



IWGB University of London

Branch Newsletter

Issue no. 1

July 2014

5-Day Garden Halls Strike

Members of the Independent Workers' Union of Great Britain (IWGB) at the University of London took strike action on 6-12 June over the loss of more than 80 jobs at the Garden Halls, student halls of residence near King's Cross.

Many of workers under threat of redundancy have been the most active in the 3 Cosas Campaign for Sick Pay, Holidays and Pensions.

Not one of the IWGB women activists has obtained a permanent position. We are considering further action, with the possibility of an employment tribunal claim for trade union victimization, and keeping open the option of balloting for further industrial action.

Our branch of the IWGB is demanding:

- a guarantee of no compulsory redundancies
- full and meaningful consultation with the IWGB
- the same wage levels, terms and conditions, and length of service for any workers transferred to contracts outside the UoL.

Contact the VC at vice-chancellor@london.ac.uk in support of our demands!



Above: Students hang banners outside Hughes Parry Hall, where IWGB members took strike action in June.

**#3
COSAS**

Press Coverage of our recent strike and the 3Cosas Campaign

The 3Cosas Campaign and our branch of the IWGB has, since the beginning, ran a public political campaign alongside regular periods of industrial action. We believe that our power as a union is ultimately rooted in the workplace but our ability to attract press coverage for protests, students and direction action has played a major role in putting pressure on the University of London—an institution always keen to uphold its reputation!

Here are some links to recent press coverage:

- **Why we prefer our immigrants to be invisible - The Observer**
- **Company Values - London Review of Books**
- **Support Crucial Battle - Solidarity & Workers' Liberty**
- **Fighting for a Future - Red Pepper**
- **Strike planned as 87 face redundancy across Garden Halls - London Student**

IWGB: Representing You!

As well as our central purpose to help workers to organise themselves, the University of London branch of the IWGB has been very active recently in representing members to the employer. We have run regular training sessions and now have 8 people trained to do casework!

If you need help at work contact
uol@iwgb.org.uk or call 07922810798

IWGB Branch fundraising

The University of London Branch of the IWGB has big plans for the year ahead, including continuing the 3Cosas Campaign for equal sick pay, holidays and pensions for all workers, running our language classes and, crucially, moving into new office space.

To do all this, as long as capitalism exists, we need to raise more money!

The best way for us to generate a stable income which will allow us to plan ahead is for members and supports to set up regular monthly Standing Orders to the branch.

If you support the aims and objectives of our campaign for equal conditions for all workers at the University of London, have been inspired by the 3Cosas Campaign and the IWGB, and want to see our work continue, then please consider making a regular donation.

To set up a Standing Order, contact our Treasurer Yvette Bailey at yvettebailey@iwgb.org.uk and let us know if you would like to give **£10, £20, £25 or even more!**

Thanks in advance for your solidarity.

Below: IWGB members on strike outside the University of London Senate House!

Support our strike fund!

The Garden Halls strike is over for now, and we'd like to say thank you to everyone for your massive support over the last week.

Workers were on strike for 5 days, which means outsourced IWGB workers have been on strike a total of 10 days in the past 8 months.

All previous strike days were compensated at full pay and that's our intention this time.

That means we have to raise thousands of pounds this summer and we need your help!

Our ability to give full strike pay will make a profound difference in whether we will be able to strike again in the future.

If you were able to donate to our strike fund, pass this message to your colleagues, or get your student union or trade union branch to pass a motion giving a donation you would be massively helping workers who could not be in a more vulnerable situation.

To donate, click the button to the left on the electric version of this newsletter, or if you are reading the printed version, contact our Treasurer Yvette Bailey at yvettebailey@iwgb.org.uk





The IWGB has been in conversation with LGBT officers in Abvakabo; a trade union affiliated to the

Dutch union confederation FNV. After seeking this advice, the branch is preparing Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) awareness and equality law training for all IWGB reps, to better enable us to tackle discrimination cases at work, and to represent LGBT union members.

We're also making changes to our website and plan to raise awareness in our recruitment strategy to make LGBT workers feel welcome in the union. We represent all workers, and no person should be made to feel excluded from the IWGB on the basis of sexual orientation.

For more details, contact Hannah Thompson:
HannahThompson@iwgb.org.uk

Language Classes!

The IWGB runs many educational programmes, teaching language and other skills to our members.

Many of our members will be soon enrolling in a programme organised by the UCL Language Centre.

Our Polish-speaking members have been making use of English classes at the University of London Union (ULU) too.

These are ongoing so if you want a place, see below for more details:

2–3.30pm, Fridays

ULU, second floor

Teacher: Rob Malas

(contact Magda Chytra to join: 07887 459648)

Our branch has recently set up an arrangement with the law firm OH Parsons. OH Parsons will take on personal injury claims we send them, for workers who are injured on the job. There will be no upfront costs, and the firm will charge 25% of damages if they win.

The firm will also provide some free legal advice from on employment matters at a monthly legal clinic. The first legal clinic was conducted on 18 June.

95% of OH Parsons's work is trade union-related so they are union-friendly and experts in their field!

Check out their website at:

<http://www.ohparsonscs.co.uk/>



As you can see above, the 3Cosas Campaign for sick pay, holidays and pensions that IWGB members have been running at the University of London has been awarded the Campaign of the Year by University College London Union (UCLU).

One major strength of the campaign has been the involvement of students at UCL and at other colleges across the University of London and the city more generally.

The IWGB branch at the University of London would like to thank UCLU for this award, and pay tribute to all the students, trade unionists and activists who have helped us in our campaign so far.

¡Hasta la Victoria Siempre!

Henry and Jason visit LabourStart in Berlin!

IWGB President Jason Moyer-Lee and University of London IWGB Branch Chair Henry Chango-Lopez visited the LabourStart "Global Solidarity Conference" in Berlin on 23-25 May.

The conference was hosted by the German trade union ver.di, and comprised nearly three days of plenaries and workshops covering a range of themes.

Henry spoke at the "Union strategies toward migrants" on behalf our branch and the 3Cosas campaign, and the conference provided a great opportunity to talk to trade union activists from across the world to share experiences, learn lessons and forge global solidarity between workers of all countries.

LabourStart is a campaigning and news website in more than 20 languages, maintained by volunteers across the world. As well as sharing news about the international labour movement, it runs online campaigns. Last year LabourStart generated over 1400 emails to the University of London Vice Chancellor in support of the 3 Cosas campaign!

Visit LabourStart at www.labourstart.org

Important branch contact information

If you need more information, have a problem at work, or want to get involved:

Branch Secretary: Catherine Morrissey
(catherinemorrissey@iwgb.org.uk) or call
07926879011

Branch Chair: Henry Chango Lopez
(henrychangolopez@iwgb.org.uk) or call
07922810798

Current officers (elected AGM April 2014)

Branch Chair: Henry Chango Lopez
Vice-Chair: Sonia Chura
Branch Secretary: Catherine Morrissey
Recruitment Officer: Hannah Thompson
Education Officer: Usman Tayyab (elected at June branch meeting)
Treasurer: Yvette Bailey
Second Treasurer: Alison Hunter
Communications Officer: Liam McNulty (elected May 2014 branch committee meeting)

For more information about the central IWGB:

Jason Moyer-Lee, President, Independent Workers of Great Britain (JasonMoyer-Lee@iwgb.org.uk) or call 07771783094

