

A LAWRENCE HISTORY CENTER
COMMUNITY SYMPOSIUM

THE HISTORY AND EVOLUTION OF EDUCATION IN LAWRENCE

and similar communities



ONE CHILD IN TEN IN THE LAWRENCE
PUBLIC SCHOOLS GOES TO HIGH SCHOOL

Hosted by YDO, Lawrence, MA | SATURDAY, APRIL 27, 2024

Symposium Program Guide

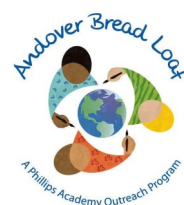
Our Sponsors:

The symposium is made possible with funding from Lawrence Cultural Council, The White Fund, Andover Bread Loaf, and the Catherine McCarthy Memorial Trust Fund.

Our Host:



Lawrence Cultural Council,
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The Lawrence History Center is delighted to host its sixth community symposium since 2012.

"The History and Evolution of Education in Lawrence and Similar Communities" is designed for exploration and dialogue, thinking broadly about the history and evolution of education in the city of Lawrence through the multi-disciplinary lens of the humanities. The day-long effort focuses on the topic of education in Lawrence (and similar communities) from its founding as a town in 1847 to the present day.

There have been many historic steps since the first Lawrence School Committee meeting of May 3, 1847. The Lawrence Public School System has grown to include 26 schools, 3,000 staff positions and 13,000+ students (April 2023). The symposium explores what education looked like to a predominantly immigrant population in an emerging industrial city then, and now to a Latino majority population in the shadow of de-industrialization, state receivership, and in a post Covid-19 era.

Information about previous symposiums may be found at <https://lawrencehistory.org/education/symposium> or at the QR code.



This image on the cover and at right is from Alice Winifred O'Connor's Immigration Thesis: "A Study of the Immigration Problem in Lawrence, Massachusetts, 1914."

It illustrates that, "ONE CHILD IN TEN IN THE LAWRENCE PUBLIC SCHOOLS GOES TO HIGH SCHOOL."

Alice O'Connor (1886-1968) was an immigration worker in Boston, Massachusetts. Between 1918 and 1962 she worked as the executive secretary, social worker, executive official, and finally board member for the Massachusetts Department of Education's Division of Immigration and Americanization. She sought to ensure that all immigrants to Massachusetts were treated without prejudice and were given the opportunity to gain an education, earn a living, and become citizens of the United States. Living her entire life in Lawrence, Massachusetts, she was a very religious woman for whom family and friends were very important. Her diaries and thesis document both her personal and professional lives.



O'Connor addresses education in Chapter IV: Education and the Immigrant (p. 96 - 178). To read the full thesis, please visit <https://archive.org/details/alicewinifredoco00ocon> or click the QR code.



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Program At-A-Glance

8:15 AM – 8:45 AM: Symposium check-in and breakfast

8:45 AM - 9:00 AM: Welcome and Introductions

- Susan Grabski, Executive Director, Lawrence History Center (LHC)
- Sara Morin Barth, President, LHC Board of Directors
- Jineyda Tapia, Member, LHC Board of Directors

9:00 AM – 9:45 AM:

- **Opening Keynote Speaker: Lorena Germán, "Textured Teaching in These Times"**

9:45 AM – 10:45 AM:

- **Panel:**
Anticipating Educational Needs in the Immigrant City Across a Century
Moderator: Sara Morin Barth, President, LHC Board of Directors
 - **Roman Catholic Parochial Schools: the case of Ste. Anne's of Lawrence and French-Canadian Cultural Survival**
Presenter: Jim Beauchesne, retired Visitor Services Supervisor, Lawrence Heritage State Park
 - **The Development of the Lawrence Vocational School**
Presenter: Kathleen S. Flynn
 - **Early Years of NECC in Lawrence, 1985 - 2000**
Presenter: Katharine K. Rodger, EdD

10:45 AM – 11:00 AM: BREAK

11:00 AM – 11:30 AM:

- **Speaker:**
The Lawrence Plan for Education in Citizenship (1918)
Presenter: Brian Sheehy, History Department Coordinator at North Andover High School, North Andover / Member, LHC Board of Directors

11:30 AM -12:30 PM:

- **Panel:**
Our Future, Our Schools: The Fight for Democratic Control of the Lawrence Public Schools
Presenters: HomePlace Collective (Dr. Marianela Rivera, Kassie Infante, Wadscar Gomez)

12:30 PM – 1:30 PM: LUNCH

- **12:45 PM – 1:30 PM: LUNCHTIME CONVERSATION**

Reimagining and Reshaping the Landscape of Public School Education

Facilitator: Nathan Baez, Elevated Thought

Panelists: Lawrence High School students

1:30 PM – 2:15 PM:

- **Panel:**

Violence and School Desegregation in Lowell, MA in the 1980s

Presenters: Professor Robert Farrant, Distinguished University Professor of History at the University of Massachusetts Lowell; Chandarane Khoeun, UMass Lowell undergraduate student

2:15 PM - 3:00 PM:

- **Panel:**

Community Education at the Bread and Roses Festival

Including “Weaving Justice in the Global Textile Industry: Labor Arts Education in Mill Cities”

Moderator: Jim Beauchesne, President, Friends of Lawrence Heritage State Park

Presenters: Wangeci Gitau, Secretary, Bread & Roses Heritage Committee; Elizabeth Pellerito, Vice President, Bread & Roses Heritage Committee / Director, Labor Education Program, University of Massachusetts Lowell

3:00 PM – 3:15 PM: BREAK

3:15 PM - 4:00 PM:

- **Panel:**

Carving a Path for Teacher Diversity in Lawrence: A Close Look at the UML-LPS Paraprofessional Pathway

Moderator: Glennys Sánchez, Director of DEIB, Lawrence Public Schools

Presenters: Stacy Szczesiul, Associate Dean of Online Education, Accreditation & Licensing, College of Fine Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences, UMass Lowell; Dr. Marianela Rivera, Lawrence Pathway Coach

4:00 PM - 4:30 PM:

- **Conversation and Feedback Session:**

Transitioning from State Receivership

Facilitator: Jonathan Guzman, Vice-Chair, Lawrence School Committee

4:30 PM: Closing Remarks

Session Schedule & Descriptions

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8:45 AM - 9:00 AM: Welcome and Introductions

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- Sara Morin Barth, President, LHC Board of Directors
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9:00 AM – 9:45 AM:

- **Opening Keynote Speaker: Lorena Germán**
"Textured Teaching in These Times"
What should students be learning in school? How should they be learning? What skills will this learning build to meet the needs of our changing country and world? In this keynote, we will explore these questions by drawing connections, analyzing our educational journeys, and exploring an innovative teaching framework.

9:45 AM – 10:45 AM:

- **Panel: Anticipating Educational Needs in the Immigrant City Across a Century**
Moderator: Sara Morin Barth, President, LHC Board of Directors
 - **Roman Catholic Parochial Schools: the case of Ste. Anne's of Lawrence and French-Canadian Cultural Survival**
Presenter: Jim Beauchesne, retired Visitor Services Supervisor, Lawrence Heritage State Park

The arrival of large numbers of Roman Catholic immigrants in the mid-19th century, starting with the Irish Potato Famine wave, posed a difficult challenge to the existing public education system in Yankee New England. Irish-Catholic communities complained to authorities about bias against the Irish and Catholicism, not only in attitudes but in curriculum and substance. Prayer in public schools involved Protestant versions of prayers and Biblical references. Textbooks depicted Catholic countries as backward and superstition-bound. Frustration over these issues led to the American Catholic Church hierarchy's 1884 decision to encourage parishes to create their own schools... parochial schools... and to urge Catholic parents to send their children to those schools.

This admonition was vigorously embraced by the next large wave of Catholic immigrants to New England, the French-Canadians, who arrived with a sense of cultural vulnerability due to the British, and Protestant, conquest of Canada, i.e. New France, and a century of perceived second-class citizenship. French-Canadian elites coined the term "Survivance" to describe an ethic of cultural survival emphasizing maintenance of the Roman Catholic faith and French language. This cultural imperative travelled with the immigrants to New England. As this presentation will describe, the original French-Canadian parish in Lawrence, Ste. Anne's, manifested this ethic in many ways but particularly through its

schools. While adjusting to cultural and legal pressures encouraging assimilation, the parish and its schools effectively kept its members both French and Catholic for multiple generations.

- **The Development of the Lawrence Vocational School**

Presenter: Kathleen S. Flynn

Industrialization and manufacturing were developing strengths in the United States at the dawn of the twentieth century, especially in the Northeast section of the country. However, similar strides were occurring in Europe, especially Germany. There was national concern about the US losing its global foothold within this industrial rivalry. Studies were focused on German progress and various plans were developed within the manufacturing states. Massachusetts was one of these states and Lawrence was one of its major manufacturing centers.

Massachusetts studies focused on the growing need for skilled workers. New manufacturing facilities in Lawrence such as the Wood Mill, the Ayer Mill and the Everett Mill were only a few years away from completion and the hiring of thousands was anticipated by 1910, many of whom would need to have manufacturing skills. Local attempts at skill training existed; but were insufficient to meet the current and anticipated needs. Lawrence and its manufacturers could only profit by paying attention to the plan for focused skill education developed by the state legislature.

The presentation will focus on the above context, the state-wide plan proposed by Beacon Hill and the response it generated within the city of Lawrence. While none doubted the need for the training of skilled workmen, the manufacturers, local politicians, and the residents of the city had varied responses to the state's plan.

- **Early Years of NECC in Lawrence, 1985 - 2000**

Presenter: Katharine K. Rodger, EdD

Northern Essex Community College's expansion into the city of Lawrence in 1984 was the Commonwealth's direct response to address the causes of the city's 'riots' which occurred in the city in August of that year. Responding to a proposal from NECC President John R. Dimitry, a special state allocation of approximately \$225,000 to establish the Lawrence Education Employment Project (LEEP), a program designed to provide English as a Second Language (ESL), Literacy, and Short-Term intensive skill training programs to meet the skills level needs of the city's residents.

More than 8,000 LEEP flyers were distributed to churches, schools, and community agencies throughout Lawrence. The flyers were written in 5 languages (English, Spanish, French, Portuguese, and Vietnamese) to ensure that Lawrence immigrants would know about the project and its proposed services. Activity was intense as people enrolled in ESL classes, basic literacy (on both English and Spanish), and even a Basic Math Skills Program. Training Programs in Electronics, Machining, and Welding were established at training centers in the city.

Building on the success of LEEP, and with the acquisition of the Prudential Life Insurance Company site on Franklin Street in 1991, NECC expanded its presence opening the John R.

Dimitry Building, as well as a second education site on Amesbury Street. With an actual campus now in Lawrence, President Dimitry moved important college program to the city: Registered Nursing, Licensed Practical Nursing, Radiological and Respiratory Technology, Dental Assistant, Paralegal, and Criminal Justice.

This presentation will focus on NECC's early efforts and activities culminating in the creation of a full-service campus in Lawrence.

10:45 AM – 11:00 AM: BREAK

11:00 AM – 11:30 AM:

- **The Lawrence Plan for Education in Citizenship (1918)**

Presenter: Brian Sheehy, History Department Coordinator at North Andover High School, North Andover / Member, LHC Board of Directors

At the turn of the century the mill city of Lawrence, MA was an immigrant city with different nationalities and ethnicities drawn to the job opportunities in the vast network of mills that called Lawrence home. Immigrants were tolerated and accepted as long as they followed the rules and did not complain or challenge the labor structure of the city. In 1912 and 1919 labor strife and strikes challenged that status quo and forced the power structure to reassess how they could control this largely immigrant labor force and, in many ways, "Americanize" them. One of the plans to Americanize this labor force was ingraining ideas of patriotism and citizenship to those immigrant laborers' children in the public school system. English language courses and naturalization programs had existed in the city before, but none had focused on children. According to the Journal of Educational Method, 11/01/1921, Vol.2 (3) "The Lawrence Plan for Education in Citizenship, set on foot in May 1918 was an attempt to discover through sane experimentation what changes should be made in the curriculum, the teaching practices, and the general conduct of an ordinary elementary public school in order to engage more directly and more purposely in its most fundamental task, the making of intelligent, responsible, and loyal citizens in our American democracy." Its core components promote Citizenship- Freedom and Personal Obligation and Patriotism-Devotion to Country. This "plan" also extended to newspaper ads, pamphlets, and posters, the goal being to show that "good Americans" did not question or challenge the laborer/ management dynamic.

The presentation will examine the origins of the movement in Lawrence, the larger reach of this plan, and the overall impact that this movement had on Lawrence.

11:30 AM -12:30 PM:

- **Our Future, Our Schools: The Fight for Democratic Control of the Lawrence Public Schools**

Presenters: HomePlace Collective (Dr. Marianela Rivera, Kassie Infante, Wadscar Gomez)

In November 2011, the Massachusetts Board of Elementary and Secondary Education voted to designate the Lawrence Public Schools as "chronically underperforming" and place the district in state receivership. The events that ensued after this decision led to the sparking of an educational justice movement. Presenters will provide an analysis of the state and federal policies that lead to the takeover of the Lawrence Public schools and the impact that the receivership has had in the community.

12:30 PM – 1:30 PM: LUNCH

- **12:45 PM – 1:30 PM: LUNCHTIME CONVERSATION**

Reimagining and Reshaping the Landscape of Public School Education

Facilitator: Nathan Baez, Elevated Thought

Panelists: Lawrence High School students (Adelina, Angelica, Arlyng & Marcelo)

Students take the lead in reimagining and reshaping the landscape of public school education, playing an active role in their own educational journey. Youth will explore the following topics:

- **Student-Centric Learning**
Explore innovative approaches to a student-centric learning environment. Discuss how tailoring education to individual needs can enhance the overall learning experience.
- **Redefining the Modern Classroom:**
Envision the ideal modern classroom and how it fosters creativity, critical thinking, and collaboration. Discuss the integration of technology and interactive learning methods.
- **Balancing Structure and Flexibility:**
Delve into the concept of a balanced school day that allows for structured learning while providing flexibility for students to explore their interests and passions.
- **Curriculum Co-Creation:**
Address the importance of students actively participating in the development of the curriculum. Discuss how a collaborative approach ensures that the content is relevant, diverse, and engaging.
- **Teacher-Student Collaboration:**
Explore ways to strengthen the collaboration between teachers and students. Discuss the impact of open communication and mutual respect in creating a positive and empowering educational environment.

1:30 PM – 2:15 PM:

- **Violence and School Desegregation in Lowell, MA in the 1980s**

Presenters: Professor Robert Farrant, Distinguished University Professor of History at the University of Massachusetts Lowell; Chandarane Khoeun, UMass Lowell undergraduate student

“In the war, he never died. Why did he come here and die?”

What Does the Unremembered (For Some) Death of 13-Year-Old Vandy Phornng Reveal About Lowell, Massachusetts and the Commonwealth?

Starting in the 1970s, Lowell faced a highly contentious issue as its economy and population changed. From the late 1970s, a majority of the city’s white elected leaders metaphorically stood in the schoolhouse doorway blocking equality and opportunity in education and politics for the city’s nonwhite young people until forced to do otherwise. As Southeast Asian refugee numbers grew,

along with Spanish speakers, the schools struggled to accommodate the increased numbers of non-English speakers. The School Committee publicly and loudly refused to listen to parents when they requested translators so that they could advocate for their children. Only a federal lawsuit filed by Southeast Asian and Latino parents forced the city to revamp education delivery.

The rapid growth of Lowell's Asian and Latino populations challenged long-established leaders in the city's schools. Anti-immigrant resentment developed just as it had earlier in the 20th century when the city's mills attracted French Canadian migrants and anti-Catholicism had sparked widespread violence against Irish immigrants. Outspoken members of Lowell's elected School Committee led a campaign to make English the 'official' language of the city. When Southeast Asian parents joined with Latino parents, to demand educational access and equity for their children in the 1980s the backlash escalated. This is borne out by the public statements of George Kouloheras, chair of the Lowell School Committee: "English is our mother tongue and it's the language that's going to be used at our meetings. This is an English-Only School Committee in an English-Only America."

With anti-immigrant rhetoric a prominent feature of the 1987 city elections, tensions were high in the city at the start of the new school year. On September 15 an eleven-year-old white student confronted thirteen-year-old Vandy Phornng and assaulted him. Phornng ended up in the fast-moving water of the Pawtucket Canal and drowned despite the best efforts of a UMass Lowell student and others who jumped into the canal to save him. The heated anti-immigrant rhetoric continued unabated. In the elections in November, the loudest anti-desegregation candidates carried the day while one of the most outspoken advocates for the plan lost his School Committee seat.

Using oral histories from the UMass Lowell Southeast Asian Digital Archives and newspaper accounts, presenters will tell the story.

2:15 PM - 3:00 PM:

- **Community Education at the Bread and Roses Festival**

Including "Weaving Justice in the Global Textile Industry: Labor Arts Education in Mill Cities"

Moderator: Jim Beauchesne, President, Friends of Lawrence Heritage State Park

Presenters: Wangeci Gitau, Secretary, Bread & Roses Heritage Committee; Elizabeth Pellerito, Vice President, Bread & Roses Heritage Committee / Director, Labor Education Program, University of Massachusetts Lowell

In 2024, the Bread & Roses Heritage Festival will celebrate its fortieth anniversary. Each year on Labor Day, the Festival brings to Campagnone Common a variety of musical acts, arts and crafts vendors, groups for working people, and talks about the past and present of labor activism. This interactive panel discussion will explore the ways in which the *Festival* provides a unique opportunity to educate a diverse group of people in the city about labor heritage, labor rights, and activism.

Presenters will explore the models of education provided by the *Festival*. Rooted in models of popular education articulated by Paulo Freire, bell hooks and others, the *Festival* creates education in action that is rooted in the experiences of everyday people, and that is aimed at creating social change for a more liberated world. The techniques used at the *Festival* echo the techniques used by the Bread and Roses strikers themselves, who were able to communicate with

one another across many languages and cultures in order to build a movement for workers. This model allows us to connect history to the present moment, and asks the question, what can the past teach us about how we get free - from capitalism, from racism, from oppression - in the twenty-first century?

Second, presenters will look at the ways in which the *Festival* has changed over time. By some metrics, the *Festival* was perhaps more “successful” in the 80s when it was founded: with internationally-known performers like Judy Collins and Odetta, larger audience numbers, and more funding dollars. However, members of the current board argue that the *Festival* today has morphed into something truly unique and special, if not quite as large as it once was. The anthropological lens prevalent in folk festivals of the 80s and early 90s “others” both the cultures and the people of Lawrence and presumes that cultures must be preserved as they were at an unspecified point in the past to be “authentic.” Instead, we focus on a model that asks how cultures change, combine and fuse; what their struggles for liberation are in the current moment, and how the arts can move those struggles forward and create change for justice.

Finally, presenters will examine how the physical geography of the city provides an opportunity to reimagine structures of oppression and sites of liberation and self-determination. What does it mean to see the mills empty, crumbling, repurposed as community spaces, repurposed as sites of gentrification - in a new light? How can we use arts education to uplift the history of struggle against exploitation and racism and reimagine these decaying hulks as monuments to a people’s history of strength and resilience?

3:00 PM – 3:15 PM: BREAK

3:15 PM - 4:00 PM:

- **Carving a Path for Teacher Diversity in Lawrence: A Close Look at the UML-LPS Paraprofessional Pathway**

Moderator: Glennys Sánchez, Director of DEIB, Lawrence Public Schools

Presenters: Stacy Szczesiul, Associate Dean of Online Education, Accreditation & Licensing, College of Fine Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences, UMass Lowell; Dr. Marianela Rivera, Lawrence Pathway Coach

Critical shortages and persistent diversity gaps plague the nation’s teacher workforce. Across the U.S. there are an estimated 200,000 vacant positions. Last April there were 7,000 unfilled teaching positions in the Commonwealth with over 4,000 teachers working on emergency licenses. Under-resourced districts, like Lawrence, serving low-income communities with high concentrations of Students of Color carry the largest burden, claiming 10% of the Commonwealth’s underqualified teachers (i.e., emergency licensed teachers and teachers working out of field). The combined impacts of teacher shortages and deep ethnracial mismatches between educators and students leave students in communities like Lawrence at a considerable disadvantage. There is a considerable body of evidence supporting the theory that race-match efforts are essential to closing the equity gap for Students of Color. Same-race teacher matches improve test scores, graduation and suspension rates, relationship building, attendance, student attitudes about school, and parental involvement.

We know that increasing the supply (while also improving the retention) of qualified, racially diverse teachers into high-need fields (namely mathematics, science, special education, and bilingual/ESL

education) and locations (urban and rural areas) is best accomplished through a suite of interventions including financial incentives (provided by the state) and high-retention Grow Your Own (GYO) pathways because the largest potential supply of future Teachers of Color—the next generation of teachers—can be found in public schools around the country (i.e., high school students and paraprofessionals). Moreover, we believe that addressing these problems requires a community-based, PK-16 teacher preparation model because the path to becoming a teacher begins way before the first teaching assignment is accepted and because it is the people in the community who bring the much-needed cultural wealth that is scarce in our current teacher workforce.

In an effort to make our beliefs actionable, partners at the University of Massachusetts Lowell and Lawrence Public Schools launched the UML-LPS Paraprofessional Pathway in the Fall of 2023. The pathway reflects a shared commitment to building a strong and sustainable teacher workforce in Lawrence. The pathway aims to increase the number of eligible, high quality, bilingual, Latino/a/x teachers to serve the district and to mitigate the disparities in educational outcomes that are associated with a largely white, monolingual teacher workforce.

Presenters will share the values and beliefs that underpin the pathway:

- Educational justice is the driving force.
- Teaching is elevated as a noble profession.
- Students are empowered through curriculum and pedagogy.
- Community and family are explicitly valued.
- Students are supported: financially, academically, and emotionally.
- Share the current state of the pathway, including how it is structured, staffed, and funded.
- Elevate the voices of paraprofessionals in the program and to learn from their lived experiences.
- Seek feedback and recommendations for improving the pathway from community members.

4:00 PM - 4:30 PM:

- **Conversation and Feedback Session: Transitioning from State Receivership**
Facilitator: Jonathan Guzmán, Lawrence School Committee

4:30 PM: Closing Remarks

- Audience is invited to continue the conversation at El Taller / Café Azteca, 275 Essex Street, Lawrence, MA.

Speaker Bios

Nathan Baez (he/him) is a multi-dimensional poet and an innovative educator whose work revolves around liberation practices and dismantling psychological systems of oppression. His music and art are vessels for exploring ideas that seek to shift social and economic paradigms. To Nathan, every conversation is an experiment, an experience, and an invitation to learn more about yourselves and how to interact with the material conditions of the world. He is currently working on his first novel, which is a fictional story touching on the impending realities of technological advances and our withdrawal from nature.

Jim Beauchesne served as the Visitor Services Supervisor at Lawrence Heritage State Park from 1998 to his retirement in 2021. He was responsible for the Park's educational and cultural programs, including historical exhibits and tours. He is now President of the Friends of Lawrence Heritage State Park. For many years he was a member of the Bread and Roses Heritage Committee, which organizes the Bread and Roses Labor Day Heritage Festival. He has served as a board member of the Lawrence History Center, Lawrence's historical society. He also worked at Lowell National Historical Park. He holds an M.A. in Public History from Northeastern University, and a B.A. from Merrimack College. He has lectured on topics including the Bread and Roses Strike, and the French-Canadian immigrant experience in New England. Jim was born and raised in Lawrence and was educated at St. Anne's School through the eighth grade.

Kathleen S. Flynn was an early supporter of the Immigrant City Archives (now the Lawrence History Center) during the 1980s and 1990s, volunteering and serving in several board capacities, including president. A graduate of Regis College, she received advanced degrees from Northeastern University in counseling and Fitchburg State College in educational administration. Kathy was a founding member of the Bridge Over Troubled Waters Program in Boston, MA. After 33 years of service, she retired as an administrator from Whittier Regional Vocational Tech High School in Haverhill, MA. Currently she supports LHC as a volunteer and researcher. Kathy authored *A Sacred Space, a history of St. Mary and Immaculate Conception Cemeteries* in 2010; a history of the Catherine McCarthy Family and development of the Memorial Trust Fund entitled *The Catherine McCarthy Memorial Trust Fund*, in 2019; and co-authored a chapter entitled, "Lawrence, Massachusetts and the 1912 Bread and Roses Strike at Street Level: Interpretation Over Time" in the University of Illinois Press publication, "Where Are the Workers? Labor's Stories at Museums and Historic Sites", a part of the Working Class in American History series in June 2022. Kathy is a board member and annual walker for the Just'Cause 60-mile Walk for Breast Cancer.

Robert Farrant is Distinguished University Professor of History at the University of Massachusetts Lowell. Principal historian on numerous projects funded by the National Endowment for the Humanities, the Lowell National Historical Park, and the Massachusetts Foundation for the Humanities, his newest book, *Where are the Workers: Interpreting Labor and Working-Class History at Museums and Historic Sites*, with Mary Anne Trasciatti, was published by the University of Illinois Press in 2022.

Lorena Germán is a three time nationally awarded Dominican American educator focused on anti racist education. She has taught English Language Arts from 6th through 12th grades in both public and private schools, including Lawrence High School, her alma mater. Her work has been featured in the New York Times, NPR, PBS, Rethinking Schools, EdWeek, Learning for Justice Magazine, and more. She published *The Anti Racist Teacher: Reading Instruction Workbook*, and *Textured Teaching: A Framework for Culturally Sustaining Practices* about curriculum & lesson development focused on social justice. She is a Co-Founder of #DisruptTexts through which she encourages teachers to work toward an inclusive ELA curriculum. As Co-Founder and Academic Director at *Multicultural Classroom* she leads professional

development for teachers and creates teaching materials with and for leading literacy organizations. Lorena is also the Chair of NCTE's Committee Against Racism and Bias in the Teaching of English. She lives in Tampa, Florida.

Wangeci Gitau (she/they) is a Kenyan-born writer, artist and teacher from the Kikuyu tribe living in Lawrence, Massachusetts. Her work explores taking up space on American soil as an immigrant queer African femme. She is the author of poetry collections "there's the truth then there are other things" (2019) and "i'm not allowed to explain (only foreshadow and reminisce)" (2021). In 2021, she was chosen to interview Dr. Angela Davis through her local library's lecture series. In the same year, she had the opportunity to read her poetry through UC Berkeley's Radical Kinship Series. In 2022, she was featured on the show "Stories from the Stage" on WorldChannel and PBS, advocating for her community after a devastating gas explosion. Wangeci is co-founder & prose editor at *Exposed Brick Literary Magazine* and an 8th grade ELA teacher in her neighborhood. She is working on her Masters in Literary Arts at the BreadLoaf School of English at Middlebury. She is currently the secretary of the Bread and Roses Heritage Committee

Wadscar Gomez is an educator turned scholar activist and policy analyst. He has spent the past decade in education where he held roles as school safety, student support management, teacher in biology and math, and advocacy. Passionate about racial justice and equity in education for Black and Brown students, he focuses on amplifying student voices through advocacy and research. He holds an Associate of Science in Criminal Justice from Northern Essex Community College, a Bachelor of Arts in Multidisciplinary Studies from Cambridge College, and a Master of Public Policy in Education Policy from Vanderbilt University Peabody College.

Jonathan Guzmán, born in Rio Piedra, Puerto Rico in 1995, has been committed to the betterment of Lawrence City since 2010. His educational journey began at the Math, Science, and Technology Academy at Lawrence High School, graduating in 2014. During his school years, he established the Humanitarian Club, a platform for Lawrence's youth to engage in community service and leadership roles. The club was involved in various fundraising events and local activities. Guzman's mission was to assist those in need and promote student participation in community-based activities, collaborating with organizations like Groundwork Lawrence and the YMCA.

Guzmán furthered his education at Fitchburg State University, earning a Bachelor's in Biology and a minor in Political Science. He served on several committees and was a Senator of the Student Government Association. He also led the Latin American Students Organization, which was recognized as the Organization of the Year under his leadership. Initially aspiring to be a veterinarian, Guzman redirected his focus towards environmental justice and political science in response to the challenges faced by BIPOC communities and the political climate following the 2017 presidential election.

In 2020, Guzmán began serving the City of Lawrence as a dedicated public servant. He has been the Vice-Chair of the Lawrence School Committee since his second term, playing a crucial role in advocating for a robust school system. He currently spearheads efforts to end state receivership and enhance student readiness for college or other career paths. Guzmán championed the approval of the Lawrence School Committee Rules in 2021 to ensure accountability and transparency. He secured specialized training for committee members and was appointed to the Anti-Racist Committee by the Superintendent. In 2021, he joined the Portrait of a Graduate project, an initiative to identify the skills necessary for Lawrence students to succeed in the 21st century.

Guzmán joined Groundwork Lawrence in 2021, an organization dedicated to environmental justice and community development in Lawrence. As their Public Affairs Coordinator, and later as External Affairs

Manager, he became a key advocate for public health, environmental justice, education, food access, and economic stability. He collaborated with various coalitions to achieve the organization's advocacy goals. Guzmán also promotes community participation in the mission of WE ARE LAWRENCE, a platform established in 2012 to highlight the positive aspects of Lawrence and foster unity among its residents.

Ms. Kassie Infante earned her B.S. from the University of North Carolina Wilmington and has extensive experience working in the non-profit, educational development/philanthropy and political advocacy field. Her experience working in private schools, reconciled with her educational upbringing in public schools and the realization of deep disparities, led her to pursue a career advocating for equity and justice in public education. While serving on the Lawrence School Committee in 2020, Ms. Infante attended the Harvard Graduate School of Education and earned a Masters in Education. Her studies and interest lie in advancing progressive education policy, community organizing and critical participatory action research as methods to disrupt and dismantle systemic racism.

Chandarane Khoeun is a second-year student at the University of Massachusetts Lowell, where she is pursuing a degree in History. She is a second-generation refugee with a strong interest in arts and culture, aiming to preserve the legacies of Cambodian Americans, as well as highlight minority voices. Her work for UMass Lowell and UMass Boston's joint project focuses on anti-Asian racism and violence surrounding the Cambodian diaspora. In the future, she intends to research the revival of Khmer art after the genocide.

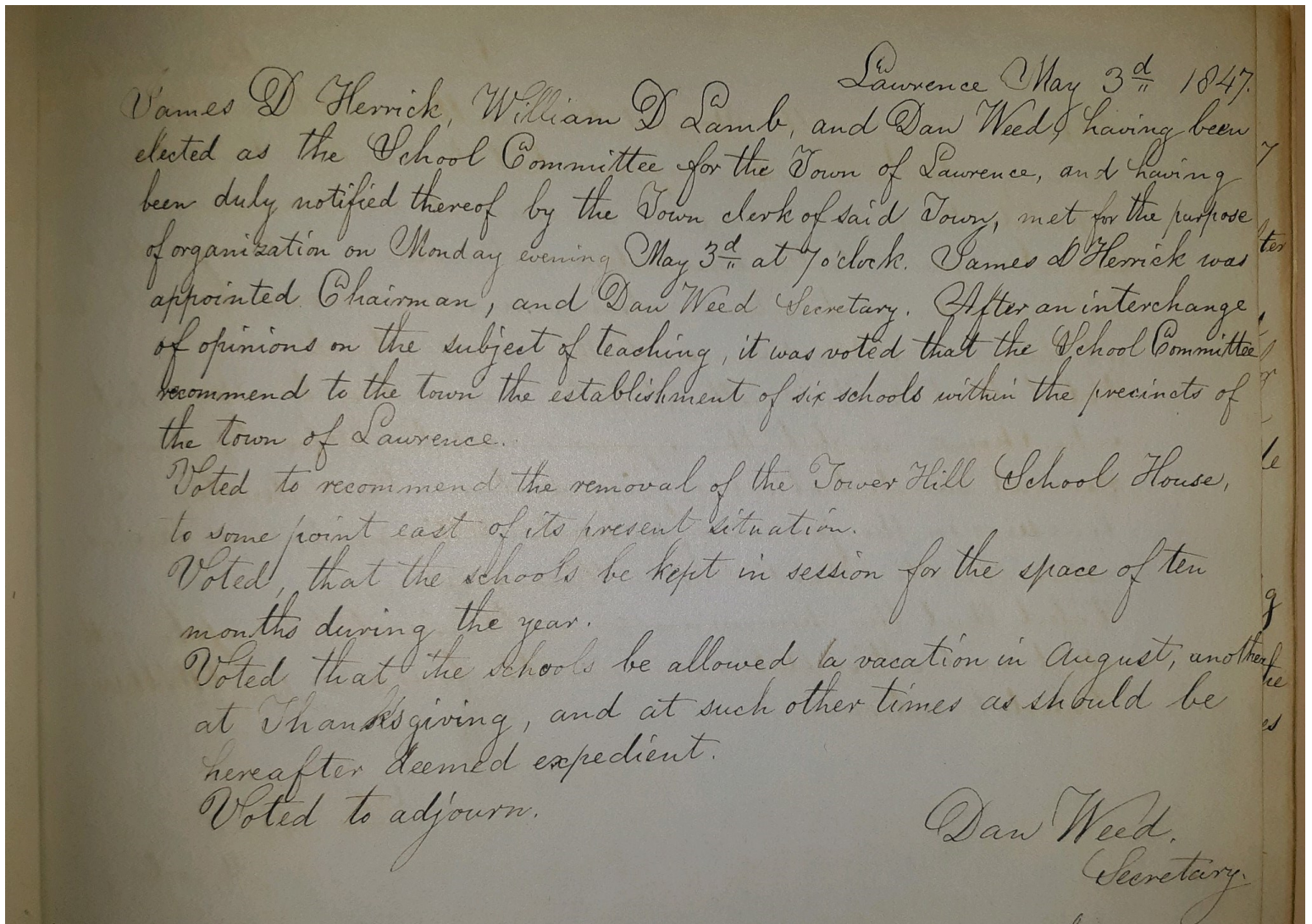
Elizabeth Pellerito is the former President of the Bread & Roses Heritage Committee and current Vice President. She is the Director of the Labor Education Program at the University of Massachusetts Lowell and uses popular education techniques to develop and deliver training for workers; she also teaches Labor Studies courses at UML. She is a Gist Yarn weaver-in-residence in 2024 and is completing a manuscript about the history of weaving and struggles for liberation.

Dr. Marianela Rivera (she/ella) is a physical therapist and has focused the majority of her career in serving students receiving special education services. Her experiences while working for Lawrence Public Schools revealed systemic issues impacting her students and their families, which motivated her to run and win a last-minute write-in campaign for the Lawrence School Committee in 2015 and was re-elected as Vice Chair in 2017. Dr. Rivera's efforts helped organize parents, teachers, students, activists, and concerned citizens to propel public education forward with the Fund Our Future campaign that led to the passing of the Student Opportunity Act. Dr. Rivera was one of the first Table Coordinators of the Greater Lawrence Education Justice Alliance, a role that was taken over by Kassie Infante in 2020. She co-founded HomePlace Collective with Kassie Infante, a Department of Education (MA-DESE)-approved consultancy group that helps educational institutions, community spaces, and nonprofits drive social change by building transformational civic skills and critical socio-political literacy. In addition to education consulting, she continues to work in special education, coaches students in UMass Lowell's Pathway program, and is an adjunct professor at UMass Lowell

Katharine K. Rodger, EdD, joined Northern Essex Community College in 1985 to direct the Lawrence Education Employment Project (LEEP), retiring as Dean of the Lawrence Campus in 2002. Prior to working at NECC, she was Executive Director of the International Institute of Greater Lawrence, Inc., before that, served as Community Liaison for the Lawrence Public Schools, interfacing with Hispanic students, their families, and the school system. Kathy earned her B.A. from Macalester College in 1966; her Masters in Education from the University of Lowell in 1982; and her Doctorate in Education from UMass Lowell in 2000.

Brian Sheehy is the History Department Coordinator at North Andover High School in North Andover, MA, where he teaches AP European History, AP US History, and Sports of the Past. He is the 2020 Organization of American Historians: Mary K. Bonsteel Tachau Teacher of the Year Award winner and Williams College: Olmstead Secondary Teacher of the Year Award winner. He created the North Andover High History Learning Lab, which focuses on enriching and enhancing the history curriculum through object-based learning. Brian has also presented at several conferences on the merits of and pedagogy behind the use of object-based learning. He also developed and published a lesson plan that National History Day published focused on Baseball, WWI, and Patriotism. Brian is also a sports historian who has traveled all over the country giving presentations at conferences, symposiums, historical societies, and museums. He wrote a chapter in the book *Stories of Sport: Critical Literacy in Media Production, Consumption, and Dissemination* entitled "'Selling Patriotism On and Off the Field: Media Connections Between Baseball, the Military, and the Government". He has designed and created PD on a variety of topics including local history and how to incorporate sports themes in their classrooms.

Stacy Szczesiul is the Associate Dean of Online Education, Accreditation & Licensing in UMASS Lowell's College of Fine Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences. Prior to moving to the Dean's Office in Fall 2021, Szczesiul served as a faculty member in the School of Education for 11 years. During that time, she led the design and implementation of an Ed.D. Leadership in Schooling program that has been nationally recognized for its emphasis on critical improvement science and equity literacy. As Associate Dean, Szczesiul has prioritized efforts to diversify the educator workforce in the Commonwealth by building out high school Grow Your Own pathways in Lowell and Lawrence and partnering with nonprofits like Latinos for Education and He Is Me. Szczesiul is an established researcher with interests in the role of internal and external accountability systems in school improvement and in the occupational expectations of teachers in a changing policy context. She received an Ed.D. in Education Policy, Leadership and Instructional Practice from the Harvard University Graduate School of Education in 2009.



[From the Lawrence History Center Collection: Minutes from the first Town of Lawrence School Committee Meeting]

Lawrence May 3, 1847

James T. Herrick, William D. Lamb, and Dan Weed, having been elected as the School Committee of the Town of Lawrence, and having been duly notified thereof by the Town clerk of said Town, met for the purpose of organization on Monday evening, May 3rd at 7 o'clock. James D. Herrick was appointed Chairman, and Dan Weed Secretary. After an interchange of opinions on the subject of teaching, it was voted that the School Committee recommend to the town the establishment of six schools within the precincts of the Town of Lawrence.

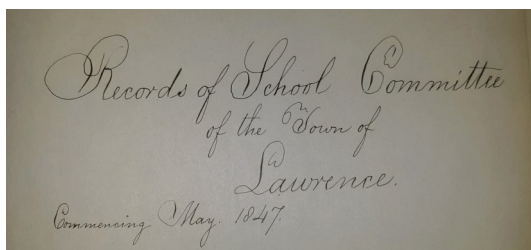
Voted to recommend the removal of the Tower Hill School House, to some point east of its present situation.

Voted that the schools be kept in session for the space of ten months during the year.

Voted that the school be allowed a vacation in August, another at Thanksgiving, and at such other times as should be hereafter deemed expedient.

Voted to adjourn.

Dan Weed,
Secretary



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Founded as the Immigrant City Archives in 1978, the mission of the Lawrence History Center is to collect, preserve, share, and animate the history and heritage of Lawrence and its people.

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The symposium is made possible with funding from Lawrence Cultural Council, The White Fund, Andover Bread Loaf, and the Catherine McCarthy Memorial Trust Fund.

Our Host:



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