

# Chas Walker \* Curriculum Vitae

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PhD Student, Boston University Department of Political Science

## Education & Training

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*Boston University, Political Science (PhD Student as of Fall 2020)*

- Research interests include political thought and US politics – specifically racial and economic inequality, unions and social movements, and participatory democracy.

*Brown University, African-American Studies (BA, 2000)*

- English Dept. Preston Gurney Writing Prize for top essay by a member of the senior class, 2000.
- Hanoian Memorial Award for students dedicated to improving the lives of working people.
- Work-study positions / internships at RI Jobs with Justice and Direct Action for Rights & Equality.
- Founding Member, Brown Student-Labor Alliance.

*School for International Training*

- Study in Mali (Fall 1998) and Nicaragua (Spring 1999)

*Additional Education/Training:*

- Dēmos – Race-Class Narrative Training (2018)
- Service Employees International Union – Coordinator (2018), IGNITE Sparking Leadership (2015), New Media / Digital Organizing (2012), and WAVE New Organizing (2004) trainings
- RI Institute for Labor Studies & Research – Leadership for a Future (2003)
- People’s Institute for Survival and Beyond – Undoing Racism (2002)
- Center for Third World Organizing – Community Action Training (2001)

## Select Publications

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- [The government is failing healthcare workers. Unions aren’t.](#) – *Strikenave* (February 2021)
- [The Working Dead: Reviving the Crowd as a Protagonist.](#) *Los Angeles Review of Books* blog (June 2020)
- [“Soul Searching” Will Not Stop the Police Murders of Black People.](#) *Truthout* (June 2020)
- [Poverty Wages in Nursing Homes Have Accelerated the Coronavirus Outbreak.](#) *The Boston Globe* (April 2020)
- [Frederick Douglass and the Transformational Power of Courage in a Fearsome World.](#) *The American Philosophical Association’s Black Issues in Philosophy Blog* (February 2020)
- [They called us “flat-earthers.” But we were right.](#) *The Boston Globe* (November 2019)

## Summary of Work Experience

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- Nearly two decades of strategic and successful organizing with child care and health care workers to develop a participatory organization and build member power.
- Strong writing, policy analysis, and research skills. Proven track record of creative and effective communication campaigns. Deep expertise in data-driven campaign planning.
- Skilled facilitator, adept at popular education methods, consensus- and coalition-building, and situational leadership. Fully fluent in Spanish. Intermediate fluency in French.

## Work History

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### *Self-Employed, Dorchester, MA*

### *Researcher/Writer*

*2019-2020*

- Research, data analysis, and writing for multiple unions on child care affordability, child care worker wages, staffing levels at Medicaid-funded skilled nursing facilities, and collective bargaining.
- Grant-writing and project assistance for worker-centered and worker-driven non-profit training fund.

### *SEIU District 1199NE, Providence, RI*

### *Elected Organizer*

*2004 - 2019*

#### *Union Organizing*

- Led organizing drives to help more than 1,200 education and health care workers win a union in RI, often overcoming significant opposition from employers, public officials, and anti-union groups.
- Participated in SEIU organizing drives in other states including Illinois, Washington, and Maryland.
- Negotiated union contracts in multiple settings, coordinating member engagement and proposal development, leading discussions at the table, and organizing field, media, and community outreach.
- Led direct actions, marches, vigils, rallies, picket lines, and strikes.
- Filed and won numerous grievances and complex arbitration cases.

#### *Communications & Public Affairs*

- Led member communications including writing, layout, and translation of newsletters, flyers and leaflets, petitions and visibility actions, etc.
- Piloted union's digital organizing efforts via social media, email and text messaging platforms; transitioned union website to WordPress (including basic coding and graphic design).
- Wrote and edited policy white papers, press releases, op-eds, and other public communications.
- Trained member activists on messaging and storytelling for public events.

#### *Electoral Campaigns*

- Recruited and coached member candidates to successfully run for public office including the first Dominican-American woman elected to a state legislature in the U.S., Grace Diaz.
- Coordinated independent expenditure campaigns in multiple election cycles, supervising both targeted direct mail and door-to-door canvas operations.

#### *Legislative Campaigns*

- Coordinated successful grassroots campaigns for RI state laws to ban mandatory overtime for hospital workers (2007); establish the right to organize for home-based child care providers (2013); and establish the right to organize for independent home health care workers (2018).
- Participated in statewide coalitions that won paid family leave (2013) and earned sick time (2017) for hundreds of thousands of workers in Rhode Island.

#### *Capacity-Building and Grant-Writing*

- Established a labor-management training and support fund with the RI Department of Human Services for home-based child care providers.
- Secured funding from the RI Department of Labor & Training to create a substitute pool to support home-based child care providers' professional development and use of earned sick time benefits.

### *Training, Facilitation, and Organizational Leadership*

- Trained and supervised organizers to build member participation, multiracial unity, and power. Coordinated organizing blitzes in RI and CT, training staff and members on organizing conversations and digital organizing tools.
- Worked with peers to create and deliver leadership development trainings using popular education methods. Trained hundreds of union delegates on organizing skills, grievance procedures, and more.
- In close coordination with 1199's officers and members, helped establish organizational goals and priorities, develop strategic plans, build coalitions, and allocate resources effectively.

### ***Day Care Justice Co-Op, Providence RI***

### ***Organizer***

***2001 – 2003***

- Coordinated membership meetings, direct actions, trainings and professional development opportunities in a non-profit of home-based child care providers.
- Responsible for numerous successful grant proposals to local, state, and regional foundations to support the Co-Op's organizing and programming.

### **Boards & Commissions**

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- Providence Student Union Board of Directors (2017 to 2019)
- RI Congressman David Cicilline's District Child Care Roundtable (2018)
- Department of Human Services' BrightStars Think Tank (2017)
- Rhode Island Early Learning Council (2010-2013)
- State of Rhode Island's Permanent Legislative Commission on Child Care (2001 - 2013)
- Haymarket Peoples' Fund, RI Funding Panel Member (2001-2003)

### **Professional Recognition**

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- Citations from the *RI Governor*, *RI General Assembly*, and the *Providence City Council* (2019)
- Labor wins elections because "they employ some very, very smart political operatives...[like] SEIU's Chas Walker." – *Ted Nesi, WPRI.com* (2012)
- Paul E. Moura Leadership Award - *RI Institute for Labor Studies & Research* (2006)
- Sister Carol McGovern Voice for the Voiceless Award, *RI Fund for Community Progress* (2003)