

Making Sense of Economic Crises and Popular Movements: Snapshots of the Past Year's Local Labor Activities



1. Black History Month 2010 at Hofstra featured the annual film series “Africans At Work,” organized by the Hofstra Labor Studies Program. On February 4th, Anthropology Professor Chris Daniels introduced “Traces of the Trade,” a new documentary exploring the roots of race-based economic inequality in the largest slave-trading family in U.S. history. The DeWolf family lived in New England, not the Deep South – a fact so startling to its descendants that 10 of them recently embarked together on a journey of discovery that took them from their quaint Rhode Island home base to the slave forts of Ghana and the sugar plantations of Cuba where their family built its fortune. [Photo credit: *Regional Labor Review*].



2. “Immigration Today: Current Issues and Future Policies,” was held at Hofstra on March 25th, 2010 just four days after a national march on Washington calling for passage of immigration reform legislation. Saul Linares, a director of day laborer organizing at The Workplace Project, showed slides from the march and spoke about Workplace Project efforts to combat violence against immigrants that has intensified during the recession. The event was held on the 99th anniversary of the Triangle Factory fire in Lower Manhattan. The city’s deadliest workplace tragedy before September 2001, the fire claimed 146 lives, mostly young immigrant women. [Photo credit: *Regional Labor Review*].



3. Princeton University Sociology Professor Douglas Massey spoke on his latest research findings and on the “war against immigrants” undertaken through government policies over the past two decades. [Photo credit: *Regional Labor Review*].



4. MayDay 2009 was celebrated at Hofstra with multiple cultural activities. For the 8th consecutive year, the film festival *MayDay At The Movies: Comedy and Tragedy At Work* showcased new and class films about work and working people around the world. In Memorial Quad, students in the May Day seminar taught by Professors Lisa Merrill and Mary Anne Trasciatti commemorated the Haymarket executions in pictures and words, including a recital of the stirring courtroom speech of August Spies; they organized a letter-writing campaign on behalf of the Employee Free Choice Act; staged an art piece to illustrate the high cost of health care and the need for universal health insurance; and sang several renditions of international labor songs. [Photo credit: Rhys Schneider].



5. May Day 2009 at Hofstra [Photo credit: Rhys Schneider].