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By Monica Moorehead
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Greater Boston Marxists Association builds frameworks of solidarity, community care

Special to Workers World

The following interview was conducted for Workers World by Monica Moorehead, a managing editor of WW, with Leighsandra and Queen-Cheyenne, co-presidents of the Greater Boston Marxists Association that originated in the Marxist Student Association at Suffolk University in Boston.



Leighsandra, Queen-Cheyenne, Feb. 22. Photo: Stevan Kirschbaum

Workers World: Can you tell our readers about the founding of the Greater Boston Marxists Association and what its guiding principles are?

Leighsandra & Queen-Cheyenne: Our organization was founded during our senior year at Suffolk University by the two of us: Queen-Cheyenne and Leighsandra. The initial founding of the Marxist Student Association was brought about by the realization that we needed to build a solid community and safe space on campus for ourselves and other leftists who may hold the same ideologies.

Beforehand, we both began our work in activism in high school after coming to the conclusion that the education we were receiving, specifically regarding Black and Indigenous history, was ahistorical and white-washed severely. This was the leading motivation behind wanting to broaden our knowledge even more in a socioeconomic sense, eventually leading to a deeper understanding of capitalism, imperialism and radical leftism itself.

The Greater Boston Marxists Association is built around the frameworks of both solidarity and community care. Our mission is not only to educate ourselves, but the Greater Boston communities about the impacts of capitalism and imperialism on the lives of marginalized peoples, locally and globally.

WW: What is the social composition of the student population at Suffolk University?

LS & QC: Suffolk University is located directly in downtown Boston and can be classified as a commuter school. Aside from many of the students being local and from Greater Boston communities, there is also a very large international student population. With all this being said, Suffolk is still a predominantly white institution.

WW: What were some of the major campaigns MSA worked on? What were some of the challenges MSA faced on campus?

LS & QC: Our newer campaigns have specifically included the framework of community care and popular education. Our biggest campaigns at the moment are our work within the Greater Boston community around historically accurate education on Black radicalism and Black Resistance movements of yesterday and today. This campaign works directly with Boston universities and Boston public schools, hopefully to continue to lead workshops and help build curriculum around the framework of accurate education about Black history.

Our second major project during this time is transitioning many of our already established workshops and interviews over to an online podcast accessible to anyone. This will have

regularly updated audio recordings of our workshops and interviews of upcoming organizations, organizers and activists. Our last major campaign while working on our transition is our online reading groups, which we'll be continuing virtually on Instagram Live and Zoom calls for anyone interested in joining.

At this moment, we'd like to address a significant change for our organization. In light of recent events, we feel that it is the best time to announce that we will be officially terminating our association and/or affiliation with Suffolk University. Our lead organizers feel it is best not to put a limit on our work toward socioeconomic change and will be extending the association locally in order to work more effectively within the Greater Boston communities. Additionally, the Marxist Student Association will no longer be operating under said name, which has officially been changed to the Greater Boston Marxists Association.

We thank you all for your support in our recent adjustments and ask that you continue to stand in solidarity with the communities most affected by the current health issue at hand.

WW: How can other activists and/or progressive organizations show solidarity with GBMA?

LS & QC: During this time, specifically with the outbreak of the coronavirus COVID-19, some of the best ways to continue solidarity with the Greater Boston Marxists Association is keeping yourself and community safe through acts of community care — in this case, for example, not hoarding resources. Another way to continue showing solidarity is to stay up to date on current events and global issues, specifically within the Global South and other states affected by imperialist powers.

If you're interested in continuing to follow our campaigns and/or possibly joining our lead organizing team or our general organizing populace, please feel free to reach out to our lead organizers at GBMarxists@gmail.com.

(WW photo: Stevan Kirschbaum)

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