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[August 2025 HELU Chair's Message](#)

From Levin Kim, HELU Chair and member of UAW 4121, student workers, researchers and postdocs at the University of Washington

Staff, faculty, university healthcare workers, facilities & maintenance workers, research workers, academic advisors – we carry out the crucial everyday work that keeps our campuses running. It's time we had a say in shaping the future of our sector in order to build a world that actually works for working people... [Read more.](#)

[Read HELU's August 2025 Chair's Message](#)

Three of the five articles in this newsletter are reports from the front lines: firings at CUNY, precarity and cuts to essential climate research at UMD, and the creation of an explicitly conservative accreditation commission for Southern higher ed. The other two focus on the fightback: HELU at the DSA convention in Chicago and a motivational piece to urge HELU delegates to run in the upcoming HELU election.

– Helena Worthen, Co-Chair, HELU Media & Communications Committee

From the HELU Blog:

[CUNY's Political Purge and the Fight for Academic Freedom](#)

As adjuncts, we occupy structurally precarious positions in the neoliberal university — a system that treats contingent faculty as disposable, stripping us of real job security and leaving us especially vulnerable to political

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solidarity with Palestine. The chilling effect reaches everyone. These firings are the canaries in the coal mine: if adjuncts can be purged for their political speech, anyone can be next... [Read more.](#)

[Accreditation bodies: Ideological cartels or guardians of academic freedom and the public good?](#)

The new conservative southern Commission for Public Higher Education is likely to facilitate waste, fraud and abuse in the use of federal funds for private profit in higher education. More importantly, it will try to centralize a weaponized accreditation system across the whole southeast U.S., forcing universities to obey direct government orders, censor teaching and research, and systematically re-marginalize or exclude those groups with recent access... [Read more.](#)

[Cuts to Earth Science at University of Maryland, College Park](#)

ESSIC (Earth System Science Interdisciplinary Center) researchers typically operate on cooperative agreements with NASA and NOAA, making us vulnerable when the science budgets (and in particular, the Earth science budgets) of these agencies are subject to political attacks. Many ESSIC researchers work on issues related to the environment and climate change... [Read more.](#)

["The kids are alright" — HELU at the DSA National Convention, Alliances in the Making](#)

HELU Sec/Treas TJ Acena and Policy and Politics Sub-Committee Chair Jenna Chernega spoke to the Convention as part of the three-hour Saturday afternoon session with other allied organizations. Each presenter was asked first about their organization's attitude toward a national labor action in 2028, as called for by UAW leader Shawn Fain, and second toward the development of a party independent of Republican or Democratic... [Read more.](#)

[HELU Elections Coming Up November 20, 2025](#)

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November 20, 2025.... [Read more.](#)

Solidarity Asks

HELU Solidarity Asks come from higher education labor organizations looking to build solidarity with workers on a larger national or regional basis, to drive participation in a particular action or campaign that supports higher ed workers. To submit a solidarity ask, please [complete this form](#).

- [Sign on: Protest the elimination of the Labor Studies major at San Francisco State University](#)
 - [HOLD THE LINE: Stand Strong Against Attacks on Education at the University of California](#)
 - [Columbia is hiring scabs! Spread the word and tell Columbia you won't take our jobs](#)
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- [Under Trump, Student Labor Organizers Face New Challenges](#) – The Nation
- [University of Minnesota workers plan to strike Wednesday, just days before students arrive](#) – Minnesota Star Tribune
- [University of Iowa grad union 'condemns' school's DEI investigation, cites unauthorized recording policy](#) – Iowa City Press-Citizen
- ['Textbook union busting': As SWC-UAW negotiations stall, Columbia replaces grad student teaching positions with external recruits](#) – Columbia Spectator
- [With GLO push, RI becomes first state to explicitly codify student unionization rights in state law](#) – Brown Daily Herald
- [Lane Community College budget cuts spark union backlash](#) – KVAL-CBS13 News
- [Union seeks more action from CU leaders amid federal changes](#) – Colorado Hometown Weekly
- ['Harder for All of Us': Confusion Reigns After Harvard Excludes 900 Grad Students From Union](#) – Harvard Crimson

Want to support our work? Make a contribution.

We invite you to support HELU's work by making a direct [financial contribution](#). While HELU's main source of income is solidarity pledges from member organizations, these funds from individuals help us to grow capacity as we work to align the higher ed labor movement.

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