

Workers Struggles: The Americas

More local units authorize strike action as Nova Scotia long-term care workers push for all out fight

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The World Socialist Web Site invites workers and other readers to contribute to this regular feature.

Nationwide strike by Argentina university educators

Unions representing university professors across Argentina report that real wages have reached the lowest point ever while the Milei administration refuses to implement an inflation adjustment that is mandated by existing law. Real wages are now 35 percent less than in 2023.

The educators walked off their jobs on March 15 demanding a 60 percent raise. The ongoing strike involves Argentina's most prestigious institutions, including the industrial city of Cordoba, the University of Buenos Aires and the La Plata University, in Buenos Aires province.

The strike coincides with the beginning of the school year in the Southern hemisphere.

The educators' unions plan a mass protest on April 23.

The strike is taking place in the midst of massive, government-imposed budget cuts to universities that have already pushed public universities into a massive financial crisis.

Administration workers strike 20 college campuses in greater Mexico City

On March 19, administration workers at the 20 campuses of the second-tier universities (that grant bachelor's degrees), known as Baccalaureate Schools (Colegio de Bachilleres) in the State of Mexico went on strike, following the breakdown of negotiations.

At issue are wages and health benefits, promotions, retroactive pay for educators and staff members already in new positions; and that those temp positions already filled be made permanent. Professors and educators are also demanding less onerous work schedules, and updated uniforms and teaching materials.

A significant number of the workers and professors at the 20 campuses are in contingent, temporary status, often for several

years, and demand higher paid, full-time positions.

This strike is taking place in the context of an increase in strike activity across Mexico.

Tens of thousands march in Santiago, Chile on Water Day

A massive protest took place in Santiago on March 22, International Water Day. Most of the demonstrators were high school and university students. At issue is the attack on the environment being proposed by the newly installed ultra-right-wing President Jose Antonio Kast, which is in the process of cancelling 43 environmental decrees, to benefit mining and fossil fuel corporations. Other signs and chants opposed the privatization of water rights and the impunity of the nation's oligarchy.

In addition to the elimination of the 43 decrees, the Kast administration in imposing a so-called economic restoration which included cutting corporate taxes and deregulating 'strategic industries', eliminating state-imposed limits on corporations engaged in mining and drilling, lowering air-quality standards for power-plants and copper processing plants.

Also impacted are National Parks and bio-diversity areas.

The demonstrators came from schools and universities from across Chile and marched through central Santiago. Kast is also proposing the elimination of tuition free public universities.

Despite the non-participation of the trade union apparatus and the establishment politicians, many workers joined on their own in support of the students' demands.

Some of the signs denounced Kast for selling the natural environment to US President Trump.

University of Illinois Springfield faculty votes to strike

Faculty at the University of Illinois Springfield (UIS) announced March 19 it had voted unanimously to grant strike authorization as the union charges workers are paid below counterparts on other campuses. Besides salaries, members of University Professionals

of Illinois Local 4100 are seeking to negotiate workload, job security, academic freedom and professional development.

Thomas Gebhardt, UPI Local 4100 Support Staff president, charged that the administration “refuses to bargain seriously and is offering unacceptable salary proposals that amount to pay cuts when adjusted for inflation.”

Negotiations commenced in June of last year and according to the union, UIS has turned down every offer governing financial issues and instead is seeking concessions.

The union representing UIS’s support staff, representing clerical, custodial and food service workers, has also voted to strike. Negotiators for UIS are only offering support staff a 1 percent pay increase.

AT&T contract negotiations extended as workers vote to strike

AT&T and the Communications Workers of America reached a contract extension for the fourth time March 20 as the two sides negotiate over an agreement covering 9,000 workers across five union districts. The negotiations involve the Orange Mobility division of the company.

The extension came one day after workers voted by a 95 percent margin to grant strike authorization over demands for increased benefits, job security and wages that keep up with the cost of living.

Lindsey Wilkerson, CWA District 4 representative, told 14 News in Evansville, Indiana, “We deserve fair pay, livable wages, and to not live paycheck to paycheck, and that’s where we’re at right now: paycheck to paycheck. We can barely make it.”

AT&T reported a gross profit of \$74.83 billion for the full year 2025. The company gushed that it “returned over \$12 billion to shareholders in 2025 through dividends and share repurchases and expects to return an additional \$45 billion+ from 2026-2028.”

Workers strike Paynesville, Minnesota dairy plant after year of negotiations fail to produce an agreement

Some 60 workers at the Associated Milk Producers Incorporated (AMPI) in Paynesville, Minnesota, have gone out on an unfair labor practices strike after a year of failed contract negotiations and having seen no wage increase during that period. Members of Teamsters Local 471 are seeking improved wages, health care, and job security protections.

Workers are demanding a guarantee that in the event the Paynesville plant is sold or the ownership is transferred, they will retain their jobs and contract language provisions.

AMPI is a cooperative. It has another plant in New Ulm, Minnesota, as well as facilities in South Dakota and Wisconsin.

More union locals authorize strike action Nova Scotia long-term care workers push for all out fight

Continuing care assistants; licensed practical nurses; support services, which includes environmental, housekeeping and laundry; occupational therapy aids; and physiotherapy aids and maintenance workers at several more long-term care homes on Nova Scotia’s north shore have voted to authorize strike action should a new collective agreement not soon be reached. Workers, members of the Canadian Union of Public Employees, at Glen Haven Manor voted by 100 percent for strike action last week joining their colleagues at nearby Maritime Odd Fellows and Valley View Villa who also recently voted massively for strike action.

The votes along the north shore bring the number of care homes across the entire province where staff has supported strike action to 42. On average, strike mandate votes have averaged about 95 percent in favour since balloting began across the province this past autumn. The low-paid workers have been without a new contract since October 2023.

The most recent votes follow on from the interference of Barbara Adams, the provincial Conservative government’s seniors and long-term care minister, into the collective bargaining process. Fearing the massive votes up and down the province in favour of strike action, Adams is calling on administrators at nursing homes to make direct appeals over the heads of the union to their employees to accept the government’s miserable contract proposals.

The long-term care workers are demanding improvements to address the cost-of-living crisis, chronic understaffing and to bring their pay, often less than \$19 per hour, in line with other Atlantic Canadian provinces. Similarly skilled care workers in nearby Prince Edward Island, for instance, earn \$10 per hour more than their Nova Scotia colleagues. Beyond wages, workers are fighting for better staff retention, guaranteed hours, and safety against burnout, with some workers reporting they are forced to take on multiple jobs just to make ends meet.

Bargaining with the Conservative government of Premier Tim Houston has been an interminable “slow walk” over contracts that have expired more than two years ago. CUPE long-term care workers are set to return to bargaining with the government on March 24 for a final conciliation meeting before they can enter a legal strike position. If a settlement is not reached, several thousand care workers across the province could begin strike activity in early April.



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