

New England Human Rights and Equity Committee Meeting

The Human Rights and Equity Committee, New England branch, kicked off its first discussion group meeting on Saturday June 9th at the Boston Newspaper Guild's headquarters in Quincy, Massachusetts.

Despite threatening weather equity seeking members began to arrive. In attendance were:

Glenda Buell, Living department The Boston Globe
Kathleen McCabe Zone reporter The Boston Globe
Rachel Leach, Outside Sales The Boston Globe
Marc Bell, Security The Boston Globe
Debbie Thomas, Human Rights Director The Newspaper Guild Washington.
Donna Marks, Sector 1 Vice President The Newspaper Guild
Dan Totten, Boston Newspaper Guild President
Scott Steeves, Boston Newspaper Guild Vice President.
Carl Younger, Executive Committee At Large and Human Rights and Equity Committee Rep. New England.

Hand outs included

Potential Topics for discussion.

Equity member unity and history.
Minorities in the workplace
The term minority
Minority employment and mentoring
Strategies for our future
Is affirmative action necessary in our current culture.

A list of available library videos to date

American Dream
At the River I stand
Harlan County USA
The Navigators
Salt of the earth
Vietnam, the Philippines and India
Chinese Americans
Cambodia, Thailand and Laos
Civil Rights Journey
Black Indians: an American story
African Contributions to the United States

Guidelines to live by from 16th century warrior and Kensei, (Sword-saint), Miyamoto Musashi.

- Think honestly within yourself in your dealings with all people.
- Constant Training is the only way to learn strategy
- Become familiar with every art you come across
- Understand the way of other discipline.
- Know the difference between right and wrong in all matters.
- Strive for inner judgment and an understanding of everything.
- See that which cannot be seen.
- Overlook nothing, Regardless of its Supposed insignificance.
- Do not waste time idling or second guessing after you have set your goals.

Sushi was served.

The discussion went immediately to the current effect on minorities at the Boston Globe due to its current policy on layoffs, buyouts and outsourcing. It appeared to the group that minorities had taken an extremely large hit at the company and there was talk of investigating the actual numbers lost.

The conversation continued with discussions on developing cultural events at the Boston local, inviting people of various cultures to share their cultural histories and traditions and letting people know that the Newspaper Guild includes all people under its umbrella.

The basic concept of the New England program was explained by Carl Younger.

“The idea is to create a family environment that members easily tap into. The Newspaper Guild is a large group of people with a lot of knowledge and resources yet to be tapped. The Newspaper Guild has members knowledgeable about a myriad of subjects.

If someone wants to learn Spanish or Tai Chi there are members in our unit knowledgeable in those subjects. Why don't we start networking with our brothers and sisters in our local across the country. Study groups could be formed for work or fun or we could just ask for advice when we need it. The untapped resources in our group are amazing and its about time we took advantage of them.”

Debbie Thomas, Human Rights director, Washington D.C. expanded on the concept by saying “ for those people that think the union is not for them we can show them that the union is more than they think it is. The Union is a big thing made up of individuals and we do a lot more than our day to day jobs.”

Carl Younger, local 31245, mentioned that the library part of the program is also an attraction to bring people in to learn about the union and our diverse cultures and history.

Dan Totten, President of the Boston Newspaper Guild local 31245, suggested that the library program could be expanded to open our arms to the public school system, to combine resources and to alleviate misconceptions of the union movement and history.

Scott Steeves, Vice President of the Boston Newspaper Guild local 31245, stated “ It shouldn't take someone to be brought up on charges to make them understand the importance of the union, some people don't realize what unions have gone through to bring us what we have.”

Debbie Thomas later spoke on the CWA plan to propose 4 diversity seats and reactions from the members to that proposal.

Marc Bell, Security the Boston News paper Guild stated,” we need to work harder to let members know what their rights are on the job and simplify the information in the contact book to make it more understandable.”

Donna Marks, Sector One Vice President for the New England District council said: “ as much as it is important to go back and learn history, unions are right now being reinvented. We should start doing some activist work right now. The way the laws are we have to get active in things like the employee free choice act.”

It was decided to have another meeting on Tuesday June 26th 5:30 pm, with: Program introduction and explanation by Carl Younger BNG Guest speaker Donna Marks, Sector 1 Vice President.

Russ Davis of Jobs for justice.

Feature film: Management on trial, Our workplace unraveling daily Hopefully, we can have Debbie Thomas attend as the Creator of the Human Rights and Equity Group. Her knowledge and insight are invaluable.

Kathy McCabe BNG agreed to take notes in future meetings