

# CaliforniaTeacher

February ■ March 2012  
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CALIFORNIA FEDERATION OF TEACHERS, AFT, AFL-CIO



## Classified colleagues reunited in AFT win

PAGE 13



### What really matters in education

Finnish activist describes success

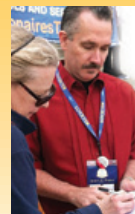
PAGE 9



### Plucky organizer builds connections

Local union takes on financial giant

PAGE 5



### Put Millionaires Tax on state ballot

Help collect signatures now

PAGE 3



## Up Front Josh Pechthalt, CFT President



# Independent political action becomes proud hallmark of our Federation

Our coalition partners understand that this initiative must be driven by the goals of our members, not those of Sacramento insiders.

**THE BUZZ IS SPREADING.** The Millionaires Tax is exciting Californians unlike any initiative in recent memory. Over the last few weeks, tens of thousands have signed petitions to put our measure on the November ballot while dozens of newspaper articles, radio and television interviews have carried our message across the country.

That message, that it is time for those who have benefited the most to pay their fair share, is clearly resonating with working families, students, community partners and rank-and-file union members.

The Millionaires Tax will bring significant dollars into education and social programs, and coincides with the growing awareness of income and tax inequality that is now part of the national political debate. Unfortunately, some of our usual allies in Sacramento and in labor would like for us to drop our measure and line up behind the governor's proposal.

One labor leader admitted to me that his union didn't join our effort early on in deference to the governor. But as late as November, the governor's office encouraged us, the Mil-

lionaires Tax campaign, to continue working on our measure because they weren't sure they would have an initiative ready to submit on time.

The notion that we in the labor movement and the progressive community should sit on our hands and wait for a call from any elected leader to get our "marching orders," underscores the true crisis of leadership we are facing in this country. In particular, a labor movement that is not prepared to organize and act independently is a labor movement on its way to political irrelevance.

Despite vague promises from elected leaders, Californians continue to suffer from the consequences of billions of dollars in cuts to education and vital programs. Unless we push back, these cuts will become institutionalized, dooming entire communities to poverty.

Our union has never been shy about charting its own path. Proposition 25 didn't rely on getting a green light from elected leaders and the big unions to get off the ground.

CFT led the way on Proposition 25 because we couldn't continue to suffer through more years of budget stale-

mate only to have Democrats negotiate away labor and environmental protections to gain Republican support for disastrous budget agreements.

In preparing for the Millionaires Tax, we worked to build the broadest labor-community coalition possible. Our coalition partners understand that this initiative must be driven by the goals of our members, not those of Sacramento insiders. As a result, our measure has the support of more than 50 unions and community organizations committed to progressive change in November and over the long haul.

In the months before November, we must expand our network of supporters and activists, raise money, and spread the word about our measure. Work with your local union to take our message to your worksite. Join in collecting signatures to put the Millionaires Tax on the November ballot.

We have a long road ahead of us, but with your active involvement, we can begin to change the face of California.

In Unity,

*Josh Pechthalt*



DAVID BACON

### ON THE COVER

Berkeley operations and support staff, including district bus drivers, become the newest group of workers to join the CFT. Front row, left to right: Francis Balba, Tanyel Simon, Angela Banks, Mary Ann Lopez, Robert Castillo. Back row: Derrell Laird, Will Essex, Mark Bauer, Chuck Copeland, and Johnny Billups. See story page 13.

PHOTO BY SHARON BEALS

**California Federation of Teachers**  
AFT, AFL-CIO  
*A Union of Professionals*



The California Federation of Teachers is an affiliate of the American Federation of Teachers, AFL-CIO. The CFT represents faculty and classified workers in public and private schools and colleges, from early childhood through higher education. The CFT is committed to raising the standards of the profession and to securing the conditions essential to provide the best service to California's students.

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#### EDITORIAL OFFICE

**California Federation of Teachers**, 1201 Marina Village Pkwy., Suite 115, Alameda, California 94501  
 Telephone 510-523-5238 Fax 510-523-5262  
**Email** jhundertmark@cft.org

**Publications Director and Editor** Jane Hundertmark

**Contributors this issue:** David Bacon, Velma Butler, Patty Cox, Megan Dias, Tom Edminster, Carl Friedlander, Fred Glass, Elaine Johnson, Judith Michaels, Joshua Pechthalt, Mindy Pines, Gary Ravani, Bob Samuels, Kim Turner, Malcolm Terence, Sandra Weese, Rosanna Wiebe

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AFT Guild President Jim Mahler collects signatures.

# All-Union News

## Field Poll shows CFT's Millionaires Tax top choice among voters

THE CALIFORNIA FIELD POLL reported that voters prefer the Millionaires Tax over Gov. Brown's tax initiative by 63 percent to 58 percent, with the proposal by Molly Munger, a wealthy lawyer, trailing at 45 percent. Brown's own poll shows the same order.

Only 20 percent of those polled in the late February Field Poll opted for keeping income tax rates unchanged, a clear signal that voters in the state are ready to raise taxes on the wealthiest Californians.


Sponsored by CFT and its partners in the Restoring California coalition, the Millionaires Tax will, if passed in November, add \$6 to \$9.5 billion a year to fund public education and services — without asking people who make less than \$1 million per year to pay an extra cent.

"It is the people at the top of the economic scale who have a responsibility to give back," explains CFT President Josh Pechthalt. "The Millionaires Tax doesn't place any additional burden on the backs of working families, middle-class families, or the poor."

As CFT launches its spring signature-gathering drive to place the Millionaires Tax on the ballot, MoveOn.org, the 5 million-member online advocacy group, asked its more than 900,000 California members if they support the measure.

When an overwhelming 94 per-

Compare the **3** tax initiatives for yourself

	Revenue estimate 2012-13*	Voter support**	Tax change and expiration	Who benefits	Who backs this***	Annual cost to typical taxpayer****
<b>Millionaires Tax of 2012</b> 	\$6 to \$9.5 billion	63%	Raises rate by 3% on income over \$1 million; by 5% on income over \$2 million. <b>Does not expire.</b>	60% to K-14, CSU, and UC, remainder to local governments to restore services	CFT, Courage Campaign, MoveOn.org, California Calls, CNA, UC Students' Association, AFSCME District Council 57	\$0
<b>Gov. Brown</b>	\$4.8 to \$6.9 billion	58%	Increases state sales tax by half cent and tax rates on income over \$250,000. <b>Expires in 2016.</b>	K-14, public safety, social services and corrections	Gov. Brown, SEIU State Council, CTA, Billionaire Eli Broad, Occidental Petroleum	\$123
<b>Our Children, Our Future</b>	\$5 to \$5.5 billion	45%	Raises income taxes on all Californians who earn more than \$7,316 per year. <b>Expires in 2024.</b>	K-12, early childhood programs	Civil rights attorney Molly Munger	\$222

\*Legislative Analysts Report

\*\*Feb 2012 Field Poll

\*\*\*Partial list

\*\*\*\* Typical taxpayer = median joint filer, \$65,000

cent of MoveOn members cast their support for the Millionaires Tax, the president and co-founder of MoveOn, Wes Boyd, said, "Our members clearly believe that millionaires who have done so well in our state should do well by our state."

Rallies in four cities kicked off the signature-gathering campaign on February 6. In Fresno, former United Farm Workers leader Dolores Huerta told the crowd, "We must act now and lend our time and energy to put this Millionaires Tax on the ballot



ANA BEATRIZ CHOLO

centers to pay their fair share.

The popularity of the Millionaires Tax was evident on the same day when supporters mounted 10-foot banners on freeway overpasses in nine cities. Joanne Waddell, president of the Los Angeles College Faculty Guild, reported that L.A. drivers responded with enthusiastic honking and hand waving, and "the overwhelming majority of those waving hands featured all five fingers."

In Costa Mesa, Kimberly Claytor, president of the Newport-Mesa Federation of Teachers, estimated that 20,000 commuters saw the banner. When police ordered her to remove the banner from the overpass, Claytor told the officers their pensions were at risk from inadequate funding and attacks on public workers. The cops nodded and left...without the banner.

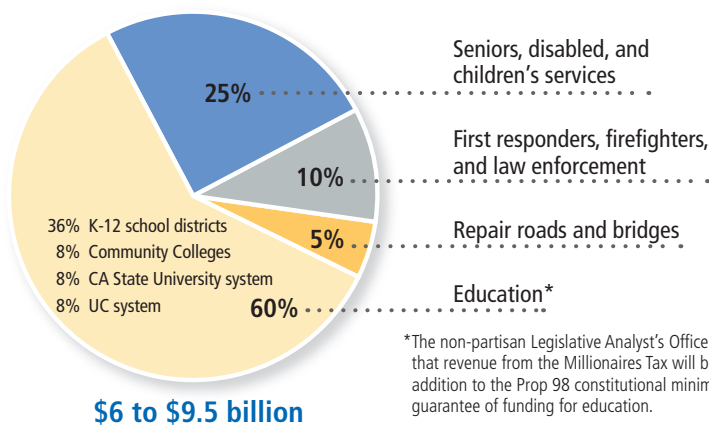
— By CFT Staff

and make sure everyone pays their fair share."

Coalition partners spoke at an adult education center slated for massive funding cuts in South Central Los Angeles. In Oakland, the campaign rolled out its first "millionaire for the Millionaires Tax," Frank Jernigan.

Jernigan, a software engineer who worked for a Silicon Valley startup, was vaulted overnight, as he put it, "from the 99 percent to the 1 percent," when the company went public. But he has not forgotten where he came from, and he called on his fellow 1

### How the Millionaires Tax will fund public services



### TakeAction

>Join the signature gathering now underway. Obtain petitions from your local union leaders and learn more at [cft.org](http://cft.org). To join the email list and watch popular videos, go to [millionairestaxca.com](http://millionairestaxca.com).





# Deceptive ballot proposition is another corporate power grab

## Third statewide ballot measure in 14 years aims to silence workers and their unions

**THE LATEST IN A** string of ballot measures claiming to limit special interest money in politics will appear on the November ballot. This is yet another attempt to deceive voters into passing a law that benefits wealthy corporate interests at the expense of workers and unions. It is nothing but a corporate power grab, the kind California voters have already rejected twice first in 1998 and again in 2005.

This measure would limit the ability of local unions to help elect education-friendly school board members and college trustees, and limit the CFT's ability to participate in candidate campaigns and ballot measures such as the Millionaires Tax.

CFT has joined forces with a statewide coalition of unions fighting to defeat this measure, one that the *Long Beach Press Telegram* called "...a phony veneer of fairness...one-sided and biased." Yet the measure's proponents have positioned the "Stop Special Interest Money Now Act" as a "simple, fair and balanced solution."

Proponents claim the measure bans contributions to candidates by both unions and corporations, prohibits both from collecting political funds from members and employees through voluntary payroll deduction, and makes all member or employee political contributions by any other



means strictly voluntary, requiring annual written consent.

A closer examination, however, reveals a giant loophole that allows corporations to continue to make unlimited political expenditures supporting or opposing candidates, without restrictions, and unlimited contributions to ballot measures.

Here is how this ballot trick works. It would stop both corporations and unions from collecting political funds through payroll deductions. But while unions use payroll deductions

to collect a portion of dues money for political purposes, corporations *almost never* use payroll deductions to support or oppose candidates or ballot measures. Instead, they use their corporate profits, spending 15 times as much as unions on political contributions, according to the Center for Responsive Politics. What's more, the wealthy can just write a personal check.

This proposition would add a new requirement that even voluntary contributions from employees must be accompanied by annual, written permission to use the funds. For example, the use of a voluntary deduction such as a contribution to your local union Committee on Political Education would require your written permission each year.

According to the *Sacramento Bee*, the measure is the brainchild of Orange County conservatives, is being bankrolled by wealthy conservatives, and was written by a partner in the law firm that represents the California Republican Party. Other financial supporters are millionaires associated with the extreme right-wing Lincoln Club of Orange County.

Newport Beach attorney Michael Capaldi, one of the main proponents of the measure, told the *Bee* he

adheres to a libertarian philosophy and opposes regulation and government interference. Yet the website of Capaldi's law firm makes note of his clout: "As an opinion leader and chairman emeritus of the Lincoln Club of Orange County, he has had a major influence in Orange County, Sacramento, and Washington, D.C."

Anti-worker extremists, including the Beltway's no-tax ideologue Grover Norquist, have sponsored similar measures in dozens of states in the past. Their stated agenda is to diminish worker rights, abolish organized labor, and privatize public education. They have tried passing similar measures twice before in California. Voters soundly rejected the measures both times.

If this measure were to pass, it would effectively silence the voices of working people while giving corporations free rein to influence the political system. The measure's loophole would allow corporations to spend without any limits using a web of shadowy front groups, big business associations, and corporate super PACs.

Unions would see their political funds dry up and the voice of workers fall silent in the public debate, while corporate interests would continue to spend unlimited money from unnamed sources to conduct the new one-sided "debate." Corporations would take control of the initiative process in California, placing their self-serving measures on the ballot, and spending millions to convince voters to support them, while labor organizations would be unable to fight back.

The proposition's cynical backers know this measure won't curb corporate influence on politics. What it would do is make it impossible for workers to speak with a collective voice to counterbalance corporate influence.

— By CFT and Coalition Staff

### The "Corporate Deception Act" threatens to:

- >**Create a loophole that allows corporations to increase political spending** using their profits for unlimited expenditures to support or oppose candidates and ballot measures, even though corporations now spend 15 times more than unions on political contributions.
- >**Prohibit member-approved use of union dues for political campaigns,** ballot measures or independent expenditures, as well as direct contributions by unions to political party committees and state and local candidates.
- >**Make it illegal for unions to use payroll deduction to collect funds for political contributions,** even though unions currently use payroll deductions as an accepted and practical way to compete with better-funded corporate interests.
- >**Require that even voluntary contributions from members must be accompanied by annual, written permission** to use the funds, creating impractical and unnecessary paperwork each year.
- >**Silence the voice of workers,** but not that of corporations.

### On the Web

- >To learn more and download materials, go to [calaborfed.org](http://calaborfed.org).





## Local organizer preps for fall elections, takes on financial giant Peralta Federation challenges Morgan Stanley to share bailout windfall with district

JANELL HAMPTON RARELY slows down as she goes about connecting faculty, students, staff, unions, and community groups. The political organizer for the 1000-member Peralta Federation of Teachers is pulling together people with a long-term vision for improving public education. She calls her work “the perfect opportunity to impact the world in a way other than teaching.”

Hampton carries a .75 FTE load teaching English at two colleges including Laney College in Oakland, one of four campuses in the Peralta Community College District. During the past 14 years, she has worked concurrently for multiple college districts, feeling “rootless” because she didn’t belong to any single campus community.

“I became a teacher to make the world a better place, but I wasn’t feeling fulfilled until I got involved in the union.” Hampton served the Peralta Federation as an elected officer and representative before becoming an organizer under a grant from the CFT program, Political Leaders United to Create Change, or PLUCC. Now she

by the Peralta district.

When interest rates were rising, the district bought into interest rate swaps, switching from adjustable to fixed interest to protect against fluctuating variable rates. But when the banks failed and variable interest rates dropped to nearly zero, the

SEIU, Local 1021, the union representing campus staff. The union leaders requested that Morgan Stanley “drop the swap” and return the district bonds to a variable interest rate.

The union got thousands of students involved, signing petitions that looked like valentines and writing

and labor rights values,” Hampton says. The local is working on building a stronger Committee on Political Education, or COPE, to elect local candidates to the Board of Trustees, pass a potential parcel tax, elect CFT-endorsed candidates to the state Legislature and qualify the Millionaires Tax for the November state ballot.

“Working on the Millionaires Tax is of utmost importance,” Hampton explains. “It’s the only tax initiative that takes money from the 1 percent rather than asking for some regressive sales tax that will require everyone to pay.”

The Millionaires Tax would require those making more than \$1 million a year in personal income to pay their fair share in taxes, raising an estimated \$6 billion a year for schools (early childhood, K-12 and higher education), seniors, children’s and disabled services, public safety, and rebuilding roads and bridges.

Hampton’s boundless organizing energy is rooted in her conviction that union work brings good working conditions and livable wages. She believes this is the path out of today’s economic and political crisis.

For years, Hampton heard college administrators “sadly explain how we have less and less money from the district and the state. In every forum or town hall meeting,” she says, “one question kept coming up from all invested parties: ‘How do we connect?’”

Hampton is one political organizer who is poised to create that connection.

— By Mindy Pines, CFT Reporter



Part-time English instructor Janell Hampton collects petitions seeking financial relief for district.

Peralta district was left to pay a fixed interest rate much higher than if it had kept the variable rate.

about how the interest swap negatively impacts their lives. On February 14, the coalition presented the valentine petitions to Morgan Stanley representatives who were meeting with district officials.

Organizing around the Morgan Stanley issue is part of a larger effort. “We want to get people into office who share our student-centered

**“Working on the Millionaires Tax is of utmost importance. It’s the only tax initiative that takes money from the 1 percent rather than asking for some regressive sales tax that will require everyone to pay.”**

—Janell Hampton, Peralta Federation of Teachers

works more than 20 hours a week for the union.

Since November, Hampton has helped build a student, faculty, staff, and union coalition that works to save the district millions of dollars, money that can restore classes and services. The coalition is asking financial giant Morgan Stanley to cancel interest rate swaps on bonds issued

Morgan Stanley got the government bailout, but the public got nothing, Hampton exclaims. “With all its PR about supporting education and at-risk youth, Morgan Stanley should pass on its break, starting right here in the Peralta district.”

Peralta President Matthew Goldstein drafted a letter to Morgan Stanley, also signed by the chapter president of

### About CFT political organizing grants

**POLITICAL LEADERS UNITED TO CREATE CHANGE** is a CFT program that has awarded grants to 12 local unions allowing them to hire political organizers. The program is one component of the larger Strategic Campaign Initiative, a CFT plan to build political organizing experience and power in local unions. The initiative also includes coalition building with community groups, regional area councils for CFT local unions to join forces, organizing campaigns to bring new members into the Federation, and training to inspire and activate members. Applications from local unions for the next round of PLUCC grants are due in April.



# CFT sponsors ten bills in new legislative session

**MEMBERS IDEAS** for union-sponsored legislation come from a number of sources including governance meetings and resolutions at CFT Convention. When the CFT adopts a sponsored bill program, the union's lobbyists work to secure legislators to author the bills, and shepherd the bills through the legislative process to the governor's desk. Following is the list of CFT-sponsored bills for the coming legislative year.

## K-12 EDUCATION

### Make kindergarten compulsory

AB 2203 (V. Manuel Pérez, D-Coachella)  
Makes attendance in kindergarten compulsory, rather than optional, for all California children.

### Fully implement Visual and Performing Arts Content Standards

AB 2361 (Pan, D-Sacramento)  
Will encourage schools to include the following visual and performing arts data in the Student Accountability Report Card: the number of visual and performing arts classes offered in the district at school sites; the amount of time devoted to visual and performing arts instruction; the number of pupils enrolled in visual and performing arts classes; and the number of full-time equivalent teaching positions in the visual and performing arts.

### Abolish California Standards Test for second-graders

SB 740 (Hancock, D-Berkeley)  
Excludes pupils in grade two from the standards-based achievement test requirement. Requires the State Department of Education to identify and make available to school districts information regarding existing assessments in language arts and mathematics for pupils in grade two for diagnostic use by classroom teachers.

## CLASSIFIED

### Implement fair work rules for non-academic employees

AB 2236 (Hueso, D-Chula Vista)  
Provides statutory wage and hour protections that existing law denies to non-academic hourly employees who are excluded from the classified service and who work in public schools and community colleges. Such protections — rest breaks, lunch breaks and overtime rights — mirror those provided to private sector workers.

### Increase death benefit

AB 2606 (Mendoza, D-Artesia)  
When fully developed, will contain a graduated death benefit increase for the beneficiaries of classified employee members of CalPERS.

## COMMUNITY COLLEGE

### Mandate rehire rights for part-time faculty

AB 852 (Fong, D-Cupertino)  
Provides that each part-time community college faculty member have a right of first refusal for teaching assignments in his or her faculty service area, subject to any greater rights provided in a collective bargaining agreement or otherwise provided by a district.

### Promote retirement equity for part-timers

SB 114 (Yee, D-San Francisco)  
Addresses problems and inconsistencies that occur when community college districts calculate and report the service credit of part-time faculty members to CalSTRS.

### Limit full-time faculty overload

AB 1826 (Roger Hernández, D-West Covina)  
Limits the amount of excess work a faculty member can be assigned to 50 percent, helping to ensure quality instruction and protecting part-time faculty members from losing income and eligibility for health benefits. Local collective bargaining contracts that contain a lower cap on overload will not be affected.

## RETIREMENT

### Elect retiree member of CalSTRS Board

AB 1101 (Eng, D-Monterey Park)  
Requires the member of the CalSTRS Board who represents retirees to be elected by retired members of CalSTRS rather than appointed by the governor.

### Promote fair retirement for charter employees

AB 1819 (Ammiano, D-San Francisco)  
When fully developed, will require that CalSTRS and CalPERS retirement benefits be made available to charter school employees.

## On the Web

>To learn more about CFT-sponsored bills, go to [cft.org](http://cft.org)>Resources>Legislative.



# Governor tries to solve budget shortfall by tax initiative and cuts Schools and colleges won't see any new funds even though Proposition 98 grows

**WHILE CFT'S MILLIONAIRES** Tax aims to eliminate further cuts and produce a permanent revenue stream, Gov. Brown addresses a \$9.2 billion shortfall in the 2012-13 budget by proposing even more cuts and asking voters to pass a tax initiative that would temporarily raise state sales tax by half a cent and increase income taxes on Californians making more than \$250,000.

If the governor's measure passes, it will provide no new money for education. If it fails, there will be more significant cuts. K-14 education will be cut by \$4.9 billion — a loss of about \$370 per K-12 student and millions more to community colleges and universities. By comparison, the Millionaires Tax funnels new dollars

directly to districts and colleges.

Under the governor's proposal, Proposition 98 funding would grow, but education will not see the new monies. In his proposal, the new dollars supplant current general fund money being spent on education. To achieve that, Brown would establish an Education Protection Fund where new dollars would be deposited to pay for education expenses formerly paid by the state's general fund. This maintains current inadequate funding but provides no funds to restore programs or establish new ones.

**For K-12 education**, the governor wants to see a new simplified way to fund schools. Recognizing it costs more to educate some students than others, he proposes a "weighted stu-



## THE STATE BUDGET

dent formula," to be phased in over the next six years.

The governor would add a new factor for students who are English learners or eligible for free and reduced lunches, pool general purpose and most categorical funds, and redistribute the money to districts on a per-student basis. Districts with large concentrations of these students would get additional funding.

While this is a step in the right direc-

tion, the governor does not add new dollars to the mix; he simply redistributes the current inadequate funding.

**Community colleges** will see restrictions eased on categorical dollars in the governor's budget. They might see new funding in future years if the governor's initiative passes. The catch is that to obtain the funding, colleges must meet "improvements in specific accountability metrics, such as graduation rates, time to completion, transfer students enrolled, faculty teaching workload, successful credit and basic skills course completion."

In summary, this is another problematic budget proposal that offers some solutions, but no resolution for our resource-starved schools and colleges.

— By Patty Cox, CFT Research Specialist



Newport-Mesa's Dave Brees touts the retiree chapter newsletter.

# New retiree chapters offer social connection, wield political clout

## Expertise of post-career members brings valuable asset to mid-size locals unions

**ALTHOUGH IT BEGAN** as a social group, the recently chartered retiree chapter of the ABC Federation of Teachers has become increasingly political, says its president, Gayle Pekrul. "Many retirees are not interested in just being social — they want to be involved in the issues."

and buttons, circulate information by email, and publish an informative newsletter edited by the former editor of the local newsletter.

ABC-Retired wanted to be a chartered AFT affiliate to gain support from CFT and AFT. It wanted to send its own delegates to CFT Convention.

Retirees who substitute teach wanted the benefit of the AFT liability insurance. And because the AFT pays dues to the AFL-CIO's Alliance for Retired

"We lost so many, building reps even, that we realized we needed a retiree chapter," explained member Dave Brees. "I came aboard in 2001 and dues were only \$20 a year. Now they are \$40, but all that money stays local. We don't have to pay per caps to CFT and AFT, but we have representation at CFT and AFT Conventions, and the Orange County Labor Federation, so we are involved."

Another reason Newport-Mesa retirees join has to do with the dis-

### Action in new chapters

**San Jose/Evergreen-Retired**, chartered in 2007, hosts regular social activities, is busy politically, and strives to keep its membership well informed. President Bill Jacobs says the chapter's 100 retirees have worked phone banks and canvassed neighborhoods in past elections in collaboration with the central labor council. The retirees stay in close touch with their parent local and are planning a "full-court press" in the coming election.

**Salinas Valley-Retired**, chartered in 2009, has 200 retirees on its mailing list and 50 paid members in the chapter. Even though Co-President Cynthia Suverkrop describes the chapter as "apolitical in nature," their recent luncheon meeting focused on the supercharged issues of Medicare and healthcare reform.



SHARON BEALS

ABC-Retired leader Gayle Pekrul and editor Steve Harris helped launch the chapter.

**ABC-Retired** is one of several new retiree chapters in the CFT. Once found mostly in larger locals, retiree chapters are sprouting up in small to mid-size local unions too. ABC-Retired started in 2010 with 20 retirees and has already grown to 50. "It's exciting to see new faces," says Pekrul, "and they are not just people I've known during my working years."

In November, the chapter worked phone banks for a successful school board election. "Not only do we retirees have more time," Pekrul explains, "but we've done it before. Our members also go into their communities and are involved in other groups."

The ABC parent union provides support to the retiree chapter, starting with \$8000 seed money, an office in the local union office, and use of the photocopier. They have letterhead



DAVE BREES

Newport-Mesa President Kimberly Claytor talks to retirees at fall luncheon.

Americans, the retirees have a voice in national retirement issues.

**PARTICIPATION IN THE** Newport-Mesa Federation retiree chapter took off in 1998 when an exodus of teachers retired after CFT helped win improved CalSTRS pensions. The chapter was formally chartered in 1999.

tract's health benefits committee. The union has four seats on the committee and retirees get one. Brees has held the seat since 1986. The president of **Newport-Mesa-Retired**, former local president Phyllis Pipes, says the 155-member chapter is mostly social, "but when you mess with health benefits or pensions, that's the sort of thing that gets us riled up."

That happened a few years ago when the school board changed the level of benefits. Overnight one retiree established a Yahoo group so members were in instantaneous communication with

each other. From Saturday to Sunday, the chapter turned out 100 retirees to picket the board and successfully fight back the proposal. Now one retiree who writes for *Newport Beach Patch* wants fellow retirees to occupy the school board.

Newport-Mesa-Retired also works closely with its parent local. Each August, the retirees hold an organizational meeting

where the president of the parent local presents the state of the union.

During elections, retirees distribute literature and help phone bank. It participates in the California Alliance for Retired Americans, continues to communicate by

email and publishes a newsletter. The recent issue published results of a survey that asked retired teachers what they do with their time: The responses contained dozens of volunteer and political activities. Brees concludes, "As retirees, we do have time, but we are kind of protective of it, so be careful what you ask us to do."

— By Malcolm Terence, CFT Reporter and Jane Hundertmark, Publications Director



SHARON BEALS

Newport-Mesa retiree delegates cast their votes at CFT Convention.

### How to charter a retiree chapter with AFT

**AFT MEMBERS ARE GRANTED** lifelong membership as soon as their local union updates his or her status from "working" to "retired.active" in its membership reports to AFT. Retirees receive publications from AFT and CFT and can sign up for an e-newsletter at [aft.org/yourwork/retirees](http://aft.org/yourwork/retirees).

Across the country, AFT has chartered more than 100 retiree chapters. AFT publishes a helpful guide to starting a retiree chapter and also offers a three-day, all-expenses-paid orientation in Washington D.C., to make setting up a chapter as painless as possible.

>To learn more about starting a retiree chapter, email [lluchi@aft.org](mailto:lluchi@aft.org).





United Educators of San Francisco President Dennis Kelly with Ravitch.

# What Matters

Diane Ravitch and Pasi Sahlberg spoke at events hosted by United Educators of San Francisco

**DIANE RAVITCH** inspired hundreds of educators as she took to task corporate reformers and privatizers with their miracle cures for our schools and false claims about achievement and teachers.

An outspoken analyst, education historian, and research professor, Ravitch spoke onstage at San Francisco's Herbst Theater on January 18.

In the words of Diane Ravitch...

**Corporate reformers** Why are we closing public schools and replacing them with private management? They call themselves reformers, but they are really corporate reformers. They don't talk about providing warm and exciting places for students, but rather how to cut costs. They want schools to follow a business model, not one of public service. Public schools are a public good, like parks and police. We should not close and open them as if they were shoe stores.

**Testing** There's no way to have "no child left behind" in standardized testing: Half are on the bottom, half on top. Students will learn test-taking tricks. Who is going to hire someone to take standardized tests? It's not a valuable skill. The most important outcomes of education can't be measured: love of learning, character, compassion, courage, integrity, asking the right question, and civic responsibility.

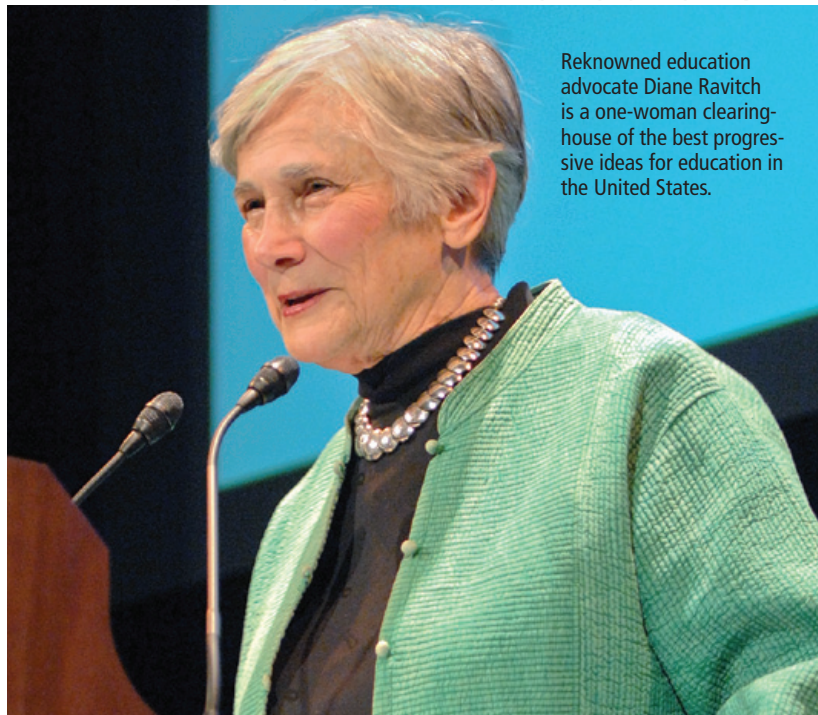
**Poverty** The influence of family income dwarfs that of teacher and school. Poverty is the root of low performance. Family income is the most reliable predictor of test scores. We lead the world in child poverty. More than 27 percent of our children live in poverty, behind Mexico and Turkey.

This is a scandal — it should be on the front pages of the newspapers every day.

**DIANE RAVITCH** is the author of *The Death and Life of the Great American School System: How Testing and Choice Are Undermining Education*. >To learn more, go to [dianeravitch.com](http://dianeravitch.com), like her on Facebook (Diane Ravitch) and follow her on Twitter @DianeRavitch.

in

## American Education



Reknowned education advocate Diane Ravitch is a one-woman clearinghouse of the best progressive ideas for education in the United States.

SCOTT BUSCHMAN

### Diane Ravitch

**Accountability** There is no accountability for the Legislature, only teachers. The testing and accountability we hear about every day are status quo. The status quo has failed.

**Race to the Top** RTTT is NCLB 2.0. Race to the top of what? Education is a right, not a race. A race has one winner and a lot of losers. That is not what we want for our children.

**Vouchers** There has been a voucher experiment in Milwaukee now for 21 years. There has been no improvement in performance in those 21 years. Now we know, looking at National Assessment of Educational Progress, that black students in Milwaukee, the recipients of the

vouchers, get no better scores than those in Louisiana or Georgia.

**Charter schools** The evidence shows that most charter schools do no better on test scores. Very few can claim to close the achievement gap. Those that do keep out low-scoring students and have high staff turnover.

About 80 percent of charter schools are non-union. Right-wing reformers count on big foundations, like Gates, Broad, and Walton, with huge amounts of money to promote vouchers and charters because they want to destroy teacher unions. Their free market model produces winners and losers, never equality.

**Achievement gap** Washington D.C. has a 60-point gap in achievement, the largest in the United States. Michelle Rhee couldn't fix it. The reformers believe in carrots and sticks that are always tied to test scores. They for-

get that tests measure student performance, not teacher performance. Tests should always be used for the purpose for which they are designed.

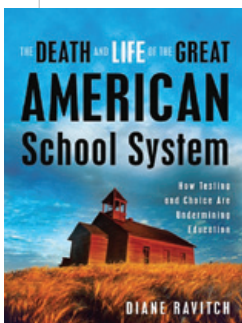
**Merit pay** This is the idea that never works and never dies. Studies by the National Center on Performance Incentives show that when districts tried increasing merit pay, it didn't work. When larger bonuses were offered to one group rather than another within the same district, it didn't matter. Merit pay doesn't work because schools are collaborative places. The work of the math teacher affects the work of the English teacher. Merit pay replaces the interest of "we" with the interest of "me." Teachers don't want to work against each other; they want to work as a team.

**Professional respect & unions** Corporate reformers want to destroy education unions. If they can silence the unions, they can remove teachers' voices and proceed without any opposition. Massachusetts, Connecticut, and New Jersey are strongly unionized and the highest performing states in the United States. The lowest performing states are in the South where unionization is the lowest.

Corporate reformers view parents as consumers, students as products and teaching as a job, not a profession. They think anyone can teach. Corporate reform will implode in five years; there is just no evidence it can succeed.

**Be loud** We must speak out. Silence equals complicity. Organize, agitate, demonstrate. Write to newspapers, use social media, bring politicians to classrooms, run for the school board, engage in direct action. The other side will always have more money, but an informed public will not tolerate the abandonment of public education, or allow the privatization of the schools that belong to all.

TOP: MIKE MYSLINSKI/CTA





# Today

and co-sponsored by CFT and CTA

Reported by Mindy Pines, CFT Reporter and Jane Hundertmark, CFT Publications Director



Educators were moved by what they heard from Pasi Sahlberg.



**PASI SAHLBERG** noted international education activist, described on February 17 how Finland has revolutionized public education by focusing on support and respect for educators and de-emphasizing testing. Finland has created the highest performing education system in the world.

In the words of Pasi Sahlberg...

**Overcoming poverty** We had a lot of poverty just 30 to 40 years ago but we have been able to transform our country. Equal education opportunities are very important in Finland, American ideals going back to Jefferson. We use these great American ideas to benefit everyone, but implement them in a different way. You can have high performance and widespread equity at the same time, but it requires a different way of thinking.

**Free education for all** Education is considered a basic human right. All Finnish schools are publicly funded. We have no charters. We have no private schools. It is against the law to charge fees for education in my country. We have the smallest variation between schools of any country in the world. That means parents never sit at the dining room table and talk about school choice. They know that the school in their neighborhood is good.

**Cradle to university care** Every family has a right to municipal day care for a 0-6 year old. There is one year of preschool at age 6. Compulsory school starts at age 7. Children stay in school nine years. High school has academic and vocational streams. Students study 14 or 15 different subjects. At age 16, students are free to do what they want. We provide 65 percent of our students free university.

**Personalized education** Early education is very informal; we believe in play and music and joy. Finns believe that every child is different, that we all learn at a different pace. We don't have grade level standards. We don't have national standards and every school is responsible for planning its

## in Finnish Education



Author Pasi Sahlberg is the Director General of the Centre for International Mobility and Cooperation. He travels the world sharing the secrets of Finland's education success.

### Pasi Sahlberg

own curriculum. One third of Finnish students are in special education, so special education is not special anymore. We do not grade any students before the fifth grade.

**Creative learning** Finland has the least number of instructional hours of all countries. We have less time to teach and more time to cooperate with other teachers. Every school has a nurse, psychologist, and doctor. A new law says every student has to go through a comprehensive medical check, including dental care.

Children have a right to recess. The law says instruction is 60 minutes, but 15 minutes has to be recess. Rain or shine, children go outside between lessons. They take their shoes off in the classroom. Finns take their shoes off at home and the classroom is like their home. We are increasing time for music, drama and arts, and taking away from subjects like math and read-

ing. It is not remembering things, but creativity that will bring innovation to our nation.

**Localized assessment** We do a lot of assessment but it is mostly done by schools and teachers themselves. We don't believe standardized testing will improve education. The less we test our students, the more they learn. Our whole testing budget is \$1 million and we spend \$70 million on professional development.

**Learning and immigrants** Finland was homogeneous until 15 years ago. For immigrant students, there is one year of orientation. They study the Finnish language intensively, but they study all subjects in their mother

tongue with a teacher who speaks their language. Schools with more immigrants get extra money to hire more assistant teachers.

**Competition to teach** Teaching is the leading area of desired study. To get into primary school education, you have to be good in music, sing, be good in sports, and be academically very strong. Then you will be invited to be a student of education. Every year we have 6000 to 7000 applicants for primary teacher, mostly women. Only 10 percent are accepted. Each has a masters degree. Very few people leave teaching. There is not a significant gap between teacher salaries and others with comparable degrees.

**One strong union** We have one very strong union for teachers, the Trade Union of Education in Finland. More than 95 percent belong to the union; principals and district superintendents belong as well. Without the union, we really cannot implement anything. Its role is securing and protecting rights of teachers, and providing professional development for teachers. It's a very important part of the system.

**Progressive taxation** There is a misconception that we have extremely high taxation. We have a progressive taxation. If your income is high, then you pay more taxes. The corporate tax payment is 26 percent.

**Education is not political** Education is never an issue in elections. No candidates mention education, except to say that education and health-care will remain a human right for everyone.

**PASI SAHLBERG** is the author of *Finnish Lessons: What can the world learn from educational change in Finland?* To learn more, go to [finnishlessons.com](http://finnishlessons.com) and [pasisahlberg.com](http://pasisahlberg.com), and follow him on Twitter @pasi\_sahlberg



TOP: SHARON BEALS





DAVID BACON

## Book Review

# *Trampling Out the Vintage* offers unique insight into UFW

FRED CHAMBERLAIN



## CFT member Frank Bardacke writes worker-oriented opus that tells behind-the-scenes story of the United Farm Workers Union



DAVID BACON



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The subtitle “The Two Souls of the United Farmworkers Union” foretells what Frank Bardacke will reveal in *Trampling Out the Vintage*. Though a carefully researched telling of the story, this book is not just one more history of the United Farm Workers. It is different from other efforts because it makes the actions of farm laborers central to that history.

The UFW has been scrutinized recently but no writer approaches the breadth and depth that Bardacke achieves in *Trampling Out the Vintage*. Bardacke is a careful observer of work culture and practices. In the 1970s, I was a student at UC Santa Cruz taking his class “The Political History of California Agriculture” while he was in the midst of his seven-year sojourn in the canneries and fields of the Pajaro Valley. In class, Bardacke was specific and meticulous in reviewing work practices of farm laborers.

Bardacke went on to teach at the Watsonville/Aptos Adult School for the next 25 years and serve as site representative for the Pajaro Valley Federation of Teachers. He is now retired.

Spending nearly 40 years in the verdant Pajaro Valley, Bardacke also became an astute analyst of the political economy of agriculture. The book takes on the first grape strikes, the work of AWOC, and the National Farmworkers Association from which Cesar Chavez emerged.

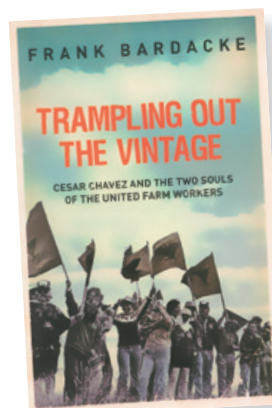
Chavez, his history, predispositions, ideologies, and behaviors are fairly described. He was a complex figure with a background in community organizing and a distrust of external allies. His mission and passion are not slighted, yet any illusions of saintliness evaporate with the turning of these pages, which is a story of workers woven into the complex and treacherous politics of agribusiness, mediated by an organization in which farmworkers had limited influence. Volunteers in a UFW boycott office, with only six months experience, had

as much standing as farm laborers in the fields. Cesar Chavez built a power base outside of farm labor into the core structure of the UFW.

Several practices, well footnoted by Bardacke, may be shocking to UFW supporters. One is the “Campaign Against Illegals,” a UFW attempt to block undocumented workers from entering the agricultural markets of California

Numerous story strands fill the epic history of farm labor struggle that many of us lived through, worked in, and supported: the various incarnations of UFW periodical *El Malcriado*; the creation of the Agricultural Labor Relations Act and Board with all its permutations and opportunism; the lack of effective non-violence training in the UFW; the internal and public challenges Chavez faced in accepting a human rights award from Philippines President Ferdinand Marcos at the height of the Marcos dictatorship; and how waves of UFW key players were demoted and expelled.

The excavation of farm laborer voices, from the Pajaro Valley, the Salinas Valley, the San Joaquin Valley and the Imperial Valley, are central to this retelling. *Trampling Out the Vintage* should be read for its recounting of the workers’ stories, their cultures and craft — not merely for filling out



*Trampling Out the Vintage: Cesar Chavez and the Two Souls of the United Farm Workers*

By Frank Bardacke

Verso Press, November 2011

[versobooks.com](http://versobooks.com)



the shadow of the “other soul” of the UFW — the iconic Cesar Chavez.

*Trampling Out the Vintage* is also notable for its view of working class democracy and the need for strong base organization in labor unions and movements. There is much to learn about, to grieve, and to celebrate in this opus written by our union colleague Frank Bardacke.

— By Tom Edminster, Chair of the CFT Labor in the Schools Committee and member of United Educators of San Francisco

## Classroom Resources **Cesar Chavez Day and Labor History Week**

**EDUCATE YOUR STUDENTS** about the labor movement! Go to [cft.org](http://cft.org) (and click on Committees) to find a lesson plan from the CFT Labor in the Schools Committee for Cesar Chavez Day on March 31, and Labor History Week, April 1-7. Go to [farmworker-movement.us](http://farmworker-movement.us), the Farmworker Documentation Project, another important source for information on the UFW and the many who dedicated their lives to the union. For in-depth study, go to [library.sfsu.edu](http://library.sfsu.edu), the Labor Archive and Research Center at San Francisco State University, where Frank Bardacke donated much of his historical material.





# Around CFT

Secretary Treasurer Jeff Freitas leads a two-day treasurer training at the CFT Leadership Conference.



Novato Federation members with conference speaker AFT President Randi Weingarten, second from right.

## Minard retires from CFT career, Kurre hired as new training director

**JULIEN MINARD** is retiring from “the union that I treasure,” she says, after a rich history with the CFT, as a teacher, member, leader, and staffer.

Minard joined the AFT in 1967 as a young high school teacher in Glendale. Later teaching in the ABC Unified School District, she became a charter member of the ABC Federation of Teachers, a building representative, vice president and president of the local, and a CFT vice president.



Julien Minard

In 1978, Minard went to work as a CFT field representative, three years after state law granted collective bargaining rights to K-14 educators. During this period, she was in charge of many first-time organizing campaigns, as well as decertification campaigns. As an “add-on” to her field rep job, she co-

founded the first Western States Union Leadership Institute at Santa Cruz.

Minard left CFT for 10 years, taught part-time at the Labor Education and Research Center at the University of Oregon, and worked as a mediator with the city of Portland. She returned to CFT in 1999, became training director two years later, and has since had hosted the annual Leadership Training conference, launched the CFT Leadership Institute, and held countless trainings for local unions and CFT.

“It has been an honor to write CFT before the words field rep or training director,” Minard says. “I truly believe I have had the greatest job in the trade union movement.”

**LAURA KURRE** brings a wealth of experience to the CFT as the union’s new training director. Kurre has been a community and labor organizer in California and Illinois for the past 20

years. Most recently she has been a consultant to labor unions and non-profits on strategic planning, campaign development, and leadership training programs.

In her work for a large healthcare union, United Healthcare Work-



Laura Kurre

ers-West, Kurre directed the union’s Education Department. Prior to that position, she worked in higher education at the UC Berkeley Labor Occupational Health Program, UCLA’s Labor Occupational Safety and Health Program, and in the Office of Student Affairs at the University of Illinois.

Kurre, who works in the CFT Bay Area office, last month launched the union’s first webinars and is planning the CFT Union Summer School.

## Mark your Calendar

The **AFT National Higher Education Issues Conference** will be held **March 30-April 1** at the Sheraton Chicago Hotel & Towers. Learn more at [aft.org](http://aft.org).

Honor farmworkers. Celebrate **Cesar Chavez Day** on **March 31** and for **Labor History Week April 1-7**.

The annual **CFT Convention** will be held **April 13-15** at The Fairmont San Jose. On Friday morning, join the One-Mile March for Fairness. See story below to learn more.

The annual **AFT Paraprofessional and School-Related Personnel Conference** will be held **April 19-22** at the Marriott Wardman Park, Washington, D.C. There is also a pre-conference health and safety training. To learn more, go to [aft.org](http://aft.org).

**CFT Lobby Days** are back! The event will be held on **April 23-24** at The Citizen Hotel in Sacramento. Join your union colleagues in meetings with elected representatives in the California Legislature. See story below for more information.

**Standing Committees of the CFT** meet Saturday, **April 28** at Los Angeles Valley College.

**Division Councils** for the K-12, classified and community colleges meet **May 18** at the Oakland Airport Hilton.

**State Council**, where delegates from local unions decide issues before CFT, meets the next day on **May 19** at the Oakland Airport Hilton.

Deadline for continuing college students to submit applications for the **Raoul Teilhet Scholarships** is **July 1**. Download applications at [cft.org](http://cft.org).

**AFT Convention** will be held **July 27-30** at the COBO Center in Detroit. Learn more at [aft.org](http://aft.org)

**New this year!** CFT is launching a week-long **Union Summer School** from **August 13-17** offering five days of training and leadership development that will be held at UCLA. Registration for classes will begin in April. Don’t miss this new opportunity!

## April offers line-up of big events: Convention and Lobby Days

**CFT LOBBY DAYS** are back! After a several-year hiatus, the CFT is hosting Lobby Days on April 23 and 24 in the state Capitol. Let your voice

be heard in Sacramento on issues regarding pension reform, the rights of community college part-timers, K-12 standards implementation, and

education funding.

Lobby Days begin with a Monday evening dinner meeting at The Citizen Hotel for a briefing on current bills before the Legislature

and to organize lobby-

ing teams. Tuesday kicks

off with a CFT group

picture at 8:15 a.m.,

followed by a briefing

in the Capitol.

Throughout the day,

members will talk

with their legislators at

individual meetings.

Your presence in the

halls of the Legislature will give a human face to our fight in support of education and our members.

► To register and download a tentative schedule, go to [cft.org](http://cft.org) or phone the Sacramento CFT office at 916-446-2788. The deadline to reserve rooms at the CFT room rate is April 8.

### CFT plans action-packed Convention

**ORGANIZED AROUND** a theme of “Our State, Our Future, Our Fight,” the CFT Convention promises three jam-packed days of action and inspiration from April 13-15 at the The Fairmont San Jose.

After the first general session Friday morning, delegates will leave the hotel and march behind the ILWU Drill Team through downtown San Jose in a One-Mile March for Fairness. The solidarity march brings together educators and San Jose union workers in the fight for fair taxation and adequate funding, and culminates with a noon rally in Cesar Chavez Park.

Guest speakers on Saturday include Bill Fletcher, Jr., a longtime labor, social justice and international activist; and David Cay Johnston, journalist and author, a specialist in economics and tax issues, and winner of the 2001 Pulitzer Prize for Beat Reporting as the former tax reporter with The New York Times. Throughout the Convention, delegates can debate resolutions, attend workshops related to General Election 2012 as well as professional issues, and network with union colleagues from throughout the state.





# Pre-K and K-12

Jefferson elementary and high school teachers attend the EC/K-12 Conference.



## Darling-Hammond charts path to fair teacher evaluation Stanford education professor encourages teachers to stay the course despite difficulties

**LINDA DARLING-HAMMOND** applauded teachers who are struggling with classes of 35, and even 45 students, sometimes without desks or textbooks, while the misplaced focus on teacher evaluation has become a drum beat.

The Stanford professor and education advisor on President Obama's transition team, said, "There are good ways to build the teaching profession and there are bad ways. So much of the discourse is about getting rid of teachers, when instead we need to be creating policies that support the development of expertise."

Speaking at the union's EC/K-12 Conference on February 3, Darling-Hammond said teachers are not the problem. In fact, individual teachers account for only 7 to 10 percent of measured student achievement. Student



Linda Darling-Hammond advocates for a statewide education system that makes sense.

SHARON BEALS

union in San Francisco for successfully negotiating funding for mentor teachers so teachers can get extra help. "These programs allow the system to improve and allow us to make decisions in a way that makes sense.

"You can't fire your way to Finland," she asserts. "In Finland, they don't talk about getting rid of bad teachers; they talk about how they can help their colleagues improve."

Darling-Hammond would like to see collaboration as part of teacher evaluation. "We have to do what Finland does. They don't want to build competition; collaboration is what they want." (See story page 9)

The things that matter for teacher success, Darling-Hammond says, are resources, class size, mentoring, and collaboration. "At the end of the day, there would be multi-faceted evidence about the effectiveness of a teacher. Then we need to integrate these systems, think about it as a whole, so our children can benefit.

"There will be people who continue to bash teaching and we need to embarrass and shame them," she concluded. "I urge you to stay in the fight

poverty is one of the largest factors.

Similarly, she debunked the use of value-added measures for teacher assessment. "We found that *who* you teach determines the classroom value measure."

In Houston, where value-added measures are now used to determine dismissals and merit pay, an elementary teacher was dismissed based on value-added scores after she had taught for only three years and been named teacher of the year. Moving a grade level had changed her "worth." When students arrived in her fourth grade class, value-added scores declined severely because fourth grade is when the school mainstreams English Language Learners.

"If this continues as a way to evaluate teachers," Darling-Hammond says, "it will be the death knell of public education."

Pointing to approaches that work, she cited districts where teachers can offer evidence of student learning in their evaluations, in any of the content standards. For example, a teacher might assemble "befores and afters" of a student's body of work.

"These qualities are embedded in the National Board Standards and the California Standards for the Teaching profession," she says. "There is evidence that if we use this type of evaluation, learning results are better."

Darling-Hammond also wants to see the expanded use of mentors who can step in and help teachers. "We

**"There are good ways to build the teaching profession and there are bad ways. So much of the discourse is about getting rid of teachers, when instead we need to be creating policies that support the development of expertise."** — Linda Darling-Hammond, Educational reformer

need to have a comprehensive system that gives the proper feedback and offers struggling teachers an opportunity to improve, but it has to be based on valid and reliable evidence."

While she credited AFT locals with bringing Peer Assistance and Review to California, she bemoaned the lack of funding that has hamstrung the statewide program. She cited Poway as a model program and credited the

even when it is discouraging. Get a voice in this discussion and, whatever you do, stay the course."

Calling teaching the profession upon which every other profession depends, Darling-Hammond concluded, "We need the union of professionals to step up and say that we care about how our profession will be treated."

— By Jane Hundertmark, CFT Publications Director

**GARY RAVANI**  
COUNCIL PRESIDENT

### The progressive trifecta

The following wisdom and warnings come from three leaders in progressive educational reform who recently spoke with CFT members.

**Diane Ravitch:** 1. Corporate reformers are out to destroy teacher unions and you cannot meet them halfway. 2. The current reform movement has been in place for more than a decade and constitutes the status quo.

**Pasi Sahlberg,** Finnish education policy expert: 1. High test scores are a byproduct of emphasizing social and economic equity for children and families. 2. Highly successful education reform in Finland has no similarities to current efforts in the United States.

**Linda Darling-Hammond:** 1. Teaching is a complex activity that, done right, requires a sophisticated evaluation system. 2. The currently failing teacher-oriented accountability system is based on getting rid of "bad teachers." 3. You cannot fire your way to Finland.

TOP: SHARON BEALS



Local leaders from Menifee learn new skills at the CFT Leadership Conference.



Compton local president Gwen Holmes with union colleague Derek Hefflin.



## Berkeley workers succeed in quest for AFT representation

### Operations and support workers reunite with colleagues in Local 6192

FOR NEARLY A DECADE, classified employees in the Berkeley Unified School District were divided between two unions, but when a majority of operations and support workers signed petitions to be represented by the Berkeley Council of Classified Employees, AFT Local 6192, they were reunited. In December the school board agreed to the workers' decision.

"We're very happy to be back together," says bus driver Johnny Billups, one of 170 workers in operations and support. "We're starting to participate in BCCE activities, and talking about what we can achieve in our next contract."

Years ago, all Berkeley classifieds belonged to one union, Public Employees Local 1. When the clerical employees and teacher aides joined the AFT in 2002, bus drivers, food service, maintenance and yard workers, campus security, and custodians joined the Stationary Engineers, Local 39.

"That union had no experience in public schools," says Billups, who has driven or washed the district's buses since 1972. "In negotiations for the first contract, they gave up many rights we had before," he explains, including medical coverage during the summer months and pay for the Fourth of July. "I told the union, and human relations, that what they'd negotiated wasn't legal."

Billups got other employees on board, and eventually a court case reinstated the lost benefits. "Last year we finally got some back pay," he says, "and BCCE helped us."

When Billups and others attended meetings of the Stationary Engineers, "they'd shout us down, like we were stepchildren," he says. "Once they told us to be quiet, and that 'we wish you weren't here.' And by that time, we wished we weren't either."

When there were discipline problems on the job, including prefer-



Berkeley operations and support staff, including district bus drivers, reunite with their colleagues in Local 6192. Left to right: Robert Castillo, Will Essex, Francis Balba, Mark Bauer, Tanyel Simon, Chuck Copeland, Angela Banks, Johnny Billups, Mary Ann Lopez and Derrell Laird.

ential treatment and favoritism, the other union wouldn't defend its members. At district school board meetings they would watch the president of the Berkeley Council of Classified Employees, Billups says. "When we saw Paula Phillips up there fight-

**"When we saw Paula Phillips up there fighting for her people, we thought, 'This is where we need to be.'"**

— Johnny Billups, bus driver

ing for her people, we thought, 'This is where we need to be.'"

Last fall, unit members asked the Stationary Engineers to either provide better representation or give up its representation rights. The union let the classified employees leave. Afterwards, Phillips circulated petitions among the workers asking for AFT representation.

"People had already made up their minds that they wanted our AFT local to represent them," says Phillips, who collected 120 signatures in three days. Operations and support workers had gone to her over the years for advice on enforcing their contract. "At my site, we went out to the gate to meet her, and I urged everyone to sign," Billups says.

Phillips presented the petition

to the district board, which agreed to recognize AFT Local 6192 as the unit's representative. Contract negotiations have begun, and the local is moving to include all classified employees in a single contract.

Conditions for classified employees

the chance to negotiate a new contract, and they will do what it takes to get one."

— By CFT Reporter David Bacon

**VELMA BUTLER**  
COUNCIL PRESIDENT

### Get ready, get armed for 2012 budget battle

**What will the next round** of budget cuts look like? Are we at the table during these serious talks? Are we, as union leaders and members, prepared for the task at hand?

Are we involved in shared governance and site-based decision-making where we can fight to protect our rights and defend the need for adequate funding of public education and vital programs? This is our challenge and this is our responsibility.

The next question is 'Are we prepared for the fight?' Are we scrutinizing the budget, participating on hiring committees, reviewing program viability, and reviewing administrative costs and overhead, to name just a few of the ways we can gather and analyze information.

If not, start preparing now. In difficult times, we can make a difference when we come to the table armed with the facts that matter.

SHARON BEALS



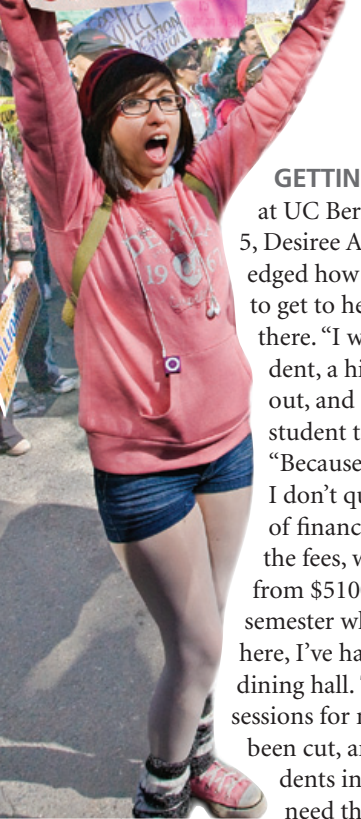
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FEES ARE TOO HIGH  
CLASSES TOO FULL  
STOP THE CUTS  
SAVE OUR SCHOOLS

# Community College

## March in March voices rising anger with increasing cuts Faculty, students, and staff demand Millionaires Tax at state Capitol rally



**GETTING ON THE BUS** at UC Berkeley on March 5, Desiree Angelo acknowledged how hard it has been to get to her senior year there. “I was a transfer student, a high school dropout, and a low-income student too,” she recalled. “Because I dropped out, I don’t qualify for a lot of financial aid. To afford the fees, which have gone from \$5100 to \$7100 a semester while I’ve been here, I’ve had to work in the dining hall. The discussion sessions for my classes have been cut, and with 500 students in a class, we really need them. So I’m pay-



DAVID BACON PHOTOS

ing more, getting less, and working like crazy just to stay here.”

When Angelo got off her bus in Sacramento later that morning, she found herself in a crowd of over 10,000 people. Prominent in Southside Park was a large contingent of faculty and students from all the campuses of San Francisco City College.

Teresa Pon, who’s taught ESL at the downtown campus since 1977, described the cutbacks resulting from the state’s budget crisis. “We can’t get paper or toner for the copy machine,” she said. “When custodians call in for more toilet paper, the business office tells them they’ll send it when they get it in. Our students are fearful of the increase in fees, and don’t see an end in sight. Are we in America anymore?”

City College administrators and classifieds are already taking 15 furlough days, and the administration has made a proposal to the faculty union, AFT Local 2121, for a salary cut.

Other faculty had their own horror stories. Classes were canceled four weeks into the semester, leaving students who’d bought books out on a limb. There are no longer any substitutes, so if a teacher gets sick, the

class is canceled. “I’m two years into a four-year tenure review,” said Eileen Adamian, “and now there’s no more money to pay for my evaluation.”

Pon said the union had mobilized members to go to Sacramento, as it has many times in the past. “It’s very on top of things,” she explained. “We



get better and quicker information about the crisis from the union than we do from the district.”

Christine Alvarado, president of the Associated Students at Consumnes River College, worked with the faculty union there, the Los Rios College Federation of Teachers, to get students to the march. “The union

paid for our busses, provided lunches and gave out tee-shirts,” she said. Her fellow student, Sucoyia Granderson, added that because fees last semester were over \$400 she’s working two jobs to stay in school.

Students, teachers, and administrators from higher education institutions throughout the state then marched down to the state Capitol building, where a rally made visible



San Francisco members Eileen Adamian, Tracy Ousdahl, Barbara Kastner and Teresa Pon.

the opposition to education cuts and fee increases.

Nora Ramos, a mother of six from the San Joaquin Valley, feels the devastating cuts to elementary schools. “They’re laying off Ms. Pedraza, who was my son’s first grade teacher,” she explained. “We’re here to save her job.” Her 9-year-old daughter Alondra added, “They’re taking our teachers away. Who will teach us now?”

Listening to elected officials addressing the rally, Sonja Franeta, an ESL teacher at Laney College in Oakland, concluded, “these budget cuts are unjust and undemocratic. How can we spend so much on the military, and starve the schools?”

“Even before the cuts, California was third from the bottom nationally in the amount we spend on students,” said her friend Christine Will, who teaches math at Laney. “We have the money in our society, but we have to prioritize. That’s why we need to tax the rich.”

— By David Bacon, CFT Reporter

**CARL FRIEDLANDER**  
COUNCIL PRESIDENT

### Raising fees does not generate revenue

**On top of all the** other budget cuts they’ve suffered, California’s community colleges now face an additional mid-year cut of \$149 million. This is mostly because revenue from increased student fees has come in \$106 million below projections (the remainder of the shortfall is from property taxes).

This latest devastating cut is unexpected and unfair, and we are doing everything we can to get it backfilled. The fee shortfall proves that the “high fee, high aid” proponents who argue that increasing student fees is a smart way to raise funds for the community colleges are all wrong.

Raising fees does not generate revenue. Many more students become eligible for fee waivers from the Board of Governors; others exit the colleges because they are “priced out.” Tragically, the main effect of higher fees is not increased revenue, but the denial of access to an ever-widening population of California students.





UC-AFT Executive Director Maria Elena Cortez trains at the Leadership Conference.



## Honored academic Axel Borg a driving force at UC Davis Agricultural sciences librarian excels at organizing information and colleagues

**LONG-TIME UC DAVIS** reference librarian Axel Borg wears so many hats that he received the James H. Meyer Distinguished Achievement Award from the Academic Federation last year. Borg has served on three of its committees, including the one which names the Federation president each year.

While every UC campus has an Academic Senate, giving tenured faculty a forum to debate academic and professional issues, the Academic Federation is unique to UC Davis, where it performs a similar function for non-tenured faculty, librarians, researchers, scientists, agronomists, cooperative extension specialists, and academic administrators.

Working in the Biological and Agricultural Sciences Reference Department of Shields Library, Borg is a subject specialist in food science and technology, nutrition, plant science, agronomy and general agriculture. He is best known for curating the 29,000-volume viticulture and enology collection at UC Davis, considered the finest in the world.

Student activist Charles Parker

**“The best thing I hope for from my activity, is that it gets people involved. The members are the people who can actually make things happen.”**

calls Borg “a walking treasure trove of information.” He said Borg gives the same amount of attention to everyone who comes to him for assistance, “whether it’s a senior faculty member working on material for publication, or a young undergraduate completing a first research paper.”

Borg also wears several union hats. He is president of the AFT local at Davis and vice president of legislation for statewide UC-AFT. Today, for Borg that means preparing for what will be a tough fight in the fall to pass



Reference librarian Axel Borg curates the 29,000-volume viticulture collection at UC Davis.

the CFT-sponsored Millionaires Tax. “I think it’s the way to go.”

Borg looks to members of his union for strategy. “I’ve been talking with my members, and I know we have to be thoughtful.” His solution is one particularly appropriate for a librarian. “I provide them with objective information,” he says, “and try to get away from sound bites. That often

—Axel Borg, President, UC-AFT Davis

takes a 30-45 minute discussion. Our members are highly educated and trained to question things critically, so I don’t tell them what to think.”

Borg doesn’t just talk to librarians and lecturers, the bargaining units represented by UC-AFT, but also to other unions in the system. He plays an important role in the UC Union Coalition, which includes the California Nurses Association, the United Professional and Technical Employees, the American Federation of State County and Municipal Employees,

and the Association of Graduate Student Employees.

Parker, one of the students pepper-sprayed in last year’s infamous Davis protest incident, respects Borg because “he was not content to sit by as the university suffers through one of the worst budget crises in its history,” which saw unprecedented increases in tuition for students and cuts for faculty and staff. “Instead he was instrumental in forming a coalition of unions and student activists to pressure the university for reform.”

Borg negotiates carefully the line between his roles as union president and as a leading member of the Academic Federation. At one federation meeting, another member incorrectly described a university decision to withhold merit raises from UC-AFT members. “I spoke to correct the misstatements, without trying to make a pro-union speech,” he recalls. “Another federation member proposed a resolution to condemn the UC administration’s action. And when it came time to vote, I abstained.”

The purpose of the Federation, Borg says, is to provide a vehicle for

shared governance. That doesn’t prevent him from firmly defending the rights of members under the UC-AFT contract. “When I approach any issue, I always have to ask myself where the line falls.” The newly reenergized local has developed such a good reputation that workers in unrepresented units have started to ask how to get organized.

“The best thing I hope for from my activity,” Borg concludes, “is that it gets people involved. The members are the people who can actually make things happen.” Parker calls him “a true example of what it means to commit your life to a role as an educator.”

— By David Bacon, CFT Reporter

**BOB SAMUELS**  
COUNCIL PRESIDENT

### Master Plan proves failure

**Three recent reports show** how the California Master Plan for Higher Education, though it worked for decades, has now failed.

One, *Beyond the Master Plan: The case for restructuring baccalaureate education in California*, says, “California now ranks last among states in the proportion of its college students that attend a four-year institution.” There are simply not enough openings at colleges and universities, and while many students attend community colleges, few graduate or transfer.

This new reality is dominated by racial disparity. “Relative to their share of the college-age population,” the report says, “Latino, African American, and American Indian students are more poorly represented in California’s four-year universities than in any other state except Arizona.”

California ranks 45th in the proportion of its underrepresented minority population that attains a bachelor’s degree. These groups constitute a majority in California, yet their level of college degree attainment is one of the lowest in the nation.



TOP: JANE HUNDETMARK



# Local Wire

Reporting Local Action  
Around the State



CHRIS RYDER

UTLA President Warren Fletcher, right, stands with parents at Miramonte Elementary during a union press conference, where parents expressed concern for the academic progress of their children and the unfairness of stigmatizing an entire staff prior to any investigation.

## LOCAL 1021

**UTLA stands with Miramonte community...** Without the involvement of parents or the union, the Los Angeles Unified School District took the unprecedented action to remove the entire Miramonte Elementary staff in the wake of horrific abuse allegations. “We know — like the hundreds of parents who have rallied to return the teachers to the site — that this move destabilizes a campus that needs consistency more than

ever,” leaders of United Teachers Los Angeles said in a statement. “We also cannot allow the district to stigmatize an entire staff of teachers when in fact it was a failure of district supervision that led to the crisis.”

Until recently, Miramonte, one of the largest elementary schools in the district, had only one administrator to oversee the entire campus. After UTLA held a press conference with the community on February 9, district officials reversed their position

and said that Miramonte teachers would be able to return to campus once the investigation is complete.

UTLA is demanding a timeline for that to happen. In the meantime, the union supports a thorough, vigorous, and fair investigation of all allegations and is committed to helping rebuild the Miramonte community.

In the initial days of the crisis, UTLA leaders and staff met with Miramonte teachers every day to provide sustained assistance. As allegations impacted other campuses, UTLA responded rapidly and effectively with resources and staff support.

“All educators share a deep revulsion for actions that harm children. That is a given,” UTLA stated. “We will also stand together with parents and our colleagues to protest any misguided actions that serve to hurt — not heal — schools in turmoil. The outpouring of parent support for the Miramonte staff has been the one bright spot in this dark time. It serves to underscore what we know to be true: The public knows that the vast majority of teachers are doing remarkable work every day to motivate and educate the children of Los Angeles.”

## PRIVATE SECTOR

**National ruling supports worker organizing...** Until recently, the union election process for private sector workers allowed significant delays in the vote. Employers often harassed, threatened and intimidated workers trying to gain union representation. This occurred recently at the Los Angeles Film School, where faculty, led by digital gaming instructor Brandii Grace, were forced to abandon organizing efforts when the employer retaliated. (*California Teacher*, Sept-Oct 2011)

On December 21, the National Labor Relations Board adopted changes to the union election process that will remove barriers and bet-

ter ensure workers can effectively exercise their basic right to vote on whether to form a union.

“At a time when we are facing many challenges, we can take satisfaction in this decision which strengthens the ability of workers to organize,” said CFT President Josh Pechthalt.

Film School teachers who wanted a union signed CFT union authorization cards, but when the NLRB notified school managers that CFT had filed an election petition, the managers instantly contested the petition



BOB RIHA, JR

Brandii Grace

and confronted teachers with intimidation, delays, and a concerted disinformation campaign.

Though Film School workers and community allies fought back, it took months before the NLRB ruled in favor of CFT, saying the attacks on members of the organizing committee and campaign of worker intimidation violated the law. But by then management’s efforts had succeeded in demoralizing faculty and eroding union support.

CFT withdrew its petition for an election and the following week the NLRB issued complaints on all unfair labor practice charges filed against the employer, too late to preserve the integrity of the union election process.

## Rank & Files

**Kimberly Claytor**, president of the Newport-Mesa Federation of Teachers, Local 1794 and CFT vice president, was listed by Costa Mesa’s *Daily Pilot* newspaper as the eighth most influential person in the Newport-Mesa community for 2011. The *Pilot* said, “The teachers’ union president voiced support for cutting money from the administration instead of the classroom and led a teachers union no-confidence vote in the superintendent.”

**John McDowell**, professor of labor relations, director of the Labor Center at the Los Angeles Trade Technical College, and member of the Los Angeles College Faculty Guild, Local 1521, was appointed to the California Student Aid Commission on January 24 by Assembly Speaker John A. Pérez. The California Student Aid Commission is the principal state agency responsible for administering state financial aid programs for college students. “With 25 years of experience fighting for higher education access, John McDowell is the type of leader who will defend the critical programs that make higher education possible for all Californians,” said Speaker Pérez.

**Dennis and Hene Kelly** were honored as Humanitarians of the Year by the B’nai Zion Foundation in January. Dennis is president of United Educators of San Francisco, a CFT vice president and AFT vice president. Hene is chair of the CFT Retirement Committee and a member of the San Francisco Democratic County Central Committee. Both are lifelong educators and unionists.

**Paul Karrer**, member of the North Monterey Federation of Teachers, Local 4008, had an article published in the *Korean Times* called the “Myth of Korean Super Teacher.” In the article, Karrer makes the point that parental commitment and cultural support define how education succeeds in Korea.

Have you or your colleagues made news lately? Email the pertinent facts to the editor at [jhundertmark@cft.org](mailto:jhundertmark@cft.org).