



MLK events

This year, join in some of the events scheduled to commemorate MLK, p. 4.



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Your letters

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CT news

The voice of the Clerical-Technical Union of Michigan State University

January 2013



Lansing, December 11, 2012—Between 10,000 and 12,000 workers descended on the Capitol to register their disagreement with Right to Work legislation that was passed by the Michigan House and Senate and signed by Governor Rick Snyder. Several CTs and others from the MSU labor community participated.



MSU Trustee Joel Ferguson (left) and Senator Gretchen Whitmer (right) on stage with Jesse Jackson at the December 11 Right to Work rally. Two MSU Trustees, Ferguson and Diane Byrum participated in the Rally.



CTU President Deb Bittner was one of the CTs who lent her voice to the workers' rally at the Capitol on December 11.

President's corner

What RTW means for us

President Deb Bittner

How does the new law affect CTs? This is the question I hear every day lately.

We have an answer to the "nuts and bolts" part of the question: Our existing collective bargaining agreement is

in place until April 1, 2015. No changes resulting from the Right to Work (RTW) law will take place before then, according to our attorneys. This gives us more than two years to work out the administrative logistics of how to operate under RTW.

However, in answering the question

RTW continued on p. 3

CTnews

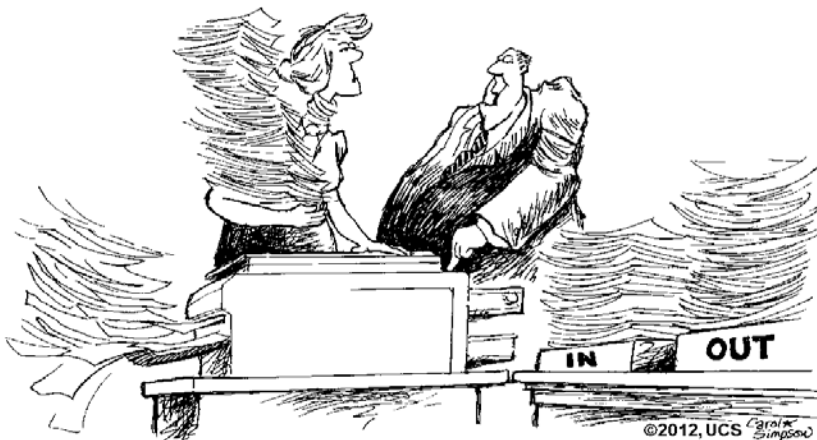
The voice of the Clerical-Technical Union
of Michigan State University

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independent
since 1974!



"You're right Ms. Watkins, you do need extra help. Hop in the xerox machine and make some copies of yourself."

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Editorial Policy:

The CT News is the voice of our union. It is our vehicle for communicating, on a regular basis, the issues that confront us as workers. Through this newsletter we explain union policies, show how dues are spent, and explain the views and actions of the elected leadership for evaluation by the members.

The CT News is the voice of the membership. We welcome articles from members and stories about members.

While contributions are welcome, they should be constructive and contribute positively to the welfare of our union.

We will accept no attacks on any union leader or member. We will accept thoughtful discussion of all related issues in the letters section, and reserve the right to reply to those that seem to reflect a misunderstanding of the union and its policies.

Direct ideas, letters, questions and comments to Cherylee Finney.

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CTclassifieds

Wanted

▼ **Used love seat or very small sofa,** in good condition. Contact jane1753@yahoo.com.

Services

▼ **Quality Carpet and Upholstery Cleaners:** Your holiday parties and gatherings helped create memories that will last a lifetime. But the spills, the stains, and the ground-in dirt that came with those memories you'll want to disappear.

Membership Meetings

Meetings for 2013 will be held in 252 Erickson Hall on Tuesday, January 29, Thursday, April 25, Tuesday, July 23 and Wednesday, October 23. Meetings begin at 5:20, but doors open at 5, so come early to socialize. Membership meetings are for making decisions about the Union, asking questions and receiving updates about Union activities.

Executive Board Meetings

1st & 3rd Tuesdays at 5:15
CTU Office

(In January, we will hold only
one meeting: January 15.)

All members welcome.

Keep the memories, loose the stains. . . . With all that you have to do, let Quality Carpet Cleaners take that cleaning burden off your shoulders. Just make an appointment today. Reasonably priced, owner operated, free phone estimates. Please give us a call at 517-694-0497.

▼ **Ride share:** Capital Area Transportation Authority offers a ride sharing service called Clean Commute that several CTs are using. Contact Clean Commute: toll free (877-921-POOL), locally (517-393-RIDE), by fax (517-394-3733), or on the web (www.cata.org/cleancommute/index.html).

For rent: Suite or individual office.

2990 East Lake Lansing Road in East Lansing. Will work to meet your specifications. Contact the CTU, 517-355-1903.

Free

▼ **CTU Conference Room:** Available free to members (with deposit). For non-members, \$25/hour plus deposit. For questions, reservations, etc., contact the CTU office at 355-1903.

▼ **Advertise** to your colleagues in the *CT News*. Contact Cherylee Finney at Cheryl@ctumsu.org. The *CT News* accepts ads from CTU members on items for sale and/or services provided by CTU members and/or their household family members.

we also need to consider how the new law will affect our relationship with our employer and each other.

RTW, CTU and MSU

I have spoken with MSU administrators, Human Resources officials and members of the MSU Board of Trustees about the impact of the law on the union's relationship with the university, and I am happy to report that our employer agrees with us that the collective bargaining process has benefited the institution as a whole.

Even when CTU and management have disagreed about benefits, wages, discipline, policies, or whatever, both sides have ultimately shown respect for the collective bargaining process and our long-term relationship of solving issues. This process has provided us a forum where we could join together to tackle big problems—even a problem like health care, which has confounded the entire country. This process has resulted in loyal, productive and educated employees. This process has helped MSU succeed. If we maintain our mutual commitment, we can keep the relationships and successes we have achieved at MSU on track even under RTW.

The past is our future

A friend of CTU has prepared a short historical analysis of how labor, with the assistance or resistance of the legal system, progressed in the United States.

"Let's face a fundamental truth: Things were not too good for workers when they didn't have a voice in the workplace. The working class has always struggled and will always struggle. Things got a little bit easier and a little bit better for a while but we seem to have forgotten our history and are steadily marching back in time. Let's take a look at how we got here."

See the rest at www.ctumsu.org.

It's not a secret: the CTU opposes RTW. We have been very public and vocal about the divisive nature of RTW and how it will hurt CTs as well as our communities, our state and the institution for which we work. It is already causing major divisions in our state, and the situation will only get worse. Our Executive Board has passed several resolutions opposing RTW over the years, and I believe that we need to continue our opposition by participating in the struggle to overturn the newly passed legislation (while faithfully complying with it and any laws that affect us).

RTW & our relationship with each other

This is the hardest part of the question to answer. Most people really want to know, "How will RTW affect our strength in our day-to-day operations? How will it affect my job and my life?" The answers are that I just don't know for sure. I do believe that although the law is intended to weaken unions, we can minimize the impact if we maintain our solidarity within CTU and with the Michigan labor movement as a whole.

Under the new law, workers will be able to receive all union contractual benefits including representation on the job even if they refuse to pay dues. Sadly, some of our coworkers might choose this course. The vast majority of us, however, have always recognized that solidarity is our biggest strength and we have always come through for each other when needed. That is the essence of unionism.

We need to start a conversation amongst ourselves about the best way to fulfill our mission under the new law. As an independent organization, we have limited resources and need to target them in the most efficient ways. I believe that



the CTU will continue to represent all of the CTs who help keep MSU running and fight any efforts to balance budgetary and other problems on our backs. I am confident that the collective bargaining process will survive and lead to continued success for our members and the institution. [Carey Marie Ommen]

Rest assured that the entire union will be taking part in discussions about how the law affects us and what actions we should take. The subject is on the agenda at our first Membership Meeting in 2013: Tuesday, January 29, 5:20 p.m., in 252 Erickson Hall.

MLK

On another note, I have been involved in planning MSU's Martin Luther King Jr. commemorative events this year. I hope everyone will have an opportunity to participate in one or more of the activities.

As an organization, the CTU will take part in the commemorative march and dinner on January 21. Meet us at the MSU Union Building at 3 p.m. to join the march. Call 517-355-1903 if you would like to meet up with us for dinner.

Although MLK Day is not a holiday (not for lack of trying on CTU's part), the university does encourage supervisors to be flexible in allowing CTs to participate in events. Contact your union if you have difficulty getting the time to attend. This is a great way to celebrate and support the diversity that is both MSU and CTU.

Martin Luther King Jr. & collective bargaining

What did Martin Luther King Jr. think of labor unions and collective bargaining? Here, in his own words:

Speaking to the AFL-CIO, December 11, 1961

“By raising the living standards of millions, labor miraculously created a market for industry and lifted the whole nation to undreamed of levels of production. Those who attack labor forget these simple truths, but history remembers them. . . .

“In our glorious fight for civil rights, we must guard against being fooled by false slogans, such as “right to work.” It is a law to rob us of our civil rights and job rights. It is supported by Southern segregationists who are trying to keep us from achieving our civil rights and our right of equal job opportunity. Its purpose is to destroy labor unions and the freedom of collective bargaining by which unions have improved wages and working conditions of everyone. . . . Wherever these laws have been passed, wages are lower, job opportunities are fewer and there are no civil rights. We do not intend to let them do this to us. We demand this fraud be stopped. Our weapon is our vote.”

Speech to the state convention of the Illinois AFL-CIO, October 7, 1965

“The labor movement was the principal force that transformed misery and despair into hope and progress. Out of its bold struggles, economic and social reform gave birth to unemployment insurance, old-age pensions, government relief for the destitute and, above all, new wage levels that meant

not mere survival but a tolerable life. The captains of industry did not lead this transformation; they resisted it until they were overcome. When in the thirties the wave of union organization crested over the nation, it carried to secure shores not only itself but the whole society.”

Speaking to sanitation workers in Memphis, March 18, 1968

“If you will judge anything here in this struggle, you’re commanding that this city will respect the dignity of labor. So often we overlook the worth and significance of those who are not in professional jobs, or those who are not in the so-called big jobs. **But let me say to you tonight, that whenever you are engaged in work that serves humanity, and is for the building of humanity, it has dignity, and it has worth.** One day our society must come to see this. One day our society will come to respect the sanitation worker if it is to survive. For the person who picks up our garbage, in the final analysis, is as significant as the physician. All labor has worth.

“You are doing another thing. You are reminding, not only Memphis, but you are reminding the nation that it is a crime for people to live in this rich nation and receive starvation wages. . . . But we find ourselves living in a literal depression all over this country as a people.

“Now the problem isn’t only unemployment. Do you know that most of the poor people in our country are working everyday? They are making wages so low that they cannot begin to function in the mainstream of the economic life of our nation. These are facts which must be seen. And it is criminal to have people working on a full-time basis and a full-time job getting part-time income.”



Honoring the vision of MLK

Although MSU classes will be cancelled on MLK Day, Monday, January 21 is *not* a paid holiday for MSU employees and we are expected to report to work.

However, our employer does agree that CTs should be able to participate in MLK events. We have a letter of agreement affirming MSU and CTU’s mutual commitment to diversity and inclusion and encouraging supervisors to be flexible in permitting employees to participate in events associated with commemorating Dr. King.

If you are denied a reasonable request to participate in an event associated with MLK Day, contact the CTU for support in working out a mutually agreeable arrangement.

A year of events

This year’s theme, “The Road to

MLK continued on next page

Social Justice Begins with One Step,” was selected by MSU to set the stage for a year of events recognizing the 60th Anniversary of the U.S. Supreme Court decision in *Brown v. Topeka Board of Education* and the 50th Anniversary of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (referred to as the 60/50). The 2013 MLK activities kick off the campus wide preparations for the 2014 celebration.

Community Dinner and other MSU events

The annual dinner, held this year on **Monday, January 21**, is one of the more popular events, especially for support staff members who need to stay on the job during the day. The dinner provides an opportunity for staff, students, faculty and community members to share in the spirit of diversity and inclusion in celebrating the legacy of Dr. King. It takes place in the Akers Hall Dining Cafe. Food is served starting at 4:45 p.m. and the program starts at 5:30 p.m. Dinner is free but pre-reservations are required: <http://www.inclusion.msu.edu/Outreach/MLK.html>. [Kimberly Fay Smith]

Several units and colleges are offering events that commemorate Martin Luther King Jr.'s contributions this year. Like the dinner, all of the events are free but some require reservations. We have listed a few that might be of interest to CTs, but additional offerings can be found at <http://www.inclusion.msu.edu/Outreach/MLK.html> along with more detailed information and reservation materials.

▼ **Social Justice Films and Dialogue: “The Loving Story,”** Thursday, January 17, MSU Libraries, 7 p.m., Main Library North Conference Room (4th Floor West).

▼ **“Showtyme @ MSU,”** Saturday, January 19, 8 p.m., International Center. A family-friendly and educational event where students perform their many talents in front of a panel of judges and an enthusiastic audience.

▼ **“Jazz: Spirituals, Prayer & Protest,”** Sunday, January 20, two shows at 3 and 7 p.m., Pasant Theatre, Wharton Center. Free, but tickets must be picked up at the Wharton Center Box Office only (517-432-2000). Musical expressions of the struggle for social justice, equality and civil rights performed by the Professors of Jazz and students in the Jazz Studies Program.

▼ **Social Justice Films and Dialogue: “The Rise and Fall of Jim Crow: Promises Betrayed (1865–1896),”** Monday, January 21. MSU Libraries, 12 p.m.–1 p.m. Main Library Reference Instruction Room (1st Floor). [Patty Anne Zamora]

▼ **“Loss Prevention,”** Residential College for Arts and Humanities hosts Visiting Artist Eto Otitigbe, RCAH LookOut! Art Gallery, Monday, January 21, C200 Snyder Hall, 1:30–2:30 p.m. An occasion to talk with visiting New

York-based polymedia artist Eto Otitigbe about his work and career. Otitigbe's works draw on iconic moments in the histories of the Civil Rights Movement and anti-colonial struggles as well as current figures such as Trayvon Martin. They ask us to reflect on the nature of loss and how we can continue to honor and redeem loss, individually and collectively.

Lansing Celebration

Off campus, the 28th Annual Celebration Luncheon in honor of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. will take place on Monday, January 21, 2013, in downtown Lansing at the Lansing Center, 333 E. Michigan Avenue. The luncheon will begin at 11 a.m. (doors open at 10:30 a.m.). The luncheon is sponsored by the Greater Lansing Area Holiday Commission.

This year's theme is “Moving the Dream Forward in Pursuit of Truth, Justice, and Compassion.” The Keynote speaker is Jacque Reid, a celebrated journalist with more than fifteen years of broadcasting expertise in news, lifestyle, entertainment reporting and hosting. She has interviewed some of the most influential people of our generation including Presidents Barack Obama and Bill Clinton.

Tickets are \$35 per person. The order form and additional information is available online at <http://www.lansingmi.gov/mayor/mlk/> or by calling 517-483-7637.



Into the streets with CTU

Join other CTs as our union moves “Into the Streets” at the annual MLK Commemorative March on Monday, January 21. Meet at our banner in the MSU Union Building first floor lobby at 3 p.m. After the march, join us for a Community Celebration Dinner at Akers Hall (pre-registration required).

For over 30 years, thousands of MSU students, administrators and staff have come together to celebrate the legacy of Dr. King and other Civil Rights activists. This is our opportunity to follow their lead by participating in this historic event.

MI's only labor history museum

The Philip Murray Building in Monroe was scheduled for demolition in 2001. Built by the Congress of Industrial Organizations in 1947 and home to many union locals over the years, the loss of the building also would have meant losing a piece of labor history.

Then union and history activists stepped forward to save the building and use it for the preservation and display of local, regional and national labor history. It is now the only labor history museum in Michigan.

Bill Conner, President of the Monroe Lenawee County AFL-CIO Central Labor Council, gave CTU's representatives, board members and staff a tour of

the museum in November.

"Sometimes, especially recently, labor gets a bad name," Conner said. "But labor has gotten us the standard of living we have today, health care, weekends, unemployment insurance, a lot of safety nets, workplace safety. We need to educate people about the important role of labor."

"When you look at the timeline," he added, pointing to one of the exhibits, "you see that when the economy was bad that's when labor was on the rise."

Visit the Monroe County Labor Museum online at <http://www.monroelabor.org/>. The Museum is open from 10 a.m. until 2 p.m. every Saturday. Admission to the museum is always free.



Ten-year-old spinner at a North Carolina textile factory began working at age 9.

Sometimes you gotta laugh



"You'll have to change your religion if you work here. Our boss believes he's God."

Giving the boss the "fast hustle"



A man walks into the boss's office and tells him three other companies are pursuing him but he'll stay if he gets a raise. The boss isn't happy, but he doesn't want to lose the guy, so he agrees to boost his pay by 10 percent. "By the way," the boss says as the man is walking out his door, "which three companies are after you?" The man answers: "The electric company, water company, and phone company."

—Union Communication Services



Member Tip: My Union, Everyone's Benefits

Economists talk about a "union wage effect." This is where the wages of unorganized workers are raised because of the standard established by the unionized workers in a particular locality or industry. Many laws that benefit everyone would not have been passed without the efforts of organized labor. The establishment of our Social Security system is probably the most important of these.

—Adapted from *The Union Member's Complete Guide*, by Michael Mauer

URdistricts

The following CTs are seeking appointment to UR positions. If no other members from their respective districts express interest in the positions before January 28, they will be appointed.

- ▼ **District 18** (Kellogg Center, Brody Complex), **Anita Garza.**
- ▼ **District 28** (Clinical Center [B, C, D Wings], Engineering Research, Radiology): **Becky Sullivan.**
- ▼ **District 30** (Campbell, Central School, Gilchrist, Landon, Mayo, Human Ecology, Union, Williams, Yakeley, Wills House): **Pam Sloan.**
- ▼ **District 32** (Main Library): **Judy Redding.**

District 6 (Auditorium, Baker, Geography, Kresge, Mason-Abbot, Psychology Building, Snyder-Phillips): **Julie Detwiler** was reappointed to be UR. Contact her at 353-5258 or detwiler@msu.edu.

District 8 (MSU Grand Rapids Campus): **Kirk Bartling** has promoted out of the CTU. We thank him for his service to the union and wish him well in his future endeavors.

We now have 16 districts without a UR. If you are interested in becoming a UR, contact URCC Chairperson **Becky Sullivan** (884-3374 or sulli306@msu.edu). [Eric J. Christensen]

CTcomments

One CT's experience with Right to Work

Dear CTU—

Years ago, I worked in Tennessee, a so-called “right-to-work” state.

My children were small, so I couldn't go back to work right away, because my husband and I only had one car, and anything I might earn would be completely used up by the cost of child care.

When they were old enough to be in school all day, I found a job at Memphis State University (now University of Memphis) in the accounting office. I prepared travel claims, mainly for the Athletic Department, and paid invoices. There were very few benefits that came with the job: no health insurance, limited sick pay and vacation time, no retirement pension, and no special perks.

When we returned to Michigan, I applied at Michigan State University for a part-time job, doing very similar work. I was ecstatic to learn that my pay was \$2/hour more than I had earned at “the other MSU” in Tennessee. I had fully paid health insurance (and dental!) for my entire family (even though I was only working 20 hours per week), sick pay and vacation days accumulating at the half-time rate, and other benefits. As soon as possible, I signed up for the 403B.

People need to realize that “right-to-work” means a much lower salary and very limited benefits. In Michigan we all have the right to work, regardless if we are in union jobs or not. The presence of unions in Michigan also raises salaries in the private sector, so that those who aren't in unions benefit as well.

We have a fighting

chance to raise our families in a decent manner, because of the hard-won rights people fought (and DIED for) so many decades ago. We must never forget that. We must keep on fighting to preserve unions in Michigan. “Right-to-work” may sound like a good deal—but it is misleading, tricky language to convince people that what is good for business is good for them. It isn't, people, so wake up and protect your rights.

—Linda Gibson, MSU Union

Board member says “thank you”

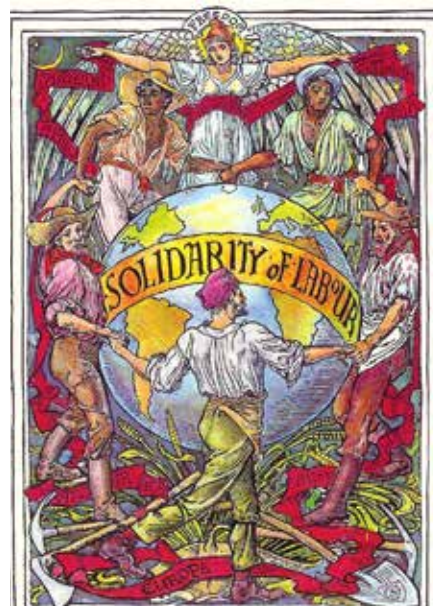
A sincere thank you to all union members that placed their confidence in me by voting to allow me to continue serving our membership on the CTU Executive Board.

I consider your vote to be one of trust which I truly appreciate, and pledge that I will continue to work diligently in this position. I consider it vital that members' treatment in the work place, benefits and fiscal investments be kept at a priority level; and I will do the best I can to ensure that it continues in that manner.

An additional thank you to all that voted in our union election as well as the general election this fall!

Solidarity forever!

—Willie Paulsen, Medical Claims



Cool labor site

The most comprehensive bibliography of information, documents and links of U.S. labor history sites that you can find on the internet: www.niu.edu/~rfeurer/labor/indexpage.html. It was developed by labor historian Rosemary Feurer for the Labor and Working Class History Association.



Wal-mart action

November 22, 2012, Outside the parking lot of the Delta Township Walmart store —CT Willie Paulsen participated in a local “Black Friday” action in support of Walmart employees who speak out against deplorable working conditions, low wages and retaliation against workers who stand up for themselves.



CTU OF MSU
2990 E. LAKE LANSING ROAD
EAST LANSING, MI 48823-6219

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CTcalendar

January 15. The only January meeting of the CTU Executive Board. C-T Union Hall, 5:15 pm. Members welcome.

January 21. “Into the Streets” MLK Commemorative March. MSU Union Building, 3 p.m. See page 5.

January 29. CTU Membership Meeting. See ad on this page.

February 1. Extended deadline for Ruth Jameyson “Above and Beyond” award for staff members pursuing a post-baccalaureate degree. Information at

www.hr.msu.edu/recognition/supportstaff/JameysonAward.htm.

February 1. “‘They All Sort of Disappeared’: The Early Cohort of UAW Women Leaders.” An “Our Daily Work/Our Daily Lives” presentation, MSU Labor Education Program. 12:15–1:30, MSU Museum Auditorium.

February 5 and 19. CTU Executive Board meets, C-T Union Hall, 5:15 p.m. Members welcome.

February 8. “Organizing in a Precar-

ious World of Work: The Self Employed Women’s Association of India.” An “Our Daily Work/Our Daily Lives” presentation, LEP. 12:15–1:30, MSU Museum Auditorium. [Rebecca Chockley]

February 10. Vegan Potluck, 6 pm until 7:30 pm, CT Union Conference Room. Bring a dish to pass and a copy or three of the recipe to share. Free and open to the public. Dinnerware provided. For more information contact marian.erickson@yahoo.com.



Membership Meeting

We have a lot to talk about. Attend the January Membership Meeting to discuss the latest on Right to Work, CTU finances and other issues that affect us. The meeting starts at 5:20, but doors open at 5 so come early to socialize. Door prizes. IDs checked at the door.

Tuesday, January 29
252 Erickson Hall
5:20 p.m.