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[July 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

Over the first six months in office, the Trump Administration attempted to gut funding for crucial research, attack immigrant and non-citizen workers, curtail academic freedom and freedom of speech, and more. These attacks on higher ed workers and institutions have been the centerpiece of the right wing's political agenda to expand control and power over public-serving institutions in service of the interests of the ultra-wealthy few.

[Read more.](#)

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

HELU's July 2025 newsletter contains items about movements in large systems. Some are national (the EWOC conference, the NEA organizing grants, May Day Strong, the DSA Convention). Others are state-level (Michigan and New York). Some are system-level (Arizona and California university systems). Some are about collaborations (the LA Federation of Labor, the SUNY/CUNY MADCs). This movement reflects the reality of where the higher ed labor movement is going.
– Helena Worthen, Co-Chair, HELU Media & Communications Committee

From the HELU Blog:

[EWOC and Higher Ed: First Conference at Labor@Wayne](#)

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28 and 29. [Read more.](#)

[The University of California System: Labor Actions Loom in 2025-2026](#)

The longer the UC system maintains a hard line against unions at the bargaining table, the more likely it is that a majority of UC's unionized workforce will be out of contract by the end of the 2025-26 school year. [Read more.](#)

[NEA Offers Grants to Help Local Affiliates Pay HELU Solidarity Pledges](#)

The National Education Association (NEA) has offered grants to local affiliates to enable them to join HELU by paying half of their solidarity pledge for one year. [Read more.](#)

[Contingent Labor at the University of Arizona: One Damn Thing After Another](#)

If it weren't so devastating, it would be comic timing. Every year, contingent faculty, specifically lecturers with academic year appointments, at the University of Arizona are laid off in May. Then, in the fall, some are hired back in even more precarious positions as adjunct instructor. [Read more.](#)

[Joint Union-Senate Mutual Academic Defense Compacts in SUNY and CUNY Systems](#)

Hours before the signing of the federal budget reconciliation megabill, ten current and former leaders of SUNY's and CUNY's governance bodies issued a [July 4 declaration](#). Candice Vacin, President of the SUNY Faculty Council of Community Colleges (FCCC), described it as "a solemn call to defend foundational principles of American higher education" ... [Read more.](#)

[Michigan HELU Coalition: Organizing and Action](#)

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colleges, and our jobs. So far, the coalition has hosted several online and in-person events, actions, and meetings, each bigger than the previous one. [Read more.](#)

[What is HELU Doing at the DSA Convention in August?](#)

On August 9th, representatives from Higher Education Labor United will be attending the [Democratic Socialists of American biennial convention in Chicago](#) to take part in their first ever Cross-Organizational Political Exchange. [Read more.](#)

[HELU at May Day Strong in Chicago](#)

On July 17 and 18, Levin Kim and Executive Director Ian Gavigan traveled to Chicago for the second national May Day Strong convening hosted by the Chicago Teachers Union (CTU). [Read more.](#)

[Mass Non-Violent Resistance Trainings in Los Angeles: Labor Leads with Power and Discipline](#)

On July 10, 2025, 1,443 people gathered at the Los Angeles Convention Center for the largest nonviolence training in the history of the city, and perhaps the country. [Read more.](#)

Upcoming Events:

[Building Campus Solidarity Across Job Categories: Lessons from Recent Strikes & Adjunct Struggles](#)

Weds., July 30 at 6pm ET/5pm CT/4pm MT/3pm PT

Join the Contingency Taskforce (CTF) of Higher Ed Labor United (HELU) for an urgent strategy discussion of how we can build campus solidarity among faculty and other higher ed workers, across job ranks, in light of the severe threats we now face. How can we organize broadly to defend the most vulnerable members of our communities? How can we help people overcome isolation and fear, discovering new courage and power by

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defend higher ed? [Register here.](#)

[International Campus Worker & Student Organizing Meeting](#) **Monday, August 4 at 2pm ET/1pm CT/12pm MT/11am PT**

Attacks from the Trump administration are putting international students and workers in our campuses at risk. Mass SEVIS terminations, cancellations of Visa appointments, targeted attacks against Chinese nationals, ICE detentions and threats of raids in our campuses are making our jobs, our livelihoods, and the mission of our institutions unsafe. These actions follow the same pattern: attacking those who are in the most vulnerable positions to create a chilling effect on the rest of us. We demand action from colleges and universities now! Join us on Zoom August 4th at 2pm ET/1pm CT/12pm MT/11am PT to plan next steps and organizing strategies. [Register here.](#)

[HELU Open House](#)

Thursday, August 14 at 6 pm ET/5 pm CT/4 pm MT/3 pm PT

HELU has been organizing since 2021 and is growing. On Thursday, August 14, at 6pm ET/5pm CT/4pm MT/3pm PT we will be hosting another HELU Open House, designed to welcome folks into the national higher ed organizing space and help everyone find a way to plug in. Join HELU on Thursday, August 14th, at 6pm ET/5pm CT/4pm MT/3pm PT. [Register here.](#)

[Library Workers Organizing Meeting & Strategy Session](#)

Weds., August 20 at 7pm ET/6pm CT/5pm MT/4pm PT

On August 20, 2025, HELU is bringing together higher ed library workers across the country to strategize against threats to our livelihoods and profession. We will come together to meet and set our agenda, then we will break into small groups to discuss crises in academic freedom, disparities between library staff categorizations, labor organizing, austerity, and more. Our goal is to develop a platform for library worker protections to advocate for and implement across the country. [Register here.](#)

Higher Ed Labor in the News

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- [UMN union workers announce vote to authorize strike](#) – MN Daily
- [Duke Graduate Students Union scores historic tentative contract](#) – Duke Chronicle
- [Faculty Unions & New York City Electeds Say ‘Hands Off Higher Ed! Hands Off CUNY!’](#) – WNY Labor Today
- [In AAUP Trial, State Dept. Official Says Criticizing Israel Could Be Grounds for Visa Revocation](#) – Harvard Crimson
- [Labor union says California university professor was taken during Camarillo immigration raid protest](#) – KTLA5 News
- [Penn Postdocs and Research Associates Win Their Union](#) – UAW
- [‘Without us, there is no UMass’: Unions representing staff decry bargaining tactics by administration at campus rally](#) – Athol Daily News

The link to Scott Douglas' presentation on the California community college load cap, included in HELU's June 2025 newsletter, has changed. You can now [access it here](#).

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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