

Partners in Discovery

Student Research Employing University of Washington Special Collections

This exhibit, co-sponsored by the **Research Commons** and the **Labor Archives of Washington**, focuses on recent University of Washington graduate student research projects employing primary source materials from the **University of Washington Libraries Special Collections**. Primary sources are materials directly related to a topic by time or participation. These materials include letters, speeches, diaries, newspaper articles from the time, oral history interviews, documents, photographs, artifacts, or other sources that provide firsthand accounts about a person or event.

The innovative research of three graduate students from the departments of History and Geography are highlighted, hinting at the broad topical range of the type of scholarly disciplines that employ the unique treasures housed in Libraries Special Collections (located below the Research Commons in the Allen Library South Basement).

Similarly, the Research Commons is a central hub of presenting and supporting student research, offering an array of consulting services for UW students and organizing regular forums for presenting research in the quarterly Scholar's Studio: an informal forum featuring 10 rapid-fire ignite-style presentations given by graduate students and postdocs doing research on topics related to an interdisciplinary theme.



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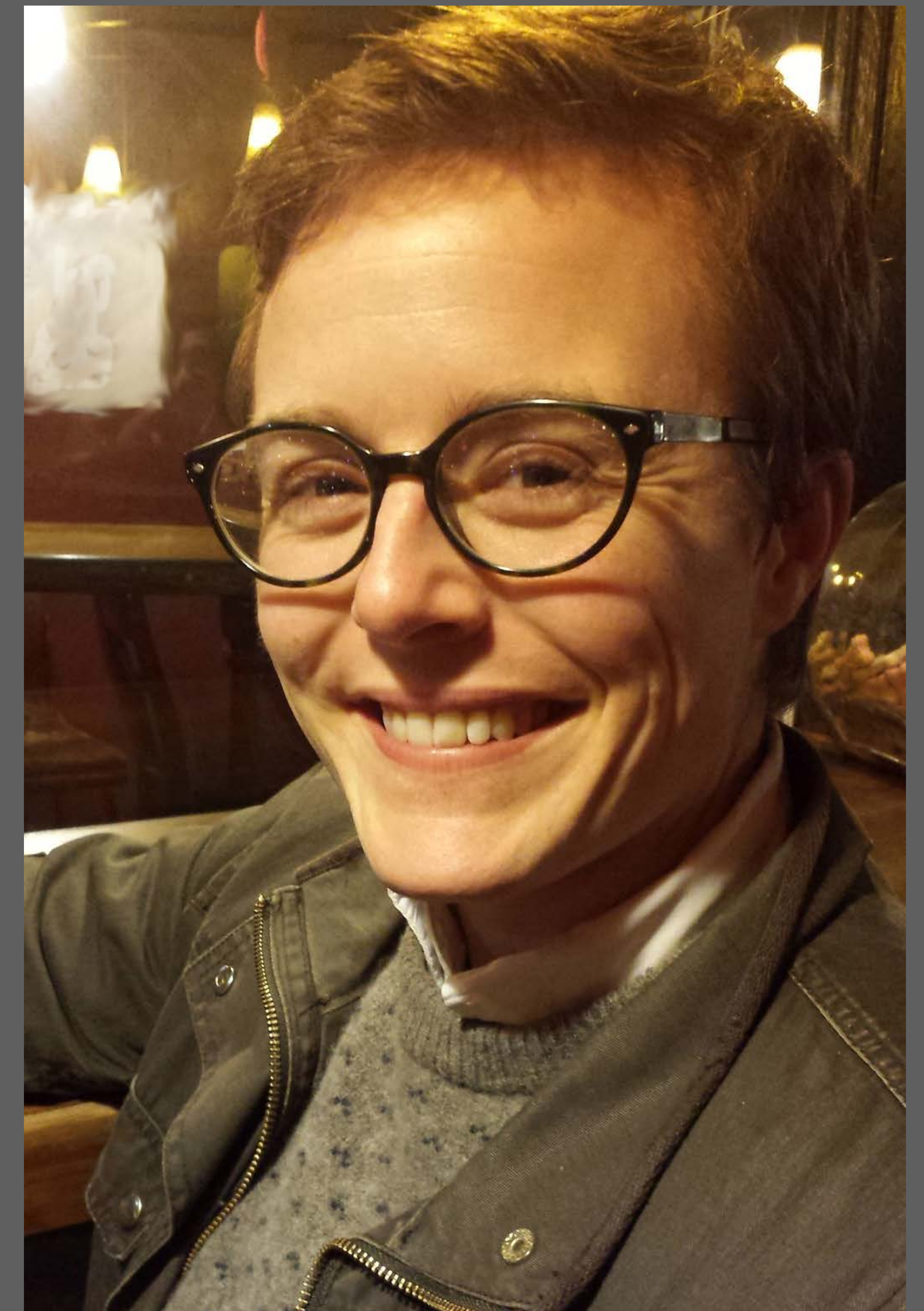
Labor Archives of Washington

Megan Brown | UW Department of Geography

SeaTac/Seattle Minimum Wage Campaign

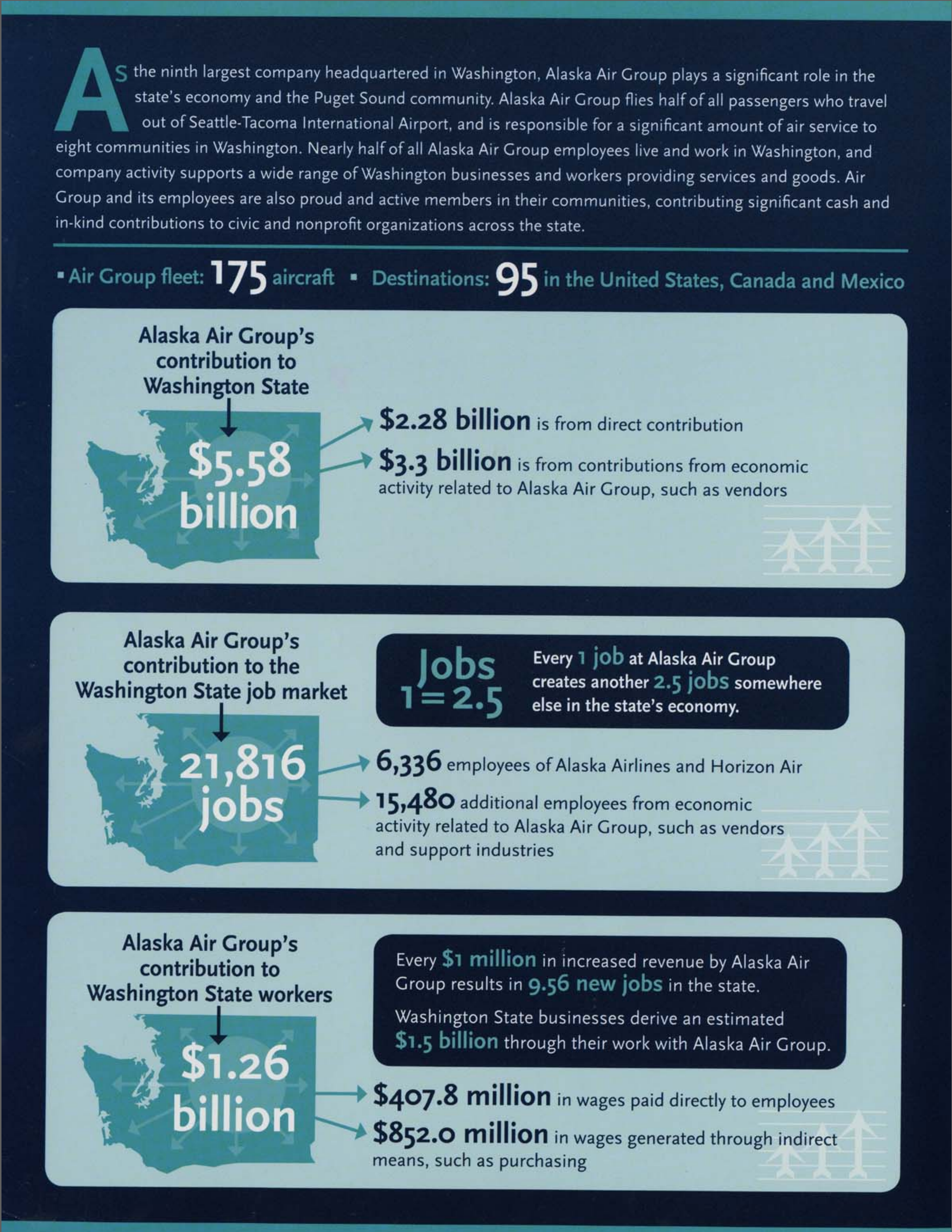
Mobile Minimum Wage Policies and Labor Union Campaigns in the U.S.

Megan's Commentary: *"The Fight for \$15 is a rapidly growing movement for higher minimum wages and on-the-job rights for low-wage workers. My dissertation investigates the strategic and practical mechanisms through which labor unions, progressive worker and community organizations, and policy makers are spreading \$15/hour minimum wages throughout the U.S. Because the diffusion of these campaigns across the U.S. is still in process, an important and brief window is currently open for the empirical investigation of the spatial strategies employed by labor organizations, the variation of these strategies across locations, and the generalized patterns of movement of minimum wage increases as they proliferate throughout the country. This project takes the form of a three-part comparative case study, investigating both the connective flows and moments of disjuncture between the sites in which campaigns for higher minimum wages have been executed."*



Megan Brown is a PhD Candidate in Geography. Brown spent three years in the labor movement, working as a strategic researcher for SEIU Healthcare 775NW. Megan's research interests include the modern labor movement and social movements. Specifically, how collective action organized on the local level is conceived in relation to and directed against global forces of capital mobility, neoliberalism, and globalization.

SeaTac/Seattle Minimum Wage Campaign



Alaska Air Group pamphlet containing statistics about its impact on Washington State economy, 2011–2014.

Guillermo “Memo Rivera” Collection of SEIU 775 and Working Washington Records, **Labor Archives of Washington**, University of Washington Libraries Special Collections

Megan’s Commentary: *“On one hand, corporations and conservative policymakers argue that businesses create jobs. In this scenario, jobs are given by companies to the community, and wages are simply another cost that employers bear. This is the reigning “common sense” perspective on the economy.”*

Hanauer Quote: *“To make an extraordinarily long story short, when you go from conceptualizing an economy in a neoclassical sort of orthodox way, as a linear, mechanistic closed system, essentially a zero-sum system, the way in which most orthodox economists and policy makers think about it, to conceptualizing it in a twenty-first-century way, as an open, dynamic, nonlinear, non-equilibrium system, you come to entirely different conclusions about how the system works and what you might do to make it better.*

And Eric Liu and I evolved a framework called “middle-out economics”, which again, is a long story, but it is largely the view that a thriving middle-class isn’t the consequence of growth. A thriving middle-class in a technological capitalist economy is the source of growth. And that a policy focus therefore on the middle class is the thing that drives a robust capitalistic economy. In another parlance, the orthodox view, entrepreneurs and business people like me are job creators and that just isn’t true; we are idea-creators and solution-creators, but jobs are a consequence of a feedback loop between consumers and businesses. The true job creators in a capitalist economy are middle class consumers. When they thrive, so does business and employment and so on and so forth.”

Nick Hanauer Interview

SeaTac Seattle Minimum Wage History Project, **Labor Archives of Washington**, University of Washington Libraries Special Collections

(Playing on Monitor below)

Megan’s Commentary: *“Advocates of raising the minimum wage take two distinct tactics. The first combats the idea that corporations make the economy by centering the importance of workers in creating demand. Here, Nick Hanauer, a proponent of the \$15 minimum wage in Seattle, explains the theory of ‘middle out economics,’ an updated version of Keynes’ economic theory. By collectivizing responsibility for the economy, activists make the case that everyone benefits by increasing the minimum wage.”*

Andrew Hedden | UW Department of History

Carlos Bulosan, Boeing Machinists

Andrew's Commentary: *"My research explores alternative histories of Seattle that center the experiences of people on the margins of power, documenting the activities and organizations of working-class people and communities of color. I am particularly concerned with the growth of the city's service economy and political liberalism since the 1970s, and I emphasize the dominant role of the federal government and U.S. empire in economic development, as well as the roles of race and gender.*

Overall, I seek to complicate what it means to cast Seattle as an urban exception: a 'middle class' city with a high quality of life that has seemingly escaped the urban crises and conservative political turns prevalent elsewhere in the United States. If cities are to provide the political base of resistance to the next four years of the Trump administration, as many have called for, I think what's needed is a long hard look at the historical strengths and limitations of liberalism and cities in the United States. Seattle, present home to the tech-based New Economy and died-in-the-wool Democrats, is as good as any a place to start."



Andrew Hedden is the Associate Director of the Harry Bridges Center for Labor Studies and a graduate student in the UW Department of History's PhD program.

Carlos Bulosan, Boeing Machinists

Andrew’s Commentary: “*U.S. empire built Seattle as we know it today, most notably through the millions of dollars in Cold War military contracts granted the Boeing Company throughout the 20th century. But long before Boeing was a household name, the international reach of U.S. commercial and military power contributed to the economic development of Seattle through the trade benefits and labor flows created by the U.S. occupation of the Philippines. Part of my research has explored this history through the life of Carlos Bulosan, a famed Filipino novelist, poet, and labor and anti-colonialism activist, who first came to the city in 1930, returning many times again over the course of his life, before dying here in 1952. The UW Labor Archives collections of Bulosan’s writings and correspondence provide an indispensable window into the Seattle world of Bulosan, revealing a city full of colonial inequalities, racial violence, and labor exploitation, but also radical working-class resistance.*

The rise of the Boeing Company defined Seattle after World War II, but often lost in the traditional story is the place of Boeing workers themselves. Another part of my research into Seattle’s history, therefore, has explored the role of Boeing’s machinists, unionized since 1936 in the International Association of Machinists, District Lodge 751. This history is documented in a number of collections in the Labor Archives in UW Special Collections, including local union records and the papers of union activists. The union has gone unheralded in traditional Seattle history, yet its efforts have saved Seattle on at least one occasion. When the Boeing Company nearly went bankrupt in the early 1970s, driving double-digit unemployment in the Seattle area, it was the union-generated protections of high wages, seniority, and unemployment insurance that kept the city’s economy from fully imploding.”

“I Want the Wide American Earth”
Carlos Bulosan
Papers, University of Washington Libraries
Special Collections

I WANT THE WIDE AMERICAN EARTH
Carlos Bulosan
Carlos Bulosan (8/1)

Before the brave, before the proud builders and workers,
I say I want the wide American earth,
Its beautiful rivers and long valleys and fertile plains,
Its numberless hamlets and expanding towns and towering cities,
Its limitless frontiers, its probing intelligence,
For all the free.

Free men everywhere in my land --
This wide American earth -- do not wander homeless,
And are not alone; friendship is our bread, love our air;
And we call each other comrade, each growing with the other,
Each a neighbor to the other, boundless in freedom.

I say I want the wide American earth....
I say to you defenders of freedom, builders of peace,
I say to you democratic brothers, comrades of love:
Their judges lynch us, their police hunt us;
Their armies and navies and airmen terrorize us;
Their thugs and stoolies and murderers kill us;
They take away bread from our children;
They ravage our women;
They deny life to our elders.

But I say we have the truth
On our side, we have the future with us;
We have history in our hands, our belligerent hands.
We are millions everywhere,
On seas and oceans and lands;
In air;
On water and all over this very earth.
We are millions working together.
We are building, creating, molding life.
We are shaping the shining structures of love.
We are everywhere, we are everywhere.
We are there when they sentence us to prison for telling the truth;
We are there when they conscript us to fight their wars;
We are there when they throw us in concentration camps;
We are there when they come at dawn with their guns.
We are there, we are there,
and we say to them:

"You cannot frighten us with your bombs and deaths;
You cannot drive us away from our land with your hate and disease;
You cannot starve us with your war programs and high prices;
Because you are nothing but nothing;
You cannot put us all in your padded jails;
You cannot snatch the dawn of life from us!"


And we say to them:

"Remember, remember,
We shall no longer wear rags, eat stale bread, live in darkness;
We shall no longer kneel on our knees to your false gods;
We shall no longer beg you for a share of life.
Remember, remember,
O remember in the deepest midnight of your fear,
We shall emulate the wonder of our women,
The ringing laughter of our children,
The strength and manhood of our men,
With a true and honest and powerful love!"

And we say to them:

"We are the creators of a flowering race!"

Strike letter from
IAM 751 President
Harold Gibson to
striking Boeing union
machinist members,
1948.
Harold J. Gibson
Papers, Labor
Archives of
Washington,
University of
Washington Libraries
Special Collections


International Association of Machinists
5502 AIRPORT WAY
SEATTLE 8, WASHINGTON

AERONAUTICAL INDUSTRIAL DISTRICT LODGE 751
May 1, 1948
Rahner 1300

Dear Member:

The shoe must be beginning to pinch over at Boeing. They're getting desperate!

Perhaps you received a letter from Mr. Allen, Boeing president, within the last few days telling you how honorable the Company is and continuing at great length to explain what a bunch of fools we are for going out on strike.

Well, don't let it mislead you. That's more of the vicious propaganda we've been fighting against as employees for a number of years. That's apparently the first step in a planned "back-to-work" movement without a contract. They want you to come back to an "open shop"...to work without any type of Union protection. They want to hire you as they please...promote you as they please...demote you as they please...and fire you as they please. In other words, they want absolutely no restrictions. They don't want you, as an employee, to have a thing to say about your future welfare and job security. The fact that most of you have families to support and must depend on a steady annual income, doesn't worry Boeing management. They want to run things in their own way...without intervention from anyone. And you've worked at Boeing long enough to know what would happen if they had their way. It certainly isn't necessary to go into detail about that subject.

None of us enjoy being out on strike. We all want -- and need -- steady employment. The shoe is going to pinch us, too, if this strike continues much longer. But if the Company persists in its unreasonable attitude we should prepare ourselves to fight to the last ditch for our rights and principles.

The Company claims that our strike was never authorized by the membership of the Union!

We wonder what they think those thousands of people did at the Armory on May 24th, 1947. You'll recall that we voted almost unanimously to strike against the Company if the Union negotiators were unable to obtain a satisfactory agreement. Our membership never rescinded that action, nor did they ever give any indication that they wanted to change their minds.

True, we did not have official sanction from our International Office when we went on strike...but, it was pending and had not been denied! A few days later, when our International officers learned of the Company's adamant position, official sanction was granted...and we knew that the International, with its large staff of learned attorneys, would not sanction our action unless it was legal under the laws of our land.

The Company says we violated our contract. This statement is utterly false. If there was a contract, the COMPANY has violated the Taft-Hartley Act by terminating the document without giving a 60-day notice! The Union has acted in full

Eleanor Mahoney | UW Department of History

The Art of Richard Correll

Eleanor's Commentary: *"I first came across the incredible work of **Richard V. Correll** while reviewing issues of the Voice of Action, a radical newspaper published in 1930s Seattle. Correll's stunning and at-times provocative wood block cartoons vividly captured the spirit of the paper and I found myself returning to them during my research. I encountered Correll's work a second time while writing a history of New Deal art programs in Washington State. Correll participated in the Federal Art Program for three years, completing a mural project, linoleum and wood block prints, lithographs, etchings and more. Particularly striking were a series of prints based on Paul Bunyan, an iconic Northwest folk figure. I have selected two works from this series, "Clearing Tacoma Flats, 1938" and "Creation of San Juan Islands, 1938" to showcase as I believe they vividly capture not only Correll's unique style, but also the ethos of much public art created in the 1930s.*

***The Labor Archives of Washington** accessioned much of Correll's work at roughly the same time I was completing my research. Labor Archives staff not only supported my work, but also arranged for me to meet Correll's daughter Leslie, an incredible opportunity to learn more about his life and art. Additionally, I presented at the 2013 Seattle Folklife Festival with the support of Labor Archivist Conor Casey, a wonderful experience."*



Eleanor Mahoney is a PhD Candidate in United States History. Her dissertation examines the connections between economic change and environmental policy in the period after World War II. She has also researched Depression-era art and politics in Washington State.

The Art of Richard Correll



"Clearing Tacoma Flats, 1938"

Richard V. Correll Prints and Papers, **Labor Archives of Washington**, University of Washington Libraries Special Collections

Eleanor's Commentary: *"I have selected two works from this series, 'Clearing Tacoma Flats, 1938' and 'Creation of San Juan Islands, 1938' to showcase as I believe they vividly capture not only Correll's unique style, but also the ethos of much public art created in the 1930s."*

"Creation of the San Juan Islands, 1938"

Richard V. Correll Prints and Papers, **Labor Archives of Washington**, University of Washington Libraries Special Collections

