



United Students Against Sweatshops

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July 2020: USAS Plans to Address Anti-Blackness and Organizational Structure

Addressing Anti-Blackness in USAS:

- We have secured a professional facilitator to lead us in a series of conversations (open to all locals) on how to combat anti-Blackness in USAS on both a national and local level. Our facilitator recommended that we survey students and alum on their experiences of anti-Blackness in USAS and what ideas they have to address it, in order to better guide these conversations.
- Alumni and former staff have expressed interest in helping us create an anti-Blackness task force of Black students and alumni who will propose and implement changes to the USAS structure and constitution around fighting anti-Blackness. This task force will have decision-making power, and student members of the task force will be paid for their labor.
- August 2020's virtual summer conference will be themed around the necessity for Black liberation in labor justice and anti-capitalist movements. We are in talks with a potential keynote speaker and have plans to implement more political education around Black liberation into our conference programming. We also want to continue to push for the removal of the International Union of Police Associations from the AFL-CIO, as well as supporting our locals in running campaigns for their universities to cut ties with local police departments.
- At the recommendation of Black alumni, we plan to prioritize and put our resources into building new USAS locals at HBCUs and intentionally developing Black student leadership at both new and existing locals.
- We will form a working group of student members to amend the USAS constitution, specifically adding language about accountability and transformative justice procedures to be undertaken when any USASer (student or staff) causes harm. This working group's proposed amendments will be presented to and voted on by members at the virtual summer conference on August 22nd-23rd. The amended constitution will be made public on the USAS website.

Addressing USAS Structure and Transparency:

- In order to be more accountable to our membership and to move away from operating within the constraints of the nonprofit industrial complex, we will take actionable steps to make USAS significantly more member-funded. This will involve transforming our current system of collecting dues from individuals and locals, in a way that still keeps USAS membership open and accessible to working class students.
- We will ensure that all USAS members have access to the names and contact information of all USAS staff members and national student leadership. This information was removed from the public USAS website at the advice of our Digital Security Advisor, due to the increased risk of doxxing of individuals affiliated with the movement. We are in talks with our Website Consultant to create a members-only online space, which may be located within the USAS website or on a separate platform, where USASers will be able to login and view this information. This members-only space will also allow students to connect with other USAS locals and will host updates on national gatherings, calls, and opportunities for collaboration.
- National staff, alongside the CC's Bargaining Committee, will update the USAS staff CBA to include clarification that all national staff members are hired for a two-year term, unless the CC votes to approve a term extension of no more than one year due to organizational need.