THE WORKING CLASS UNMUTED

Message from the Chair — Kim England

IN THE SPRING OF 2020, we at the Bridges Center released a statement regarding the COVID-19 pandemic and its impact on workers. “If anything good can come out of this crisis,” we wrote, “it will be a new social commitment to transforming and strengthening the rights and conditions of workers everywhere.” The pandemic has now resulted in the deaths of 650 thousand people in the United States, many of which could have been prevented if the lives and safety of working people were prioritized over the economy. I invite you to take a look at an ongoing project conducted by Bo Zhao (Geography), Marissa Baker (Environmental & Occupational Health Sciences), myself and several students. We’re building a smart dashboard online to track the COVID-19 risk to Washington workers (hgis.uw.edu/covid19-workers/index.html). I welcome your feedback.

In Washington we are lucky to have leaders who value the lives and safety of all working people in the state. That was on full display during the last legislative session with a set of bills that better protect the health and safety of workers (so starkly revealed in the early months of the pandemic), alongside those that address longer standing gaps in worker protections such as wage theft and inadequate safety training. And dear to my heart, eligibility for paid family and medical leave was expanded too. Threaded throughout these important gains is the commitment, energy and leadership of Senator Karen Keiser. A valued member of the Bridges Center Visiting Committee, it is an honor to work with the Senator and to announce that she is the recipient of the 2021 Robert H. Duggan Distinguished Supporter of Labor Studies Award (see page 11).

Growing the Labor Studies Minor is a hallmark of my time as the Bridges Chair. We are seeing a steady increase in the number of Labor Studies Minors and the growing student interest in Labor Studies on campus is wonderful to see. “The pandemic has limited my ability to see and meet many of you; I look forward to the time when that changes. The pandemic has also fun — you can read about the ‘dank memes’ it generated on page 6!”

Yasmin Ahmed’s creativity and mentorship was pivotal and with some additional funding this summer, we were able to secure additional seats to reach 180 students. The Labor Studies Minor and in the upcoming academic year, the Labor Studies prefix will be in the UW course catalog for the first time ever — meaning students will discover our classes.

The 2020-2021 speaker series, workshops and community-focused events were excellent and both campuses will be offering more this academic year. Turn to page 8 to find out how to access them. More reports are on the way — please let us know what you think of them.

The workers depicted in the image above the fold (bus drivers, nurses, farm workers, grocery workers, teachers, and delivery workers) are a very limited depiction of the essential workers who have risked their health, livelihoods and even their lives to keep life moving forward during the COVID-19 pandemic. For those of us who are able, our lives and interactions continue online. We must do more than just highlight these workers. As we benefit from their labor and have the privilege to engage in their struggles from behind the safety of a screen, we must ensure that we continue to fight for the safety, rights, and wellbeing of all working class people. — YASMIN AHMED

TRANSFORMING AND STRENGTHENING THE RIGHTS AND CONDITIONS OF WORKERS EVERYWHERE

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One of the few benefits of the obligatory online world is that I’ve had the chance to join many of the events organized by colleagues based at the UW Bothell and Tacoma campuses, events I’d have difficulty getting to usually. Their 2020-2021 speaker series, workshops and community-focused events were excellent and both campuses will be offering more this academic year. Turn to page 9 for full reports on their activities.

One event I did get to attend in-person was an ILWU co-organized joint-monthly celebration of the life of Frank Jenkins (see page 11). We met in Seattle’s Central District outside the house where Frank and his family lived (sadly slated for demolition). Without a doubt meeting members of Frank’s family was a major highlight of my summer. It was a delight and renewed my “commitment to transforming and strengthening the rights and conditions of workers everywhere.”

As I enter my last year as the Harry Bridges Endowed Chair in Labor Studies (how can it be, the time has gone by so quick?) I find myself reflecting on the many opportunities (like meeting the Jenkins family) that the Chair has brought me to and to those yet to come. The pandemic has limited my ability to see and meet many of you; I look forward to the time when that changes.

In solidarity,

Kim
LABOR ARCHIVES OF WASHINGTON: SERVICE, ACCESS, AND PRESERVATION

2021 MARKS THE ELEVENTH YEAR OF the Labor Archives of Washington (LAW). This year, we worked to deepen our access to digital collections, add new collections, and improve access to legacy collections.

LAW Wins Sessions Award
This year, the law was awarded the American Library Association’s Reference & User Services Association 2021 John Sessions Memorial Award recognizing a significant effort to improve access to labor collections. To read more about the award, visit tinyurl.com/Sessions-RUSA.

Annual Event: Essential Stories of Frontline Workers
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New Collections
New Collections
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LAW employs “corrective collecting” to actively remedy omissions in the archival record, enabling more inclusive regional and topical histories.

New Collections:
• Asian Pacific Labor Alliance – Records of the APIF-CIO constituency and advocacy organization.
• Dana Frank Research Papers for Purchasing Power – Research materials from Frank’s book on the experiences of women in the Seattle labor movement following the Seattle General Strike of 1919.
• Fred Hutchinson Union Organizing Campaign – Independent union organizing effort at the Hutchinson Cancer Research Center.

Additional to Existing Collections:
• Inlandboatmen’s Union of the Pacific – International union of maritime workers, including stevedores and cannery workers.

Students and Volunteers
Students and Volunteers
Students and Volunteers

The students and volunteers were critical to our mission. This year, 2 graduate students and 7 undergraduates worked with us. Even remotely, students continued to help process collections, transcribe, translate, process oral histories, and assist in outreach for the Labor Records Survey.

Labor Records Survey
Labor Records Survey
Labor Records Survey
Labor Records Survey
Labor Records Survey

Major progress was made in our Regional Labor Records Survey. Led by Crystal with the assistance of student workers, the survey continues to gather important data about labor records in the region, surveying 19 new oral history collections and preserving records of unions as well as the scope and use of labor collections preserved by archives, historical societies, and museums. Survey data is helping the LAW build relationships and enables strategic planning as we proactively collect, anticipate future donations, and offer records management consultations. We now have data on 92 unions and affiliated organizations and 49 cultural heritage institutions! One major outcome for this survey this past year is the addition of 33 entries for PW research with labor records in their holdings within the Society of American Archivists' Labor Archives Section Directory: tinyurl.com/lawarchivesdirectory

To learn more, participate, or promote: tinyurl.com/law-wa-records-survey

PROJECT IDEA
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We invite faculty, students, and community members to propose projects and collaborations with the Labor Archives and its staff. We make every attempt to accommodate requests and ideas, and often consult on research, oral history, and digital humanities projects and exhibits.

Propose a project or collaboration with LAW via this online form: tinyurl.com/LAW-Project-Form

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Website: LaborArchives.org
Facebook: facebook.com/laborarchives
Instagram & Twitter: @laborarchiveswash
This feature on inclusivity is not often present in archival projects. "History is written by victors, and archives are constructed the same way," Conor Casey, head of LAW, said. "Similar powers operate within the construction of archives; these archives inherit and recreate biases. People who are underrepresented don't have the capacity they need to preserve [their] history."

Oral histories like SCOHPI can be corrective, in that these projects "recognize that there is a problem when library collections founded on white supremacy and colonialism don't properly represent the working class," according to Casey. Corrective collecting is transformative because it is unapologetically diverse. Reflecting on the project, Zhou hopes that these oral archives can reconstruct how we look back on the pandemic—playing a small but critical role in correcting the power imbalances that separate those with the privilege to write history from those who experience the repercussions of systemic inequities firsthand. "Oral history is for the flavor," Casey said.

Casey explained that facts can always be found in secondary sources like academic journals, but oral histories are uniquely corrective in that they allow the positionality and perspective of each individual to hold prominence. Casey and Zhou both had the opportunity to encounter these narratives directly through interviews with health care workers, teachers, construction workers, labor leaders, and other frontline workers who have been on the ground throughout the pandemic. Many of these workers, riddled with uncertainty and grappling with financial instability, did not have the luxury of working remotely. Despite challenging conditions, Casey and Zhou describe the interviewees as both "resilient" and "adaptive." SCOHPI documents a period brimming with inaccessibility, grief, and turmoil, but the project also ensures that the adversities and triumphs of the past year will not be forgotten. SCOHPI is effectively pulling back the curtain on history. "Oral history projects aim to counter narratives of power, and they really do a lot to empower those voices who are not heard or have been misrepresented, intentionally or not, via the imbalances of power in historical production," Zhou said. "It's all about taking back those narratives [through oral histories as well as documented, inclusive archives]." As interviews and transcriptions ride to completion — and will be accessible to the public soon — Zhou expressed her gratitude to all who were involved in the year-long endeavor. "The project is very collaborative, not just top-down," she said. "A lot of people contributed to the project in so many ways.

More information on SCOHPI can be found at the UW Harry Bridges Center for Labor Studies. Completed interviews for the project can be accessed through the LAW archive, which also includes musical works and related oral history projects from partner organizations. More information on SCOHPI can be found on the Bridges Center website at labor.uw.edu/seattle-covid-19-oral-history-project. Completed interviews for the project can be accessed through the Internet Archive, which also includes musical works and related oral history projects from partner organizations. LAW archive/details/labor_archives_of_washington_university_of_washington_libraries_special_collections.

This article originally appeared in the Daily of the University of Washington on August 26, 2021. Reprinted with permission.
MARTIN AND ANNE JUGUM SCHOLARSHIP IN LABOR STUDIES
This undergraduate scholarship honors former IWW Local 19 leader Martin “Jim” Jugum and his wife Anne. It is given annually to students with a strong commitment to labor organizing and labor studies.

SILME DOMINGO & GENE VIERNES SCHOLARSHIP IN LABOR STUDIES
This scholarship honors Domingo and Viernes, two Seattle leaders who fought for union democracy alongside Filipino cannery workers and organized in solidarity with resistance in the Philippines to the Ferdinand Marcos dictatorship.

MARSHA H. DUGGAN FELLOWSHIP IN CARING LABOR
This award is given in memory of Marsha H. Duggan, whose caring labor made possible the life work of her husband and key Bridges Center founding supporter, Robert Duggan. It is given to graduate students studying or providing caring labor.

ANGELICA PEREZ, LAW, SOCIETIES, AND JUSTICE
Perez is an incoming undergraduate in the Law, Societies, and Justice program who aspires to become an immigration lawyer representing immigrant workers and their families. As a high school student, Perez played an important role in passing legislation that protects farmworker rights in Washington State as part of the Latino/a Educational Achievement Project (LEAP) program. Through a fellowship sponsored by the Washington State Government, Perez collaborated with peers to draft and present a bill that demands higher pay for farmworkers. At UW, Perez plans to engage with the labor movement by joining clubs on campus and continuing activism on local, state, and federal levels.

LESA AND SAMUEL B. BASSETT SCHOLARSHIPS IN LABOR RELATIONS
The Northwest chapter of the Labor and Employment Relations Association sponsors an annual scholarship for students seeking to pursue a career in labor. It is coupled with the Samuel B. Bassett Scholarship, which memorializes one of the first practitioners of labor law in Seattle.

ELIZABETH LU GAO, SOCIOLGY & LAW, SOCIETIES, AND JUSTICE
Gao is an undergraduate dual major in Sociology and Law, Societies, and Justice, who is striving to pursue a legal or political career to dismantle systems of oppression and fight for transformative liberation of all communities with a focus on labor justice. Gao has been an active youth organizer with the Chinese Progression Association (CPA), which hosted teach-ins and supported first-generation Chinese American workers to apply for COVID-19 relief funds, and fundraised to support future generations of Asian American organizers. During high school, Gao served as a youth leader of Movement of Justice & Organizing (MOJO), a social justice leadership development program at CPA, organizing around the “Our Healing in Our Hands” campaign. Her efforts culminated in San Francisco’s Board of Education allocating $1.6 million to tackle the institutionalized stigma of mental health among youth of color. Through her studies at UW, Gao is dedicated to deepening an intersectional understanding of labor justice, informed by her activism.

SAMANTHA THOMPSON, GEOGRAPHY
Thompson’s dissertation research explores the role of care labor in response to housing affordability crises. With a focus on rent control movements, Thompson’s work will illustrate transnational interconnectedness between housing and labor movements in the US and Canada. Upholding her degree, Thompson intends to continue research that focuses on tenants’ rights, housing justice, and the significance of labor organizing. Thompson’s doctoral project builds on her master’s thesis which demonstrates how collective action is enacted in non-profit housing for working low-income families in Oakland. In addition to her academic interests, Thompson’s commitments to housing and labor justice movements are exemplified through her activism. Currently, she serves as Head Steward and is an active member of University of Washington Global Equity Team, a non-profit organization that collaborates with policymakers and organizers and empowers affected individuals to engage with social systems. Gao hopes to contribute to long-term solutions that will serve all who provide caring labor.

GUNDLACH SCHOLARSHIP IN LABOR STUDIES
The Gundlach Scholarship honors IWW member and labor activist Jean Gundlach, her brother and former UW Professor Ralph Gundlach – a victim of communist witch hunts in the late 1940s—and their siblings, Wilford and Betty.

SELENA CALDERA, LAW & POLICY, UW TACOMA
Caldera’s academic trajectory is a culmination of her extensive and diverse organizing experience. During her time serving in the Iraq War, Caldera played a crucial role in anti-war organizing and organizing against racial violence in the military. Subsequently, Caldera successfully unionized from the ground up a canvassing organization in which workers were treated poorly and being paid poverty wages. During her studies at UW, Caldera will engage with local labor movements as much as possible. As a seasoned organizer, Caldera continues to fight for all working people by offering organizing workshops to workers who seek to build collective power. After completing her undergraduate degree, Caldera plans to go to law school to become a labor lawyer and provide legal counsel for burgeoning labor campaigns.
FRANK JENKINS JR. FELLOWSHIP IN LABOR STUDIES
This award honors the legacy of Frank Jenkins Jr., a lifelong civil rights and union rights activist. Jenkins was one of the first African Americans to hold a leadership role within Seattle’s International Longshore and Warehouse Union, Local 19, which created the award.

DIANA VERGARA, BUSINESS/ POLITICAL SCIENCE
An incoming undergraduate, Vergara aspires to become a political leader and a fearless advocate for Black, Latinx, and immigrant populations in Washington State. Vergara started participating in labor, immigrant justice, and feminist movements at a young age. Currently, she is a core member of Centro, Latinx. Vergara has been advocating for more ethnic art in the state capital and the ratification of House Bill 1372 which requires the removal of statues upholding white supremacy. At UW, Vergara will continue her activism in local politics, get involved on campus essays or multimedia projects on a labor history topic produced by UW students.

PNLHA BEST PROJECTS IN LABOR HISTORY PRIZES
Made possible by the Pacific Northwest Labor History Association, these awards honor the finest essays or multimedia projects on a labor history topic produced by UW students.

Liam Collins, Point: Defiance Podcast
Collins’ podcast, the final project for his major in Community, Environment, and Planning, speaks with four scholars about major civil disturbances that have shaped the labor history of the Pacific Northwest: the anti-South Asian riots of 1907; the 1936 IWW Everett Massacre; the Yakama KRK’s anti-Filipino campaign of 1927; and Native American fish-ins and occupations of the 1960s and 70s.

Selma El-Badawi, The Sweet Fruit of Labor: An Examination of Black Labor Unions in South Africa
Focusing on the interconnections between struggles for labor rights by Black workers and the anti-apartheid movement, El-Badawi’s essay traces the history of Black unions in South Africa across the latter half of the 20th century.

Kelly Maldonado, A Comparative Essay on Slavery and Penal Labor
Pairing historical accounts of slavery alongside analysis of contemporary regimes of work in prisons, Maldonado draws critical connections between the two forms of labor, and outlines the case for abolition of both slave labor and prisons, past and present.

Amrine White, Unstable Foundations: Poor Whites and the Economic Fight for Emancipation
During the Civil War era, poor white workers held a range of views on the end of slavery. White’s historical essay, written for an Honors seminar in Political Science, details the economic motivations of white workers during the period, their relationships with Northern and Southern elites, and the key roles they played in political coalitions both for and against emancipation.

Yasmin Ahmed, Geography
This fall, in addition to their ongoing work as the Bridges Center’s Assistant Director of Student and Community Engagement, Ahmed will enter the UW Masters program in Geography. In their graduate work, they will explore the exploitation and enslavement of migrant workers on the coast of Thailand and the International Constitutional network of seafood industry giants that work together to seemingly promote fair and sustainable trade through the Seafood Business for Ocean Stewardship (SeAS). Ahmed will investigate how the rapid expansion of industrial aquaculture impacts the exploitation of communities, labor, and the environment on land and at sea. Ahmed’s work builds on the research they undertook since 2019 with Uprooted and Rising (UNR) Seattle, a chapter of a national BIPOC network dedicated to food sovereignty and justice work. In this study, they examined the issues revolving around genetically engineered salmon and industrial aquaculture in the United States.

Ragya Kaul, History
Kaul hails from the University of Texas at Dallas where they studied International Political Economy with a Minor in History. At the UW, they plan to study class solidarity as a way to reach across racial lines to counter state-authored violence specifically in the American West during the early 20th century. Kaul is particularly interested in the mutually reinforcing implications of immigration law, racial makeup of the workforce, and social dynamics around race in rural organizing through examining leftist newspapers. Currently, they are working on a research project titled, “Smash the Color Line: Class Solidarity and Campaigns against Anti-Miscegenation Law,” which investigates race-based regulations by exploring the relationship between immigration, labor, and citizenship through the lens of multiracial activism.

Best undergraduate papers in labor studies prizes
These prizes recognize the finest essays in Labor Studies written by UW undergraduate students.

Hazel Brown, Right-to-Work Laws: Implementation and Effects
Written as part of a fellowship with the Center for American Progress and Public Policy, Brown’s sophisticated study examines connections between state “right-to-work” laws and rates of state unionization and economic growth.

Yogasai Gazula, Always On-Demand: How the Gig Economy is Changing Traditional Work Practices
Richly drawing upon theories of capitalism, Gazula’s International Studies seminar paper describes the rise of new technologies and the “gig economy” and evaluates their implications for workers.

Best papers in labor studies prizes
These prizes recognize the finest non-history papers on Labor Studies topics written by UW graduate students.

Star Berry, University Staff: Indigenous Sovereignty and Justice Online
Written for her doctorate in Education at UW Tacoma, Berry’s thesis evaluates how the websites of research universities represent their Indigenous, Transgender, and Disabled staff in severely limited ways, treating people as a commodity to appear institutionally diverse and inclusive while disregarding staff-led community grassroots efforts in practice and research.

Julia Lund, the Intergenerational Impact of Precarious Work
Lund’s Masters thesis in Public Health addresses the impacts of working conditions on workers’ families, using long-term household survey data to show an association between the quality of parents’ employment—including job stability, pay and benefits, and unionization—and the behavioral health of their children.

Best projects in labor studies prizes
Projects and papers are available at labor.uw.edu/bestprojects.

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VOLUME 31 • FALL 2021
IN MARCH 2021, THE BRIDGES CENTER LAUNCHED the Building a Movement (BAM) Labor Internship, an exciting paid internship program that connects undergraduate students at the University of Washington with the local labor movement by partnering with various community organizations.

BAM offers students, especially those considering labor-related careers, a broader understanding of what work in the labor movement can look like through firsthand experience. In addition, the program includes weekly meetings among interns and Bridges Center staff, curated readings on labor, and a culminating creative project. Ultimately, BAM aims to bridge the gap between academia and local organizing, creating a vibrant community of undergraduate students interested in issues of labor, and expand the scope of the Bridges Center’s community engagement.

A cohort of eight exceptional students kicked off the very first quarter of BAM in Spring 2021: Andrew Jawort, Eva Hudak, Jakar Delacruz, Jasmine Fernandez, Kaia Corry, Rachel Sun, Shoab Laghari, and Liana Phan. Each student paired up with one of four participating community organizations including Seattle COVID-19 Oral History Project (SCOHP), Massage Parlor Outreach Program (MPOP) / API Chaya, UNITE HERE Local 8, and UW United Students Against Sweatshops (USAS). Over the course of the quarter, experienced activists joined the BAM interns to discuss their work in the labor movement, including longtime organizer Cindy Domingo, and UW alums Quinn Rao (currently working with UFCW 21) and JM Wong (of the Seattle Office for Civil Rights).

While sharing a commitment to social justice, students were diverse in terms of their experience with and prior knowledge of labor issues before joining BAM. Yasmine Ahmed, Assistant Director of Student and Community Engagement at the Bridges Center, shared that “Students from all backgrounds, disciplines, and experience in labor organizing are welcome, given the breadth and relevance of labor to a wide range of social justice issues.” Thus, Ahmed strongly encourages students to apply regardless of their familiarity with labor organizing or labor studies, as long as they are interested in social justice.

Reflecting on their BAM internship, students expressed deep appreciation for the sense of community the program helped foster among students and with host organizations. Eva Hudak, who worked with UW USAS, shared that “Being a group of people who are passionate about the same things that you are passionate about” made BAM a particularly valuable experience. Jasmine Fernandez, who was involved with SCOHP, was thrilled about the opportunity to “center my work around being involved in movement spaces, being on the ground talking to people.”

Students spoke highly of BAM as a professionally and personally meaningful experience enabling them to pursue hands-on work that aligns with their values, academic interests, and life experiences, while being compensated for their time and labor. Jakar Delacruz, a BAM intern with SCOHP, shared that the labor movement, and BAM in extension, allowed them to “take control of [their] agency in a world that constantly victimizes [them]” because of their intersecting identities.

After a successful inaugural quarter of BAM, the Bridges Center expects the program to grow and evolve. Based on feedback from Spring 2021 BAM interns, in future rotations, Ahmed hopes to organize in-person action days so that students can participate in labor rallies and events around the city as a collective. Through BAM, the Bridges Center will continue to build relationships with local labor organizations, co-creating the future directions of BAM with students and community organizers.
UNITED STUDENTS AGAINST SWEATSHOPS.

LEO IN HIS STUDENT ACTIVIST DAYS WITH work of caring for others. an invisible sector of our region and broader nation, those who do the complicated and challenging often precariously documented. Using digital storytelling methods, this research highlights and centers labor market participation and altered perceptions about employment.

Fowle and Beach’s study will examine individuals’ experiences in the labor market after participating wage garnishment, driver’s license suspension, occupational restrictions, and even jail. More recently, some courts have created opportunities for individuals to reduce or eliminate their court-ordered debt. Fowles and Beach’s study will examine individuals’ experiences in the labor market after participating.

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Matthew Fowle, Evans School of Public Policy & Governance

Lindsey Beach, Department of Sociology

Can ‘Reversing Punishment’ Support Labor Force Participation? Exploring the Labor Consequences of Court-Ordered Debt Relief

Monetary sanctions are a pervasive form of punishment throughout the criminal legal process. Over time, unpaid monetary sanctions may lead to incarceration and eviction. To make matters worse, fines and fees can be used by local, state, and federal agencies to fund essential services, making the effects of punishment even more pronounced.

The overall impact of monetary sanctions on individuals is well documented. In Washington State, approximately 30% of adults have outstanding warrants for fines and fees, and the consequences of such warrants can be severe, including the loss of employment.

Our research will explore the pathways that inevitably lead individuals to become debtors, and the impact of monetary sanctions on individuals’ labor force participation. We will develop a theoretical framework and identify the key factors that influence individuals’ ability to participate in the labor force.

Allison Goldberg, Department of Sociology

Resilience and Collective Resistance: Mutual Aid During COVID-19

During times of crisis, how do people re-imagine modes of labor? Mutual aid (MA) offers a robust area to investigate this question. As activist scholar Dean Spade writes, MA generally refers to “collective coordination to meet each other’s needs.” From an awareness that the systems we have in place are not going to meet them,” Goldberg’s research examines MA in the form of neighborhood-based grocery operations in Brooklyn, New York during COVID-19. Through interviews and participant observation, this MA-rich examines the ways in which MA is connected to other forms of collective action to address inequality, including reconstituting labor.

Olivea Orosco, Department of Geography

Essential and Vulnerable: Latino Health Care Workers in the COVID-19 Pandemic

Inspired by New York based artist Aya Brown’s portraits of frontline workers, Orosco’s research explores the lives of home care aides: as people, as community members, as those who are deemed artistically worthy of being rendered and as #HealthcareHeroes. Working within her personal networks, Orosco will conduct testimonials with home care aides (HCA) in the South Sound, a sector composed of predominantly immigrant women of color, often precariously documented. Using digital storytelling methods, this research highlights and centers an invisible sector of our region and broader nation, those who do the complicated and challenging work of caring for others.

Lauren Pittkins, College of Education

Teaching the Roslyn Cemeteries: Connecting labor, race and immigration through place based curriculum design

Pittkins and Anke-Marlac’s project asks how a historically situated, critically oriented, place-based curriculum can contribute to a greater understanding of the intersection of labor, race and immigration in Washington State history. The project focuses first on archival and historical research for developing a standards-aligned curriculum for 4th and 7th grades in Washington State centered around Roslyn’s historical cemeteries and their significance.

Yuying Xie, Department of Geography

Inequality, racial capitalism, and labor rights: Transnational workers in China’s English Language Training Industry

In the past few years, the English Language Training (ELT) industry in China experienced remarkable prosperity and created a significant demand for foreign language teachers, recruiting and employing an increasingly diverse workforce. This means more people from different racial and ethnic backgrounds are working in China, with many of them ending up in low-end precarious occupations. Xie’s research explores the new dynamics of transnational workers in China. Combining two groups of interviewees on racial capitalism and China’s labor conditions, the project intends to explore foreign workers in the ELT sector with a specific focus on their wages, labor rights, and social welfare benefits.

Michele Cadigan, Alyiah Turner, and Maxine Wright, Department of Sociology

Racializing Institutional Boundaries: The Case of the CHAZ/CHOP

Cadigan, Turner, and Wright’s study investigates the response of businesses in the Capitol Hill Autonomous Zone / Capitol Hill Organized Protest (CHAZ/CHOP) area in Seattle, Washington during the twin pandemics of COVID-19 and state-sanctioned violence and police brutality. The study will examine how business owners have leveraged the current political climate in setting forth an ideology around racial justice and equity in their daily operations. It will also evaluate the moral tensions that may arise between employers and employees that might lead to a breakdown in company morale and integration. The study will interview 20 small business owners and 30 employees across businesses in the Capitol Hill area.

Matthew Fowle, Evans School of Public Policy & Governance

Lindsey Beach, Department of Sociology

Can ‘Reversing Punishment’ Support Labor Force Participation? Exploring the Labor Consequences of Court-Ordered Debt Relief

Monetary sanctions are a pervasive form of punishment throughout the criminal legal process. Over time, unpaid monetary sanctions may lead to incarceration and eviction. To make matters worse, fines and fees can be used by local, state, and federal agencies to fund essential services, making the effects of punishment even more pronounced.

Our research will explore the pathways that inevitably lead individuals to become debtors, and the impact of monetary sanctions on individuals’ ability to participate in the labor force.

Allison Goldberg, Department of Sociology

Resilience and Collective Resistance: Mutual Aid During COVID-19

During times of crisis, how do people re-imagine modes of labor? Mutual aid (MA) offers a robust area to investigate this question. As activist scholar Dean Spade writes, MA generally refers to “collective coordination to meet each other’s needs.” From an awareness that the systems we have in place are not going to meet them,” Goldberg’s research examines MA in the form of neighborhood-based grocery operations in Brooklyn, New York during COVID-19. Through interviews and participant observation, this MA-rich examines the ways in which MA is connected to other forms of collective action to address inequality, including reconstituting labor.

Olivea Orosco, Department of Geography

Essential and Vulnerable: Latino Health Care Workers in the COVID-19 Pandemic

Inspired by New York based artist Aya Brown’s portraits of frontline workers, Orosco’s research explores the lives of home care aides: as people, as community members, as those who are deemed artistically worthy of being rendered and as #HealthcareHeroes. Working within her personal networks, Orosco will conduct testimonials with home care aides (HCA) in the South Sound, a sector composed of predominantly immigrant women of color, often precariously documented. Using digital storytelling methods, this research highlights and centers an invisible sector of our region and broader nation, those who do the complicated and challenging work of caring for others.

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2021-2022 GRADUATE STUDENT RESEARCH GRANTS

2021-2022 CHARLES BERGQUIST LABOR RESEARCH GRANT

THIS GRANT HONORS THE MEMORY of the late Charles Bergquist, UW History professor emeritus and former holder of the Harry Bridges Endowed Chair. It is funded through an endowment created by Bergquist and his partner, fellow labor historian Hsiao-mei Hsiao. Following in the spirit of Bergquist’s scholarship, the grant recognizes graduate research that explores labor through an international, global, or transnational lens.

Jeehyun (Jenny) Lee, Department of Communication

What do others think about Asian creative labor? An investigation of transnational creative labor and algorithmic management of the platform economy

Lee’s project investigates the transnational and racial dimensions of the platformized cultural economy. In particular, this study aims to understand the experiences of Asian cultural producers from East Asia who create content for global audiences beyond their locality by addressing the following question: How do the algorithmic systems of global social media platforms structure the production of Asian creative labor? How do cultural producers perceive the algorithmic ranking and categorization of their work? How do they navigate through these algorithmic imaginations? Lastly, how does the algorithmic management of their work shape the symbolic and material value of Asian creative labor?

2021-2022 LABOR STUDIES WORKING GROUPS

The Bridges Center’s Working Group program provides funds for projects that create meaningful labor research collaborations between UW faculty and the larger labor community.

Marissa Baker, Environmental and Occupational Health Sciences

Hendrik Meisch, Health Services

COMMUNITY PARTNER: Mary Keefe, Business Agent, Teamsters Local 763

EWT Well Being and Quality of Life Working Group

Emergency Medical Technicians (EMTs) are a vital component of an emergency medical services system. Yet EMTs in Washington State are not paid a living wage, face burnout and stress, work demanding hours with limited weekends and holidays off, and often encounter violence at work. In collaboration with Teamsters Local 763, this project will collect and analyze survey data to investigate the determinants of well-being, mental health, and quality of life of EMTs in Washington State during the COVID-19 pandemic. Additionally, researchers will work with EMTs and Teamsters Local 763 to identify and disseminate policy recommendations that could be implemented by the employer, union, or on a city or county-wide scale.

Kim England, Geography

COMMUNITY PARTNERS: Margaret Diddams, Research and Policy Analyst, SEIU 775, and the Seattle Coalition (a collective of domestic worker organizations, domestic employer groups, policy attorneys, and academics)

The Employment Conditions of Domestic Workers in Seattle

Domestic workers (house cleaners, nannies, home care workers, and gardeners) have long been excluded from many of the employment and labor protections enjoyed by other workers. Domestic workers are geographically scattered, hidden behind the doors of private homes, often isolated and unaware of their labor rights. Seattle’s landmark July 2018 Domestic Workers Ordinance strengthened the labor rights of domestic workers in Seattle. This Working Group (which includes domestic workers) will develop a demographic analysis of the intersectional inequalities facing domestic workers (compared with other workers, they are more likely to be women, and from BIPOC and immigrant communities). Second, the group will analyze data collected in a survey of Seattle’s domestic workers and employers asking about their experiences and opinions regarding employee benefits. Finally, the Working Group will generate policy recommendations around better benefits for domestic workers, such as paid sick leave and paid time off, with the goal of improving the working conditions of these workers.

2021-2022 LABOR RESEARCH VOLUME 31 • FALL 2021
Carrie Freshour, Geography and P. Joshua Griffin, American Indian Studies  
Labor, Race, and Indigeneity in Washington’s Maritime Blue Strategy  
(ORIGINAL FUNDED 2020-2023, ADDITIONAL FUNDING AWARDED 2021-2022)

In January 2019, Washington State Governor Jay Inslee and a host of stakeholders gathered at the Seattle waterfront to launch the “Maritime Blue Strategy.” This strategy presents a vision of economic growth centered on environmentally friendly “blue growth” mechanisms for rapid workforce development and new mobilizations of expertise and capital. Through interviews, surveys, and community engagement, Freshour and Griffin’s research will trace the development and effects of Maritime Blue on labor, environmental justice, and BIPOC communities of the Salish Sea, investigating ways to address global climate change and pursue economic development while confronting past and ongoing forms of settler colonialism. What might worker solidarity, environmental sustainability, climate change policy, and other coastal movements for environmental justice mean in a world that is rapidly shifting to a new maritime economy? Freshour and Griffin’s research will explore this question while also considering the implications for BIPOC communities of color who are experiencing a disproportionate economic impact of the pandemic.

Lilian Liu, Department of Environmental and Occupational Health Sciences  
Assessing Stakeholder Engagement in Labor Policy: The Washington Emergency Rule to Protect Workers from Wildfire Smoke

After the devastating wildfire episode in September 2020 in Washington State, the Washington Department of Labor & Industries (L&I) filed an “emergency rule” that increases protection for outdoor workers exposed to smoke. During last year’s smoke episode, many outdoor workers were classified as essential workers who continued to work despite risk of infection from COVID-19. Prior to this rule, employers in Washington were not required by state or federal agencies to provide respiratory protection to workers. Liu’s study will assess stakeholders’ input on the L&I’s rule-making process and evaluate reactions to the new emergency rule in the upcoming wildfire season. This project utilizes interviews, surveys, and content analysis and asks: (1) What motivated the rule development, and what positions did labor and industry organizations have on the rule? (2) How important were similar rules from other states in Washington’s rule establishment? (3) What were the potential challenges in emergency rule implementation this year, and did stakeholders feel it was effective in worker protection? (4) To what extent was equity considered in the rule development and implementation given the overlapping concerns of essential work, the COVID-19 pandemic, and disproportionate risks for people of color in smoke-affected communities and industries?

Lisa Manzer, UW Center for Women’s Welfare, School of Social Work  

Working parents in Washington are struggling in the face of a mounting disparity between rising costs and stagnating wages. The uneven recovery from the Great Recession and 2020-2021 pandemic-related economic downturn have exacerbated economic inequality, putting new pressures on family budgets. Manzer’s project will explore how the proposed policies of the Biden administration’s American Families Plan will impact Washington State working families’ ability to cover their basic needs. The study asks: How will proposed policy changes, such as tax credit increases, reduce low-wage-worker taxes, and childcare affordability impact the economic well-being of working Washington families? Which groups will be most affected by these changes, and will these proposals benefit working mothers and families of color who are experiencing disproportionate economic impact of the pandemic? Ultimately, this research informs discussions surrounding how child-focused investments can increase family income and stability and disrupt the trend of increasing economic inequality.

Elizabeth Pellelier, Evans School of Public Policy and Governance  
Disparities in Parental Employment Instability Around A Birth: Evidence from Washington State

Parents, especially mothers, often experience unstable employment around the birth of a child, as parents may take paid or unpaid leave from work, work fewer hours, voluntarily leave a job, or even be fired. As a result, households often face reduced income around the time a baby is born – precisely the time they need increased resources to cover expenses for the new child’s needs. In Washington State, as in the United States more broadly, sporadic and unequal access to paid parental and other affordable childcare can have severe employment instability around birth has disproportionate effects on factors such as sex, race, and employment status. Using linked birth and employment records between 2010 and 2016 from the Washington Merged Longitudinal Administrative Data, Pellelier’s project will examine which parent demographic, socioeconomic, and employment characteristics are most associated with increased risk of employment instability around birth.

Rachel Salt, School of Medicine  
A Survey of Washington State Employers’ Policies for Returning to Work After Cancer Treatment: A First Step in Reform

Close to 400,000 people in Washington State are currently living with cancer. During cancer treatment, patients often take medical leave or need adjustments in their work. Following treatment, survivors report a desire and need to re-engage in employment for financial needs, a sense of productivity and recovery, and return to their normal lives, including a return to work. However, the Washington State Department of Labor and Industries has no system in place that provides or requires recommendations to employers to help cancer survivors get back to work, and cancer survivors are 1.4 times more likely to be unemployed than individuals without health concerns. To address this policy gap, Salt will conduct a survey among 200 employer representatives in Washington to examine employer practices and identify how state policies might facilitate successful returns to work for cancer survivors.

Elyn Terry, Evans School of Public Policy and Governance  
Can a Guaranteed Income Program in Washington State Mitigate Resource Deprivation and Decrease Racial Inequality?

The economic fallout of the COVID-19 pandemic has fallen unequally across populations, revealing how the present social safety net in the United States is not designed to be responsive to economic downturns. Policies such as social distancing, stay-at-home orders, and mandated shutdowns led to concentrated job losses among low-wage workers, racial and ethnic minorities, and women. The responsiveness of social programs, meanwhile, was reduced by work requirements, asset tests, stigma, and large lags between application and receipt of funds. Terry’s study will evaluate how these problems might be addressed in Washington State through a Guaranteed Income Program, which has shown promise in creating financial stability and increasing employment outcomes by guaranteeing recipients an income sufficient to live on.

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LAPOR STUDIES AT UW BOTHELL AND TACOMA
THE HARRY BRIDGES CENTER FOR LABOR STUDIES continues to sponsor the development of Labor Studies initiatives at the University of Washington Bothell and Tacoma campuses, where dedicated faculty are spearheading new courses, research, and more.

Making Trouble: Year Two of the Labor Solidarity Project at UW Tacoma
Tacoma has long been identified as a labor town. Since its inception in 1990, the University of Washington Tacoma (UWT) has reflected its urban community and base of working and first-generation students. The UWT’s Labor Solidarity Project (LSP) was founded in the Fall of 2019 with the mission of increasing the institutional presence of Labor Studies on campus and fostering collaborative initiatives between our faculty, students, and community partners. With the support of the Harry Bridges Center, the LSP continues to pursue these goals, steadily expanding its influence and impact throughout the South Puget Sound while fostering an intellectual community on campus.

The 2020-21 academic year was unprecedented. Against the backdrop of a pandemic, mass demonstrations demanding racial and economic justice, and a historically contentious electoral cycle, we were forced to reimagine how our work could support our students, community, and colleagues. Together, the LSP continued to pursue its central objectives of increasing labor education opportunities on campus, funding intersectional research initiatives focusing on the region’s workers, and deepening our partnerships with the local labor community.

Labor in Times of Crisis: A Collaborative Colloquium at UW Bothell
As the educational institution with both the highest levels of minority students and Pell grant-working-class students within the University of Washington system, UW Bothell has a special interest in addressing questions of economic structure, political and social injustice, and equity for workers. This past academic year, the UW Bothell Labor Colloquium entered its second year of programming by focusing on organizing a colloquium with the theme of “Labor in Times of Crisis,” a year-long series featuring visiting scholars and artists exploring the exacerbated economic fault lines for working-class lives in times of crisis.

Labor Studies at UW Bothell and Tacoma

Education
LSP faculty regularly teach labor-related courses as part of UWT’s Ethnic, Gender and Labor Studies Major on topics ranging from women and work to Latinx social movements. A Night included Sonia De La Cruz and Tanya Velasquez’s “Black Lives Matter Collaborative Storytelling Project,” which saw students create media about their experiences of race and racism (see uw.pressbooks.pub/blmstorytelling). In Fall 2020, Mary Miller offered "Making Trouble," a seminar series open to UWT students and wider communities that featured nine guest speakers, both academics and activists. All seminar sessions were recorded and added to a playlist on the LSP’s YouTube channel (see tinys.cc/LSPYouTube).

Research
The LSP was proud to support two new faculty research projects this year. Mark Pendras’ study “Industrial Rethinking for Working Class Sustainability” explores new environmental strategies for industrial retention and expansion, while Margaret Griesse is leading a new collaborative project on Universal Basic Income. Faculty member Michael Honey spent the year at a Radcliffe Institute Fellow at Harvard University, where he is writing a memoir of his years in the labor and civil rights movements. He also appeared with Stuart Appelbaum, president of the union organizing Amazon workers in Alabama, AFT president Randi Weingarten, and New York State Senator Charles Schumer for a commemoration of Martin Luther King’s birthday and what it means to unionists.

Stay Connected
LSP’s activities will continue in Fall 2021 with a third edition of Alex Miller’s online seminar series. To sign up and receive announcements about upcoming events, follow LSP on Facebook and Twitter (@UWT_Labor) and on the web at labor.uw.edu/uwtacoma.
Healing in Crisis: Honesty, Solidarity, and Transformational Change

2021 Worker Memorial Day, Keynote Speech by April Sims, Washington State Labor Council, AFL-CIO

We are a community of workers committed to building power for working people. Our work is about showing up for one another, standing with those who are struggling, and speaking truth to power. We are a community of workers who believe in the dignity and worth of all people, and we are committed to building a world where the costs of living can be met by all, and where the promise of a better future is realized for all.

On June 22, 2021, the UW Libraries union held its first formal election, and on July 14, the union was certified by PERC. This is a significant moment in the history of the UW Libraries, and it represents a major victory for workers and their families.

The election was a testament to the power of solidarity and the strength of the labor movement. The union was able to win because of the hard work and dedication of all those who stood together to make it happen.

As we celebrate this victory, we must also remember the workers who lost their lives on the job, and we must continue to fight for a world where all workers can live and work with dignity.

Today, we honor the memory of those who lost their lives on the job, and we reaffirm our commitment to building a world where all workers can live and work with dignity.

Let us remember that we are stronger together. Let us remember that we have the power to build a world where all workers can live and work with dignity.
JUNETEENTH 2021: HONORING THE LEGACY OF FRANK JENKINS JR.

ON SATURDAY, JUNE 19, 2021, FOLKS GATHERED in Seattle’s Central District neighborhood around the former home of the late Frank Jenkins Jr. to celebrate the Juneteenth holiday by honoring the life and legacy of the second generation longshoreman and International Longshore and Warehouse Workers Union (ILWU) leader who stewarded the fight for racial equity on the Pacific Northwest waterfront.

Jenkins, who was of Black and Filipino heritage, passed away in 1974 after 49 years working on the Seattle waterfront. He was one of the very first Black people to hold a leadership position in the ILWU, and is recognized each year with the awarding of the Frank Jenkins, Jr. Fellowship in Labor Studies by the Harry Bridges Center.

The event was organized by the Seattle Chapter of the A. Philip Randolph Institute (APIR), the Committee to Stop Police Terror and End Systemic Racism—Seattle, and rank and file members of the ILWU. Gabriel Peñal, APIR Seattle Chapter President, opened the event with remarks about the importance of remembrance and recognition, stating that Jenkins, through his lifetime commitment, struggles, and leadership, had opened the door for Black union membership and entry into the waterfront industry.

Community members and workers from multi-generational union families then came up to share their stories of the Jenkins’ house, the surrounding community, and the strength, benefits, and community that their union jobs offered to them. Brian Jenkins, Frank’s grandson, took to the steps. “For those of you who don’t know, this house was a union hall. For the fire department, for the garbage men—the leadership, had opened the door for Black union membership and entry into the waterfront industry.”

Kim England, Director of the Harry Bridges Center and holder of the Harry Bridges Endowed Chair, also spoke. England told how Frank’s contributions went largely unseen during his lifetime, but that his memory is maintained now through the annual fellowship awarded in his name, which was established by Jenkins’ colleagues and other rank and file members of ILWU Local 19. “We are thrilled to have the Frank Jenkins Jr. Fellowship in Labor Studies for students at the University of Washington who have dedicated their education to the labor movement,” England said.

Speaking next was Cindy Domingo, a second generation Filipino American and longtime labor activist, who echoed England’s comments. Though the impact of Jenkins’ work stretched across the labor movement in the Pacific Northwest, she had not heard his name until the fellowship was created. “There’s certain people you wish you would’ve known, and Frank would have been one of them. Such a courageous man who believed in building bridges across communities for the betterment of working-class people. Frank’s name should be a household name in this city, in the ILWU movement, in the Filipino-American history books, and in African-American history books.”

Fellow ILWU Local 19 President Herald Ugles, a rank and file union member, sits on the Jenkins Fellowship review committee. Jenkins’ picture, Ugles told the crowd, hangs in the union president’s office, and “when I had the honor to sit in that seat for four and a half years, I would sit at that desk where I know these other great members did, every day I would look up at Frank Jenkins.” In creating the Jenkins Fellowship, Ugles said, the ILWU wished to honor Jenkins’ work by supporting students who are committed to labor and social justice struggles.

Paulette Thompson, a PhD student in Education at the UW and an inaugural recipient of the Fellowship, came up to the stage to thank the ILWU for the creation of this award. “This has meant a lot to us and the work that we do. I believe there is a transformation that teachers go through when they understand their role in the labor movement. Our working conditions are our students’ learning conditions. Thinking about growing up here in Seattle, I did not learn about Frank Jenkins until the fellowship was created. I did not learn about the great Afro-Filipino Frank Jenkins. And I think it’s important that we have an understanding of what’s happened in the past, what’s happening now, and where we’re going in the future.”

To end the event, Thompson shared words from author Clint Smith on the importance of Juneteenth: “When I think of Juneteenth I think of the generations of Black folks who fought for a freedom they knew they might never see themselves, but who fought for it anyway. It’s a reminder that we do not always try to build a better world so that we can see it, but because someday, someone will.”

DISTINGUISHED SUPPORTER OF LABOR STUDIES AWARD — SENATOR KAREN KEISER

IN 2021, WE ARE PRIVILEGED to honor Senator Karen Keiser, a longtime supporter of the workforce in Washington State, and in recognition of her contribution to the Harry Bridges Endowed Chair, this award. Named in honor of the labor lawyer who led the effort to found the Harry Bridges Endowed Chair, this award recognizes members of the community who make the work of Labor Studies at the University of Washington possible.

Senator Keiser represents District 39 in South King County. Senator Keiser was appointed to the Washington House of Representatives in 1996 and served there until her appointment to the Senate in 2001. Her favorite item in her Olympia office is a framed picture of the quote from labor organizer Mother Jones, “Pray for the Dead and Fight Like Hell for the Living”—and for twenty-five years, she has done just that in the legislature. A fearless advocate of working people, she was a pivotal leader in ratifying Washington State’s 2002 Family Care Act which allows workers to use their paid leave to care for family members, and has since maintained leadership on healthcare issues. Collaborating with the Obama White House, she was the prime sponsor of the law to establish Washington State’s health care exchange and fully implement the Affordable Care Act in the state in 2010. Within two years of implementation, the percentage of those uninsured dropped from 16% to 5%. Senator Keiser also played a crucial role in achieving bipartisan cooperation to instate Washington’s nation-leading Paid Family and Medical Leave program in 2017. The program was fully implemented in 2020 just in time for COVID-19 and greatly benefited low-wage workers.

Senator Keiser has watched the Bridges Center grow over the years, having attended some of the very first of the Center’s events in the early 1990s. Since joining the Bridges Center’s Visiting Committee in 2020, the Senator has participated in Center events and advocated for Labor Studies. She is a passionate advocate for the Bridges Center and its mission to provide public programs and scholarship on labor history, education and community that are essential to deepening our understanding of what’s happened in the past, what’s happening now, and where we’re going in the future.

In the coming years, Senator Keiser hopes to achieve several policy wins for working people in Washington State. Currently, she is working to reform the apprenticeship training program to diversify the workforce by creating incentives for employers to hire women and communities of color throughout the process. In addition, Senator Keiser wants to build on the recent victories for farmworkers and other outdoor workers. She helped win overtime pay for farmworkers, who had previously been excluded from the Fair Labor Standards Act, and urged the state to issue an emergency rule that protects outdoor workers from extreme heat.

Senator Keiser just finished writing a book titled Getting Elected to the Easy Post, which is due to be published in Spring 2022 by Washington State University Press. The book is meant to be a guide for newly elected lawmakers and especially women and people of color who must confront enormous structural barriers in passing new laws to solve problems or improve their state. “You stand on other people’s shoulders,” Senator Keiser shared, “that’s all there is to it, whether it is your family, your father, or someone else, and you hold the shoulders for other people to stand on.”
ANNUAL AWARDS CELEBRATION & LABOR STUDIES FUNDRAISER

Tuesday, November 9, 2021 • 6:00pm – 7:30pm

Due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, the Labor Studies Awards Celebration will continue online this year. Please join us for a special evening on Zoom as we honor student and faculty achievements and raise funds for Labor Studies at the University of Washington.

• MEET OUR STUDENTS—the next generation of the labor movement. Learn about our faculty—and the latest Labor Studies research. And more!
• OUR KEYNOTE SPEAKER will be Kent Wong, Director of the UCLA Labor Center—a longtime model for collaboration between higher education and the labor movement.

Register Today!
The Awards Celebration is free and open to the public. To receive a Zoom link for the Awards Celebration livestream, registration is required. Please register by visiting labor.uw.edu/celebration

QUESTIONS? Contact the Bridges Center at (206) 543-7946, or e-mail hbcls@uw.edu. All donations are tax-deductible.

BUILDING A MOVEMENT LABOR INTERNSHIP—CREATIVE PROJECTS

In Spring 2021, The Harry Bridges Center launched the Building a Movement (BAM) Labor Internship, placing UW students with local labor organizations. At the end of their internships, students created creative projects reflecting on their experiences in the labor movement. To learn more about the BAM Labor Internship, turn to page 6. To view all the Creative Projects and read students’ full project statements, visit labor.uw.edu/bam

Shoaib Laghari, Modern Day Economics

Kaija Corry, "are you really satisfied?"

Liana Phan, Rest in Power

“...My journey to this point has been an emotional one that stemmed from deep feelings of anger and dissatisfaction, but most of all it has been one that has stemmed from love: love globally, love for the working class, love for my ancestors, love for my posterity, and love for myself. Now it is all about working together to reinvent and rebuild a life rooted in community and care that is absolutely possible.” – KAIJA CORRY, BAM PROJECT STATEMENT