

STUDENTS & WORKERS UNITE FOR JUSTICE

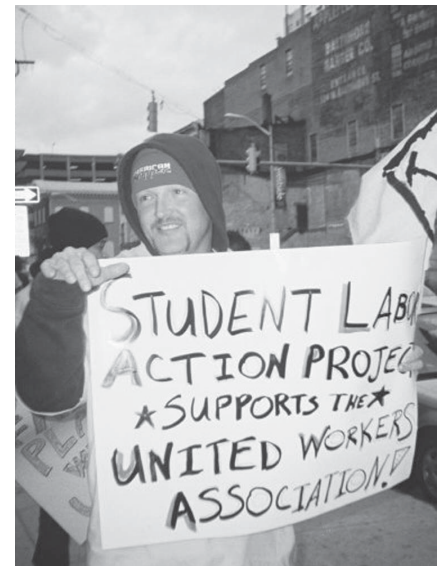
Highlights from the 2004 National Student Labor Week of Action

From March 29th to April 4th, approximately 10,000 students and workers on nearly 200 campuses organized over 300 events for the **5th Annual National Student Labor Week of Action**, honoring the lives of Cesar E. Chavez and Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. These national actions were coordinated by the Student Labor Action Project of Jobs with Justice (JwJ) and the United States Student Association (USSA).

Partnering organizations included Movimiento Estudiantil Chicana/o de Aztlan (MEChA), United Students Against Sweatshops (USAS), NAACP Youth and College Division, Student Action with Farmworkers (SAF), American Federation of Labor-Congress of Industrial Organizations (AFL-CIO), Not With Our Money, Organization of Chinese Americans (OCA), and the Sierra Student Coalition.

Various union locals of American Federation of State, County, and Municipal Employees (AFSCME), the Communications Workers of America (CWA), the Union of Needletrades, Industrial and Textile Employees and Hotel and Restaurant Employees International Union (UNITE-HERE), the Service Employees International Union (SEIU), the United Steel Workers of America (USWA), the International Brotherhood of Teamsters (IBT), United Farm Workers (UFW), and Farm Labor Organizing Committee (FLOC) worked with students to organize actions, rallies, teach-ins and other activities to demonstrate the power of students and labor working together.

Many of the events organized for the week centered around ongoing student-labor campaigns and demands, which are highlighted below.



Students from U. Maryland Baltimore and Virginia Commonwealth U. marched and rallied with the United Workers' Association at Camden Yards.

STUDENTS DEMAND CAMPUS LIVING WAGES & CODES OF CONDUCT!

Washington, DC - Eleven students were arrested on March 29th at the **George Washington University (GWU)** in D.C. for peacefully protesting against the unfair treatment of the workers that serve the GW community. Students from the **GWU Progressive Student Union** and surrounding DC SLAP schools, such as **Georgetown University**, entered their student union building and announced that they would not leave until the university adopted a labor code of conduct and affiliated with the Worker Rights Consortium. Students began setting up tents while about 100 supporters chanted in solidarity within the lobby. **DC SLAP, DC JwJ**, and the **DC Metro Labor Council** brought community support, as well as various local unions including **SEIU, HERE**, and the **IUOE**. Brandon Neal, President of the **NAACP Youth and College Division** addressed the crowd, expressing his support for the student movement. Students received public support from Senator Ted Kennedy who spoke at a rally to protest the arrests. Charges were dropped against the students on April 21st. They continue to put pressure on GWU to do the right thing.

Photo: Chris Garlock



GWU students celebrate after the charges against them were dropped.

St. Louis, MO - The **Student Worker Alliance (SWA) of Washington University** launched a living wage campaign to promote workers' rights on campus. To escalate the campaign, they planned a whole week of events. Events included: a forum organized by SWA and **Amnesty International** called "Nickel and Dimed: Trying to make it in St. Louis," which was an exposition of the lives of the workers on our campus; a Boot the Bell event to educate students and administrators about the integrity of some of the companies that provide food on campus; a discussion on campus living wages that included a great panel of speakers including Nick Fichtenbaum (SWA), Economics Professor Raines, and Ken McCoy from ACORN St. Louis; and a silent march that involved 40 students and community members to protest recent unjust firings of campus workers, including the 36 Nicaraguan workers who were sent back to Nicaragua and have yet to return. To culminate the week, 250 people gathered to stand in support of a living wage and workers' rights at Washington University on Friday, April 2nd. Speakers included representatives from St. Louis JwJ, ACORN, and Ana Rizo, national coordinator of **SLAP** addressed the crowd. In attendance were students, campus workers, **St. Louis JwJ, SEIU, USWA, FLOC**, religious community members, and **ACORN**. The presence of the service workers at the rally proved the most powerful component in creating a unified atmosphere between students, workers, and the community.

Photo: Ana Rizo



Washington U. students rally for a campus living wage.

STUDENTS STAND UP IN SUPPORT OF WORKERS' RIGHTS!

Boston, MA - **Boston SLAP and JwJ** supported Justice for Janitors during the week of action! On April 1st, Boston SLAP organized a citywide call-in day for the Tufts Janitors with **SEIU Local 285**. On April 2nd, they organized a rally and demonstration at the University of Massachusetts Boston in support of 400 janitors who were recently denied a pay increase. On April 4th there was a Boston SLAP action at Ritz Deluxe Apartment complexes against Commercial Cleaning, the Ritz's cleaning service that fired an employee a month ago for no valid reason and continues to violate union contracts. They also participated in a huge rally to abolish poverty on the Boston Common and then lead a march to the Ritz apartment complexes where they delivered an eviction notification to management for violation of Martin Luther King's dream of fair treatment for all workers.

Philadelphia, PA - **Philadelphia SLAP and AFSCME 1723 win victory with campus workers at Temple University!** Philadelphia SLAP and **Philadelphia JwJ** held a Teach-In on Wednesday, March 31st at Temple University on the "Corporatization of Higher Education". Students were educated on how and why universities are increasingly being run on corporate models and how this is currently playing out and affecting students and workers at Temple University. The Teach-In also served to build support for a 500-person rally on April 1st that Philly SLAP and JwJ organized with Temple workers, AFSCME 1723, who won their contract two days after that awesome energetic rally.

Photo: Fabricio Rodriguez



Temple students rally with campus administrative workers.

Austin, TX - On April 5, about 30 **University of Texas Austin (UT)** shuttle drivers and a coalition of **Austin SLAP, Not with Our Money**, faculty, and UT staff held a rally and picnic to bring attention to the refusal of ATC Transit to bargain in good faith with the drivers. The drivers have not had a raise in three years and their health benefits have been slashed. Before the action, the drivers received a memorandum from ATC threatening all workers who attended the event with termination. **One week later, two of the most active union members were fired.** Since the rally, the Austin public transit authority (which also subcontracts with ATC) has publicly indicated some support for the workers, but UT has yet to comment on the struggle. Students and workers have since rallied in support of the fired workers, and expect that they will be reinstated in the near future.



Fired worker Glenn Gaven rallies with students.

STUDENTS DEMAND GLOBAL JUSTICE!

Seattle, Washington - **Washington State SLAP and JwJ** organized a week of global justice awareness events. One event included a panel featuring Luis Adolfo Cardona, a **Coca-Cola Union leader** forced to flee Colombia for his life; Tara Widner, staff representative of the **USWA** and an organizer of the Miami Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA) protests; and Akson Mounlamai student leader of Washington State SLAP, JwJ and **APALA**. Other events included a Central American Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA) action in Pierce County and an event highlighting the resistance movement of Mayan Women in Chiapas, which was sponsored by the **UW MEChA** and the **UW Bridges Center for Labor Studies**.

STUDENTS ORGANIZE TEACH-INS AND FORUMS ON LABOR JUSTICE

Chicago, IL - During the National Student Labor Week of Action, **Chicago SLAP** held an Anti-Oppression Training at Lake Forest College. Midwest student labor activists got together for a weekend of learning and discussing the ways in which identity and oppression (racism, sexism, homophobia, etc.) play out in the context of our organizing. Speakers included Prexy Nesbitt who co-founded the **Chicago Clergy and Laity Concerned (CLAC)** Anti-Racism Training Institute, Cindy Levitt who is an anti-racist/multicultural educator, Simon Strikeback who was the first Chicago SLAP intern, Cynthia Rodriguez who is the vice president of **SEIU Local 73**, and a representative from **Chicago Women in the Trades**.

Participating campuses in the 2004 Student Labor Week of Action

CA - Claremont College - Contra Costa College - Inglewood M.E.Ch.A. - Laney Community College - National U. - Occidental College - Renaissance High School - Sacramento City College - San Diego State U. - San Francisco State U. - San Jose State U. - Santa Ana College - Stanford U. - Sun Valley M.E.Ch.A. - UC Berkeley - UC Davis - UC Los Angeles - UC Riverside - UC San Diego - UC San Francisco - UC Santa Barbara - UC Santa Cruz - Van Nuys M.E.Ch.A. - **CO** - Regis U. - **CT** - U. of Connecticut - **DC** - George Washington U. - Georgetown U. - **FL** - U. of South Florida - **GA** - Valdosta State U. - **IL** - DePaul U. - Lake Forest U. - Northern Illinois U. - U. of Chicago - **IN** - Indiana U. - Notre Dame - **KY** - Morehead State U. - **MA** - College of the Holy Cross - Hallmark Institute of Photography - Hampshire College - Harvard U. - Mt. Holyoke - Simmons College - **MD** - U. Maryland Baltimore - **MI** - Central Michigan U. - Eastern Michigan U. - Grand Valley State U. - Michigan State U. - Oakland U. - U. of Michigan - Wayne State U. - Western Michigan U. - **MN** - Morris College - **MO** - Washington U. - **NJ** - Rutgers Law School - **NM** - U. of New Mexico - **NY** - Buffalo State College - Cornell U. - New Rochelle High School - Southampton College of Long Island U. - SUNY New Paltz - **OH** - Kent State U. - Miami U. of Ohio - U. of Cincinnati - Westerville South High School - **OR** - Oregon State U. - Portland Community College - Cascade - U. of Oregon - **PA** - Haverford - Indiana U. of PA - La Salle U. - Mercyhurst College - U. Pittsburgh - Swarthmore - Temple U. - U. Pennsylvania - **RI** - Providence College - **TN** - Belmont U. - U. of Tennessee - **TX** - Texas A&M - U. of Texas Austin - U. of Texas El Paso - **UT** - Waterford School - **VA** - Virginia Commonwealth U. - **VT** - Middlebury College - **WA** - U. Washington - Washington State U. - **WI** - U. Wisconsin Madison - U. Wisconsin Manitowoc - U. Wisconsin Marinette - U. Wisconsin Milwaukee - **Canada** - Queen's U. - Saint Francis Xavier

Kent, OH - At Kent State University, student groups including **CHANGE, Student Anti-Racist Action, Campus Animal Rights Expedition (CARE) and Students Eliminating Environmental Destruction (SEED)** joined with labor groups like the **USWA, KSU Staff United, AFSCME Local 153, AAUP-KSU, HERE, and Tri-county Central Labor Council**, as well as community organizations including **Kent Natural Foods Co-op, Late Night Christian Fellowship, Policy Matters Ohio, and American Friends Service Committee (Akron)** to organize a whole Week of events for the National Student Labor Week of Action. The Week of events included a Labor Action Games Night; a screening of a Roger Hill video "A Year in the Movement" (featuring FTAA Miami protests, May 4th 2003 Kent State anti-war protest, various other protests); a Labor Action Rally with dozens of speakers and musicians; a speaking event on "How can students and workers change society?" with Staughton Lynd, a civil rights and anti-war activist and legendary labor organizer; a Fair Trade Coffee Workshop; Labor Films "CorpOrNation" and "Live Nude Girls Unite!"; and a very fun Benefit Concert.

STUDENTS ORGANIZE "NO SWEAT" EVENTS

Indiana, PA - Indiana University of Pennsylvania **United Students Against Sweatshops** held a "No-Sweat Fashion Show" to highlight companies that do not use sweatshops. Companies included were **Justice Clothing, Maggie's Organics, Northern Sun, and Lunatique**. Students showed a ten minute video about Forever 21 and the sweatshops in LA produced by the **Garment Workers Center**, read labor themed poetry, and read a testimonial from a former sweatshop worker. An information table had catalogs from worker-friendly companies and postcards to send to Forever 21.

STUDENTS STAND IN SOLIDARITY WITH FARMWORKERS!

Corvallis, OR - National Movimiento Estudiantil Chicana/o de Aztlan (MEChA) kicked off their conference and the National Student Labor Week of Action by bringing together about 1,000 activists from **MEChA, as well as PCUN, CIW, and Portland Jobs with Justice (JwJ)**. They continued the legacy of Cesar E. Chavez by marching from Oregon State University to a local Taco Bell and then City Hall, demanding justice for farmworkers.

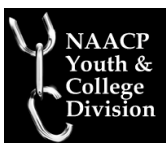
Notre Dame, IN - University of Notre Dame **MEChA, Progressive Student Alliance, and Amnesty International** organized a series of farmworker solidarity events for the National Student Labor Week of Action, including a powerful candlelight march in support of farmworkers struggling for their rights. A hunger strike was undertaken by freshman, Antonio Rivas. The students called for the University to be Catholic in its actions; to issue a statement guaranteeing that Notre Dame will NOT enter into any more contracts with Taco Bell, as part of the "Boycott Taco Bell" campaign of the **Coalition of Immokalee Workers**; recognize campus workers' right to organize through a statement of voluntary recognition for collective bargaining and through issuing a statement of neutrality; and grant recognition to the student club "United in Diversity" and affirm that Notre Dame will not discriminate based upon sexual orientation. In addition, the CEO of Gallo wine serves on Notre Dame's Board of Trustees, which created the opportunity for students to pressure the Trustee member to address many issues, including the lack of health care for 75% of grape pickers, who are members of the **United Farm Workers**. Community support for the hunger strike included **North Central Indiana Central Labor Council, SJVP Jobs with Justice, and the Center for Social Concerns**.

Photo: Chris Ferlazzo



Community and labor activists march to Taco Bell with national MEChA conference participants in Corvallis, OR.

Student Labor Week of Action Partnering Organizations



Contact the Student Labor Action Project at:

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