

## **25+ Years of Working Class Struggle**

# **Building the Solid Foundation and the UE150 Social Justice House of Labor**

## **UE150 History Timeline (1982-2022)**

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### **Laying a Strong Foundation**

#### **December 1982**

Founding of Black Workers for Justice out of a struggle led by Black women workers at a K-mart store in Rocky Mount, NC.

#### **1982 - 1984**

1. Black Workers for Justice bores into public sector and revitalizes AFSCME Local 1194-Durham City Workers Union. Rank and file frontline workers self-organize and rebuilds membership of 23 up to 298 by 1989.
2. Rocky Mount Sanitation Workers, led by Alexander Evans, begin organizing and Raleigh City Workers Organizing Committee led by Will James and Laquan Johnson is established.
3. BWFJ's Workers Want Fairness & M.L. King Day campaigns develop and helps to grow other workplace committees in Wake, Durham, Edgecombe, Wilson, Duplin Counties. (10 counties in total). Ten thousand signatures are collected on petitions and help to win the federal and state M.L. King Holiday.
4. Relationships are built with Duke University Hospital Workers AFSCME Local 77

#### **1989**

Black Workers for Justice forms the Rocky Mount Workers Unity Council after hosting Workers consisting of five in plant committees at: CDC, Standard Products, Bendix Aerospace, Rocky Mount Undergarment and Rocky Mount City Workers.

NC Public Service Workers Network hosted at Durham City Workers AFSCME local 1194 office in Durham, NC. Raleigh, Rocky Mount, Durham, Asheville and

Charlotte city workers as well as Pitt County workers participate in this historic meeting.

## **Early 1990's**

The Pitt Co. School Bus Drivers Safety Club and the Durham City and County workers met regularly and were later joined by Housekeepers, Groundskeepers, and other lower-paid UNC workers from UNC-CH and East Carolina University. This organizing led to the establishment of the NC Public Service Workers Organization (NCPSWO), which published a regular Newsletter and recruited Chapel Hill City bus drivers and other labor activists.

Noted human rights attorney, Arthur Kinoy, attends a speak out at NCCU where public service workers from across the state testify about inadequate compensation, hostile work environment and lack of an opportunity to negotiate.

NC Dept. of Transportation's Equal Treatment Now, city, county and, eventually, state workers joined the NCPSWO. Attempts were made to affiliate with various international unions.

## **1990**

First public service workers assembly held at the NC AFL-CIO headquarters in Raleigh including Raleigh, Durham and Rocky Mount city workers, convened by the Durham City Workers Union, AFSCME Local 1194.

CDC Workers Unity Committee petitions for paid MLK Holiday and wins

## **1991**

The second public service workers assembly held in Rocky Mount at the BWFJ Workers Center including city workers from Durham, Raleigh and Rocky Mount.

Organize the South Solidarity Tours in 1990 and 1991

**1993** – January 9, 1993, the “3rd NC Public Service Workers Assembly” was sponsored by and held in the Durham City Workers Union (AFSCME Local 1194) Union Hall. Workers came from Charlotte City, Mecklenburg County, Greenville City, Butner, Chapel Hill town, Orange County, Durham City, Town of Rocky Mount, Edgecomb County, and the City of Raleigh. NC State Employees from

the “Equal Treatment Now” Movement, NC Central University, Greenville Detox Center, UNC Housekeepers Association agreed to develop a state-wide forum targeting concerns of 2,729 lay-offs, budget cuts, and job discrimination.

#### **1994**

September 1, CDC Workers Unity Committee (now Carolina Auto, Aerospace & Machine Workers Union (CAAMWU-UE) at Cummins), were first to affiliate with UE and bring UE back to NC. Met at Bloomer Hill, with Bob Kingsley and Saladin Muhammad as our UE organizer.

#### **1995**

August, UE sends organizer Ed Bruno to work with CDC Workers Unity Committee-UE to form Community Empowerment Alliance of labor and community groups in Battleboro-Whitakers-Enfield area. CEA still continues to this day meeting at Franklinton Center at Bricks. President Janice Bellamy.

#### **1996**

UNC Housekeepers Association files lawsuit for majority Black women housekeepers being treated as “second class citizens” due to racism and low wages. UNC settles the lawsuit, and the housekeepers received \$1 million in back pay and benefits, the right to “meet and confer,” or meet to discuss workplace issues, with the Chancellor.

June 6-9, delegation of 5 members CDC Workers Unity Committee/UE go to founding convention Labor Party in Cleveland, Ohio and take two members of NC Public Service Workers Assembly along as guests. For first time, we are seated at Labor Party Founding Convention as UE local from NC. Members of BWFJ, Durham City Workers Union AFSCME Local 1194 and others participate.

#### **1997**

1. January – Barbara Prear, of the UNC Housekeepers Association is invited to speak at CDC Workers Unity Committee, UE MLK Day celebration in Bloomer Hill.
2. NC Public Service Workers Organization leaders, BWFJ leaders meet to deliberate which national labor union - CWA, SEIU, AFSME, UAW or UE – would be chosen to affiliate with.

3. May, First UE Statewide Public Worker Organizing Committee meeting including leaders from the UNC and ECU Housekeepers Associations. UE expands organizing across the state within the UNC System launching the Grievance for Justice Campaign expanding to NC State University, NC Central University, UNC-Greensboro, NC A&T, UNC-Charlotte, WCU, UNC-Wilmington; some contacts at FSU, ECSU, NCSA. UE150 wins grievance assistant rights, meet and confer, right to organize.

## **1998**

UNC Council Meets with UNC System President Molly Broad's assistant

### **Building the UE150 Social Justice Labor House**

#### **1999 - May Statewide organizing blitz in UNC System.**

1. First DHHS organizing at Special Care Center (now Longleaf Center) and Eastern NC School for the Deaf.
2. July 30 – August 2 - First Constitutional Convention, UE Local 150 gets chartered at NC State University – Barbara Prear elected President, Nathanette Mayo elected Vice President, Novella Townsend elected Recording Secretary, Raymond Eurquhart elected Treasurer, and Pearl Williams elected Financial Secretary.
3. August, As more workers from City, County, and, eventually, State agencies joined the NC Public Service Workers Organization, attempts were made to affiliate with various International Unions. Meanwhile, we convinced then State Senator Toby Fitch from Wilson Co. to convene a special session of the Personnel Subcommittee of the NC State Legislature to hear statements by Larry Farrar and Barbara Prear, (UNC-CH Housekeeper leaders), and others re: the uneven and inadequate Grievance Procedures throughout the state system. The more than 30 workers present then marched into the offices of then State Personnel Director, Ron Penny, and demanded equity ASAP. Some form of uniformity was later achieved.

#### **2000 - DHHS Organizing Begins at Dorothea Dix Hospital**

Nurse Beverly Moriarty and Housekeeper Rev. James Thomas calls UE150, and new organizing campaign at Dorothea Dix Hospital, signed up over 200 members.

## **2001- DHHS “Workers Dignity” Campaign organized DHHS chapters at Cherry Hospital, O’Berry and Caswell Center**

1. 1<sup>st</sup> DHHS Council campaign “DHHS Workers Dignity”
2. Caswell maintenance worker, Steve Rhoda, calls UE150 seeing successes in Goldsboro
3. Join Farm Labor Organizing Committee (FLOC) in a march in Raleigh for Black and Brown Unity.
4. UE150 participates with other public worker unions in the formation of the NC Hear our Public Employees (HOPE) coalition.
5. January 2001, the CDC Workers Unity Committee/UE joined with the UE Workers Committee at Vermont American in Greenville (later called Bosch) and Honeywell Aerospace plants to form Carolina Auto, Aerospace & Machine Workers Union (CAAMWU-UE)
6. June, UE National Union delegation, which included UE150’s Nathanette Mayo, attend the 1<sup>st</sup> World Social Forum in Porto Alegre, Brazil. The strategy of filing a formal complaint with the United Nations regarding North Carolina’s denial of collective bargaining rights for public employees was born during discussions with UE & Mexico’s FAT delegates.
7. Won NLRB cases and the 4th circuit court ruling allowing distribution of UE Unity News inside plant.
8. UE delegates are also exposed to the concept of “Participatory Budgeting” and meet with Porto Alegre city and labor officials to see and discuss how the process works. Durham City Workers Union begins to incorporate and push for workers and citizens input in having some control over the city’s funding allocations using the participatory budget concepts learned from this meeting. It becomes a demand in the DCWU’s yearly budget campaign and eventually begins to gain some traction.

## **2002- DHHS-Council Formed, “State of Emergency” campaign with UNC&DHHS**

1. Organizing in Butner begins at John Umstead Hospital and Murdoch Center
2. DHHS-Dignity Campaign March & Rally in Goldsboro with Rev. Barber's "The (3) R's speech Right, Reason & Responsibility
3. UE National Convention hosted in Raleigh, alongside UE150 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Convention, Raymond Sanders elected President.
4. DHHS Worker Speak-out with Caswell Center workers in Kinston
5. UE 150 Department of Administration Capital Area Chapter organized

### **2003- "Workers Fairness" campaign**

1. DHHS and UE Council campaign "*Workers Fairness*" campaign *challenging state budget cuts and balancing the budget on the backs of workers*
2. International Public Sector Workers Convergence in Mexico
3. UE National Political Action Conference in DC, lobbying for CB rights
4. CAAMWU gained 50 plus members and joined UE Local 150 at UE Convention in September.
5. October 16-19 UE150 women's delegation participates in the Southern International Working Women's Conference in Atlanta, GA

### **2004- International Worker Justice Campaign formed to repeal NC-GS 95-98 and win Collective Bargaining rights for public workers by:**

1. 2<sup>nd</sup> International Public Sector Worker Convergence in Canada
2. 3<sup>rd</sup> Bi-Annual UE150 Convention at Franklinton Center, Raymond Sanders re-elected President
3. IWJC Hearings in Rocky Mount, Durham, Chapel Hill
4. CAAMWU hosts first UE National Pre-Majority Union Conference at Franklinton Center at Bricks, Whitakers

5. October 17, Million Worker March in Washington, DC to oppose George Bush and put forth a workers program under leadership of Black worker organizations.
6. UE150 members, Al Locklear and Raymond Sanders participate in a National UE delegation to Mexico

### **2005- Public hearings with international lawyers about human right to collectively bargain**

1. IWJC Public Hearings held in Goldsboro, Greensboro, Raleigh, Charlotte
2. International Labor Organization of the United Nations sends labor lawyers & labor rights experts from Canada, South Africa, Nigeria, Mexico, India & the US to visit NC and convene full on-site investigations on violations under international law, working conditions and the impact of the lack of CB rights.
3. 3<sup>rd</sup> IPSWC held in Raleigh, NC
4. File a complaint with the United Nations (ILO) that will help to bring international pressure to bear on NC & the federal government.
5. May, delegation of four CAAMWU members plus Saladin Muhammad go to Cummins stockholders meeting in Columbus IN and protested and spoke out in stockholders meeting, unfair pay scale at CDC, and convened a Cummins Workers Fairness conference with the two unions of Cummins workers in Indiana.
6. UE150 member Angaza Laughinghouse is a part of the UE delegation which attends the 5th World Social Forum in Porto Alegre, Brazil

### **2006- Working the IWJC objectives**

- A. 4<sup>th</sup> International Public Sector Worker Convergence in Japan
- B. UE Public Employee Conference in CT

- C. Received ILO report with ruling and recommendations from Int'l Commission for Labor Rights
- D. September Sanitation Workers Strike - formation of Raleigh City Workers Union chapter
- E. Municipal Council solidified movement on municipal workers across the state.
- F. 4<sup>th</sup> Bi-Annual Convention in Raleigh, Annie Dove, elected President
- G. CAAMWU wins NC wage & hour lawsuit court victory over bonus back pay
- H. UE150 member is a part of the UE delegation which attends the 6<sup>th</sup> World Social Forum in Caracas Venezuela
- I. June UE150 participates in the Southeast Social Forum at NC Central University in Durham, NC. Planning for the 1<sup>st</sup> U.S. Social Forum takes place.

### **2007- Building Solidarity**

- A. 1<sup>st</sup> HKonJ March & Rally---People's Assembly 14-Point Agenda where CB rights for public employees is #11
- B. US Social Forum in Atlanta---IWJC petitions in support of calling on the president & secretary of labor to honor the ruling and recommendations of the ILO
- C. DHHS Council organizing expands to western part of state at Broughton Hospital
- D. After years of petitions and protests of CAAMWU members and following workers' victory in the 2006 wage and hour lawsuit, Cummins/CDC announce new pay scale based on of years of service and across board raises for all, decrease reliance on merit pay.
- E. June 27-July 1<sup>st</sup> UE150 participates in the 1<sup>st</sup> US Social Forum in Atlanta, GA



## **2008- Mental Health Workers Bill of Rights Campaign**

- A. DHHS division develop Mental Health Workers Bill of Rights referendum that was voted on and adopted by over 3,000 workers statewide
- B. 2<sup>nd</sup> HKonJ March & Rally
- C. Rallies to keep Dorothea Dix Hospital open occur monthly/weekly
- D. 1<sup>st</sup> Mental Health Workers Public Hearing held in Raleigh
- E. Canada & Mexico file complaint under (NAFTA) condemning NC law banning CB rights to public employees
- F. 5<sup>th</sup> International Public Sector Convergence in West VA
- G. 5<sup>th</sup> Bi-Annual Convention at Franklinton Center, Angaza Laughinghouse elected president
- H. Campaign to overturn unjust firing of five Black workers at Central Regional Hospital “CRH5”, ultimately winning 2 years later.

## **2009- Coalition Building**

- A. Labor-Faith-Civil Rights Coalition In Defense the Public Sector formed in response to Wisconsin overturning CB rights
- B. 3<sup>rd</sup> HKonJ March & Rally mobilize 7,000 people to Raleigh
- C. Weekly/Monthly rallies to stop closure of Dorothea Dix Hospital
  
- D. Southern Workers School in SC
  
- E. Fight against privatization of solid waste services in Charlotte

## **2010- Working the M/H Workers Bill of Rights Campaign**

1. NC Organizing Blitz---recruiting more members for the struggle
2. 2<sup>nd</sup> M/H Workers Public Hearing in Butner, NC
3. 6<sup>th</sup> Bi-Annual Convention at Franklinton Center, Larsene elected president
4. UE150 starts organizing campaign with Town of Chapel Hill, firing of Solid Waste Operators Clyde Clark and Kerry Bigelow. Struggle to re-hire “Sanitation 2”
5. UE 150 participates with our national UE delegation and 20,000 other attendees in the US Social Forum in Detroit, MI. The strategy of building Peoples Movement Assemblies is discussed and embraced.

## **2011- Greenville Sanitation Strike, MH BoR Campaign and fight against Closing of Dix**

1. Greenville Sanitation Strike
2. 5<sup>th</sup> HKonJ March & Rally
3. 3<sup>rd</sup> Mental Health Workers Public Hearing in Goldsboro, NC
4. Mental Health Workers Bill of Rights introduced in the legislative session following the hearing & political action, HB 287 by Rep. Larry Bell and SB 481 by Senator Ed Jones
5. Produced written report on UE Local 150 & IWJC M/H Workers Public Hearings
6. Developed a post card in support of the human right to healthcare & a quality job in support for justice for M/H workers and to put pressure on the legislators to make the bill law
7. Continued rallies around closure of Dorothea Dix DHHS hospital
8. May – First meet-n-confer with Murdoch Center Director Aleck Myers

## **2012-Founding of the Southern Workers Assembly, NC DOT organizing**

1. Organizing drives at NC DOT in Greenville, Wilson, Raleigh and Durham.
2. 6<sup>th</sup> HKonJ March & Rally
3. Weekly pickets in front of Charlotte City Council
4. Southern Workers Assembly & March on Wall Street South outside Democratic National Convention
5. 7<sup>th</sup> Bi-Annual Convention at **NCCU**, Larsene Taylor Elected president, and Angaza Laughinghouse elected vice-president

## **2013 - Moral Mondays + Win payroll deduction and Meet-n-Confer in Charlotte**

February - Charlotte City Council majority votes to recognize union for payroll deduction and meet-n-confer.

- Tens of thousands participate in Moral Monday movement converges on Raleigh every Monday for several months, resulting in over 1,000 people getting arrested in State Legislature, including UE150 members Larsene Taylor, Angaza Laughinghouse, Don Cavellini, Charlie Daniels and Willis Johnson along with UE staff members Saladin Muhammad and Steve Bader as a “Labor” day of action including others from FLOC, SEIU and beyond.

**2014 – 8<sup>th</sup> Bi-Annual Convention, Nathanette Mayo elected President**

## **2016 – Greensboro City organizing, Form Triangle People’s Assembly and major actions against white supremacists after election of Donald Trump as President**

1. 9<sup>th</sup> Bi-Annual Convention, Nathanette Mayo elected President

2. Durham City Workers Union participates in movement to stop the construction of a new \$81 million police headquarters, participates in formation of the Durham Beyond Policing coalition

### **2017 – Hot Summer, continue fights against White Supremacy**

1. MLK day, January 2017 – Greensboro City Workers Union hosts first public rally
2. Anthony Milledge, yardwaste laborer, dies from excessive heat. Municipal Council launches campaigns in all cities, winning new policies and protections in Durham, Raleigh and Greensboro
3. After graduate workers pick up organizing steam across the country, graduate workers at UNC Chapel Hill help revitalize chapter. NCSU chapter also revitalized.
4. National UE supports statewide organizing blitz from Greensboro to Kinston.

### **2018 – Win \$15 minimum wage for all state employees, struggle against systemic racism**

1. Dr King Day, formation of the Durham Workers Assembly, securing Durham City Council resolution in support of overturning ban on collective bargaining.
2. UE150 wins \$15 minimum wage for all state employees
3. DHHS council challenges Zero Tolerance firings, continue push for Mental Health Workers Bill of Rights
4. After many mass struggles, the movement tears down Confederate statue on UNC campus, University responds by offering to pay millions to put back up. UNC Teaching Assistants threaten to strike and win elimination of all graduate worker fees.

5. 10<sup>th</sup> Bi-Annual Convention, Bryce Carter elected President
6. 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Memphis Sanitation Workers' Strike the recognition of national labor leader, Bill Lucy, is celebrated at the Civil Rights Museum in Greensboro, NC. Greensboro City Workers Union, UE150 president, Charles French speaks about city worker campaigns in Greensboro and across NC.
7. UE150 members Bryce Carter, Nathanette Mayo and Angaza Laughinghouse are part of a National UE delegation to participate in a Unifor sponsored North American Solidarity Project Conference in Port Elgin, Ontario Canada.

**2019 – Durham City Workers Union wins \$15 minimum wage for part time workers, and Step Pay Plan recognizing years of service while defeating additional funding for police.**

1. Greensboro and Durham City Workers Launch the “Fair Grievance” campaign.
2. Down east Organizing Blitz works to deepen municipal organizing in Wilson, Goldsboro and Rocky Mount, supported by UNIFOR.
3. SWA Workers Schools launch Southern Workers Medicare for All campaign

**2020 - *Safe Jobs Save Lives* Campaign amid COVID-19**

1. Host action at Governor Cooper’s Office demanding immediate action
2. April -host statewide SJS� Sticker day
3. Housekeepers at UNC, NCSU, NC Central and UNC Charlotte circulate and deliver letters to Chancellor demanding safe workplaces, join Class Action Lawsuit

4. July, host statewide UNC System Safe Jobs Save Lives Town Hall
5. 11<sup>th</sup> Bi-Annual Convention, Sekia Royall elected President
6. August, sanitation workers strike in Virginia Beach
7. Valley Protein workers in Fayetteville form organizing committee in response to COVID safety concerns. Reach out to workers at other plants in Lewiston, Rose Hill and Wadesboro.

**2021. Safe Staffing campaign in DHHS challenges severe understaffing across facilities.**

1. Strong rallies in front of Central Regional Hospital win news coverage.
2. People's Budget coalition "funeral procession" in front of State Legislature, disrupts budget debate.
3. May 1, Virginia law overturning ban on collective bargaining for local government workers goes into effect.
4. Launch Southern Worker Justice campaign to unite city workers across NC and VA
5. Greensboro City Workers Union campaign wins first Step Pay Plan
6. Join Southern Workers Assembly Safe Jobs Save Lives sticker day action
7. Support Bessemer, AL Amazon warehouse worker union campaign with actions across the state and the US South.
8. September - Kevin Hoeft and Brad Zipp die from asphyxiation in meat pit at Valley Protein plant in Fayetteville. Valley Protein Blue Collar Organizing Committee organizes public remembrance and worker speak-out, and files complaint with OSHA.
9. UE150 participates in founding of statewide labor coalition with the NC AFL-CIO, National Domestic Workers Alliance and others to challenge NC Department of Labor on strengthening OSHA safety enforcement.
10. UE staffers from NC/VA, Chris Hollis and Charles Brown participate in a delegation visiting Cuba and share reports and photos with UE150 and the Southern Workers Assembly

## **2022:**

Charlotte City Workers Union wages strong budget campaign with dozens of workers testifying and hundreds join multiple rallies at City Council budget hearings through entire spring, wins historic wage increases of \$20 per hour minimum wage, 10% raise, 2.5% CDL pay, 2.5% shift differential, \$2 million city worker home ownership program and more.

UE150 joins with Refund Raleigh Freedom Committee, Muslims for Social Justice, NCBL, BWFJ and other allies to collaborate, mobilize and participate in several community electoral candidate forums and at the Raleigh City Budget Public Hearing to challenge the city's bloated police budget and the inadequate funds allocated for city workers wages, affordable housing and community services.