

04/03/2025 [AllUnit] Take Action to Defend Education, Research, and Our Community!

Good morning!

Your labor unions—MSP, MTA, and NEA—are engaging in coordinated, member-led advocacy and action at the local, state, and national levels! We are pushing back against cuts to education and research funding, threats to academic freedom, and attacks on our most vulnerable community members. Are you ready to step up your activism? Become a Solidarity Team leader or sign up to come to one or more of the upcoming actions!

Solidarity Team

Our Solidarity Team is a brand-new organizing strategy to respond to escalating threats, and also to channel the enormous energy of our members to defend one another. Solidarity Team leaders pledge to be in regular contact with five or more other MSP members—they will share information on important mobilizations and will also hear from them about any need for support and bring those concerns back to MSP. If you are ready to become a Solidarity Team leader, please [fill out this form](#).

April Days of Action

Monday, 4/7 LGBTQIA+ Solidarity Meeting

12-1pm, Campus Center 904-08

Register here: <https://forms.gle/NXyzfj59qpWStMfM9>

Please join us to hear inspiring stories from union members who are organizing to fight back against attacks on the LGBTQIA+ faculty, staff, and students. Learn how our unions are building upon our cross-campus relationships to foster solidarity, keep our members safe, and hold our leaders accountable for making decisions that affect our autonomy, safety, and health.

Tuesday, 4/8 Kill the Cuts

Together with the national coalition Higher Ed Labor United, MSP is demanding that cuts to research funding be stopped. At the same time, [MTA is sending a delegation](#) to the MA legislature's Joint Committee on Ways and Means to call for **\$200 million dollars from Fair Share funds to support university research threatened by federal cuts**. Here in Amherst, we'll be mobilizing our members to write letters and make phone calls to state legislators to support the MTA effort! Planning to go to Boston to testify? [Reach out to the office](#) and let us know – we can help you coordinate with local members for a ride, and with the MTA in Boston. And if you do go to Boston to testify, join the [Kill the Cuts demonstration](#) at the Federal Building afterward!

Thursday, 4/10 MSP General Assembly – with contract action!

12:00-1:30 Amherst Room, Campus Center

After passing the budget and conducting elections, we will mobilize for a march to Whitmore to deliver MSP's demands for a fair contract now—with robust raises, increases to the floors, child care, and more!



Monday, 4/14 Freedman Lecture: How Can Universities Navigate the Current Moment?

4-5:30, Great Hall, Old Chapel

MSP is co-sponsoring this year's [Freedman Lecture](#) by [Robert Shibley](#), Special Counsel for Campus Advocacy at the Foundation for Individual Rights and Expression (FIRE), and [Hank Reichman](#), Former Chair of the American Association of University Professors' (AAUP) Committee A on Academic Freedom and Tenure, where they will discuss the future of higher education and academic freedom. This event will be held from 4:00 p.m. to 5:30 p.m., Great Hall, Old Chapel. [RSVP here](#).

Thursday, 4/17 National Day of Action for Higher Ed

In conjunction with academic unions and AAUP chapters across the country, MSP is mobilizing to defend our universities. Stop by our table in front of the Student Union to pick up a sticker and a poster, sign our banner, and learn more about how we can fight back together!

Tuesday, 4/22 Webinar on International Academic Workers' Rights

8:00 p.m., online

In collaboration with unions across the country, MSP is cosponsoring the webinar “Scholars, Not Spies: Fighting for International Academic Workers' Rights in an Era of Rising US-China Conflict.” [Register here](#).

Monday, 4/28 MSP International Working Group

12:00-1:30, room TBA

[RSVP here](#) for our final meeting of the spring semester. We will debrief the 4/21 webinar and continue strategizing to protect international faculty, students, and staff at UMass.

5/1 International Workers' Day

Stay tuned!!!

And here are a few of the highlights from earlier this semester!

February Days of Action

2/19 Building our Solidarity Team: MSP leadership held a meeting to address concerns regarding federal actions and to launch our Solidarity Team. Senator Ed Markey and MTA President, Max Page, attended part of our meeting virtually to address federal funding cuts that may affect research projects and personnel. Learn more and [sign up here](#).

2/21 Fighting for Climate Justice: Dr. Michael Mann (UPenn) delivered a talk, "[Winning the New Climate War](#)," to over 150 union members and activists in the Amherst Room. He discussed how unions are fighting back against strategies to "distract, deflect, attack, and divide the climate activist community." A key take-away: "There is still time for us to avert the worst impacts of climate change if we act now and we act boldly." MSP continues to advocate on the MSP campus and at the statehouse for investments in greener energy, buildings, and transportation.

2/28 Immigration 'Know Your Rights' workshop: Led by two MTA staff attorneys, we held a multi-union KYR workshop to inform members of their rights and empower them to take action in responding to ICE and other law enforcement agents. This workshop provided clear and practical guidance to exercising your rights with the understanding that everyone has different degrees of vulnerability. You may review the accompanying slides here: https://umassmsp.org/site/assets/files/1030/2024_02_28_umass_amherst_immigration_kyr_training.pdf

March Days of Action

3/14 Western Massachusetts Area Labor Federation (WMALF) Legislative Breakfast: At the start of the year's legislative session, hundred of members, representing dozens of local unions in Western Mass, gathered in Springfield to learn about organized labor's legislative priorities for 2025 and to discuss ways for elected officials to support our agenda.

3/24 MA Joint Committee on Ways and Means Hearing: MSP activists distributed leaflets to advocate for the MTA's budget proposal, which demands a reserve of \$200 million from the Fair Share surplus and additional funds from general Fair Share revenue to stave off [negative impacts](#) from federal actions. MTA President Max Page and MSP Co-President Marc Liberatore [gave testimony in support of the MTA's budget proposal](#).

At the National Level

Our national union, the NEA, is also actively working to protect and defend our educators and our communities. In addition to working with the AFT and coordinating locals across the country, the NEA has actively opposed the use of overbroad executive orders, [filing suit against the Trump administration's attempt to shutter the Department of Education](#) and [over the "Dear Colleague" letter threatening DEI efforts](#), and issuing legal guidance around [LGBTQIA+ rights](#) and the [gender identity executive order](#).