

# WORKING TOGETHER

Monthly Newsletter of Locals 34 & 35

MAY 2001 Volume 1, Number 7

## Yale alums meet 2,200 marching to support unions, neutrality

Hundreds of influential Yale alumni got the message on April 20 that Yale's workers were standing together and demanding that Yale treat them more fairly.

The alumni were on campus for the second Tercentennial weekend, when President Levin kicked off the next major Yale fundraising drive: The "Fourth Century Initiative". As part of this initiative, donors who give over \$300,000 will have their name engraved in a monument on campus.

On Friday afternoon, when their session on "Creating Economic Prosperity" ended at 4:30pm and the alumni filed out of Woolsey Hall onto Beinecke Plaza, they were greeted by 100 clergy holding a vigil for justice, calling on Yale to "Bring Democracy Home" and support card-count neutrality at Yale just like President Levin did at the Omni Hotel in 1998.

On the other side of Woolsey, alumni were greeted by hundreds of Yale employees holding signs calling for "Neutrality Now". Around the corner on Hillhouse, hundreds more were gathering once work let out at 5:00pm. They were joined by hundreds of undergraduates who had just held the founding meeting to organize a student union, called "United Students at Yale", or USAY.

All in all, well over 1000 people from Central and Science campuses gathered and began marching toward the Green, where they were joined by another 1000 people marching from the hospital and medical areas. The yellow flags of District 1199 joined with the crowd's robust chants as everyone gathered on the Green.

In all, an estimated 2,200 enthusiastic

union members and supporters marched to the New Haven Green to demand that Yale sign a card-count neutrality agreement for their graduate teachers and hospital workers.

Under card-count neutrality, the administration would agree not to interfere as its graduate teachers and hospital workers decide whether to form a union. The formal demand was sent to the members of the Yale Corporation, and was published in the *Yale Daily News*.

Speakers at the rally included the presidents of Locals 35 and 34; Congresswoman Rosa DeLauro; State Attorney General Richard Blumenthal; Rev. Eric Lee of Community Baptist Church; and Mayor John DeStefano of New Haven (joined by the mayors of the surrounding communities). Everyone called for card-count neutrality.

Card-count is the most democratic way to make a choice. Under such an agreement, a majority of all employees would have to support unionization, rather than only a majority of those who turn out to vote.

In response, President Levin said that he would prefer the NLRB election process.



Two groups from either side of campus marched and converged on the Green during Yale's Tercentennial on April 20

During the 1980s, we all learned that the NLRB process is the most divisive way to unionize. Before Local 34's election, Yale stepped up their anti-union campaign leading up to the election, dividing the campus and leaving lasting scars.

The march and rally were historic because so many different groups came together to support the right to unionize. In February, President Levin said: "Freedom of association as a general proposition is something that we encourage." Freedom of association means letting the workers decide the issue of unionization for themselves,

without fear of intimidation and reprisal.

Yale got the message on April 20. Things are going to change soon.

**"We want to set a new tone for the way Yale deals with its workers."**

- Bob Proto  
Local 35

### A Peek Inside:

Photo Gallery  
News in Brief

Abigail Weeks (right) helps hand out signs to the clergy as they arrive for a vigil outside Woolsey Hall.



Members of "New Growth Outreach Ministries" (at right) sang, accompanied by Rev. Scott Marks (behind, left) and Rev. Eric Smith (behind, right).



Bishop Rosazza (right) leads the group in prayer.



After the vigil, half the workers (above) gathered on Hillhouse Avenue. They were then joined on the march by the clergy. At the Green, they met up with the other half, which had marched from the medical campus.

Nancy Ryan and Sarah Saiano (far right, above) marched from the hospital to the Green. "Local 34 needs a better contract. The best way to get a better contract is to be out in force now. That's why I'm here!" said Nancy.



Hundreds of Yale-New Haven hospital workers came out to march and rally for neutrality.



Yale undergraduates (above) joined the march after founding their student union (see article at right)





Bob Proto (left), President of Local 35, opened up the rally amidst a sea of yellow District 1199 flags. "It's beautiful to see us all out here, together," he said.



Gene Lacobelli (the furthest on the right in the photo at left), a local 35 retiree, said that he attended the rally to help persuade Yale to improve the pension. "I started working at Yale in 1947. I know how to get things done here. Solidarity with all the other Yale employees, including GESO and the hospital, is the best shot I have to improve my pension."



J.J. Fueser, a graduate teacher in psychology, said, "I'm excited to see so many people standing up and telling Yale not to interfere. Yale should be more democratic, and should let us choose freely!"



Laura Smith (left), President of Local 34, said "The Federation we see today will set a new tone here at Yale. Two more unions are going to organize, and four great contracts will come next."



Also speaking at the rally were (far left, from left to right), New Haven Mayor John DeStefano, Congresswoman Rosa DeLauro, Connecticut Attorney General Richard Blumenthal, and Rev. Eric Smith.

## The News in Brief

### Student Union Movement

On Friday, April 20th, over 70 Yale undergraduates gathered in the Slifka Center to announce the formation of United Students at Yale (USAY), a coalition organizing to increase undergraduate voice at Yale.

At their meeting, the students ratified a membership statement that focused on a number of issues, ranging from financial aid and the University's environmental policy to dance performance space and mental health care.

After the conference, this group swelled to over 200 undergraduates as they marched in solidarity with the Federation of Hospital and University Employees in a common call for greater democracy at Yale.

### Quinnipiac Rally

On Tuesday, April 24th, over 100 people marked Local 217's year-long struggle for a just contract on the beautiful Quinnipiac University campus.

The clerical, technical, custodial, maintenance, and trades workers demanded a contract with good raises and improved health benefits, and they were joined by unionized steelworkers and members of the Federation of Hospital and University Employees, as well as by students and unionized faculty from Quinnipiac.

Creighton Myers, a carpenter and negotiating committee member, asked "Why should my family be asked to do with less when the University is doing so well?" Yale's employees could pose the same question.

### Harvard Student Standoff

At Harvard, students have occupied the chief administration building, refusing to leave until Harvard agrees to pay a minimum \$10.25 "living wage" for all its regular & sub-contracted workers. Support has poured in since the occupation started on April 19. Police prevented Senator Ted Kennedy from visiting the protestors. Robert Reich, former U.S. Secretary of Labor, called the protestors the "moral conscience of this community." John Sweeney brought the entire AFL-CIO executive board out in support on May 1.

Harvard says, "The decision has been made. We will not be adopting a living wage."

On May 2, over 200 Harvard dining hall workers in our sister HERE local 26 voted unanimously to authorize a strike. Their contract expires June 19. Stay tuned

# Get Ready!

## Local 35 is turning 60 years young!

*September 29, 2001*

The time is approaching for Local 35's huge birthday party. It starts, at the Omni Hotel, with cocktails at 6PM and dinner at 7PM. Dancing and entertainment will follow until midnight.

Tickets will cost \$40 per person and will go on sale soon.

Reserve the date! More details to come.

### Union Members Graduate

Thirteen Local 35 members recently graduated from an 8-week Union Counseling Training Course.

Congratulations to Nicole Pervis, Sharon Little, Nadian Moore, Karen Young, Nellie West, Glenn Wright, Willie Joe Nelson, Eric Tyson, Bill Wilson, Brian Wingate, Alex Polino, Peter Gagliardi, and Joseph Sciarini!

### Scholarship Results

The Central Labor Council awarded five scholarships worth \$500 each.

The winners were Christopher Jurzynski, Chelsea Watson, Jason Goodson, Jennifer DeNardis, and Jennifer Hodgkins. (Jennifer Hodgkins is the daughter of Curt Hodgkins, a Local 35 member.)

### Aldermanic Public Hearing May 17, 6:00pm, City Hall

A Board of Alderman committee is considering a resolution to support card-count neutrality for Yale's hospital workers and graduate teachers. The more the merrier!

Local 35  
Membership Meeting  
Wednesday, May 30, 4:45pm  
Kline Geology Laboratory

# Congratulations!

## Class of 2001

### Monday, May 21

### 9:00 am at the union office

### Be There!

*www.yaleunions.org*

**We're on the Web!**

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