

DISTRICT COUNCIL 37 AND THE CUNY SCHOOL OF LABOR AND URBAN STUDIES ANNOUNCE EXPANDED PARTNERSHIP TO EDUCATE UNION MEMBERS

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The union plans to spend an additional \$300,000 annually to cover the costs of higher education for more members.

NEW YORK—District Council 37, in partnership with the CUNY School of Labor and Urban Studies (SLU), today announced a major expansion of education offerings for its 150,000 members. Beginning this fall, the union will fully fund a series of four college-level programs at both the undergraduate and graduate levels that will provide a comprehensive overview of union-side labor relations in the public sector. These courses will help students gain the practical skills and knowledge necessary for effective leadership in collective bargaining, union administration, organizing, and labor law. The agreement builds on DC 37’s existing education and workforce training programs that provide City workers with basic job skills, technical training, and leadership development, providing members with partial tuition reimbursement for college courses.

“DC 37 is dedicated to empowerment through education,” said **Henry Garrido, Executive Director, District Council 37, AFSCME**. “Since the beginning of our partnership with SLU in 2009, hundreds of our rank-and-file members have passed through the School’s doors, developing a deeper understanding of labor and labor relations, and acquiring the knowledge and practical skills needed to become effective leaders. This expanded partnership allows hundreds more to achieve their academic goals, advance their careers, and help build a more informed membership and a stronger union.”

Dr. Gregory Mantsios, Founding Dean of the School of Labor and Urban Studies, said, “This new initiative is historic. DC 37 is enrolling 100 members in labor relations programs, where they will be able to expand their knowledge, earn credentials to help them meet their personal and professional goals, and develop the skills and confidence to be effective leaders. With the School’s focus on public service and social justice, this new program is the right place to be for union members who want to advocate for change and make a difference.”

“The expansion of the DC 37 Education Fund’s partnership with CUNY SLU is another example of our commitment to the academic empowerment of our union membership. These labor relations and urban studies programs will produce more informed, involved and committed union leaders while laying the foundation for participants to earn bachelor’s and master’s degrees from the country’s largest public university system. It’s a clear win-win-win for us, CUNY SLU and District Council 37’s 150,000+ members,” said **Stephen Johnson, District Council 37 Education Fund Administrator**.

A certificate or degree in Labor Studies is an important credential for career advancement in a range of civil service and non-profit institutions. With credits that can be applied towards a CUNY B.A. or M.A., this new Labor Leadership program is a stepping-stone for completing a college education and/or a graduate degree. An academic credential in Labor Studies gives union activists the skills and the confidence for effective leadership in organizing, collective bargaining, union administration and research. Additionally, SLU provides a learning environment that connects students with a network of public servants, as well as with labor and community activists.

Members participating in this program may take a series of four-course (12- to 16-credit) programs fully funded by the DC 37 Education Fund. Credits earned will lead to SLU’s undergraduate and graduate certificates in labor relations, or can be applied to the School’s requirements for a bachelor’s degree in Urban Studies or the master’s degree in Labor Studies. This new program adds significantly to the educational options the Union makes available to its members. DC 37 members will be able to apply for the program beginning May 24th on the DC 37 website.

When fully executed, the agreement between the SLU and the union will provide tuition costs for up to 100 members a year at an estimated cost of \$300,000 annually.

For more information on the program, click [here](#).

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About District Council 37, AFSCME

District Council 37 is New York City’s largest municipal union representing over 150,000 active members and 50,000 retirees.

Since 1971, the DC 37 Education Fund has helped make it possible for thousands of DC 37 members to improve their academic skills, language knowledge, technical skills and clerical skills. It has prepared members for civil service examinations and provided financial help and guidance in achieving their higher education goals.

About the CUNY School of Labor and Urban Studies

The CUNY School of Labor and Urban Studies (SLU) is the 25th and newest unit of The City University of New York and the only one explicitly dedicated to public service and social justice. The School offers undergraduate and graduate certificate and degree programs in labor relations, public policy, public administration, health care administration, community studies, labor studies and urban studies. SLU’s mission derives from its core values: access to education, diversity at every level, social justice, and equality for all. Its goals are to expand higher education opportunities for workers; prepare students who aspire to careers in public service and social justice movements; promote civic engagement; provide leadership development for union and community activists; and help workers achieve greater economic security. Visit us at www.slu.cuny.edu.