

# Chas Walker \* Curriculum Vitae

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## 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 popular levers of 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:

- *Service Employees International Union* – WAVE New Organizing (2004), New Media / Digital Organizing (2012), IGNITE Sparking Leadership (2015), and Coordinator (2018) Trainings
- *SEIU District 1199NE* – frequent staff development workshops and trainings (2004-2019)
- *Demos* – Race-Class Narrative Training (2018)
- *RI Institute for Labor Studies & Research* – Leadership for a Future (2003)
- *Center for Third World Organizing* – Community Action Training (2001)

## Select Publications

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- [“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 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 national SEIU organizing drives to grow the union exponentially in other states, including Illinois, Washington State, and Maryland.
- Negotiated union contracts in health centers, nursing homes, hospitals, and family child care, engaged members and developing bargaining proposals using surveys, leading discussions at the bargaining table with management, and coordinating field, media, and community support strategies.
- Led direct actions, marches, vigils, rallies, picket lines, and strikes as necessary.
- 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, media advisories, press releases, op-ed columns, 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 multiple successful grassroots field campaigns for state legislation in RI that:
  - banned mandatory overtime in hospitals for nurses and CNAs (2007);
  - established the right to organize for home-based child care providers (2013); and
  - established 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 with annual budget of \$300,000.

- 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 across a variety of workplace settings.
- Coordinated organizing blitzes in RI and CT, training dozens of staff and member volunteers on organizing conversations and digital organizing tools.
- Worked with peers to create staff and member leadership development curriculum and deliver workshops using popular education pedagogy methods. Trained hundreds of union delegates on organizing skills, grievance procedures, and more.
- In close coordination with 1199's officers and members, worked to 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)