. The way to do that is to organize, organize, organize!"

## Researchers ask Yale to make AIDS drug available in Africa

On March 16, over 600 Yale researchers submitted a petition to Yale University asking that it make a generic version of its AIDS drug, Zerit, available in Africa. The petition, circulated by GESO, included doctors, technicians, and faculty, including Prof. Prusoff, the drug's original inventor.

Yale has earned \$120 million of profit from Zerit, which was invented at Yale using federal money. Yale licensed it to Bristol-Meyers Squibb, which recently made the drug cheaper in Africa but should do more. A Teach-In on April 2 brought together about 200 people, who are working to keep the improvements coming.

## Grad Union Extravaganza

Three pieces of grad union news:

1. The NYU administration signed an agreement with their graduate teachers union, and agreed to begin negotiations ... just before the union was to take a strike vote.

2. Graduate teachers at Columbia University in New York filed for a union election with the NLRB. Columbia joins Yale as private Ivy League universities that will soon have recognized grad unions.

3. In a state labor board election, Temple University graduate teachers voted in favor of unionization by an 18-to-1 margin!

## Airport Workers OK Contract

On March 1, Local 217 members won a great contract at Bradley Airport. They got raises of 32-47% over the life of the contract, earned lower co-pays for the health and dental plans, and got MLK day as a paid day off. The contract contains protections for breaks and against short staffing.

Eva Almodovar, a cafeteria worker and member of the negotiating committee, said "the support of the community was essential to our victory. Without the hundreds of Union members that came to march with us or voiced their support from around the world, we could not have won so much." Congratulations!

# The Members Speak ...

## Rebecca Corbett

Several years ago, I had to make a decision. I was a single parent looking for a way to make life better for myself and two young children. I applied to the New Haven Residents Training Program (NHRTP) at Gateway Community College, created by Local 34 in 1988, and I was soon on my way.

Now, I'm an Administrative Assistant in Dermatopathology in the Medical School, where I've worked since coming to Yale as an NHRTP intern almost four years ago. I started out in an A level position sorting the mail. Soon, my supervisor gave me more and more responsibility, and I was moved along to other jobs. After a recent job audit, I received an upgrade to Administrative Assistant.

Soon, I was also asked to join my department's union committee. I did not only join the committee, but I have participated in actions. After the inclement weather policy went into effect during a storm a couple of weeks ago, I ran interference for co-workers.

My department has had only one grievance since I've been there. The management



was "unclear" about the contract guidelines on casual work. Once we made sure they understood the time limits for casuals, the problem was resolved.

Unions enable you to have a voice, to stand up and voice your opinion without being afraid of

being fired for it.. My department is a great place to work, and Local 34 is part of the reason why.

## Crystal Streater

I live in New Haven in the Hill Neighborhood. I have three children—two daughters and a son. Before I came to Yale, I was a certified nurse's aid at The Visiting Nurses Association. I had no benefits.

In 1996, I got a casual job in the Yale Dining Halls. Three years later, in 1999, I finally got my first Union position. It was 20 hrs/week as a Retail Worker in Marigold's Dining



Hall at the Medical School. I and my family received health benefits for the first time. I moved up into a better job in Davenport College, which gave me an increase in pay.

Just a few months ago, I finally got a full time position. I am back at Marigold's working 40 hours a week. It took me 5 years, but I'm finally full-time.

Unfortunately, even though I do the same work at Marigold's than I did at Davenport, the job at Marigold's is classed at a lower hourly wage, as a "Retail Worker 1". The work is the same, no matter where it is or whether it's part-time or full-time. But the pay and benefits sure are different! We need to get Retail Workers upgraded to Labor Grade 3, and we also need to get rid of subcontracting.

We all know that Yale can afford to have the best dining service for its students and cash operations such as Marigold's, SOM, Law School, and KBT. I am getting involved in my Union because I believe in equal pay for equal work. Together we can do it!

**Local 35  
Membership Meeting**

Wednesday, April 25  
7:30pm, Location TBA

**Scholarship Available**

Connecticut State AFL-CIO

An annual \$500 tuition award.  
Final date to apply is May 7, 2001.  
See March's *Working Together* for details  
(available on the website)

# *It's Our Time*

**Save the Date**

**Friday, April 20**

**5:00-7:00pm**

**Action!**

**Results from business portion of the Local 34 membership meeting**

March 28, 2001

In addition to voting to accept the annual financial report for 2000, the membership considered and approved four motions:

Vote #1

The Executive Board recommended that we send 7 delegates to the HERE international convention in Los Angeles in July: Laura Smith (President), Sirlester Parker (Vice President, medical), Don Frigo (Trustee), Pat Carta (Staff Director), Cathy Meyerson (Lead Organizer, Central-Science area), Beth Cooper (Lead Organizer, Medical area), and Andrea Cole (Lead Organizer, Community).

Vote #2

The Executive Board recommended that the "Lead Organizer" positions be upgraded by 7.5%. After several thoughtful comments, the vote was called and the motion passed. This upgrade currently applies to Cathy Meyerson and Beth Cooper.

Votes #3 and #4

The Executive Board recommended that Aileen Novick (Yale University Press) and Rommie Brown (Ob/Gyn, Medical School) be elected to fill vacancies on the Local 34 Executive Board.

## **Health and Safety Update**

The White House has recently overturned new ergonomic standards recommended by OSHA. This is bad news for working families, and especially for clerical and technical workers.

You can find more information from the AFL-CIO website:

***<http://www.aflcio.org>***

There are lots of other resources at this site, and you can also join the "Working Families' E-Activist network" to get electronic updates.

***[www.yaleunions.org](http://www.yaleunions.org)***

**We're on the Web!**

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