



THE UNITED ASSOCIATION FOR LABOR EDUCATION

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UALE Statement Regarding Attacks on University of Missouri Labor Educators

Recently, videotape excerpts of a labor education class taught by our colleague, Judy Ancel, director of The Institute for Labor Studies at the University of Missouri-Kansas City, and union leader Don Giljum, have been circulating on the Internet.

The dissemination of highly edited, false, and deceptive tapes that take remarks out of context and distort their true meaning has become a familiar tactic used by anti-union forces to discredit those whose views they oppose. The use of this disgraceful tactic against Judy Ancel and Don Giljum is only the latest in a series of efforts to intimidate and silence teachers, scholars, and activists who have spoken out against legislative initiatives to curtail collective bargaining rights for workers and undermine the effectiveness of labor unions.

As labor educators, we are committed to enhancing the ability of workers to participate effectively in workplace and community affairs. We also believe that the presence of a strong union movement not only provides workers with vital protections but is essential to maintaining a just and democratic society. Accordingly, we view attempts to impede or prevent labor educators from performing their vital mission as antithetical to democratic values and unacceptable.

We denounce in the strongest possible terms this blatant attempt to suppress academic freedom, impugn the character of our colleagues, and circumscribe the boundaries of political discussion. We urge administrators at the University of Missouri to do likewise and affirm the principles of academic freedom, critical inquiry, and fair play that are essential to effective education and a functional democracy.

