

Union Library Workers Blog

The Years 2019-2020 in Review

By Craig M. Guild

December 2018

2nd: Toronto Library Workers begin public campaign to raise awareness about dangers of “staffless libraries”

In response to a decision by the Toronto Public Library board to experiment with staffless libraries at two TPL branches, the Toronto Public Library Workers Union launched a campaign on December 3rd to inform patrons of the danger of staffless libraries, focusing especially on issues of public safety and the requirements that patrons sign away rights to hold the city accountable if anything were to happen at the branches.

<https://www.newswire.ca/news-releases/toronto-library-workers-begin-public-campaign-to-raise-awareness-about-dangers-of-staffless-libraries-701739052.html>

9th: A Plan to WIN! UC-AFT Ramps up bargaining campaign

Librarians in the University of California system used a break in negotiations as an opportunity to build unity and bargaining power by hosting workshops to plan local steps for winning a contract when negotiations resumed.

<https://ucaftlibrarians.org/2018/12/07/a-plan-to-win-strategic-campaign-workshops-for-librarian-bargaining/>

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Keywords: Climate strike, collective bargaining, contract negotiations, library unions, library workers, strikes.

12th: Tentative agreements reached with Boyden Library unions

The town of Boyden, MA reached an agreement with the union representing local library workers. If ratified by members, the agreement would be in effect retroactively to July 1, 2018.

http://www.thesunchronicle.com/foxboro_reporter/news/tentative-agreements-reached-with-unions/article_977781d4-817c-50bd-b2fa-fc3901cdfd9a.html

13th: New agreement for Sechelt library workers makes important gains for precarious workers

Workers for the Sechelt Public Library in Sechelt, B.C., represented by CUPE 391, celebrated the ratification of their new collective agreement. After three days of collaborative negotiations, union and library representatives were able to reach a positive agreement that addresses key issues, especially those addressing the needs of casual workers who are often in a more precarious work position without security or benefits that their regular employed colleagues have.

<https://www.newswire.ca/news-releases/new-agreement-for-sechelt-library-workers-makes-important-gains-for-precarious-workers-702478431.html>

17th: Philadelphia: Union library workers AFSCME District Council 46

Friends of the Free Library, union library workers in AFSCME District Council 47, and library members gathered at City Hall to advocate for full funding of the Free Library of Philadelphia.

<https://southphillyreview.com/rally-at-city-hall-demands-full-funding-of-library-c19b3d7a61dc>

March

1st: Village of Lincolnshire v. IUOE Local 399

In December 2015, Lincolnshire, Illinois passed a right-to-work (RTW) ordinance. Unions have been successful so far in their fight against the ordinance, winning first in the U.S. District Court and then again after Lincolnshire appealed to the Seventh Circuit Court of Appeals. But on February 14, Lincolnshire filed a petition with the Supreme Court, which will decide whether it will hear the village's appeal.

<http://inthesetimes.com/working/entry/21763/right-to-work-cities-municipalities-lincolnshire-unions-taft-hartley>

22nd: Minnesota Amazon workers walk off the job

On March 7th, workers at a Minnesota Amazon warehouse walked off the job for three hours during the night shift in protest of the company's expectations of quick turnaround times for workers. The walkout was

the warehouse's second job action in a three-month period.

<https://labornotes.org/2019/03/minnesota-amazon-workers-walk-job-over-speed>

April

2nd: University of California librarians win stronger protections for academic freedom

After a contract negotiation that included disagreement between University of California librarians and administration over whether academic freedom applied to librarians, librarians won a memorandum of understanding that includes strong protections for librarian academic freedom.

<https://academeblog.org/2019/04/01/university-of-california-librarians-win-stronger-protections-for-academic-freedom/>

17th: Spokane Public Schools to eliminate school librarian position district wide

Spokane Public Schools issued a notice to all school librarians that their positions were being eliminated beginning in the 2019-2020 school year. The district plans to keep the libraries open, relying on teachers and part-time clerks to effectively staff the library on top of existing duties and regardless of training or library experience.

<https://www.krem.com/article/news/spokane-public-schools-eliminates-librarian-positions/293-7ba3e599-e4f0-42f2-a59b-436988142892>

18th: Rutgers Faculty reach deal to avoid strike

A deal struck between Rutgers University and the AAUP-AFT managed to avoid the first strike in Rutgers' history. The deal is historic in establishing equal pay for equal work for female faculty on the university's Newark and Camden, NJ campuses, a guarantee, enforced by binding arbitration, of a workplace free of harassment and stalking, intellectual freedom extended to social media, \$20 million for diversity hiring, and a revision to Rutgers' policies opening the door for the university to sponsor non-tenure-track faculty for permanent residency. The new agreement will also raise pay significantly for graduate workers.

<https://www.northjersey.com/story/news/2019/04/16/no-strike-rutgers-university-faculty-claims-win-contract-negotiations/3492244002/>

22nd: CCA Staff, including library and facility employees, vote to unionize

Staff at the two campuses of the California College of the Arts in San Francisco and Oakland, CA voted to join SEIU 1021. In part, the vote by 164 staff members reflected concerns that cost-of-living increases were driving workers out of the Bay Area, as well as concerns that

consolidation of the school would negatively impact staffing levels and, in turn, services to students.

<https://www.seiu1021.org/post/california-college-arts-staff-vote-overwhelmingly-join-seiu-1021>

29th: United College Workers establishes first union at Ole Miss

The UCW, affiliated with the Communication Workers of America (CWA), is the first officially chartered local to form on the Ole Miss campus. It is an inclusive union and welcomes anyone at the university who is employed at the university, regardless of classification or title. This means that everyone from student workers to full-time faculty qualify for representation by UCW, though Mississippi is a “right-to-work” state which prevents automatic enrollment upon employment.

<https://thedmonline.com/university-employees-organize-first-labor-union-in-campus-history/>

29th: Union leader calls for push back against Ford government in Ontario

Mike Bellerose, president of Canadian Union of Public Employees Local 4705, called for Northern Ontario’s residents to apply pressure to the provincial government of Doug Ford. The Ford government had notified Ontario Library Services-North that their budget would be slashed by 50% following the tabling of the provincial budget on April 11th. CUPE 4705, which represents employees in the Ontario Library Services-North (OLS-North) says that 5 out of 11 full-time employees were issued lay-off notices and a sixth had been re-classed from full-time to part-time status.

<https://www.cochranetimes.com/news/local-news/fight-library-cuts-union-leader-in-sudbury-urges/wcm/d261db25-0431-4439-8529-808dbedca1b0>

30th: Salary increase for women faculty at University of Toronto

The University of Toronto announced that it would be increasing the salaries of women at the university holding tenured faculty or tenure-stream positions by 1.3% as of July 1st, 2019. The announcement was made following pre-grievance mediation with the University of Toronto Faculty Association during which both the U of T and the UTFA shared the results of studies focusing on gender and salary at the university.

<https://www.utoronto.ca/news/u-t-implement-salary-increase-more-800-women-faculty-members>

30th: New Budget means cuts to Sunday services and staff at Richmond Hill, Ontario library

After seeing a smaller than expected budgetary increase, the Richmond Hill Public Library Board has cut three staff positions, three new staff requests, and Sunday services from June 9th to September 1st of this year. Canadian Public Employees Union Local 905 is concerned not only about the staff lay-offs but also about the impact that cuts to staffing and hours will have on the greater Richmond Hill community. Popular Sunday programs, including an ESL cafe where English language learners can meet to practice their language skills, will no longer be provided.

<https://www.yorkregion.com/news-story/9295882-richmond-hill-library-makes-difficult-decision-to-cut-sunday-service-reduce-staff/>

May

1st: Buncombe County Manager, Pinder, proposes \$15/hr guarantee for county employees

Buncombe County Manager, Avril Pinder, proposed guaranteeing that every county employee, whether part-time or full-time, would earn at least \$15/hr. The move would raise the wages of 15 county employees, the majority of whom are library staff.

<https://www.citizen-times.com/story/news/local/2019/05/01/living-wage-proposal-buncombe-county-government-staff-paid-15-hourly-north-carolina-affordable/3627082002/>

2nd: May Day strike ends in tentative contract for non-teaching staff at CCC

City Colleges of Chicago staff returned to work after a one-day strike, launched May 1st, when City Colleges and the Federation of College Clerical and Technical Personnel Local 1708 reached a tentative agreement in contract negotiations. On Wednesday, May 1, 450 employees walked off the job at CCC following what the union saw as a refusal by College Administration to work with the union on demands around pay, healthcare, and unfilled vacancies at the colleges. Eighty-seven percent of membership had voted to reject the colleges' last offer. The unfilled vacancies in particular meant that many underpaid staff, primarily women of color, were forced to do the work of three or four people and use unpaid furlough days to provide crucial frontline services to students while administrative offices have seen salary increases of 40%.

<https://chicago.suntimes.com/2019/5/2/18620578/city-colleges-of-chicago-staff-returns-to-work>

2nd: Educators at three Chicago charter schools go on strike

Educators at three charter schools in Chicago struck after months of negotiations resulted in no acceptable contract for the teachers. Educators at the schools point out that starting salaries at the charter schools tend to be about 40% lower than at public schools in Chicago, leading to high turnover as teachers leave to find better jobs. They also point to the fact that while charter schools get a large amount of funding, much of the money is going into administration rather than the classroom. Frustration with workloads was also a sticking point, with paraprofessionals in particular being required to take on more work with little compensation or recognition.

<https://chicago.suntimes.com/2019/5/2/18622277/teachers-at-3-chicago-charter-schools-go-on-strike>

2nd: U of C Labor Council rallies for workers' rights and grad union recognition

The newly formed University of Chicago Labor Council rallied with 200 supporters on the campus's main quad on May Day to speak out for labor rights in the greater Chicago area and to call on the University to recognize the Graduate Student Union (GSU), which graduate students voted to form almost two years ago.

<https://www.chicagomaroon.com/article/2019/5/2/university-chicago-labor-council-draws-crowds-may/>

2nd: Carolinas' educators march on capitals on May Day

Thousands of teachers from across the states of North and South Carolina marched on their respective capitals on May Day. The rallies numbered in the thousands as the spaces around the capital buildings were turned into seas of red, the signature color of the #RedForEd teachers' movement that has been spreading quickly over the last year. Along with calls for salary increases—both states' teachers make less than the national average—and a \$15/hr. minimum for all school employees, the educators also brought up the need for more librarians and nurses in schools and an expansion of Medicaid to benefit their students and their families.

https://blogs.edweek.org/edweek/teacherbeat/2019/05/teacher_protest_north_south_carolina.html

7th: AFSCME filing unfair labor practices charges against University of California

AFSCME announced three separate filings of unfair labor practices against the University of California. AFSCME Local 3299 is demanding that UC end its practice of replacing employees with outsourcing companies. The unfair labor practice filings specifically allege that the UC system has signed contracts with private companies, bypassing

negotiations with workers and their union as required by law.

<https://afscme3299.org/2019/05/02/uc-faces-unfair-labor-practice-charges-over-plans-to-outsource-more-jobs/>

7th: Chicago Charter School's back in session after tentative deals reached

Teachers at Latino Youth High School agreed to go back to work after winning a promise of more mental health support for students and curricula that reflect the culture and background of their students, according to the Sun-Times. Instituto Health Sciences Career Academy and Insituto Justice Leadership Academy teachers saw the expansion of union recognition to clerical staff, a decrease in class sizes, sanctuary language to protect immigrant students, protections for English Language Learners and special education students, as well as better wages and improved staffing ratios for social workers, nurses, counselors, and psychologists.

<https://chicago.suntimes.com/2019/5/7/18621444/teachers-at-last-2-charter-schools-reach-agreement-ending-strike>

8th: Libraries and Museums join in commemoration of 100th anniversary of Winnipeg General Strike

A number of libraries and museums housed exhibits and hosted events for Winnipeg's commemoration of the 100th anniversary of the city's general strike, which lasted from May 15th to June 25th, 1919.

<https://winnipeg.ctvnews.ca/how-to-explore-the-history-of-the-1919-winnipeg-general-strike-1.4413892>

13th: Primary and secondary teachers plan to strike together in New Zealand's largest education strike

Educators in both New Zealand's NE Education Institute (NZEI) and the Post-Primary Teachers Association (PPTA) voted to strike May 29th. Despite the offer of pay increases over the next three years, teachers were unhappy with the government's budget plan, which left schools unable to meet the needs of students.

<https://www.newstalkzb.co.nz/news/education/primary-and-secondary-school-teachers-combine-for-mega-strike/>

13th: Argentina's University Faculty call for 48-hour strike for better wages

University Teachers in Argentina who are part of the National Federation of University Teachers, Researchers and Creators (Historic Conadu) voted for a 48-hour strike May 16-17. The strike coincided with mobilizations of other unions and student organizations. The central demands of the Federation were significant salary increases and support for university

education and research, as well as answers from the government that have not been forthcoming at the negotiation table.

<https://www.plenglish.com/index.php?o=rn&id=41825&SEO=argentine-university-teachers-call-to-strike-for-better-wage>

13th: Teacher sickouts arrive in Oregon

The wave of teacher work stoppages reached Oregon as teachers across the state called out sick to protest the under-funding of public schools. A website set up to organize the day of action speaks to the issue of growing class sizes, the lack of school librarians, and outsized ratios of students to nurses. The action resulted in 600 schools closing for the day across 25 districts, including Portland Public Schools, as teachers rallied at six sites across the state.

<https://splinternews.com/oregon-teachers-stage-mass-walkout-as-teacher-revolt-co-1834632483>

20th: New Haven Unified School District teachers strike after no deal reached with district

After months of negotiations, teachers at New Haven Unified School District in the Bay Area went on strike. The strike was called after the school district and teachers' union failed to reach an agreement around teacher salaries and pay scales. The union argued that current salaries are not enough for teachers trying to live in the increasingly expensive Bay Area around San Francisco. The union and teachers also feel that current budget cuts and offers by the school district represent a change in the district's attitude towards valuing educators as professionals who deserve a livable salary.

<https://www.eastbaytimes.com/2019/05/20/teachers-strike-work-stoppage-begins-in-union-city-south-hayward/>

20th: UC workers strike across system

Workers in the University of California system represented by AFSCME Local 3299 struck for one day, in its fifth labor stoppage in a 12-month period, over unfair labor practices and the outsourcing of jobs. The 7,440 workers represented by AFSCME were also joined by members of the University Professional and Technical Employees (UPTE), which represents healthcare and research support professionals and technical units.

<https://www.sfexaminer.com/the-city/uc-workers-go-out-on-one-day-strike/>

20th: Malawi's National Library services staff on indefinite strike

Staff at the National Library Service (NLS) of Malawi went on indefinite strike over the failure of management to provide promised

salary increases and the demand that the National Librarian, Grey Nyali, be removed from office due to abuse of power. Library workers, represented by the Communication Workers Union of Malawi (COWUMA) say that they were promised multiple pay increases that have never been fulfilled while NLS management has established various funds to pay themselves gratuities at the end of their contracts. Allegations against Nyali further claim that he has transferred NLS properties into his own private possession and has wasted funds on fruitless tours of the country rather than on much needed library supplies like operational vehicles, infrastructure, and books.

<https://www.nyasatimes.com/malawi-library-staff-on-indefinite-strike-people-denied-electoral-information/>

21st: Pembroke, MA Public Library to host “Workers’ Struggle” exhibit through June

Pembroke’s Public Library housed a “Workers’ Struggle” poster exhibit throughout the month of June. The posters come from workers’ struggles in multiple countries, reflecting both the variety and commonality of these struggles. The display was part of a collection of more than 8,600 posters owned by retired union leader and activist Stephen Lewis.

<https://pembroke.wickedlocal.com/news/20190521/pembroke-public-library-to-feature-workers-struggles-poster-exhibit>

24th: New Funding Structure Forces Oakland School Librarians to Look Elsewhere

Changes to the funding structure for school libraries has led to cuts in hours and relocations for librarians and library staff in Oakland, CA schools. The schools’ libraries were already struggling with many schools operating libraries without library staff or closing libraries all together. Some librarians in the district have had to look elsewhere for jobs that can provide more security and consistency.

<https://www.sfchronicle.com/bayarea/otisrtaylorjr/article/Oakland-school-library-workers-forced-out-after-13857609.php?psid=60n94>

29th: Security and reception staff on strike at Louvre

The Musée du Louvre’s security and reception staff struck over untenable conditions due to the rise in visitors to the museum over the past decade. The Sud Culture Solidaires Union, which represents the workers, points to the overcrowding that has resulted from the growth of attendance by 20% while the space in the museum has remained constant and staffing levels have actually shrunk.

<https://www.npr.org/2019/05/28/727592823/the-louvre-is-suffocating-museum-closed-as-workers-strike-citing-overcrowding>

June

3rd: CUPE strike school sends a message in preparation for negotiations

The Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE) in Labrador and Newfoundland opened a historic strike school in preparation for upcoming negotiations with the provincial government. CUPE members are hoping to avoid a strike but have no plans to go into negotiations unprepared or to offer concessions following a recent union convention where leadership says it received a mandate from the membership. The strike school, attended by 75 members, represented the beginning of the mobilization of membership in the run up to next year's negotiations.

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/newfoundland-labrador/cupe-strike-school-1.5157724>

3rd: U of C Graduate students to picket June 3-5

The Graduate Student Union (GSU) at the University of Chicago planned to participate in an industrial action in the 10th week of the Spring quarter. The authorization came as administration at U of C continued to refuse to recognize GSU after its 2017 NCLRB-certified election, failing to even name GSU in campus-wide emails about the impending action.

<https://www.chicagomaroon.com/article/2019/5/31/graduate-students-holding-labor-action-tenth-week/>

3rd: WV Senate Republicans strengthen anti-strike language in education bill

Republicans in West Virginia's state Senate moved to amend an education bill to include tougher anti-strike language. Both the state Senate's Democratic minority and the state's teachers view the move as retaliation by the GOP for teacher strikes across the state this past February and last year. The new language, if it were to become law, would make striking a fireable offense and give county boards the ability to withhold pay from striking teachers. Crucially, the law would also prohibit county superintendents from cancelling school prior to a strike in anticipation of teacher absences, a tactic that allowed teacher unions to avoid having to officially declare illegal strikes in the past two years.

<https://unionlibraryworkers.blogspot.com/2019/06/>

10th: Oregon Senate passes pro-public employees union bill

The Oregon Senate passed a bill that would make it easier for public employee unions to organize in a post-Janus climate. The bill mandates

employers give reasonable time off for union business, makes it easier for employees to opt-into their union, give unions the ability to determine proper employee conduct at union meetings, and mandates the sharing of employee contact information between the employer and the union.

<https://www.oregonlive.com/news/2019/06/pro-public-employee-union-bill-sails-through-the-oregon-senate.html>

10th: Sudan general strike looks to force transfer of power from military

June 9th marked the first day of a national general strike in Sudan following a June 3rd crackdown by the nation's ruling military that has left 100 dead according to protestors. The strike, organized in part by the Sudanese Professionals Association—an umbrella group of Sudanese Unions—ground the country to a standstill Sunday and shops and business remained closed Monday, though more traffic could be seen on the streets.

<https://www.thestar.com/news/world/africa/2019/06/09/sudans-protesters-launch-general-strike-after-crackdown.html>

10th: Ottawa's provincial government moves to cap contract faculty wages

Ottawa's government moved to cap the wages of contract faculty at public colleges and universities. The legislation would remove unions' ability to negotiate the wages of some of the lowest paid members of university and college faculties. Unions pushed back against the legislation and were planning to challenge it in court should it pass.

<https://ottawacitizen.com/news/local-news/contract-faculty-at-colleges-and-universities-will-be-hit-hard-by-governments-proposed-wage-caps-say-unions-say>

10th: New Haven Teachers return to work after 14-day strike

In Union City and south Hayward, CA, New Haven Unified School District teachers voted 302-200 to end their strike and accept the district's latest offer. Though they returned, teachers still felt betrayed by the school district and that they are being made to pay to fix other people's mistakes. The union has made clear that this first strike in the district's history is only the beginning of their organizing for their membership.

<https://sanfrancisco.cbslocal.com/2019/06/09/new-haven-school-district-teachers-ratify-new-contract-ending-strike/>

17th: Edmonton Public Library backtracks on proposed cuts to student worker wages

The Edmonton Public Library in Edmonton, AB seemed to be using language in its contract with Civic Service Union 52 as an excuse to

cut the wages of students who work as pages at the library by \$2.30 to \$2.50. The library backtracked its position following outcry from CSU 52 and the community. While pages will continue to be paid at their current rate, the union is now looking to keep a closer eye on decisions by the EPL moving forward.

<https://rabble.ca/blogs/bloggers/alberta-diary/2019/06/hiding-behind-ucp-youth-minimum-wage-cut-edmonton-public>

17th: Student Teachers at Kasungu Teachers' College on indefinite strike over sanitation, diet, unpaid allowances

Student teachers at Kasungu Teachers College in Kasungu, Malawi announced they were going on an indefinite strike. Students said that sanitation conditions at the college became unacceptable and that the diet they are offered is very poor. They also said that the allowance they are due for their practical teaching has gone unpaid. Student leaders at the 360-student school vowed they will remain on strike until all demands are met.

<https://www.nyasatimes.com/teacher-students-strike-over-poor-hygiene-allowances/>

17th: Swiss women strike for equality

Women across Switzerland went on strike under the banner “Wages. Time. Respect.” Along with the demand for equal pay for equal work, women demanded an end to discrimination and sexual harassment. They also want changes to societal and legal pressures that force women to make hard choices in order to keep their family afloat.

<https://www.kcur.org/post/wages-time-respect-swiss-women-go-strike#stream/0>

17th: Brazil general strike called over proposed changes to pension laws

Brazil's unions called the first general strike under far-right President Jair Bolsonaro and the second general strike in two years. The one-day strike paralyzed major cities and saw thousands demonstrate across the country. The United Workers Central labor federation called the strike in response to the introduction of a pension law that would increase minimum retirement ages and increase worker contributions to pension plans.

<https://www.cp24.com/world/thousands-take-to-streets-in-brazil-during-general-strike-1.4467886>

18th: York University refuses to negotiate with student employees, CUPE requests conciliation

Canadian Union of Public Employees Local 1356-2 has requested conciliation after they say York University in Toronto has refused

to negotiate with student employees who work part-time in student parking, closed circuit television (CCTV), and GoSafe (a walk home program at York) until they withdraw proposals the university claims are “unreasonable.” It was unclear to CUPE which proposals they put forward were considered “unreasonable,” however, and the union said the university had not provided any clarification on the topic.

<https://www.newswire.ca/news-releases/ignoring-own-recent-history-york-university-refuses-to-bargain-seriously-with-student-employees-cupe-1356-2-forced-to-request-conciliation-821501001.html>

26th: South Australia teachers vote to strike

Teachers in South Australia walked off the job in their second strike in under a year, following a half-day strike the previous November. The strike vote was born out of growing frustration among teachers regarding the allocation of classroom resources as well as by pay increases they viewed as too low.

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2019-06-25/public-school-teachers-vote-to-go-on-strike-in-sa/11246306>

28th: Librarians protest CIA’s recruiting at ALA’s conference

A group of librarians demanded the American Library Association abide by its values as they staged a protest of the Central Intelligence Agency’s recruitment at the ALA’s annual conference. The protesters laid out their motivation in a statement they handed out at the action. The resolution was defeated in the Membership Meeting at the conference.

<https://www.commondreams.org/news/2019/06/24/citing-cias-dark-history-librarians-protest-agencys-recruiting-their-conference>

July

1st: Guggenheim workers vote to unionize

The 140 employees working as engineers, maintenance workers, art handlers, cabinetmakers, fabricators, and other full-time, part-time, and temporary employees at the Guggenheim Museum voted to unionize. Workers joined International Union of Operating Engineers Local 30.

<https://www.nytimes.com/2019/06/28/arts/design/guggenheim-union-vote.html>

1st: Chilean teachers strike drags into second month

Roughly 80% of Chilean public school teachers remained out of the classroom since their strike began in June. The demands of the teachers include the payment of a bonus, a salary adjustment that had been promised four decades ago, the annulment of a measure that makes history and physical education optional for the last two years of school,

as well as steps to address sanitation and a lack of supplies in schools.
<https://www.thestar.com/news/world/americas/2019/06/27/chilean-teachers-mark-nearly-a-month-since-they-began-strike.html>

3rd: In Spain CGT demands more staff for Rafalafena Library. In Brazil librarians join general strike

In Spain, the CGT (General Confederation of Labor) union called a protest to demand more staff for the Rafalafena Public Library in Castelló and prevent it from closing in the afternoon. The Union denounced that the library only has 50% of the staff approved for its proper functioning.

In Brazil on June 14, Librarians joined the general strike against pension reform. In Rio de Janeiro, the Librarians' Union (Sindib-RJ) made a call through social networks to participate in the act. According to Luciana Manta, president of the organization, the strike was motivated by the Pension Reform, which—according to her—withdrawn workers' rights. In São Paulo, the local union (SinBiesp) also called on librarians to participate in the activities.

<https://unionlibraryworkers.blogspot.com/2019/07/in-spain-cgt-demands-more-staff-for.html>

8th: NEA adds new membership category for non-educators

The National Education Association voted by 68.9% of votes cast to add a new category of membership for 'public education allies.' Non-educator members would not have voting or nomination rights, nor would they be able to run for or hold office in the union. The status would, however, make it possible for these members to donate to the NEA's Political Action Committee. The union also believes the move will open lines of communication between educators and the community.

http://blogs.edweek.org/teachers/teaching_now/2019/07/national_education_association_membership.html

9th: Amazon workers plan Prime Day strike

Safe working conditions and job security were demanded by Amazon warehouse workers who planned to strike for six hours on Amazon's Prime Day (July 15th) in Shakopee, MN. The walkout took place across two shifts and engineers from Amazon Employees for Climate Justice planned to join the demonstration. The workers are demanding that part-time positions be converted to full time and that quotas be permanently reduced to create a safer working environment.

<https://www.theverge.com/2019/7/8/20686138/amazon-prime-day-strike-minnesota-factory-workers>

9th: Teachers at South Gloucestershire school go on strike

Teachers in Thornbury, UK went on strike over cuts to staffing and

increasing workloads. The National Education Union (NEU) is drawing attention to how the increasing load being put on teachers at the South Gloucestershire school is negatively impacting students and their learning environment as teachers have less and less time to meet their needs.

<https://www.bbc.com/news/uk-england-bristol-48919045>

16th: German Amazon workers strike Prime Day over pay

German labor union Verdi said that over 2,000 workers at seven Amazon sites in Germany struck over the company's Prime Day 'holiday.' The workers, walking out under the motto "No more discount on our incomes," serve the second largest Amazon market after the United States. Since 2013, Amazon has seen strikes by its German workforce over pay and working conditions. Verdi is also calling on Amazon to recognize the collective wage agreements in the retail and mail order sectors.

<https://finance.yahoo.com/news/amazon-workers-germany-strike-over-221621280.html>

16th: TISS suspends activities on Hyderabad campus following students protests

Students on the Hyderabad campus of the Tata Institute of Social Sciences in Hyderabad, India received the news that all academic activity was being suspended at the school and they were to vacate the campus. The move came after a week of student protests in which students physically blocked entrance to school buildings and protest-ed changes to housing and meal fees.

<https://www.thenewsminute.com/article/tiss-hyderabad-declares-indefinite-closure-amid-student-protests-105490>

18th: Federal judge rules in favor of employee claiming retaliation from Emporia State University

A federal judge ruled that Emporia State University in Emporia, KS retaliated against a former employee who had complained about being a target of a racial slur. Judge Crabtree ruled that Hale had been improperly punished for engaging in activities protected under federal anti-discrimination law.

<https://www.leavenworthtimes.com/news/20190717/federal-judge-says-emporia-state-university-retaliated-when-employee-complained-of-racial-slur>

22nd: Puerto Rico protests grow into general strike against governor

The U.S. territory of Puerto Rico saw a massive general strike as calls of "Ricky Resign" was the island's response to embattled Governor Ricardo Rosselló's attempt to hold on to power. Puerto Ricans had

been calling for the governor's resignation following a July 13th leak of text messages between the governor and 11 members of his inner circle that contained homophobic and sexist slurs aimed at political rivals and jokes about dead bodies following the destruction of hurricane Maria. Rosselló's administration has been surrounded by controversy and corruption charges since Maria.

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2019/jul/22/puerto-rico-protesters-block-highway-governor-ricardo-rossello>

29th: Bengaluru library workers protest over pay and benefits

Library workers in Bengaluru, India began protesting July 20th over the government's unwillingness to meet to discuss compensation and the level of work asked of the employees. The government claimed that they are only housekeeping employees who work two hours. However, the workers pointed out that, while they are often hired as housekeepers, they often work long hours carrying out central functions of the library, including receiving, tagging, and tracking down items.

(CW Suicide) <https://www.deccanherald.com/metrolife/metrolife-cityscape/why-are-bengalurus-library-workers-protesting-750280.html>

30th: Protest against layoffs in the Argentine National Library

A march was held against the dismissals at the Mariano Moreno National Library of the Argentine Republic. The protest, called by the Association of State Workers (ATE), was held to demand that the Director of the Library, Elsa Barber, reinstate the fired employees. The dozen workers laid off since January 2019 join the long list of almost 300 employees dismissed since the change of government and library management in 2016. The union also denounced problems in the library building that put at risk important parts of the cultural heritage of Argentina.

<https://unionlibraryworkers.blogspot.com/2019/07/pagina12-protest-against-layoffs-in.html>

30th: Norwalk school district employees file time theft lawsuit

Two employees of the Norwalk (CT) School District filed a lawsuit against the district, claiming that hourly employees have had their timecards intentionally altered to strip them of time worked. District employees represented by the Norwalk Federation of Educational Personnel such as library media assistants, secretaries, and paraprofessionals are paid hourly and must turn in timecards. The lawsuit notes that each school employs an administrative secretary who oversees timecards. These secretaries were allegedly instructed to alter timecards to ensure that full-time employees rarely exceed 37.5 hours a week and part-time employees never have more than 29.

<https://www.thehour.com/news/article/Lawsuit-Norwalk-schools-has-altered-employees-14192765.php>

August

1st: Bradford's (UK) libraries and museums staff could strike over cuts

Unite, Britain and Ireland's largest union, announced that it will hold a consultative ballot of its approximately 50 library and museum members in Bradford to see if they wish to proceed to a full-scale industrial action ballot in defense of the library and museum service.

<https://unitetheunion.org/news-events/news/2019/july/bradford-libraries-and-museums-face-swinging-cuts-warns-unite/>

1st: UCU calls for 30-minute general strike for climate

The University and College Union (UCU), which represents academics, lecturers, trainers, instructors, researchers, managers, administrators, computer staff, librarians, and postgraduates in universities, colleges, prisons, and adult education and training organizations across the UK, tabled a motion at the upcoming Trade Union Congress (TUC) in Brighton for a 30-minute general strike on September 20th in solidarity with the Student Climate Strike. If a walkout were to occur it could be unlawful, as it would not meet the strict requirements of British law to be a protected industrial action. Whether or not employees and the general public are receptive to the action may ultimately influence how and if it manifests.

<https://www.personneltoday.com/hr/general-strike-20-september-greta-thunberg-climate-emergency-walk-out/>

5th: Weekend protests turn into Monday general strike in Hong Kong

Workers across Hong Kong heeded the call of protesters and stayed home from work Monday, grinding much of the semi-autonomous island to a halt. The protests are a continuation of an increasingly volatile political situation in Hong Kong following the introduction of a bill allowing for extradition back to mainland China of fugitives who fled to Hong Kong. While the strike was not the first General Strike called during the weeks of protests, it appears to be the first purely worker-driven action.

https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/hong-kong-protesters-hold-multiple-rallies-paralyzing-city-neighborhoods-ahead-of-a-planned-general-strike/2019/08/04/2dfe20ac-b60b-11e9-acc8-1d847bacca73_story.html?utm_term=.293a88605ecf

5th: Cal State Dominguez Hills library takes over Holt Labor Library collection

The Holt Labor Library collection, originally started by early Apple employee Rod Holt, was added, along with \$200,000 to pay for the school to have someone catalog the expansive archive, to the CSDH library as the school's largest single donation. The library hoped to begin making materials available to students and researchers within six months but expects that it may take up to three years to fully understand the entirety of the collection.

<https://www.dailynews.com/2019/08/02/cal-state-dominguez-hills-gets-its-hands-on-a-huge-repository-of-obscure-and-radical-political-texts/>

6th: Victorian AEU votes to support climate strike

The Victorian branch of the Australian Education Union voted to support the student-led global climate strike on September 20th. The unanimously passed motion called on leadership to advocate for students' rights to participate in the strike safely. The motion further called on members to show solidarity by requesting a leave of absence to attend demonstrations, posting a selfie to social media, or passing a solidarity resolution in the local sub-branch of the AEU.

<https://www.greenleft.org.au/content/victorian-teachers-union-votes-support-climate-strike>

6th: German Labor Union encourages 2 million members to join climate strike

In a tweet, Verdi, Germany's second largest labor union, called on its 2 million service sector employees to take part in global climate strike actions wherever possible. While not a formal call to strike, the call is a significant move by a labor organization the size of Verdi.

<https://www.commondreams.org/news/2019/08/06/youth-and-workers-uniting-behind-crisis-german-labor-union-urges-2-million-members>

6th: UPTE reaches tentative contract, UC-AFT get snubbed

A tentative agreement reached between the University of California system and University Professional and Technical Employees-Communications Workers of America 9119 was announced after two years of negotiations. As the UC was finalizing negotiations with the UPTE, however, tensions flared in negotiations between the UC and the University Council for the American Federation of Teachers Local 1990, the union representing faculty and librarians. UC-AFT negotiators claim that amid discussions of instructional support, office spaces, and supplies, the UC negotiators began engaging in name calling and left the meeting abruptly. UC-AFT plans to continue to advocate for salary increases, especially as many faculty members are

struggling, but the university's refusal to consider changes on matters as small as letterhead does not leave many hopeful. The current UC-AFT contract is set to expire in January.

<http://dailybruin.com/2019/08/05/uc-successfully-negotiates-new-deal-with-one-labor-union-frustrates-another/>

6th: WPEA fighting for raises for library workers

Employees of the Fort Vancouver Regional Library in Washington state, represented by Washington Public Employees Union (WPEA), are fighting for wage increases following a study showing that they were paid up to 29% less than library workers in similar districts. The market study that found these results had been established following a contract agreed to by WPEA and FVRL in 2018 that tied employee salaries to the findings of the report. Employees are now being told the money is not there, and what money does exist is earmarked for capital improvements over salaries.

http://www.thereflector.com/news/article_429a5426-b7ba-11e9-895f-339a26b82321.html

7th: Lucy Kissik named winner of inaugural W&A Working-Class Writer's Prize

Writers & Artists, a part of Bloomsbury Publishing Plc., announced at the end of July that Lucy Kissik was named the winner of the inaugural Writers & Artists Working-Class Writers' Prize for her debut novel *Plutoshine*. The prize, launched in March, called for writers of a working-class background who did not currently have a literary agent or publishing contract.

<https://www.writersandartists.co.uk/2019/07/lucy-kissick-to-win-the-w-a-working-class-writers-prize>

13th: Forestville teachers strike after negotiations fall short

Forestville, CA, a town with a 120-year-old school district with one school campus and 263 students, saw its first ever teachers' strike and the first strike in Sonoma County since 1980. The district's 16 teachers braved the heat to hit the picket lines, and town residents continued to stop by the picket line all day to drop off water and other support.

<https://sanfrancisco.cbslocal.com/2019/08/12/forestville-teachers-union-on-strike-two-days-before-school-year-starts/>

13th: Ontario Union leaders back job action plan

Union leaders of the Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE) representing 55,000 non-teacher Ontario education workers such as library workers, custodians, secretaries, and early childhood educators among others endorsed a job action plan, the first step in a

process that could result in a strike as the union's contract comes to an end August 31st.

<https://lfpress.com/news/local-news/school-union-leaders-back-job-action-plan>

15th: Cuyahoga Falls Library and workforce at impasse in negotiations

Negotiations between the Cuyahoga Falls Library in Cuyahoga Falls, OH and 27 employees represented by Professionals Guild of Ohio Local 3 ended without an agreement in mid-July with no set date for when each side would return to the table. The 17 part-time and 10 full-time employees have been without a contract since the last one expired at the end of 2018.

<https://www.beaconjournal.com/news/20190719/cuyahoga-falls-library-workers-at-odds-over-new-union-contract>

15th: Victory! Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh staff say "Yes" to the union!

In a 173-106 vote, the 321 employees of the Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh voted to form a union August 14th. The library staff will be represented by United Steelworkers (USW) in future negotiations with the library system.

<https://www.post-gazette.com/local/city/2019/08/14/Carnegie-Library-staff-members-vote-to-unionize/stories/201908140121>

26th: University of Western Ontario Librarians and archivists vote to back strike if necessary

Librarians and archivists at the University of Western Ontario voted by 97% to back a strike if deemed necessary by leadership. The University of Western Ontario Faculty Association, of which the librarians' and archivists' union is a part, hopes to avoid a work stoppage and, according to both the university and union, is continuing to negotiate in good faith. Union leadership told the Gazette that the vote was simply to strengthen the union's negotiating position and hope to avoid disrupting library and archive services to students and faculty.

https://westerngazette.ca/news/librarians-support-strike-if-deemed-necessary/article_f014a258-c51d-11e9-acda-cbbc7f469b82.html

26th: University workers in Oregon could strike in September

Around 5,000 classified workers, a category that includes library technicians and IT professionals, in Oregon's public university system planned to walk off the job in September if the system and Service Employees International Union (SEIU) Local 503 failed to reach an agreement this month. University workers said their pay is stagnating

while administrative pay is rising. Many of the lower paid members of SEIU Local 503 are on food stamps for families of four, and even higher paid members have seen their purchasing power decreasing over the years in a state with a high cost of living.

<https://www.koin.com/news/civic-affairs/oregon-university-workers-could-start-school-year-on-strike/>

28th: Kennewick (Wash.) teachers out on strike, district cancel's classes

Teachers were picketing outside of schools in Kennewick, WA on Tuesday, August 27 while the school district made the late Monday call to cancel classes. These developments followed the failure of the district and union to reach an agreement in negotiations.

<https://keprtv.com/news/local/teacher-strike-begins-after-educators-and-district-leaders-fail-to-agree-on-contract-terms>

September

10th: Amazon, Microsoft workers plan to join Global Climate Strike

Almost a thousand workers, mostly at Amazon's Seattle headquarters, planned to walk off the job Sept. 20th to join the Global Climate Strike. Many of the employees, members of Amazon Employees for Climate Justice, will be using paid time off to join the global demonstrations. Members of Microsoft Workers 4 Good have also said via their Twitter feed that they plan to join demonstrations.

<https://www.cnet.com/news/hundreds-of-amazon-employees-plan-to-join-climate-change-strike/>

20th: Panamanian librarians demand salary increase

The Panamanian Association of Librarians (Apabib) presented a proposed minimum salary increase estimated at \$1,200 before the citizen participation room of the National Assembly (AN). With this initiative the association seeks to replace the current salary of \$700. There are currently about 254 professionals working in public, school, municipal, and academic libraries, and the National Library.

<https://unionlibraryworkers.blogspot.com/2019/09/panamanian-librarians-demand-salary.html>

20th: Florida A&M support staff win in negotiations and continue to grow

Members at Florida A&M University claimed a long-sought victory at the bargaining table after members voted unanimously on Tuesday, September 17 to accept the new contract. The struggle has produced further results as Tuesday also saw 15 support personnel join AFSCME.

https://www.afscme.org/now/famu-workers-win-at-bargaining-table-continue-to-build-power?link_id=1&can_id=c4211047e0c87fa94f9e0f649d6118ae&source=email-florida-famu-workers-win-favorable-contract&email_referrer=email_623456&email_subject=florida-famu-workers-win-favorable-contract

24th: OSU employees authorize strike action

A whopping 95% of 5,000 Oregon State University employees represented by Service Employees International Union local 503 voted to authorize a strike. A strike date was set for Monday, September 30th when library, counseling, health services, clerical, and technical support staff would take to the picket lines. Negotiations reached an impasse when management refused to budge on a core demand of SEIU 503: that workers receive a compensation package on par with other state workers.

<https://truthout.org/articles/oregon-state-university-employees-vote-to-authorize-a-strike-amid-heated-moment/>

24th: College of DuPage faculty authorize strike

Faculty at the College of DuPage in Glen Ellyn, IL voted to authorize a strike after negotiations went into mediation. Faculty are upset that the school is not moving to fix a three-year-old pay freeze that has led to an arbitrary promotion process that, faculty say, is not grounded in current research, while also piling on additional duties without compensation.

<https://chicago.cbslocal.com/2019/09/17/college-of-dupage-strike-vote/>

24th: Six years of negotiations end with 10-year contract for Mount Vernon Public Library workers

A six-year negotiation between the Mount Vernon Public Library in Mount Vernon, NY and its workers represented by Civil Services Employee Association (CSEA) ended with a 10-year contract retroactive to 2014.

<https://patch.com/new-york/mountvernonny/library-workers-union-sign-10-year-contract-agreement>

24th: Tenured librarians, teaching faculty face lay-offs at St. Cloud State University

St. Cloud State University in St. Cloud, MN announced that it intends to lay off (retrench) four faculty librarians (out of a total of twelve still working in the library after years of positions lost through attrition), along with three faculty from the Philosophy Department and one from Theatre. The four librarians the administration is proposing to lay off are all tenured and have worked at SCSU for more than 11

years. The only two permanent, full-time library employees who are people of color are among those targeted for retrenchment.

<https://www.insidehighered.com/blogs/library-babel-fish/retrenched>

25th: Google contractors vote to unionize

In Pittsburgh, PA, 80 Google contractors working for HCL America voted to join USW under the name Pittsburgh Association of Tech Professionals (PATP). HCL America had launched a campaign discouraging its employees from voting to unionize. Workers on both sides of the vote were concerned with the fact that they made less and had fewer benefits than full-time Google workers.

https://www.vice.com/en_us/article/8xwmnv/google-contractors-officially-vote-to-unionize

25th: McGill Faculty of Law votes to strike for climate Sept. 27

In Montreal, Quebec, McGill Law students voted 93% in favor of striking September 27 in solidarity with the global student strike for climate. The vote, held by the Law Students Association, saw a general assembly attended by 63.6% of members. McGill Law has said it will accommodate students wishing to participate. It was the decision by McGill not to facilitate participation in the September 18 global student strike that prompted the vote by law students.

<http://www.mcgilltribune.com/news/mcgill-faculty-of-law-votes-to-strike-for-climate-change-march-09252019/>

25th: Mass Senate overrides Gov's veto, allows unions to collect reimbursement from non-union members

A bipartisan vote in the Massachusetts Senate saw the overturning of Governor Charlie Baker's veto of a bill that would allow public sector unions to collect reimbursement from non-union workers for cases in which they represent the worker in grievances and arbitration.

<https://www.prwatch.org/news/2019/09/13495/massachusetts-law-could-blunt-effect-januss-attack-unions>

30th: Western University (ON) librarians, archivists, and supporters rally for fair contract

Members of the Western University community rallied in solidarity with the school's librarians and archivists, represented by the Western University of Ontario Faculty Association, who have yet to reach an agreement with school administration after a summer of negotiations. In early September, the WUOFA filed a no-board report to the Ministry of Labor which will allow them to strike as early as mid-October. Disagreements between WUOFA and Western University were primarily workload related, with a 20% decline in library employees since 2010.

https://westerngazette.ca/news/librarians-and-archivists-call-on-campus-to-get-loud/article_305974b6-e07f-11e9-b6bb-eff95fc782a0.html

October

2nd: Santa Clara County workers strike, first time in four decades

Service Employees International Union (SEIU) Local 521, which represents employees in libraries, parks, and law enforcement as well as hospital custodial staff, social workers, mental health providers, and clerical workers in Santa Clara County, CA called for its first strike in four decades. The unions contract ended in June, but a skyrocketing cost of living in the Bay Area combined with staffing shortages in mental health and key positions were sticking issues in negotiations.

<https://www.mercurynews.com/2019/10/01/union-representing-12000-santa-clara-county-workers-to-strike-wednesday/>

2nd: Chicago Public Schools staff deliver strike notices

Service Employees International Union (SEIU) Local 73, which represents 7,500 staff employees of Chicago Public Schools, issued strike notices. Members voted in July to authorize a strike by 97%, citing what they are calling poverty wages as a motivator for the walk out. SEIU Local 73 could be on strike as early as October 17th, potentially joined by SEIU members of the city's Park District which last week voted by 94% to strike. Earlier this week the Chicago Teachers Union also voted by 94% to authorize a strike, putting the CTU on pace to be on strike by the end of the month.

<https://chicago.cbslocal.com/2019/10/01/strike-notices-chicago-public-schools-park-district-seiu-local-73/>

8th: Two Ontario unions avoid strike with last minute agreements

A late-night agreement between the government and the Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE) prevented a strike by 55,000 education workers and Western University. Also, the University of Western Ontario Faculty Association (UWOFA-LA) announced an agreement that stopped librarians and archivists from walking out. Both contracts still needed to be ratified by union members, but the agreements will make it possible to continue services to students at all levels without interruption.

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/toronto/ontario-education-workers-latest-1.5310641>

9th: NLRB moves to strip grad students of union rights

Towards the end of September, the National Labor Relations Board

proposed a rule change that would upend the 2016 decision that gave graduate students at private universities the right to unionize. Such a move would dramatically upend years of victories and organizing by graduate students across the United States, often in the face of constant turnover and open hostility from administrations.

<http://ala-apa.org/newsletter/2019/10/07/new-rule-proposed-to-prevent-graduate-student-unions-at-private-colleges/>

18th: Chicago teachers union on strike, need for school librarians among issues

For the second time in seven years, 25,000 members of the Chicago Teachers Union (CTU Local 1) went on strike. The CTU has been at the forefront of a recent mobilization of teachers across the country after the Caucus of Rank and File Educators (CORE) won union elections and launched a successful strike around social justice demands in 2012. In 2019, the teachers' union is still fighting for the school that Chicago students deserve. This occurs as class size takes center stage, along with a demand for more librarians, nurses, and student counselors. Some schools must currently share these resources, leaving important student services and access to school materials out of reach much of the time.

<https://chicago.cbslocal.com/2019/10/17/chicago-teachers-head-to-picket-line-for-day-1-of-strike/>

21st: Cape Breton University approve strike with 91%

After a month of stalled negotiations between Cape Breton University (CBU) in Cape Breton, Nova Scotia and the CBU Faculty Association (CBUFA), CBUFA membership voted by 91% to authorize a strike. Sticking points in negotiations revolve around teaching supports and wages. While CBUFA was willing to make concessions in the last contract in the face of declining enrollment, faculty had hoped that a turnaround with enrollment, combined with increased duties carried out by members, would lead to a more amenable negotiation; that has not played out in practice. Along with teaching faculty, CBUFA represents librarians, archivists, lab instructors, nursing practice educators, writing center advisors, and research chairs.

<https://www.thechronicleherald.ca/news/provincial/cbu-faculty-vote-in-favour-of-strike-365497/>

21st: UO graduate students authorize strike

University of Oregon graduate students authorized a strike if negotiations with administration were still at a standstill after 11 months of bargaining. Demands centered around fair wages and the maintenance of Graduate Students' healthcare. After both sides offered

their last best offers, they went into a 30-day cooling-off period. Negotiations would be able to restart November 3rd, at which point the graduate students would be able to strike.

<https://www.registerguard.com/news/20191018/uo-graduate-employees-authorize-strike-after-11-months-of-contract-negotiations>

21st: UO support, administrative staff provide strike mandate to negotiators

University of Ottawa support and administrative staff, represented by Support Staff University of Ottawa (SSUO), voted 84% in favor of a strike mandate for their bargaining unit. SSUO's 1,200 members include library staff, co-op specialists, financial aid advisors and other support and administrative staff. A main concern at the bargaining table for SSUO members is the filling of vacant positions. More than 80 positions at the university remain unfilled, stretching vital services thin.

<https://thefulcrum.ca/news/support-administrative-staff-vote-in-favour-of-strike-mandate/>

22nd: AFSCME Council 93 and MIT Librarians organizing union drive

More than 100 librarians at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) are organizing with AFSCME Council 93 to form a union in the university's libraries.

<https://www.abettermit.com/>

28th: Harvard Graduate Student workers authorize strike

Harvard Graduate Student Union-United Automobile Workers (HGSU-UAW) voted by 90.4% in favor of a strike authorization. The vote comes as graduate students are entering their second year of negotiations with Harvard for their first contract.

<https://www.thecrimson.com/article/2019/10/26/harvard-grad-union-authorizes-strike/>

28th: Dedham, MA teachers go on strike

Public school teachers in Dedham, MA went on strike after nearly two years of negotiations have failed to provide a new contract for teachers in the school district. Striking workers included the district's teachers, nurses, and counselors. A near majority of the union's 270 members voted to authorize the strike, despite the fact that public school strikes are deemed illegal in Massachusetts. Negotiations have reportedly stalled over health insurance, compensation, and language to safeguard staff from sexual harassment.

<https://www.wgbh.org/news/local-news/2019/10/24/dedham-public-schools-teachers-going-on-strike-after-nearly-2-years-of-negotiations>

29th: Library workers among county employees disciplined for skipping “hurricane duty”

In 2017, Palm Beach County (FL) made the decision to stop contracting emergency relief efforts with the Red Cross and, instead, to require untrained and unprepared county employees to take up emergency response duties, including operating shelter services. Following this past September’s near miss of Hurricane Dorian on the Florida Coast, 28 county employees, including 14 library employees, have been suspended for a week without pay after they refused to show up for duties they were never properly trained to carry out and that many felt put both them and the public in harm’s way. Emergency response is not within the job description of any of the employees who have been disciplined, and many say the most training they got was a one-hour video. Some tried to have assignments changed but had these requests denied.

<https://www.palmbeachpost.com/news/20191028/skipping-hurricane-dorian-duty-costs-palm-beach-county-employees-weeks-quos-pay>

29th: Toronto public library workers’ union lends voice to oppose transphobia in library

The Toronto Public Library Workers Union (TPLWU/CUPE Local 4948) joined the growing chorus of opposition to a scheduled event by a prominent anti-trans speaker at the Toronto Public Library. CUPE 4948 made clear they view the event as a direct contradiction to the library’s stated values, as well as an indication that trans and non-binary employees and patrons are not able to view the library as a safe and welcoming space.

<https://www.ctvnews.ca/canada/hundreds-protest-controversial-writer-outside-toronto-library-1.4661036>

November

4th: Chicago schools back in session as strike ends: no movement on school librarians

Chicago Teachers Union (CTU) and Service Employees International Union (SEIU) members returned to work Friday after a 15-day strike by both unions, the longest in Chicago Public Schools since 1987. Language in the contract mandates the hiring of new nurses and social workers, guaranteeing that every school will have at least one of each by 2023. However, the demand for more school librarians was dropped during negotiations, despite a decline from 454 to 104 between 2013 and 2019, leaving just slightly more than one librarian per six schools in the district.

<https://abc7chicago.com/education/chicago-teachers-students-return-to-class-friday-as-15-day-strike-ends-/5663774/>

*4th: Ontario elementary school teachers
and workers authorize strike*

Public school elementary teachers and staff in Ontario have voted by a whopping 98% to authorize a strike. Wages seemed to be a sticking point, with provincial legislation known as Bill 124 hanging over negotiations. Bill 124 was introduced by Premier Doug Ford's Progressive Conservative government over the summer and would place caps on public employee raises, a move, the union argues, that would undermine the very basis of negotiations.

<https://www.cp24.com/news/ontario-elementary-teachers-union-votes-in-favour-of-strike-mandate-1.4665625>

*12th: Telegraph & Argus: Protest at Wibsey
Library against museum and library cuts*

Bradford (UK) Council is planning to cut £1.05 million from its museums and libraries budget in the coming year. Details of the cuts have yet to be revealed, but may include reduced opening hours and a greater dependence on volunteers. Around 50 staff took part in three days of strike action with more work stoppages planned to defend the paid positions.

<https://www.thetelegraphandargus.co.uk/news/18018683.protest-held-wibsey-library-union-accuses-council-wielding-pickaxe/>

*12th: Western University librarians and
archivists vote to ratify contract*

Librarians and archivists in London, Ontario represented by the University of Western Faculty Association voted by 89% to ratify a new contract. The new contract will see increases to wages and benefits while also promising a Librarian and Archivist forum to give librarians and archivists a greater say in the university's governance.

<https://london.ctvnews.ca/western-s-librarians-and-archivists-vote-in-favour-new-deal-1.4670659>

12th: Little Rock teachers to strike Thursday

Little Rock, AR teachers will strike for one day on Thursday following a decision by the state Board of Education not to recognize the union. The strike was only the second time that teachers have walked out of Little Rock classrooms. But with growing frustration over the lack of recognition and state control over the local education system, the Little Rock Educators Association felt compelled to act.

https://www.herald-dispatch.com/ap/ap_region/little-rock-teachers-to-go-on-strike-over-district-s/article_949a5e69-4588-5948-93dc-60659d4333eb.html

20th: CUPE 5521 ratifies contract

Canadian Union of Professional Employees (CUPE) Local 5521 ratified its contract with Prairie South School Division in the west-central part of Saskatchewan by 71%. CUPE 5521 represents library associates and library technicians, along with other school support staff, in the school district.

<https://discovermoosejaw.com/local/cupe-local-5512-votes-to-ratify-new-collective-agreement>

20th: UNBC faculty on strike

Faculty at the University of Northern British Columbia were on strike beginning November 8th. The administration was willing to meet the faculty union on issues of pay. (UNBC has among the lowest-paid faculty in Canada.) However, the exchange offered was the removal of a tenure appeal process.

<https://www.therockymountaingoat.com/2019/11/unbc-strike-wages-not-the-hold-up-for-academics/>

20th: Saanich school staff strike over

Support staff at Saanich, BC public schools agreed to a contract that provided for pay parity with neighboring districts, the establishment of a retention and recruitment committee, and assurances on-job evaluation payments. The agreement marks the end of a three-week strike, during which Saanich teachers refused to cross their coworkers' picket line, resulting in school closures across the district.

<https://globalnews.ca/news/6181560/saanich-school-strike-deal-ratified/>

20th: University students march on Alberta legislature to protest education cuts

Students from MacEwan University and the University of Alberta marched on the Alberta Provincial legislature to protest budget cuts that would result in multi-million-dollar shortfalls at both schools.

<https://edmonton.ctvnews.ca/university-students-marching-to-legislature-protesting-post-secondary-cuts-1.4690907>

20th: Students protest screening process that segregates schools sharing the same building

Students at New York City's iSchool and Chelsea Career and Technical Education High School skipped their first period Monday, November 18 to protest an iSchool selection process that has resulted in what students see as segregation in their schools and a lack of opportunity for students attending Chelsea.

<https://www.ny1.com/nyc/all-boroughs/news/2019/11/18/students-strike-over-school-segregation>

20th: Croatian teachers move to nationwide strike

Croatian teachers changed strategies as they moved from a series of rolling strikes to a full nationwide strike that included street protests. Calling it a “struggle for dignity and status,” teachers are frustrated with their pay that lags far behind other Croatian public sector workers.

<https://www.nytimes.com/aponline/2019/11/19/world/europe/ap-eu-croatia-teachers-strike.html>

20th: University students protest for education funding, end to university corruption, more

For weeks, Bogota’s university students protested in the streets against corruption in the university system and for more funding for public higher education. Organized by the student collective called National Union of Students for Higher Education (UNEES), the protests have spread in recent weeks to public and private universities across Colombia and have come to demand far more sweeping reforms beyond education, especially in light of tactics by police that students have called excessive and unnecessary.

<https://thecitypaperbogota.com/bogota/as-colombia-faces-a-nationwide-strike-nov-21-why-are-students-protesting/23208>

26th: Librarians among university staff on strike across UK

Over 40,000 librarians, lecturers, technicians, and other staff have gone on strike, picketing 60 universities across the United Kingdom. The strike continued for 8 days but work to rule will remain in place indefinitely and a second strike could carry into the new year if demands are not met. In the three weeks since the strike was announced, 3,500 more workers petitioned to join the University and College Union (UCU), and the UCU has begun talks at other institutions about joining the actions should they continue into the new year. At the heart of the strike is what UCU members and supporters see as the inflation of administrative salaries and benefits and “real estate deals” bringing private companies to campus while staff are forced to turn to food banks, face homelessness, and see their pensions gutted. Equal pay for women and staff from marginalized backgrounds has also been raised by strikers as an important issue.

<https://www.theguardian.com/education/2019/nov/25/university-strike-staff-walk-out-uk-pay-pensions>

December

2nd: Extinction Rebellion: On Hunger Strike in the Library

The week before Thanksgiving, four Columbia University students slept, met, and fasted beneath the gaze of a portrait of Athena hanging

in the main staircase of Butler Library.

These four students, members of Extinction Rebellion (XR), camped out for five days on hunger strike to demand that the university take meaningful action on the climate emergency. At the same time, over 400 other XR rebels around the world conducted similar hunger strikes to foreshadow the mass starvation that will accompany the widespread crop failures and desertification caused by anthropogenic climate change—these changes and the suffering they come with have already begun.

The Columbia hunger strikers' demands, still unmet, stem from the XR movement's foundational demands.

Columbia University presents itself as a leader in the fight to stave off the worst consequences of the climate emergency (read: the extinction of humanity.) When the hunger strikers met with representatives of the university administration, senior faculty touted the university's publications on climate law, research into technologies like battery storage and carbon capture, plans to retrofit campus buildings, and even the possibility of establishing a school of climate change based on the recommendations of the 24-member Climate Change Task Force. Extinction Rebellion Columbia University celebrates these intellectual efforts. However, they also know that—given the dire consensus of the scientific community and the students' dwindling possibilities of a livable future—these efforts are simply not good enough.

<https://extinctionrebellion.us>

3rd: UNBC strike ends without deal

Pickets came down Friday evening as faculty and students prepared to return to classes Monday at the University of Northern British Columbia. The union representing faculty decided to suspend their strike action, according to the *Terrace Standard*, but not without filing a complaint of bad faith bargaining with the provincial Labor Relations Board. The filing came shortly after the province appointed a mediator to bring an end to the strike. Though faculty said they would be willing to continue negotiations, the mediator called for adjournment. The adjournment combined with the coming end of the semester led faculty to pull down their pickets while they awaited the LRB's decision regarding the bad faith complaint.

<https://www.terracestandard.com/news/unbc-faculty-suspends-strike-classes-resume/>

3rd: Graduate Student strike at Harvard begins

At midnight on Tuesday, December 2nd, graduate student workers began their strike after a year of negotiations with Harvard University, the school's student newspaper *The Harvard Crimson* reports.

Negotiations remain stuck around issues of healthcare and compensation as well as grievance procedures to address sexual harassment and discrimination in the workplace. The strike, announced last month, was timed to make the university feel the full weight of graduate students' withdrawal of labor as TAs will not be teaching, holding office hours, or grading right at the end of the semester and lab assistants will not be carrying out paid research not related to their academic program. The strike has been declared by the union as indefinite; with no current bargaining sessions scheduled, it is possible the strike could drag on into finals.

<https://www.thecrimson.com/article/2019/12/3/grad-union-strikes/>

4th: London's Marx Memorial Library seeking support for flood damage

The Marx Memorial Library in London sought donations to restore the library after damage which occurred on September 24th due to flooding in the library. Donations would restore the roof and drainage system to prevent future flooding, enhance the storage and protection of archives, and fund the redevelopment of the library's facilities to expand capacity and improve access to the collection. The Library was founded in 1933, the 50th anniversary of Karl Marx's death, at a meeting of the British Labour Party, Communist Party, Labour Research Department, and Martin Lawrence Publishers Ltd. as the most appropriate memorial to the life and works of Marx; especially as fascism seemed on the rise across Europe.

<https://www.marx-memorial-library.org.uk/support>

4th: Colombian students, unions launch third national strike

Workers and students marched together as a general strike shut down Colombia for the third time since November 21st, *Reuters* reports. The strike is in response to a government which, protesters say, is not taking the concerns of the people of Colombia seriously. This is evidenced, they contend, by the fact that the government is pushing through a tax overhaul opposed by strikers while simultaneously meeting with representatives from the committee organizing the demonstrations. Along with opposition to the tax overhaul, workers are calling for greater protections for human rights activists, support for demobilized rebels following the country's historic peace deal, dissolving the riot police, and rejections of a raise in pension age and a cut in the minimum wage.

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-colombia-strike/colombian-unions-student-groups-to-hold-third-national-strike-idUSKBN1Y8oIM>

6th: Concordia University Library employees vote in favor of strike mandate

Montreal, QC—Members of the Concordia University Library Employees Union (CSN)(CULEU), represented by the Fédération des employées et employés de services publics (FEESP-CSN), voted November 29th in favor of a strike mandate after 18 months of negotiations. CULEU's President has stated that Concordia's "insistence on severely restricting advancement possibilities for new employees" has been a sticking point since the beginning of the year. This has compounded frustrations as the university is refusing to even discuss another topic until this issue is settled.

<https://www.newswire.ca/news-releases/the-concordia-university-library-employees-vote-for-a-strike-mandate-889640396.html>

6th: France hit by general strike led by public sector workers

Some of the biggest demonstrations to hit France in recent years took to the streets Thursday as labor unions across the country, led by teachers and transit workers, dug in for the second day of mass strikes, *The Guardian* reports. The nationwide strike is in response to the coming rollout of significant changes to the country's pension system put forward by President Emmanuel Macron. Many marchers are also pointing out that the proposed pension cuts are only the latest in the current government's attempts to roll back France's public services. The strikes are seen by many, in conjunction with the anti-government yellow vest protests of earlier this year, as a sign that France is in the midst of a social crisis as many people are struggling to make ends meet while the centrist government led by Macron is looking to scale back the historically robust social safety net.

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2019/dec/06/france-faces-second-day-travel-chaos-strikes-continue>

9th: Ontario teachers one-day strike could be sign of things to come

Secondary school teachers across Ontario struck for one day, *Global News* reports. Though teachers were back in school and classes resumed Thursday, it was far from a sign that negotiations would carry on smoothly. Prior to the strike, negotiations had been stalled for four days around issues of class size, mandatory e-learning, and teacher compensation. With 40,000 teachers and 15,000 support staff across the province on strike on Wednesday, the union considers the action a warning to the province's leadership, illustrating the unity and support for the action among education professionals and a signal that failure to negotiate with the teachers could lead to a full-blown strike down the line.

<https://globalnews.ca/news/6253555/ontario-high-school-teachers-one-day-strike/>

10th: UC Santa Cruz grad students withhold grades in wildcat strike

Saying they can no longer afford the cost of housing in Santa Cruz, an unknown number of graduate student workers declared an unauthorized wildcat strike. According to the *Santa Cruz Sentinel*, teaching assistants are withholding final grades and research assistants are refusing additional work until demands are met. It was unclear how many graduate students participated in the strike, or how it will impact the end of the semester for undergraduate students. The strike did not come out of nowhere for the administration, as the Graduate Student union had filed a complaint with the administration on November 7th highlighting the housing plight of many grad student workers who are confronted with homelessness, sleeping in cars and garages, and doubling up in rooms to save on rent. Striking students say they are prepared to accept the consequences of a strike that violates their contract, as the needs on the ground have simply become too much to bear.

<https://www.santacruzsentinel.com/2019/12/09/ucsc-grad-students-strike-saying-they-will-withhold-grades-until-given-a-raise-to-afford-housing/>

13th: McNally Jackson Bookstores and Goods for the Study stationary stores unionize

The Retail, Wholesale, and Department Stores Union (RWDSU) announced welcoming 90 new members as employees at McNally Jackson/Goods for the Study stores voted to unionize across 5 stores in New York City. Employees now represented by RWDSU carry out the work of sales, events, stocking, and information services within the book and stationary stores. Following unionization, the workers head to the bargaining table to establish a contract. At issue for workers at these stores are: respect, an end to harassment in the workplace, fair compensation, workplace structure, and an end to favoritism.

https://www.rwdsu.info/workers_at_mcnally_jackson_bookstores_and_goods_for_the_study_stationary_stores_vote_to_rwdsu

13th: December Library Worklife out

The ALA-APA published the December edition of the *Library Worklife* newsletter.

<http://ala-apa.org/newsletter/past-issues/volume-16-no-12-december-2019/>

16th: Verdi calls for Amazon strike before Christmas

Germany's second largest union, Verdi, called for members at Amazon logistics centers in Germany to strike in the days leading up to Christmas, key shopping days, in order to demand better pay and

conditions for workers at the centers, *Reuters* reports. Since 2013, Verdi members have struck Amazon multiple times, trying to force the retail giant to recognize collective bargaining agreements that apply to other retail employees in Germany. The country is Amazon's second largest market after the United States.

<https://www.reuters.com/article/us-amazon-germany-strike/german-union-calls-for-pre-christmas-amazon-strike-idUSKBN1YJoG6>

17th: Workers of the National Library of France join the protests against the provisional reform

Workers believe that reforms promoted by Macron are increasingly degrading working conditions and quality of life. The labor unions of the National Library of France agreed to participate in the demonstrations on December 17 and 18. The government maintains the unfair point pension system for a large part of the population, especially the younger generations.

<https://www.actualitte.com/article/monde-edition/bpi-bnf-les-bibliotheques-dans-un-mouvement-de-greve-generale-illimitee/98246>
<https://sudculturebnf.wordpress.com/category/greve/>



<https://sudculturebnf.wordpress.com>

23rd: Labor Leaders cite low pay as root of unfilled San Diego vacancies

San Diego is facing a “vacancy crisis” with over 1,400 unfilled city jobs, according to labor leaders in the city. *The San Diego Union-Tribune* writes that labor leaders are blaming this problem on the low pay offered by the city.

<https://www.sandiegouniontribune.com/communities/san-diego/story/2019-12-23/labor-unions-say-low-pay-for-san-diego-city-workers-has-created-vacancy-crisis>

23rd: Labor Activists seek to unseat leadership of Philly’s biggest union

The Caucus of Working Educators (WE) sought to unseat the incumbent leadership of the Philadelphia Federation of Teachers (PFT), Philadelphia’s largest public labor union, *The Philadelphia Inquirer* reports. WE models itself after the labor-militant caucuses

that have come to power in other major metropolitan teacher unions. The new caucus, which has tried to unseat union leaders once before, attempted to reenergize the PFT and give its membership confidence in both themselves and the union. With a contract about to expire over the summer, WE made the case that they bring with them the confidence and will to make demands at the bargaining table that current leadership just can't muster.

<https://www.inquirer.com/news/philadelphia-federation-teachers-election-union-caucus-working-educators-20191223.html>

23rd: Truthout: 2019 Showed Unions Win Big When They Bargain Big
Article from Truthout.org.

<https://truthout.org/articles/2019-showed-that-workers-win-big-if-they-bargain-big/>

January 2020

2nd: Kentucky's new governor makes teacher sickouts legal again

Saying that teachers have a constitutional right to protest legislation that affects teaching and that the "sickouts"—a tactic that has been used by protesting teachers in a number of states to force school closures through coordinated simultaneous use of sick days by teachers—that rocked Jefferson County Schools six times during the 2019 legislative session are legal, Kentucky's new governor Andy Beshear overturned the position taken by his predecessor Matt Bevin.

<https://www.courier-journal.com/story/news/education/2019/12/31/gov-andy-beshear-teacher-sickouts-legal-again-kentucky/2784579001/>

2nd: Harvard Grad Students call off strike

Both the *Boston Globe* and Boston's local NPR affiliate, WBUR, reported that Harvard Graduate Student Workers ended their nearly month-long strike on Wednesday, just before teaching positions were set to officially begin on January 1st. The union said that the introduction of a federal mediator to negotiations scheduled for January and a statement from Harvard administration that the student workers interpret as setting a timeline for negotiations to get a contract by January 27th are positive developments in negotiations and a sign they are being listened to.

<https://www.bostonglobe.com/metro/2019/12/30/harvard-grad-students-call-off-strike/uemx6YCHygDAo6fuTvW7oJ/story.html>

<https://www.wbur.org/edify/2019/12/31/harvard-graduate-students-to-end-strike-without-a-contract>

2nd: Cleveland Public Library workers left without contract after Jan 1 deadline passes

January 1st marked the deadline for a new contract between the Cleveland Public Library and its nearly 400 workers, but the date came and went, and a January 8th vote was set to determine if the workers would strike or not. A main sticking point between the union and library was the issue of library security following the shooting death of 19-year-old Brandon Cutnoe last July. Library workers pointed to security features that don't work and the termination of a contract with a security firm that, workers say, would reduce response times to violence in libraries. Library workers also pointed to three marketing consultants hired after the shooting to the tune of \$150,000 and double-digit pay increases for library administrators while workers were offered only 1.5% after a 10-year wage freeze. Negotiations are set to restart at the end of January, but many workers view that as too long to wait for needed security improvements.

<https://www.news5cleveland.com/news/local-news/cleveland-metro/nearly-400-cleveland-library-workers-are-now-without-a-contract-as-branch-security-remains-a-problem>

2nd: Amazon threatened to fire workers who spoke out on climate

A number of Amazon employees associated with Amazon Employees for Climate Justice told *The Guardian* that they had been contacted by Amazon's human relations department telling them that any future comments made about the company's role in climate change could be grounds for termination. Employees said they were contacted by HR following a change to the company's external communication policy shortly after Amazon Employees for Climate Justice announced they would be joining the September Global Climate Strike marches. Amazon denies that the policy change was designed to target any group of workers in particular, but employees vocal about issues related to climate and Amazon's connections with big fossil fuel companies believe that they have been targeted specifically, noting a climate of fear that has swept over employees who used to be far more vocal about the issue.

<https://www.theguardian.com/technology/2020/jan/02/amazon-threatened-fire-employees-speaking-out-climate-change-workers-say>

3rd: Google cafeteria workers unionize

Vox reported that 2,300 cafeteria workers across dozens of Google campuses voted to unionize with Unite Here last month after a two-year campaign. The workers are part of Google's vast workforce of contracted workers and are part of the Silicon Valley population who have seen pay decrease while cost of living has increased since 1997.

Workers say that, despite Google's success, they remain overworked and underpaid while also dealing with regular disrespect and even racism from management.

<https://www.vox.com/platform/amp/recode/2019/12/31/21043467/google-union-cafeteria-workers-unionized-alphabet-silicon-valley-mountainview>

7th: John Sessions Memorial Award call for nominations

The Reference and User Services Association (RUSA) of the American Library Association (ALA) put out a call for nominations for the 2020 John Sessions Memorial Award. Established in 1980, the RUSA John Sessions Memorial Award recognizes a library or library system which has made a significant effort to work with the labor community and by doing so has brought recognition to the history and contribution of the labor movement to the development of the United States. Such efforts may include outreach projects to local labor unions; establishment of, or significant expansion of, special labor collections; initiation of programs of special interest to the labor community; or other library activities that serve the labor community.

<http://www.ala.org/rusa/rusa-john-sessions-memorial-award>

7th: Update on Cleveland Public Libraries

Service Employees International Union (SEIU) began a petition asking supporters of the library workers to sign. The text of their petition reads: "The women and men who work at the Cleveland Public Library proudly serve our neighborhood and our community every day, providing vital resources, services, and information for people like us. However, decisions by Cleveland Public Library executives have eroded staffing, increased workloads and ignored the concerns of the public and the employees about the safety and security at library branches throughout the city. These decisions could put our local library at greater risk. Demand library executives bargain in good faith with Cleveland Public Library workers for a contract that keeps everyone safe and respects the dignity of their work."

<http://www.seiu199.org>

7th: Appeals court says U of Chicago must negotiate with student library workers

In the waning days of 2019, *The Chicago Maroon* reported that a 7th Circuit Appeals Court judge ruled that the University of Chicago must recognize the collective bargaining efforts of student library workers. The case ended up in the Appeals Court after the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) denied U of C a hearing for its claim that student workers do not have collective bargaining rights because

they are temporary workers. The ruling is the result of an 18-month-long legal battle following student workers voting to unionize under the Student Library Employees Union (SLEU) in June 2017. They are represented by the International Brotherhood of Teamsters Local 743. The University of Chicago seems to be attempting to relitigate a 2016 Columbia University case where the NLRB ruled that student workers do have collective bargaining rights, a fact that both the NLRB and 7th district pointed to, adding that U of C had not presented any new evidence. However, three Trump appointments on the 5-person NLRB has led other unions, including the U of C's Graduate Student Union, to withdraw certificates of recognition to prevent a ruling that would overturn the Columbia case. Currently, SLEU is undeterred and views their appeals court victory as a major step forward.

<https://www.chicagomaroon.com/article/2019/12/29/university-loses-library-union-case-nlr-affirms-c/>

8th: Saskatoon library workers approve contract after three years without

The last contract for public library employees in Saskatoon expired December 31, 2016. This past weekend, members of Canadian Union of Public Employees Local 2669 voted overwhelmingly in favor of a new agreement, the *Saskatoon Star Phoenix* reports. The new contract establishes four consecutive wage increases retroactive to 2017. Also included are increased rights for library pages, including sick days. Though CUPE membership voted 98% in favor of the contract, the agreement reached through voluntary mediation is being viewed as only a first step by many who still have sore feelings after administrative decisions from the past three years that included the setting aside of funds for a new downtown library rather than using those funds for wages and a top-down restructuring that caused many employees to have to reapply to their jobs at lower wages.

<https://thestarphoenix.com/news/local-news/library-workers-ratify-new-contract-union-hopes-it-brings-stability>

9th: Cleveland Library workers authorize strike

According to Cleveland's local ABC affiliate, a near-unanimous vote by members of Service Employees International Union (SEIU) 1199 authorized a strike if necessary as library workers in Cleveland Public Libraries have been without a contract since January 1st. No strike was called nor a strike notice issued to the library, but the strength of the vote gave SEIU negotiators a much stronger hand at the table as issues of library security remain a sticking point in negotiations.

<https://www.news5cleveland.com/news/local-news/cleveland-metro/cleveland-public-library-workers-vote-to-authorize-strike-if-deal-isnt-reached>

13th: Clark College faculty on strike

Classes at Clark College in Vancouver, WA, were cancelled as the 400+ member Association for Higher Education launched a strike following 15 months of negotiations that failed to result in a contract. *The Columbian* reports that the major sticking point seemed to center around wages for part-time faculty. The union says that up until recently, the college's offers for part-timers were far too little (one adjunct faculty reported making only \$26,500/year with a full course load), while the most recent offer would roll out too slowly.

<https://www.columbian.com/news/2020/jan/10/clark-college-faculty-say-they-will-strike-monday-morning/>

16th: January Library Worklife is out!

The ALA-APA published their January edition of *Library Worklife*, including an article about the Cleveland Public Library Workers' strike authorization, here:

<http://ala-apa.org/newsletter/past-issues/volume-17-no-1-january-2020/>

17th: Concordia University library workers begin strike actions

Library workers at Concordia University voted last November to mandate strike actions after 18 months of negotiations with the university failed to produce a contract. According to *The Link*, the strike mandate requires the Concordia University Library Employees Union to strike for a total of eight hours, and two and a half were carried out on Thursday, January 16th. The university and CULEU had been holding conciliation meetings with the last one ending Monday as the two sides ran into "major blockages." The major sticking points appear to hinge around changes the university is attempting to make to advancement schedules, particularly for new employees. Union leadership says that this has been a goal of the university since the union was formed. Library workers see this as a barrier for new employees and an attack on how they have come to understand their place within the university. According to CULEU leadership, the university failed to negotiate on this issue through all of 2019 and shows no signs of accepting employees' "hands off" perspective. Once CULEU has spent its mandated 8 strike hours, it will convene a new general assembly to determine next steps.

<https://thelinknewspaper.ca/article/concordia-library-workers-begin-strike-actions>

27th: *Cleveland Public Library, Employees Union reach deal to avoid strike*

The *Cleveland Scene* reported that a deal was finalized between Cleveland Public Library and Service Employees International Union (SEIU) 1199 negotiators. The deal, reached on the last scheduled day of negotiations, prevented a strike that was set to begin on February 4th following an overwhelming vote by membership to authorize strike action. The contract must still be ratified by membership at a vote scheduled for this coming Wednesday. No details of the contract have been made public yet.

<https://www.clevescene.com/scene-and-heard/archives/2020/01/24/library-workers-and-administration-reach-tentative-agreement-preventing-strike>

February

3rd: *University of Western Cape (SA) classes disrupted by student strike*

The Student Representative Council (SRC) at University of Western Cape (UWC) in Cape Town, SA, marched on classes along with other student-affiliated political organizations. UWC SRC was calling on students to gather for a meeting, according to *IOL*, as students launched a strike with demands around accommodations, debt clearance, and course registration. According to the SRC, around 9,000 students have not been able to register for courses in 2020 due to the university's approach to debt clearance which places a large financial burden on students. SRC is calling on the academic program to be delayed for a week to allow all students the opportunity to sort out their registration.

<https://www.iol.co.za/capeargus/news/student-strike-brings-first-day-of-classes-at-uwc-to-a-halt-42032046>

3rd: *Mount Alison University classes suspended as teaching faculty, librarians strike*

Negotiations between Mount Alison University in Sackville, NB, and the school's faculty and librarians union broke down, resulting in an indefinite strike launched Monday morning. According to the CBC, despite negotiations late last week and into the weekend and a lot of ground being made on some issues, talks couldn't advance enough on issues such as academic resources, workload, job security, and part-time faculty compensation. While the university says it offered its last best offer in good faith Sunday night, Mount Alison Faculty Association leadership viewed the proposed deal as a "take-it-or-leave-it" approach and that the university was not willing to actually negotiate on the terms in contention. This is the second time in six years the MAFA has gone on strike, in 2014 a three week strike

only ended after both sides agreed to binding arbitration. This time, negotiators have called in a provincially appointed moderator.

<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/new-brunswick/mount-allison-strike-day-one-1.5449636>

10th: Mount Alison strike ends as tentative agreement reached

A tentative agreement reached between the Mount Alison Faculty Association and Mount Alison University over the weekend brought a strike by the school's faculty and librarians to an end, *Global News* reported. Details are being withheld until union members have a chance to agree to the contract later this week, but known points of contention centered around accommodation for faculty and librarians with disabilities, part time compensation, workload, and resources.

<https://globalnews.ca/news/6525736/mount-allison-strike-ends/>

12th: Graduate Students reach tentative agreement with Harvard, go back on wildcat strike at UCSC

The Harvard Crimson reports that the Graduate Student Union and Harvard University reached tentative agreements on three potential contract provisions last week. Meanwhile, Graduate Students at the University of California Santa Cruz launched an open-ended wildcat strike for a cost of living increase, Monday, to meet high housing costs in one of the nation's hardest rental markets. The *Santa Cruz Sentinel* reports that pickets were set up at both main entrances to the main UCSC campus, virtually shutting down all access to the campus at one point on Monday. Striking teaching assistants were joined by teaching faculty and undergraduates swelling their ranks, but making member participation in the unsanctioned strike difficult to determine. Solidarity rallies were reported Monday on other UC campuses.

<https://www.thecrimson.com/article/2020/2/11/HGSU-new-bargaining-agreements/>

<https://www.santacruzsentinel.com/2020/02/10/ucsc-graduate-students-go-on-strike/>

26th: UCSB Students to join UCSC wildcat COLA strike

Monday evening, graduate students at the University of California Santa Barbara voted to go on strike Thursday if their demands for a cost-of-living adjustment were not met by administrators. Student paper the *Daily Nexus* reports that the vote followed a 16-hour occupation of Cheadle Hall calling on UCSB's chancellor to email UC president Janet Napolitano as well as UC Santa Cruz administrators to denounce threats to fire striking graduate students at UCSC. Much like the UCSC stoppage, the UCSB strike would be a wildcat action as students are acting independently of the United Auto Workers

union that represents graduate students in the UC system. Cost-of-living adjustments (COLA) have been a focal point of graduate student organizing across the UC system with movements on every campus except San Francisco.

<http://dailynexus.com/2020-02-24/breaking-ucsb-graduate-students-vote-to-begin-full-strike-on-thursday-for-cost-of-living-adjustment/>

27th: Great Neck Library staff, board of trustees reach deal for tentative contract

The Island Now reports that the Great Neck Library Staff Association has reached a tentative contract deal with the library's board of trustees. According to union sources, staff have been working without a contract since the last contract expired in 2012, though the two sides did sign a memorandum of understanding in 2018. Since the 2018 memorandum, disagreements have arisen between the board as workers who had been with the library for two decades were being told that they had hit the pay cap and would not qualify for further pay increases promised by the memorandum. The contract concludes a campaign by the union to engage the community and involve patrons in the issues as the union was not permitted to strike.

https://theislandnow.com/great_neck/library-union-board-of-trustees-reach-tentative-settlement-on-staff-salaries/

27th: UC Davis grad students prepare to hit the picket line

The Sacramento CBS affiliate reported Wednesday that University of California Davis graduate student workers were joining UC Santa Cruz and UC Santa Barbara in striking for a cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) pay increase. The decision to withhold grades beginning Thursday is illustrative of a growing movement of graduate students in the UC system who see large quantities of their pay eaten up by California's often competitive housing market; a movement that seems to be growing in momentum even as UCSC graduate students were threatened with losing their TA positions earlier this week.

<https://sacramento.cbslocal.com/2020/02/26/uc-davis-grad-student-strike/>

March

2nd: UCSD grad students poll for strike, UCSC fired TAs seek support

Between 54 and 80 graduate teaching assistants at UC Santa Cruz were fired due to their failure to turn in grades as a result of an ongoing wildcat strike. At midnight on Sunday, a poll closed for UC San Diego grad students assessing willingness to participate in either a full wildcat strike or rolling strike actions. The *UCSD*

Guardian covered both stories Sunday. The wildcat strike, calling for a cost-of-living-adjustment (COLA) pay raise for graduate students who are forced into either overcrowded housing or homelessness in California's pricey real estate market, has so far spread to UC Santa Barbara, where graduate students launched a full wildcat strike, and UC Davis, where students began a grading strike, both on Thursday. UCSC graduate students, who have so far faced arrests and firings since their strike moved beyond the withholding of grades last month, were calling for a day of action across the UC system on Monday and for the strike to spread as far and wide as possible.

<http://ucsdguardian.org/2020/03/01/ucsd-cola-releases-strike-polls-and-ucsc-students-call-for-support-of-fired-tas/>

5th: Hachette Book Group employees walk out to protest publisher's Woody Allen deal

Employees at Little, Brown led a walkout that included other Hachette Brown Group imprint employees including Basic, Hachette Books, Forever, and Orbit three days after Grand Central Publishing—another HBG imprint—announced it would publish a forthcoming book by Woody Allen, *Publishers Weekly* reports. The workers announced that they were taking a stand in solidarity with Ronan Farrow, Dylan Farrow, and survivors of sexual assault after senior leadership at Hachette refused to side with workers filing a complaint with human resources this afternoon. Dylan Farrow is Allen's adoptive daughter and has accused the director of sexually assaulting her when she was seven. Her brother Ronan, an author with Little, Brown where he published his expose on Harvey Weinstein, has stood by and defended his sister over the years.

<https://www.publishersweekly.com/pw/by-topic/industry-news/publisher-news/article/82609-hbg-staffers-stage-walkout-over-woody-allen-memoir.html>

10th: Hachette drops Allen book after workers' walkout & Farrow objections

NPR reports that at the end of last week, Hachette Book Group announced it would no longer be publishing Woody Allen's memoir following a protest by the publisher's employees that ended with a walkout after senior leadership failed to take concerns about the company's relationship with Allen seriously. Ronan Farrow, who published *Catch & Kill* with an HBG imprint, had previously announced that he may not be able to continue to work with HBG after they announced they would publish Allen's book.

<https://www.npr.org/2020/03/06/812687472/after-woody-allens-memoir-was-signed-book-publisher-s-employees-walk-out>

April

7th: Labor Collections of the Archives and Special Collections of the UAA/APU Consortium Library wins John Sessions Memorial Award

The Reference and User Services Association of ALA announced Monday that Arlene Schmuland, on behalf of employees of Labor Collections of the Archives and Special Collections of the University of Alaska Anchorage/Alaska Pacific University Consortium Library, was unanimously selected as the 2018 winner of the John Sessions Memorial Award. The decision was based off “their consolidation of access to extensive archival materials relating to the history of labor and labor relations in Alaska and their support of the Alaska labor community in which one out of every 5 workers is a member of a union.”

<https://rusaupdate.org/2020/04/labor-collections-of-the-archives-and-special-collections-of-the-uaa-apu-consortium-library-wins-john-sessions-memorial-award/>

15th: San Diego rescinds furloughs for 800 workers

The San Diego Union-Tribune reported last week that the city of San Diego is rescinding furloughs for 800 city workers, many of whom worked at public libraries and recreation centers before the facilities were forced to close due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The move followed a grievance filed on behalf of the workers by the Municipal Employees Association. Workers will receive their full pay and will be found alternate city jobs. Unfortunately, part-time workers have seen their hours reduced and wages cut and were not part of the grievance since weaker labor laws don't protect them.

<https://www.sandiegouniontribune.com/news/politics/story/2020-04-09/san-diego-rescinds-furloughs-for-800-workers-will-restore-pay-and-find-city-tasks-for-them>

15th: April issue of *Library Worklife* is available

The ALA-APA published the April 2020 issue of *Library Worklife*. It can be found on their website here:

<https://ala-apa.org/newsletter/past-issues/volume-17-no-4-april-2020/>

22nd: Ontario Public High School teachers reach contract deal

Global News reports that the union representing Ontario Public High School teachers reached a tentative agreement with the provincial government, bringing to an end months of contentious negotiations between the government and the four unions representing different groups of teachers in the province. At the negotiation's most contentious points, the unions had instituted rolling strikes throughout the province; however, closures of schools due to COVID-19 had brought such actions to

a close. Union leaders, while admitting they did not win everything they wanted in the interest of providing a stable school system once precautions around the pandemic allow a return to physical school buildings, say the deal represents a win for the interests of parents and teachers. Members could vote on the agreement as early as next month.

<https://globalnews.ca/news/6841348/ontario-high-school-teachers-contract-ford-government/>

22nd: CWA threatens to move August 2021 convention over convention center's lack of support for workers

The Communication Workers of America (CWA) has told the convention center in New Orleans it will be moving its 2021 convention if the center does not provide \$100 million in funding for out-of-work hospitality workers, according to reports from New Orleans-based *The Lens*. The CWA says it considers a labor conflict the fact that the convention center has yet to address the demands of the Coalition to Create a Fair Fund for Hospitality Workers, a New Orleans-based coalition of 35 organizations.

<https://thelensnola.org/2020/04/20/major-labor-union-threatens-to-cancel-convention-in-new-orleans-if-convention-center-doesnt-address-local-workers-demands-for-relief/>

May

1st: Book Riot: Library workers face layoffs and difficult decisions as institutions fail the test of supporting most vulnerable employees

An article posted last week to *Book Riot* has detailed the trials that some of the library field's most vulnerable workers have been facing amidst the global coronavirus pandemic. As the article details, staff at libraries across the country are facing furloughs, being forced to work without adequate supplies or guidance, and in some cases being transferred to pandemic response work they are not trained or prepared for. Some library worker advocates have begun tracking library layoffs and furloughs brought on by the pandemic in a shared Google Document located at <https://tinyurl.com/librarylayoffs>. They are also encouraging the spread on social media of the hashtag #protectlibraryworkers. Organizers are also encouraging people to support library workers through the work of the HALO (Help A Library worker Out) fund. Advocates for library workers argue that, with budgets already set for libraries at the beginning of the fiscal year, forcing library workers to decide to work in potentially dangerous environments or take paid time off (which many of the lowest paid library staff across the country do not have) or, worse, laying off or furloughing staff amidst this pandemic is both shortsighted and wrong.

<https://bookriot.com/2020/04/24/librarians-under-pandemic-duress>

1st: May Day greetings from ULW blog

Normally, I would want to take International Workers Day, also known as May Day, to wish everyone a happy May Day... and especially on a Friday, a happy weekend. However, this is a very difficult May Day for many people in the world of libraries as many of the most vulnerable members of our field are forced to make difficult decisions or losing jobs and protections after years of service to our institutions. Unfortunately, the future is too uncertain to make any predictions now about what the future may hold, making our work ever more precarious. So instead, I can offer solidarity and best wishes from afar and encourage those who can to contribute to the HALO fund if you are in a position where you can, follow the #protectlibraryworkers hashtag on social media, and register for the #LIBREV(olution) virtual conference scheduled for next Monday. We all need each other, even at a distance, more than ever. May you have a safe International Workers Day.

Always in Solidarity,

Union Library Workers Blog

<https://www.everylibraryinstitute.org/halo>

15th: May Library Worklife is out

The ALA-APA published its May 2020 edition of *Library Worklife*. It can be found here:

<https://ala-apa.org/newsletter/past-issues/volume-17-no-5-may-2020/>

15th: Libraries Gave Us Power: Library workers push back against resiliency narratives amid pandemic

An important article up on the new blog *Libraries Gave Us Power* by one of the founders of the #closethelibraries and #protectlibraryworkers movements pushes back against the popular media narrative that all is well in public libraries as boards and management push workers to take on dangerous and unnecessary work in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic. It should go without saying, but libraries should absolutely not be putting their workers on the front lines of this public health crisis unnecessarily.

<https://web.archive.org/web/20201208222527/https://callan.cc/blorg/librev/were-here-because-were-here/>

15th: Book Riot: Chicago Public Library to rush reopening despite risk to workers and patrons

Chicago Public Library, one of the last major public library systems to close amidst the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, sent an email to its employees on May 14th setting June 1st as its target reopening

date with employees expected to report next week, *Book Riot* has reported. Staff members, who had already experienced working in a library system well after they felt comfortable, spent the evening in tears, anger, confusion, and outrage. The email from Andrea Telli, Commissioner of the Chicago Public Library, announced only vague details about what the library's safety precautions would look like upon the reopening of the library system and did not provide information about what will happen to employees that cannot access childcare or who rely on public transit to get to work that may not be available. With Illinois not expected to peak in confirmed COVID-19 cases until mid-June and with Chicago passing Queens, NY, in terms of total confirmed cases, it is unclear why CPL is making the jump straight to a total reopening so soon.

<https://bookriot.com/2020/05/15/chicago-public-library-calls-staff-back-to-work-plans-full-reopen-june-1/>

21st: Guest post: Call for participation in survey regarding Librarian's Perceptions of Union Participation

A guest post from Mary-Michelle Moore and Heather Hughes of the University of California, Santa Barbara Library:

You are invited to participate in a survey about the benefits and effects of participating in your library's union. Your responses will help us better understand how participation in union activity informs your workplace morale and professional identity. This questionnaire should take no more than 30 minutes to complete and will ask about your experience with your library's union, your participation with the union, and how union participation or non-participation affects your interactions with colleagues and morale.

We are employing a mixed-methods approach to our research and may want to follow up with individuals to learn more about your experiences. If you are willing to speak with us further, please provide your name and contact information. Names and identifying information will not be associated with individual answers, nor will personal identifying information appear in the final paper.

Survey link: <http://bit.ly/libunion>

We invite you to take the survey if you work as an academic librarian in the United States. Please feel free to share. We anticipate collecting responses until June 15th.

22nd: Lightfoot contradicts CPL statement, union responds

Following coverage by *Book Riot* last week on an email sent to Chicago Public Library employees setting a June 1st reopening date, Lori Lightfoot, the city's mayor, disputed that any timeline had yet been established for reopening the library. The *Chicago Tribune* has both

Lightfoot's response to concerns about the library's reopening as well as a response from AFSCME Local 31, which represents the city's municipal workers.

<https://www.chicagotribune.com/coronavirus/ct-coronavirus-chicago-libraries-reopening-20200515-lmrqaovpwjdhxoev5hu5a6jomu-story.html>

29th: CPL employees ask patrons to not come to open library

Last weekend, *Scapi Magazine* ran an article in which it quotes an anonymous Chicago Public Library employee imploring patrons not to come into the library when it reopens. The plea comes in the form of an unsigned letter circulating on social media (the employee has withheld their name fearing retaliation from management) that states safety concerns are being brushed off, hand sanitizer in the libraries is expired, and the libraries lack enough plexiglass to run the library safely. This letter comes after previous statements by AFSCME Local 31 in which the union said it had not been consulted in reopening considerations and was caught off guard when Library Commissioner Andrea Telli emailed staff earlier in the month asking them to report to work May 20th.

<https://scapimag.com/2020/05/23/chicago-librarians-asking-no-one-come-to-newly-opened-libraries-top-administrators-are-forcing-an-unsafe-plan>

June

4th: UC-AFT statement on the police murder of Floyd, Taylor, and protection of Arbery's killers

On Monday, UC-AFT Executive Board released a statement on the police murders of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, and the failure of law enforcement to protect Ahmaud Arbery or persecute his killers in a timely fashion. The UC-AFT represents all non-senate faculty and librarians in the University of California system. The statement can be read here:

<https://www.ucaft.org/content/uc-aft-statement-police-murder-george-floyd>

8th: Black Lives Matter in the library and the workspace

Over the past two weeks, the nation and globe have been rocked by demonstrations set off by the police and vigilante murders of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, and Ahmaud Arbery. Despite the continuing fear of the growing COVID-19 pandemic, people have turned out in the thousands in their local communities; and many more have offered their support online, unable to attend the demonstrations due to

health concerns. Communities that have never seen demonstrations before have seen hundreds take to the streets, and even historic hotbeds of Klan activity have seen communities demand justice for Black victims of police and vigilante violence and an end to systemic racism that regularly strips Black Americans of their most basic rights.

Library workers should take this moment as an opportunity to support this movement in whatever way we are able as a field committed to equal access to information and information justice. Further, we should take a deep look into a profession that has long upheld white supremacist power structures and relied on systemic gatekeeping that has resulted in a disproportionately white profession, even in libraries that serve predominantly Black communities.

Too often, library professionals decry the inequality in our profession or wax philosophically about ideas like antiracist practices and decolonization without changing the ways our libraries function. Comfort is often given precedence over the difficult changes that will need to be implemented within our libraries and our profession.

It is well past time to listen to our Black colleagues and patrons, who are all too familiar with the disregard given to their concerns. Our libraries were built upon white supremacist ideals of propriety, civilization, worth, individualism, objectivity, and space by the likes of Melvil Dewey, Andrew Carnegie, and the Boston Brahmin class. The literary canon reflects these same ideals, and the publishing industry has yet to make the changes demanded for years by authors of color. This is to say nothing of higher education, which remains painfully unrepresentative of society and pushes the voices of Black academics along with other marginalized groups into the periphery or niche fields.

While the labor movement was indisputably founded upon the racist ideals of the early AFL, which sought to elevate the white labor force from the newly freed Black workforce following the Civil War, and white workers benefited the most from the labor peace that followed WWII, we also know that the labor movement has a long history of antiracist struggle when Black workers have been allowed the space to lead. From the Industrial Workers of the World to the Dodge Revolutionary Union Movement to Amazon workers who have launched one-day strikes just 25 miles outside of Minneapolis, Black workers have often been at the forefront of the labor struggle.

Those of us fortunate to be in a union ought to be asking our union leadership what it plans to do to ensure more Black librarians are hired. We should all be examining our library collections and programming, as well as library policies about handling disturbances in the library. We must be aware that every time police or armed security is called, we are putting our Black coworkers and patrons at risk.

Calls are being raised to defund police departments across the country and redirect those funds to services that will help communities without having to turn to law enforcement as the first and last choice. Libraries that have been starved for funding, that have seen the very real needs of our patrons to receive social services, psychiatric help, improved education systems, housing, food security, jobs, and so much more, have an opportunity to lend our voices to this discussion and this call. Libraries and library workers often lament that the library has become the catchall in the wake of the hollowing out of our social safety net, with library workers needing to wear many hats that we have never been trained to wear; now is the opportunity to join the efforts to see that that is no longer the case.

Those of us who work in libraries ought to join the call, loud and clear:

- Black Lives Matter
- Black Books Matter
- Black Library Workers Matter
- Black Communities Matter
- Black Education Matters
- Black Health Matters

19th: Articles on Library Labor and Related Industries

Several recent developments in conversations and actions regarding labor in library and related fields have come up in recent weeks; some important stories and articles ULW Blog readers may be interested in follow:

First, *Library Journal* published an editorial at the beginning of the month by Meredith Schwartz, calling for a national library labor organization:

<https://www.libraryjournal.com/?detailStory=Library-Labor-Editorial-covid-19>

There have been two recent developments in the publishing industry as well. On the 8th, *Vulture* published an article on a one-day strike by 1,300 publishing sector workers who were protesting systemic racism in the publishing industry:

<https://www.vulture.com/2020/06/publishing-strike-racism-book-industry.html>

Also, authors have begun a social media-based movement hashtagged #publishingpaidme to highlight disparities between what Black authors are paid compared to non-Black authors. Buzzfeed has more on that story here:

<https://www.buzzfeednews.com/article/tomiobaroo/publishing-paid-me-twitter-hashtag-black-lives-matter>

July

6th: *Philly Free Library workers say 'no confidence' in library leadership*

Less than a day into the return of library workers to the physical spaces of the Philadelphia Free Library, and with no patrons allowed in the buildings, employees were already sharing stories of a woefully underprepared system that was beginning to open back up. According to local PBS affiliate WHYY, employees reported expired and missing sanitizing wipes; nearly expired hand sanitizer; lack of soap; overheated, unclean spaces; and inadequate PPE among other concerns of misallocated resources and racism. These concerns inspired a petition launched by unionized employees of the library system declaring “no confidence” in library leadership and demanding the Board of Trustees force the current library director to step down and for the union to be consulted on finding a replacement. The petition followed a day after Black library workers had released an open letter regarding racism in the library system.

<https://whyy.org/articles/breaking-point-philly-free-library-workers-declare-no-confidence-in-leadership/>

13th: *Authors cancelling events at Free Library of Philadelphia over treatment of Black employees*

At the end of June, Black employees of the Free Library of Philadelphia issued an open letter detailing the discrimination and disregard for safety following an order for staff to return to library buildings. The letter is very much worth a read in its own right, especially as many of the issues detailed are not unique to Black workers in the FLP system. The workers have now begun to see further support coming from authors who had scheduled events at the FLP. As of July 8th, *LitHub* reported that six authors had all cancelled events in solidarity with the workers after hearing that the concerns raised by Black workers were not being addressed and the situation on the ground had not improved.

[https://drive.google.com/file/d/17LEyjd7_](https://drive.google.com/file/d/17LEyjd7_UVOR6kZwDqllgOrA8uyKdil/view)

[UVOR6kZwDqllgOrA8uyKdil/view](https://drive.google.com/file/d/17LEyjd7_UVOR6kZwDqllgOrA8uyKdil/view)

<https://lithub.com/black-workers-say-theyre-mistreated-at-the-free-library-of-philadelphia-and-authors-are-canceling-events/>

13th: *NLRB considering abolishing or scaling back contract bar doctrine*

Reuters is reporting that the National Labor Relations Board has put out a call for amicus briefs regarding the status of contract bar doctrine. The doctrine, a long-established precedent observed by the NLRB, prevents union decertification elections for three years after a

collective bargaining agreement comes into effect. The doctrine is being challenged by a poultry plant employee in Delaware, represented by the National Right to Work Defense Foundation, who claims that the precedent restricts employees' "free choice."

<https://www.reuters.com/article/employment-nlrb/nlrb-at-work-board-calls-for-input-on-abolishing-contract-bar-rule-idUSL1N2EHOQ2>

20th: Workers in 25+ cities walk off jobs to confront systemic racism

In a press release issued July 8th, Service Employees International Union (SEIU) reported that thousands of workers in 25+ cities organized by SEIU, the International Brotherhood of Teamsters, the American Federation of Teachers, United Farm Workers, the National Domestic Workers Alliance, and the Fight for \$15 and a Union would walk off the job July 20th to demand action from corporations and the government to confront systemic racism. Workers who cannot strike for the entire day will walk off the job for 8 minutes, the amount of time a Minneapolis police officer knelt on the neck of George Floyd, to draw attention to the issues of systemic violence directed towards Black people in the United States. Along with the press release above, you can also find more information on the action on the Strike for Black Lives website.

<https://www.seiu.org/2020/07/tens-of-thousands-in-25-cities-to-strike-for-black-lives>
<https://j20strikeforblacklives.org/>

29th: D.C. Public Library workers raising concerns about coronavirus safety

Towards the end of last week, the *Washington Post* reported that, despite the assurances of the library system head, library workers in the Washington, D.C., public library system are raising what they say are serious concerns with safety around the spread of the coronavirus. Employees in the system, which opened much more aggressively and earlier than many other public libraries across the country, say that the libraries are keeping them in the dark about potential cases and exposures, have failed to implement sufficient cleaning protocols, and are struggling with mask requirements. While many neighboring systems are limited to curbside access only, D.C. has opened up the inside of 14 locations across the city.

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/dc-md-va/2020/07/23/librarians-alarmed-about-coronavirus-safety-dcs-reopened-public-libraries/>

August

14th: *The challenges of organizing book industry workers*

Jacobin Magazine published an article earlier this week that will likely be of interest to many readers of the Union Library Workers blog: “Why Organizing Workers in the Book Industry Is So Damn Hard” by Bethany Patch and Joshua Barnes can be read here.

<https://jacobinmag.com/2020/08/book-industry-union-organizing>

28th: *Professors organizing for Sept. 8-9 #ScholarStrike and online teach-in for racial justice*

University of Pennsylvania Professor Dr. Anthea Butler was inspired by what she saw when the WNBA, NBA, and numerous other sports leagues saw players strike to bring attention to ongoing issues of racial justice and white supremacist terror in this country when she began organizing a #ScholarStrike earlier this week. Joined by Dr. Kevin Gannon, the two have put together a Google form for academics interested in organizing or learning more about the planned Sept 8-9 action. *Inside Higher Ed* has a story up on their site about organizing efforts, and you can follow the #ScholarStrike tag on social media to follow developments.

<https://www.insidehighered.com/news/2020/08/28/professors-plan-strike-racial-justice>

<https://twitter.com/TheTattooedProf/status/1298790551207251970>

September

9th: *UM grad students vote to strike*

Both the *Detroit Free Press* and the *Detroit News* are reporting that the roughly 1,000-member Graduate Employee Organization (GEO) at the University of Michigan (UM) has voted in favor of a strike against what members of the union say are unsafe working conditions in the midst of the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. Strikers will face an uphill battle as a new contract was just ratified in April and public sector strikes are illegal in Michigan. School officials are already speaking out against the action to the press, claiming that it violates the terms of the contract that prevent GEO members from interfering with university business. GEO points to the ongoing pandemic and the summer’s uprisings against police brutality as evidence that, while a contract was agreed to in April, there are new issues that need agreement between the union and the university.

Among the union’s demands are calls for greater flexibility in how graduate students are able to conduct their work, including remote instruction, increased testing, and contract tracing. There are also calls for greater support for international students, ending university

cooperation with police, and extensions on degree completion.

<https://www.freep.com/story/news/education/2020/09/07/university-michigan-grad-instructors-strike-person-classes-start/5738731002/>

<https://www.detroitnews.com/story/news/local/michigan/2020/09/07/um-grad-student-employees-strike/5738469002/>

9th: U of K students plan strike over rising COVID cases

As positive COVID-19 cases rose to 546 on University of Kansas's campus last week, student organizing group the Jayhawk Liberation Front began organizing a student strike demanding a campus closure. Local NBC affiliate KSNT reports that students participating in the strike would not show up for scheduled classes or, in the case of online classes, not log on and email their professors informing them of their participation in the strike. The petition demanding closure specifically calls out campus leadership for endangering the health of not only students on campus, but the surrounding community as well. Demands also include free exit testing, housing for students in need, and hazard pay for those who have to work.

<https://www.ksnt.com/news/local-news/ku-students-plan-strike-demanding-campus-close-after-rising-coronavirus-cases/>

October

6th: Brooklyn Friends School faculty & staff launch indefinite strike

Amidst efforts by the private, religious school, the Brooklyn Friends School, to break the faculty union that formed and began negotiations with the school in the Spring of 2019, school employees argue that the efforts to decertify the union, and hiding behind a recent NLRB ruling that states the board holds no jurisdiction over religious institutions, flies in direct contradiction to the school's stated beliefs in social justice. Mindy Isser interviewed a teacher at the school for *Jacobin Magazine*. The interview ran yesterday, the first day of the strike.

<https://www.jacobinmag.com/2020/10/unions-social-justice-brooklyn-friends-school-strike>

6th: Judge declines to halt new rule requiring annual dues authorization

A federal court judge in Detroit declined to stop a new rule last week, approved by the Michigan Civil Service Commission, that requires state employees to reauthorize their dues each year. The story in *The Detroit News* also states that the rule further eliminates agency fees, which help unions to cover the costs of services paid to non-union members.

<https://www.detroitnews.com/story/news/local/michigan/2020/10/02/judge-declines-stop-rule-requiring-michigan-state-employees-to-ok-union-dues-annually/3593124001/>

November

2nd: Administrative and support staff on strike at UOttawa

Last week, the 1,300 member PSUO-SSUO, the University of Ottawa union representing support and administrative staff, went on strike after failing to come to agreement with the school on issues such as health benefits, retirement allowance, and parental leave top-ups, *Fulcrum* reports. PSUO-SSUO represents employees such as lab coordinators, mental health counselors, financial officers, and academic advisors.

<https://thefulcrum.ca/news/psuo-ssuo-strike-the-impact-on-students/>

2nd: Haverford students on strike to protest killing of Walter Wallace Jr.

Following an October 28th march, the majority of Haverford College students went on strike to protest last week's police killing of Walter Wallace Jr. The student paper *The Clerk* reports that participating students were being asked by organizers to halt "their involvement with any college-related activities, including attending classes, working on-campus jobs, and participating in extracurriculars or athletics." Organizers, listed in the original email call as "Women of Color House, Black Students Refusing Further Inaction, [and] the Black Student League," ended their call for the strike with a list of 12 demands including the resignation of the schools Chief Diversity Officer and her replacement by a BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, or Person of Color) candidate. For more on the student strike and demands, follow the link to the original Clerk article.

<http://haverfordclerk.com/three-days-into-the-student-strike-the-organizers-have-the-momentum/>

4th: U of Manitoba faculty vote to strike

According to the University of Manitoba Faculty Association (UMFA), 80% of voting members voted to strike amid an ongoing labor dispute with the school's administration. *Global News* reports that the UMFA has asked the administration to either agree to binding arbitration or respond to the union's last offer. The union, which represents 1,240 full time faculty, librarians, lecturers, and instructors, have been in negotiations with UM since August.

<https://globalnews.ca/news/7437887/university-of-manitoba-faculty-association-votes-strike-action/>