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Current legislation would end exemption

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APRIL • MAY 2017

THE VOICE OF THE UNION ■ CALIFORNIA FEDERATION OF TEACHERS, AFT, AFL-CIO

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LOS ANGELES

SHIELD AGAINST Privatizing Our Public Schools

Joshua Pechthalt, CFT President



CFT Convention prepares us for tough challenges facing the union

The new lawsuit, *Janus v. AFCSME*, is certain to make its way to the Supreme Court and raises the same issues as *Friedrichs v. CTA*.

The CFT completed its 75th Convention and Jeff Freitas and I were honored to be re-elected by delegates to lead this great, progressive union. A new Executive Council was also elected, a diverse group of local leaders that will help guide this organization in the difficult period ahead.

While many on the Executive Council will remain, including current Senior Vice President Lacy Barnes, new leaders include Gemma Abels from Morgan Hill, Arlene Inouye and Juan Ramirez from Los Angeles, Britt Dowdy from Newport Mesa, Lita Blanc and Susan Solomon from San Francisco, Matt Kogan from Los Angeles representing adult education, and Mac McKinzie from Compton representing classified members.

Departing the council will be Dennis Kelly and Elaine Merriweather from San Francisco, Melinda Dart from Daly City, Alex Caputo Pearl and Betty Forrester from Los Angeles, Kimberly Claytor from Newport-Mesa, Jack Carroll from the Pajaro Valley representing adult education, and Paula Philips, the classified council president.

Luukia Smith stepped down as a vice president, but was elected the new president of the Council of Classified Employees so will continue

to serve on the council. Mia McIver also joins as the new president of the University Council-AFT. Outgoing leader Bob Samuels has held that office for 12 years and has been a strong, articulate voice for our UC members and for reducing costs for UC students.

Much of the CFT Convention focused on the challenging new reality in Washington, D.C. With the confirmation of Neil Gorsuch as U.S. Supreme Court justice, the CFT and public sector unions foresee the loss of agency fee. The new lawsuit, *Janus v. AFCSME*, is certain to make its way to the Supreme Court and raises the same issues as *Friedrichs v. CTA*.

While the sudden death of Justice Scalia last year put a halt to *Friedrichs*, we had been preparing for this set-back for some time. The end of agency fee will weaken our ability to represent our members and advocate for public education. Local unions throughout the state have been engaging members and non-members alike and moving agency fee payers to become full members in anticipation of losing agency fee.

We must now redouble our efforts to talk to members and get them involved in our locals. Union leaders who substitute themselves for an organized and active membership will be

more vulnerable to the coming loss of agency fee and to the various anti-union measures coming out of the White House and Congress.

Active unions are a way to win over members to the value of unionism. Whether it's a contract or political campaign, when members see their union fighting on their behalf, it underscores the value of unions and their collective strength.

One activity highlighted at the Convention was the May 1st action. The CFT, many of our locals, and other unions and organizations mobilized to show support for immigrants, education issues, and worker solidarity. May 1st has its roots in the fight for the eight-hour work day in a massive demonstration at Chicago's Haymarket Square in 1886.

The Alliance to Reclaim Our Schools wanted to build on that historic day by joining the immigrant rights community to defend public education alongside our members, students, parents, and community members to fight the privatization agenda coming from the White House. Together, we can reclaim the momentum and in turn broaden support for public education.

Our union today

Want to know more about our union's challenges and successes? Read the State of the Union address delivered by President Joshua Pechthalt to delegates at CFT

Convention. Go to cft.org/news/publications/president-blog.

★ State of the Union ★

Apr ■ May 2017 Volume 70, Number 4

OUR MISSION: 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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SECRETARY TREASURER

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ON THE COVER

Members of United Teachers Los Angeles took to the streets on May 1 on a national day of action to defend public education and support immigrants.

PHOTO BY BOB RIHA, JR.

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Members of United Teachers Los Angeles joined the May Day March in Los Angeles.



BOB RINHA, JR.

Spirited turnout for May Day in Los Angeles

In 2006, hundreds of thousands of garment and construction workers, restaurant and hotel employees, janitors, and other low-income laborers breathed new life into May Day, pouring into downtown Los Angeles streets alongside traditional labor activists and allies to demand that Congress enact comprehensive immigration reform.

Eleven years later, immigrants remain a driving force in the Southern California economy and union activism, and President Trump's plans for mass deportations and a high wall along the U.S.-Mexico border have sent shock waves through local workplaces and communities.

"When your students come to school with tears in their eyes, you see the human effects of these policies," said Noriko Nakada. "Every day we teach is a day to resist." Nakada took an unpaid absence from Emerson Middle School to march with her union, United Teachers Los Angeles.

Marching this year to protest Trump's attacks on immigrant working families was a personal necessity, Nakada said. "It's that important. The district told us test preparation was more important. It isn't. I'm here for my students and coworkers who couldn't be here today."

UTLA President Alex Caputo-Pearl said this year's march goes beyond the traditional focus on immigrant and union rights to a

broader campaign for civil rights, LGBTQ rights, and environmental and educational justice.

"These are the seeds of a movement that cuts across all sectors," Caputo-Pearl said as he admired the picket signs and banners reflecting scores of unions and groups assembled in MacArthur Park for the march downtown.

"Together, we demonstrate there is strength in numbers and power in solidarity," Caputo-Pearl said later in a speech on the steps of City Hall. "Together, we will resist the racist rhetoric and inhumane policies coming out of Washington, and the privatization agenda threatening our public schools."

UTLA is currently locked in a fierce run-off election for two seats on the Los Angeles Unified School Board. May



Noriko Nakada

"When your students come to school with tears in their eyes, you see the human effects of these policies. Every day we teach is a day to resist."

—Noriko Nakada, UTLA member

Day marchers took comfort when Education Secretary Betsy DeVos announced earlier that morning that she was postponing a visit to a local charter school meant to boost the pro-charter candidates.

National movement turns out thousands in defense of immigrants and public education

The AFT, the Alliance to Reclaim Our Schools, and the National Education Association coordinated the day of action and participation was impressive — 2,000 sites in 200 cities, according to estimates, with even greater numbers joining the groundswell through social media.

Through marches, rallies, and meetings, AFT members joined with immigrant communities, students, parents, and engaged citizens to support public education and to fight for a more fair and just immigration system. The rallies showed collective resolve to keep schools as safe spaces, free from immigration raids, bigotry and hate.

In the East Bay, the school day in Berkeley began with teacher and staff walk-ins, followed by a noon rally where Secretary Treasurer

to the Capitol.

In San Francisco, United Educators of San Francisco and AFT Local 2121, which represents faculty at City College, started in an early morning protest at the Immigration and Customs Enforcement building, and continued with a march to City Hall.

In San Diego, faculty members of the AFT Guild held a morning teach-in at San Diego City College complete with a Latin ensemble. When lessons ended, the marching began.

Also in Los Angeles, the L.A. College Faculty Guild joined the May Day festivities by tabling at Pershing Square.



SARAH CALLAHAN

PETALUMA

#CFTMayDay: Locals take to the streets

Jeff Freitas spoke. Also at noon, Peralta Federation members rallied at Oakland's Laney College. After school, educators converged on the Oakland march.

In Sacramento, faculty from the Los Rios College Federation of Teachers took to the streets in a morning labor council-sponsored march

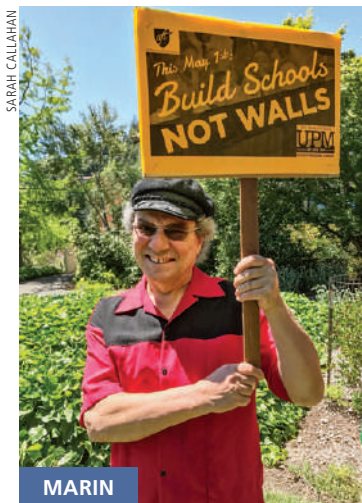
In Orange County, the Newport-Mesa Federation of Teachers rallied and marched mid-day. That night, UC-AFT Irvine co-hosted a panel discussion on campus, "Defending Workers and Immigrants in the Age of Trump."

In San Mateo County, the San Mateo Community College Federation of Teachers organized a mid-day march and teach-in on the main quad at Cañada College.

In the South Bay, the San Jose/Evergreen Federation of Teachers joined the labor council-sponsored march and rally. Morgan Hill teachers marched to an ICE office after school.

In the North Bay, United Professors of Marin staged an afternoon event on the quad at College of Marin in Kentfield. Further north, Petaluma teachers and their CSEA classified colleagues marched after school for what is the essence of May Day — a fair shake for all workers. Both unions are seeking fair contract negotiations with the district.

In the Monterey Bay area, teachers and staff in Santa Cruz rallied at the clock tower after school, joined by educators from the neighboring Pajaro Valley Federation of Teachers. Pajaro teachers also held an afternoon rally in Watsonville.



SARAH CALLAHAN

MARIN



SAN FRANCISCO

COURTESY LOCAL 61



LORI EARNES

DELEGATES MARCH FOR IMMIGRANT RIGHTS

DACA students, educators speak out at ICE building, state Capitol

Friday, Cesar Chavez Day, the first day of the CFT Convention, Art Pulaski of the California Labor Federation promised the delegates that he will make sure other unions — the plumbers, carpenters, and building trades — back up the CFT in their fight against charter schools and privatization. Then he got them fired up for the march in support of immigrant rights.

“Are you ready to raise a little hell? Are you ready to fight for immigrant justice?” Pulaski asked the delegates before they filed out to

Member voices on the street

“All human beings are legal. I came to this country when I was in my 30s. You don’t change the country of your birth lightly. A lot of people helped me. I have to help others — I feel it in my bones.”

— Pinky Uppal, special education teacher, ABC Federation of Teachers

“We need to support all our children. We have students from South America and Yemen. They’re coming to school hysterical. One little boy from Syria was hysterical for two hours.”

— Mary Lavalais, student advisor, United Educators of San Francisco

“The area where I teach has a large number of farmworkers. I’ve seen the fear and how it’s hard to concentrate on schoolwork. Some students have left school. All the teachers see the effects. I’m just standing up for the students.”

— Kent Johnson, English teacher, North Monterey County Federation of Teachers

march past Sacramento’s Immigration Customs Enforcement office on the way to the steps of the state Capitol building.

At a rally in front of the ICE office, Kent Wong from the UCLA Labor Center addressed the hundreds of marchers, telling them he couldn’t think of a better way to celebrate Cesar Chavez Day. In his 20 years of teaching, many of his best students have been undocumented, Wong said. One of those students, Hugo Romero, also spoke.

“My mother was detained in a private detention center and she said it was a living hell,” he said. “I’ve seen the impact of privatization, and I will fight like hell to prevent privatization of schools.”

One of the marchers, Robert Chacanaca, president of the Santa Cruz Council of Classified Employees, said we need to recognize that all human beings have a right to be on the planet.

“I’m a Native American,” he said. “I’m always confused when one group of immigrants is against another group of immigrants.”

On the Capitol steps, Los Rios College Federation President Dean Murakami recited a list of the lies Trump has told, and Gemma Abels, president of Morgan Hill Federation, reported numbers showing how immigrants make a difference in the United States. Early Childhood Federation President Gloria Garcia spoke of the fear educators are seeing in their students.

“One boy said to his teacher, ‘Do you know who Mr. Trump is?’ The teacher said yes. He said, ‘Do you know Mr. Trump wants to send my parents back, and I’ll never see them again?’” Garcia recounted. “Thank you for standing up here today. We have to be together and defend our students. They’re living in fear.”



ANGIE WEI



JOCELYN FORMAN



RICK OCULTO



LAURA FLORES

PANEL ON POINT: Understanding rights, rules and the law

It's not the work of a few vigilantes when Immigration Customs Enforcement agents target students, said Laura Flores of the California Rural Legal Assistance Foundation — it's becoming the law of the land.

In a panel discussion, “Rights, Rules and the Law,” Flores spoke about the need to make students safe and welcome. She said Trump's administration has eliminated the priorities for deportation, making anyone undocumented a target. That's 12 million people, and Flores pointed out that doesn't just affect those 12 million, but their families and communities as well.

The Berkeley Council of Classified Employees' Jocelyn Foreman sees those people every day at her job as a family engagement specialist. What she and others like her do makes a big difference, she said, by offering students and their families support.

Transgender students also need to feel safe, said Rick Oculito of the Transform California Project. One way is calling them by the pronoun they prefer. To drive that point home, Oculito talked about what happens at the dog park if you refer to a male dog, “He's such a good dog!”

“The owner says, ‘It's a she,’ and you change it immediately, right?” Oculito said. “That's for a dog. And we're talking about people here.”

The California Labor Foundation's Angie Wei says her organiza-

tion does trainings on what to do if ICE shows up. They tell people not to open the door and to only give their name — easy to tell people, but hard for them to do when someone with a gun is at the door. The terror in immigrant communities is palpable, Wei says.

“I'm filled with fear about how we come out on the other side of this,” she said. “The responsibility falls squarely on your shoulders to create a whole new generation of unionists and activists and fighters for justice.”

Wei also talked about SB 54, legislation to create a sanctuary state and AB 450, which would protect undocumented immigrants from workplace raids.

In a related workshop, César Moreno Pérez with AFT Human Rights & Community Relations encouraged people to do what they can to support immigrant rights — calling legislators, talking to colleagues, doing trainings, and using resources on Share My Lesson.

“Federal law says schools must accept all students,” he said. “Diversity is our greatest strength. We need to have welcoming spaces for everyone.”

»Learn more on CFT's Safe Haven resources page at cft.org/safe-haven.

TOM STEYER: Addresses climate, education

It's typical for educators to lead the way, philanthropist Tom Steyer told attendees at the CFT Convention. As the son and grandson of teachers, Steyer founded NextGen Climate, a non-profit that acts politically to prevent climate disaster.

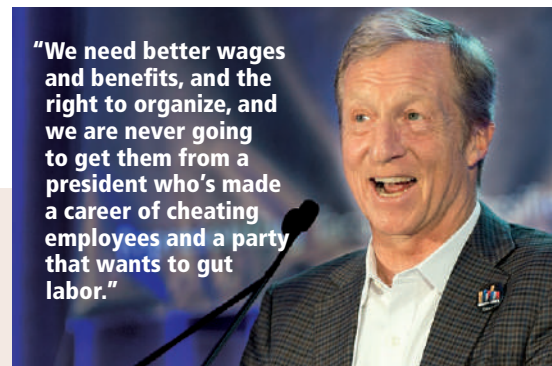
CFT President Joshua Pechthalt introduced Steyer, saying he's pledged to give at least half of his money to causes such as environmental justice and voting rights. Steyer also supports public schools and spoke to the challenges facing them.

“When the Secretary of Education does not

support or even understand public education, it's almost as if the Secretary of the Environment wanted to gut the Clean Air Act or the Secretary of Energy wanted to dismantle that department,” Steyer said, referring to Betsy DeVos, Scott Pruitt and Rick Perry, respectively. “We need better wages and benefits, and the right to organize, and we are never going to get them from a president who's made a career of cheating employees and a party that wants to gut labor.”

California needs to continue to lead by standing up for immigrants rights, against the rollback of environmental protections, and for

“We need better wages and benefits, and the right to organize, and we are never going to get them from a president who's made a career of cheating employees and a party that wants to gut labor.”



public education. Steyer added that he's working on campuses around the country with NextGen, involving community partners and unions. He's also on a committee with AFT President Randi Weingarten and AFL-CIO President Richard Trumka, and they're working to refute what Steyer calls “a few big lies” that Republicans keep repeating.

SPIRITED DEBATE ON RESOLUTIONS

Issues range from academic freedom and racial justice to community schools

At the CFT Convention March 31 through April 2, delegates took action on 23 policy resolutions addressing topics from community schools to immigrant rights to the Dakota Access Pipeline.

Resolution 23, “Defending academic freedom in the 21st Century,” arose from an incident with an instructor at the Orange Coast College, said Lee Gordon, Coast Federation member and Academic Senate president at the college, who spoke in favor of the resolution.

“It’s very hard to defend yourself on the local level,” he said. “We need some sort of rapid response plan in place. It’s challenging to deal one on one with Fox News.”

Gordon was talking about Professor Olga Perez Stable Cox. A student secretly videotaped Cox making remarks critical of

Trump. The video was posted to Facebook, went viral, and was covered extensively by the right-wing media.

Lita Blanc, the president of United Educators of San Francisco, also spoke in favor of the resolution, mentioning that a teacher in Mountain View who spoke against Trump was suspended. Blanc said contract provisions protecting academic freedom are necessary.

“We need to teach the truth,” she said. “We want to carry out our work, and we need academic freedom to do it.”

Rob Schneiderman, the president of the Coast Federation of Educators, said the media attention had been overwhelming and thanked CFT for its help.

“It was a planned attack on the faculty by the right wing,” he said. “We need more organization and support — there’s nothing

IMMIGRATION



RACIAL JUSTICE



ACADEMIC FREEDOM



ORGANIZING



SINGLE PAYER HEALTHCARE

DAKOTA PIPELINE

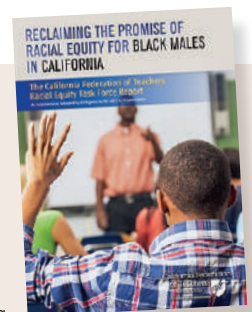
COMMUNITY SCHOOLS

Significant resolutions passed by delegates

- 1** Provide assistance to members about immigration enforcement
- 4** Increase support for local unions working to establish community schools
- 5** Prohibit classroom recording without instructor consent in support of academic freedom
- 6** Amend definition of probationary period for classified employees in Education Code
- 11** Make International Workers’ Day a state holiday
- 12** Provide paid pregnancy disability and maternity leaves
- 14** Reclaiming the promise of racial equity for Black males in California

- 18** Oppose the Dakota Access Pipeline
- 20** Increase support for organizing new retiree chapters
- 22** Taking a humane stance on solitary confinement
- 27** Oppose UC tuition and fee increases

»Delegates also passed Amendment 1, containing the annual constitutional per capita increase. Find all the constitutional amendments and resolutions passed by delegates online at cft.org/governance/resolutions-and-policy.





Delegates overwhelmingly elected the Unity Slate, including President Joshua Pechthalt, Secretary Treasurer Jeff Freitas and 24 vice presidents.

in the contract to help us support our faculty members.”

Resolution 14, “Reclaim the promise of racial equity for Black males in California,” passed unanimously.

Van Cedric Williams, a high school history teacher and a member of UESF, said his students will be happy to hear about the resolution and thanked the CFT for supporting it.

“Let’s not just speak about it, let’s be about it,” Williams said.

UESF’s Susan Solomon, United Teachers Los Angeles’ Ingrid Gunnell and Cecily Myart-Cruz, City College of San Francisco’s AFT 2121’s Tim Killikelly, Dennis Cox from the Retiree Chapter of the ABC Federation of Teachers, and Morgan Hill Federation of Teachers’ Gemma Abels were among other speakers in favor of the resolution.

Cathy Campbell, president of the Berkeley Federation of Teachers, called passing this policy one of the most important actions of the convention. The resolution was based on a report from the CFT Racial Equity Task Force, *Reclaiming the Promise of Racial Equity for Black Males in California*, that she called a “laser-focused document that is actually a call to action” for things that can be done locally.

Jim Miller of the AFT Guild in San Diego spoke in favor of Resolution 11, which he co-authored, “Make International Workers’ Day a state holiday.” It proposed combining the holidays for Lincoln and Washington into a single holiday and making May 1st International Workers’ Day in California. “This is the direction we need to go,” Miller said.

There was much debate on this, with some delegates saying they didn’t want to go back and tell their members that they had forfeited a holiday. They proposed just asking for May 1 as International Workers’ Day without offering to give up anything. An amendment to the resolution, stating this, was proposed. Jim Mahler, the president of the AFT Guild, spoke against the amendment, saying the purpose of the language was to avoid fiscal impact.

“It’s not viable if we just say we want an extra holiday,” he said.

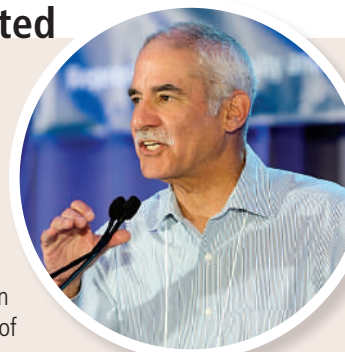
The vote on the amendment was so close delegates were required to stand to be counted. It lost the vote and the resolution to create a new holiday to honor laborers passed.

OFFICER ELECTIONS: Pechthalt, Freitas elected

Delegates overwhelming elected the Unity Slate, led by CFT President Joshua Pechthalt and Secretary Treasurer Jeff Freitas. The slate’s 24 vice presidents were elected from among a field of 29 candidates. Pechthalt and Freitas have now begun their fourth two-year term as leaders of the California Federation of Teachers.



Lacy Barnes and Jeff Freitas



Josh Pechthalt

AFT LEADER BRINGS PERSPECTIVE AND VISION

Lorretta Johnson says unions and communities united can take on the right

AFT Secretary Treasurer Lorretta Johnson pledged to join the CFT in resisting. Except for one thing.

“I went to jail once in a teachers’ strike,” she said. “My husband heard I was in jail and he didn’t come get me — I vowed I’d never go back.”

In 1966, Johnson started off as a teacher’s aide in Baltimore, making \$2.25 an hour without benefits, Paula Phillips, then president of the Council of Classified Employees, said in her introduction. Johnson went on to organize paraprofessionals and became a political force.

Johnson called the members of the CFT “first responders” to the new administration and its policies.

“I don’t even want to call them policies — this man is crazy,” she said about the current president. “When he pushes for more deportations, we are the ones who comfort the students.”

Johnson encouraged attendees to make their focus local — on governors and legislators. She also said young people are necessary to the fight, but to give them room.

“My daddy used to tell me about walking to school in the snow and every time he told it, the snow got deeper,” she said. “I tell young

people, ‘You don’t have to do it the way I did — just get it done.’”

People have been told if they work hard, they can get a shot at the American dream, Johnson said, adding she was part of that dream. Her father died when she was 14, and her mother raised her and her eight older siblings on her father’s pension. Now Johnson has a degree in education, and the Maryland Democratic Party named her a Labor Leader of the Year.

“The union movement collectively made Lorretta Johnson,” she said.

“I never thought America wasn’t great,” she added, referring to the 45th president’s declaration that he will make America great again.

“Everything could be made a little better. I could stand to lose a little weight. I could change my hair around. But that doesn’t mean I’m not great.”

Johnson urged delegates to fight against

Trump’s agenda, saying if unions work with communities, they can take on the right wing. “If you put your hand up, they can break your fingers, but when you turn that into a fist, they have hell to pay,” Johnson said, demonstrating with a raised fist. She ended with another declaration of strength. “If you see Lorretta Johnson in a fight with a bear, help the bear.”



KEVIN MCCARTY, PHIL TING: CFT Legislators of the Year

When the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges put City College of San Francisco on the severest sanction, a lot of legislators didn’t get it, said Tim Killikelly, president of AFT Local 2121, the faculty union there.

“But Phil Ting got it and he understood and he was there helping to lead the fight for fair accreditation in California,” Killikelly said. “He worked very closely with us to show how the ACCJC failed us with its lack of transparency.”



Receiving the award for Legislator of the Year, Assemblymember Ting referred to the former president of the commission. “Barbara Beno and that commission picked on the wrong college and the wrong state,” he said. “Community college is not just where you go coming out of high school — it’s where


you go if you’re 30 and decide you want to go to the culinary academy or if you’re 40 and want to be a coder.”

Assemblymember Kevin McCarthy from Sacramento also received the award. Los Rios

College Federation of Teachers President Dean Murakami introduced him, saying he had fought for restorative justice, mental health services for students, and debt relief.

McCarthy welcomed CFT members to his hometown and thanked Murakami for pronouncing his name correctly and not as Kevin McCarthy, a Republican congressman from Bakersfield, who, McCarthy said, wants to arm educators so they can protect themselves from wolves and grizzly bears. Issues he’s focusing on include expanding early childhood education and making sure students can afford college.

“This convention is about ‘organize and resist,’” McCarthy said. “In California we’ve been doing that a long time.”



“We have a president who thinks tweeting and governing are the same thing. We have a president attacking those who need the most — attacking the after-school programs, the arts, even attacking the free lunch program. I take that personally because I was on food stamps when you got actual stamps.”

TONY THURMOND SPEAKS FROM THE HEART

Announces bid for state superintendent of public instruction after Convention

Assemblymember Tony Thurmond (D-Richmond) didn't have an easy start in life. His father abandoned the family, and his mother, a Panamanian immigrant, died of cancer when he was six.

Calling education “the great equalizer” that made it possible for him to become a state legislator, Thurmond talked about the cousin in Philadelphia who took him and a brother in after his mom died.

“She raised us as her sons and saved my life,” he said about his cousin, adding that she modeled education as the way out of poverty. “She worked a lot of jobs and went to night school. She was a nurse's aide and a shop steward. I was on the picket line as a teenager, and I knew right away my walk was going to be with labor and people who fight for working people.”

Thurmond went on to be a social worker, earning a dual master's degree from Bryn Mawr College in social work and law. He served on the Richmond City Council in the East Bay and on the West Contra Costa Unified School Board before becoming a legislator.

Thurmond spoke about the importance of school staff and how he relied on them when working in schools.

“The school secretary was my best friend — she always knew where the principal was, so I always knew where the principal was,” he said. “And custodians, you better know how to work with

your custodians to run an after-school program. All these caring adults who help our kids thrive — I love you all.”

Like many who spoke at the convention, Thurmond talked about the need to resist the anti-union, anti-immigrant, anti-worker administration in Washington.

“We have a president who thinks tweeting and governing are the same thing,” he said. “We have a president attacking those who need the most — attacking the after-school programs, the arts, even attacking the free lunch program. I take that personally because I was on food stamps when you got actual stamps.”

Joking that he ate so much government cheese, he thought USDA was a brand name, Thurmond said he was thankful for the programs that fed him, and that he has heard from CFT members that many of their students come to school hungry.

“Thank you for all you do to support students like me,” he said.

Thurmond talked about the legislation to resist Trump such as SB 54 to make California a sanctuary state as well as bills he has authored: AB 43 to make private prisons put money into pre-school programs, AB 45 to provide affordable housing for school employees, and AB 670 to include part-time playground supervisors in the classified service. (*See page 16*)

Two days after the convention, Thurmond announced that he would run for superintendent of public instruction in 2018.

DAVID YANCEY: Honored with Ben Rust Award

Mark Newton says he can't go anywhere in San José with David Yancey without having someone yell out, "Mr. Yancey! You were my favorite teacher!"

Newton, a past recipient of the Ben Rust Award, and the first president of the San José/ Evergreen Federation of Teachers, was presenting CFT's highest honor to Yancey, former CFT vice president and leader of AFT Local 6157.

Newton shared presenting with a few others, all wanting to talk about Yancey's skills as a union leader. Gemma Abels, president of the Morgan Hill Federation of Teachers, talked about Yancey's work with the South Bay Labor Council, saying along with teaching his students history, he involves them in creating it, phone banking, and walking precincts for causes like Proposition 55 to extend a tax for schools on people earning over \$250,000.

"He's not only a heavy lifter in the weight room, but in the South Bay Labor Council as well," she said.

Former legislator Paul Fong, now Local 6157 president, says his feet are still flopping around in the big shoes Yancey left to fill. He recalled how Yancey's relentless calls led him to vote against a bill for two-tier tuition in higher education, which was eventually killed.

Yancey joked he wished he knew the person everyone had been talking about, and went on to talk about CFT's accomplishments,



David Yancey, left, received the Ben Rust Award. He is pictured with his San José colleague Paul Fong.

such as a tax on the highest earners for education and fighting the accreditation commission trying to revoke City College of San Francisco's accreditation.

"Being a member of any union is a noble thing, but this isn't any union," Yancey said. "This is the CFT, and it is so much more. It has accomplished so much for the people of this state. With Proposition 30 we taxed the rich for the first time in 40 years. We were in a fight for our sisters and brothers against the ACCJC, and it was really a fight for their very existence. It exemplifies the old union adage, 'An injury to one is an injury to all.'"

MELINDA DART: Women in Education Award

The day after Donald Trump was elected president, Melinda Dart, CFT vice president and president of the Jefferson Elementary Federation in Daly City, saw a sixth-grade boy with his head on a desk, sobbing. Girls asked her how a person who'd said the things Trump said could have been elected president. Dart didn't have an answer for that, but she was glad to see these sixth-graders angry.

"We need to keep them engaged and organized and resisting," she said. "Like Gloria Steinem said, 'The truth will set you free, but first it will piss you off.'"

Dart, the recipient of CFT's Women in Education Award, said that she will make the long drive to Sacramento often in the coming

months to try to flip a red district to blue even though that is not appealing.

"I have to do it for the kids who are crying and upset," she said. "Our kids are looking to us for leadership."

Introducing Dart, Sergio Robledo-Maderazo, president of the AFT local in Daly City's high school district, talked about her energy and how Dart, who he called a "strong, righteous feminist" had created ties with sister locals and pushed the Daly City Council to protect immigrants and renters.



Dart gave credit to CFT for giving her local a Strategic Campaign Initiative grant and to her local for offering family education workshops and working to create community schools. Remembering when her 32-year-old son was born, and healthcare ended when you got pregnant, Dart said it was time to organize to end injustice.

"Are we going to stand back and let immigrant families be torn apart and let public schools be sold?" she asked. "No! Organize and resist!"



Mid-session update

Union-sponsored bills pass through key legislative committees

OUR CFT-SPONSORED LEGISLATION successfully passed out of policy committees before the May 12 deadline for bills introduced in their house of origin to be heard. The union's proposal before the Joint Legislative Audit Committee also succeeded. In addition, CFT is lobbying several priority bills and continues to monitor legislation that would be harmful to educators, our students and communities. You can find legislative updates online at cft.org.

CFT-SPONSORED BILLS

Prohibit new teachers from paying for BTSA

AB 410 (*Cervantes, D-Corona*) would prohibit districts from charging new teachers for their participation in the mandatory Beginning Teacher Support and Assessment program. ➤Passed Assembly Education Committee 6-1 on March 15 and placed on Assembly Appropriations Committee suspense file.

Prohibit for-profit charter schools

AB 406 (*McCarty, D-Sacramento*) would prohibit a charter school petitioner or a charter school submitting a renewal, from operating as, or being operated by, a for-profit corporation. ➤Passed Assembly Education 5-2 on May 10 and moved to Assembly floor.

Paid leave for pregnancy and convalescence

AB 568 (*Gonzalez-Fletcher, D-San Diego*) would require school and community college districts to provide a minimum of six weeks of paid leave for certificated and classified employees due to pregnancy or convalescence following childbirth. ➤Passed Assembly Higher Education Committee 1-1-1 on April 18, Assembly Education 5-0 on May 10, and moved to Assembly floor.

Enhance school safety planning committees

AB 1029 (*Weber, D-San Diego*) would add a community schools coordinator, a restorative justice practitioner, and/or a mental health professional to a school's safety planning committee, and require the safety plan to be aligned with school climate priority and the Local Control Accountability Plan. ➤Passed Assembly Education 6-0-1 on April 5 and subsequently placed on Assembly Appropriations suspense file.

Ensuring adequate technology

Technology Audit Request (*Pan, D-Sacramento*) asks the auditor general to sample community college districts to determine if long-term strategic planning is occurring for the replacement and upgrade of instructional technology and accompanying employee training. ➤Approved March 29 with a 13-1 vote.

PRIORITY BILLS

California Community College Promise Program

AB 19 (*Santiago, D-Los Angeles*) would provide one year of tuition-free education for all first-time students taking 12 or more units. ➤Passed



On May 10, members lobbied in the Capitol to help two CFT-sponsored bills, AB 568 and AB 406, pass the Assembly Education Committee.

Assembly Higher Education 9-3-1 on March 28 and placed on Assembly Appropriations suspense file.

Assistance with school employee housing

AB 45 (*Thurmond, D-Richmond*) would create a \$100 million program to provide school districts with financial assistance to develop employee housing. ➤Passed Assembly Housing and Community Development Committee 7-0 on April 5 and Assembly Education 5-2 on April 19. Referred to Assembly Appropriations.

More pathways for community college students

SB 68 (*Lara, D-Bell Gardens*) would allow two years at a community college to count toward a student's AB 540 eligibility, and in lieu of a high school diploma, allow completion of an associate degree or satisfaction of minimum requirements to qualify for transfer to UC or CSU, in-state tuition and financial aid. ➤Passed Senate Education Committee 6-0-1 on March 22, and placed on the Senate Appropriations Committee suspense file on April 17.

Allow noon duty aides to be in classified service

AB 670 (*Thurmond*) would remove the exemption that disallows noon duty aides and playground supervisors from being counted as classified employees. ➤Passed Assembly Education 5-2 on April 19 and referred to Assembly Appropriations. (See page 16)

The Healthy California Act

AB 562 (*Lara*) would benefit all California residents by providing universal single payer healthcare coverage and a healthcare cost control system. ➤Passed Senate Health Committee 5-2-2 on April 26 and referred to Senate Appropriations.

— By the CFT Legislative Staff

Bilingual education back in national spotlight

Where will we find enough multilingual teachers amidst shortage?

Last November, California voters passed Proposition 58 — the Language Education, Acquisition and Readiness Now initiative, or LEARN — by the largest margin of any measure on the ballot.

Today, the CFT and community organizations are working with state education officials and local school districts to revive and update bilingual programs mothballed after voters passed Proposition 227 in 1998.

Ramping up to meet the needs of English Language Learners won't be easy. Many districts were struggling with teacher shortages before Prop 58.

But language instruction has advanced by leaps and bounds over the past 18 years, and school administrators are showing a new willingness to work with teachers to create successful programs.

With the anti-immigrant political wave that swept California in the 1990s, including Gov. Pete Wilson's reelection and Proposition 187, requiring proof of legal status for a driver's license, Prop 227 basically kicked bilingual education to the curb, and the goal became "transitioning" students into all-English classes by fourth grade.

"This time around, we're adding, not subtracting," said Francisco Rodriguez, president of the Pajaro Valley Federation of Teachers. "The emphasis is on multilin-

gualism, not transition to English."

LEARN was crafted to provide all 1.4 million California students the opportunity to become bilingual and biliterate. That fundamental shift is possible thanks to the rise of dual-immersion programs, in which English learners become proficient in their native language first, which leads to a quicker transition to English. The approach is also aimed at English speakers who want to learn a second language.

"The ideal is for students to join the program in kindergarten, remain through high school, and graduate with strong skills in both languages," said Gabriela Ibarra, a dual-immersion teacher in the ABC Unified School District for 20 years.

Ibarra's program at Niemes Elementary School, an environmental science and technology magnet, recently expanded into Ross Middle School as her students advanced. She hopes it will follow them into high school.

CFT Vice President Juan Ramirez of United Teachers Los Angeles said he received little guidance on how to teach a bilingual classroom when he began in 1996,

two years before Prop 227 was passed.

"Back then," Ramirez recalled, "there were a lot of questions about how effective bilingual programs are. Now we have more data on second-language acquisition."

Even before voters passed Prop 58, he said, bilingual education had been staging a quiet comeback since the negative results of Prop 227 began to add up. Los Angeles Unified currently offers 87 transitional and dual-immersion programs in Spanish, Korean, Mandarin, French, Armenian and Arabic, and plans to offer 110 this coming school year.

Bilingual education's biggest challenge will be recruiting enough credentialed instructors to meet growing needs. Californians Together is analyzing more than 4,700 responses to a statewide survey to determine how many certified and non-certified teachers are available to teach languages.

"We have no idea how large the shortage is," said Shelly Spiegel-Coleman, executive director. "We did this survey to hear from the teachers, especially how many bilingual teachers are now teaching in English, but would return to a bilingual setting."



Juan Ramirez



Francisco Rodriguez

Seven ways to address the teacher shortage

RICO TAMAYO COUNCIL PRESIDENT

Last fall, a California School Boards Association survey of 211 districts revealed alarming teacher shortages. More than half of the districts reported hiring teachers with sub-standard credentials, while 24 percent also hired substitutes at high rates, 22 percent assigned teachers to positions outside of their credential field, 17 percent left positions vacant, 9 percent increased class sizes, and 8 percent

canceled courses.

From the many organizations addressing this crisis, including the CFT, come these suggestions: 1) Create local pipelines into the profession, such as high school career pathways and "grow your own" models, which recruit talented individuals from the community; 2) Invest in high-quality induction and mentoring programs; 3) Survey teachers to assess their learning environments so that districts can make improvements where necessary; 4) Incentivize

professional development and redesign schools to foster greater collaboration; 5) Increase salaries in communities where teachers are unable to afford a middle class lifestyle; 6) Offer housing incentives, such as rent, relocation and down payment assistance, as well as discounted homes and subsidized teacher housing; 7) Forgive college loans for teachers in communities with high-need students.





Dual-immersion teacher Gabriela Ibarra says the ideal is for students to join the program in kindergarten and remain in it through high school.

BOB RIHA, JR

Regardless of what the survey reveals, California is sure to need far more teachers and funding to meet its needs. Fewer than 5 percent of ELLs statewide are currently in a bilingual program.

In the past, stipends were a strong incentive for recruiting and retaining bilingual teachers. Some differentials have been cut or reduced, but Spiegel-Coleman said her survey shows many districts still offer bonuses.

In L.A. Unified, for example, yearly stipends were trimmed from \$5,000 to \$3,000. To meet its projected teaching needs, the district has been urging universities to encourage more students to seek bilingual credentials.

In Pajaro Valley, bilingual bonuses weren't an issue in previous contract talks. In his 10 years as president, Rodriguez said,

bargaining surveys never indicated significant interest. But, he added, the district does reimburse teachers' tuition for earning special education credentials.

"The bargaining team agreed last year," he said, "that if Prop 58 passed the union would propose stipends."

Eyebrows were raised in every corner of the teaching profession when voters approved Prop 58 by a 73.5 percent majority. Perhaps it's no surprise, then, that teachers are finding a newfound spirit of teamwork in their districts.

Rodriguez said Pajaro Valley's new superintendent is one of the district's first bilingual leaders and has been very supportive. ABC, Ibarra added, has been especially helpful in ensuring that teaching materials in both languages are up to Common Core standards.

"I'm encouraged," Ramirez said, "that the L.A. district really wants to work with us. We aren't getting the run-around."

— By Steve Weingarten, CFT Reporter

CFT launches online toolkit for ELL community

The CFT English Language

Learners Committee has compiled a comprehensive listing of resources available to teachers, parents and community members. From the AFT's topnotch learning resource *Colorín Colorado* to the plethora of statistics available through the state Department of Education's DataQuest, you will find it all in the online toolkit at cft.org/ELL-toolkit.



Bringing part-time playground aides into classified service AB 670 would give “noon dutys” long overdue workplace rights

Lesa Estrada has been a noon duty aide at Lawndale’s Anderson Elementary since her son began kindergarten here more than 25 years ago.

“All three of my children attended Anderson,” Estrada said. “I’ve seen kids grow up and bring us their children. Now some are bringing us their grandchildren.”

Estrada is one of about 60 playground aides who work two or three hours daily at the Lawndale Elementary School District’s nine campuses. Their jobs often mirror staff positions, but state law specifically excludes them from “the classified service.”

That barrier may be falling.

More than 40 part-time playground aides—“noon dutys” for short—recently signed AFT Local 4529 membership cards, and in late April the Lawndale Federation of Classified Employees’ newest members “sunshined” their first bargaining proposal.

Also, legislation working its way through Sacramento would open the door to union rights and new benefits for aides. “Part-time playground employees deserve the same protection and benefits as classified employees,” said Assemblyman Tony Thurmond, D-Richmond, the author of AB 670.

Part-timers are predominantly women, and are often the lowest wage earners on

campus. Their duties are similar to services performed by staff, from supervising students during breakfast and lunch, to keeping peace on the monkey bars.

The job draws on Estrada’s energy, diplomacy, creativity, tenderness and grit. “I don’t go for bullying. If I see it, I handle it right away. And if I see a child sitting alone, I’ll approach them and find out if something is wrong. It might be a sign of bullying or a problem at home.”

“The noon dutys all love their jobs, but if you’re a nonunion employee in a school district, you don’t have a voice.”

— Dan Meseraull, Vice President, Lawndale Federation

Estrada begins her mornings with 45 minutes at Anderson’s front gate, making sure the 700 students enter safely and don’t leave campus after they arrive. After supervising a 30-minute recess she volunteers in classrooms, then she and the other aides monitor several shifts of children at lunch for an hour and 45 minutes.

“I’m here for the kids. They’re like our own children. That’s the way you must look at this job,” Estrada said. “If you’re here for the money, you’re wasting your time. I’m embarrassed to even say what I’m paid.”

Without union representation or a contract, part-timers are also frequently short-changed and otherwise mistreated.

“The noon dutys all love their jobs,” said Dan Meseraull, vice president of the Lawndale Federation, “but if you’re a non-union employee in a school district, you don’t have a voice.”

Meseraull was spurred to action after his wife, Stephanie, a kitchen manager at William Green Elementary, related a sad

story from an aide at work: The district promised the noon duty that it would pay her, but claimed there were no funds when the school year ended.

“And then my wife asked me, ‘Isn’t there something the union can do to help?’ That’s how this whole organizing campaign started.”

Although the Federation doesn’t represent the aides, who often work just two or three hours a day, Meseraull and President Carl Williams discussed the case and decided there was nothing to lose by raising it with administrators.

Getting to know new CCE President Luukia Smith

LUUKIA SMITH COUNCIL PRESIDENT

I’m Luukia Smith. I was elected as the president of our Council of Classified Employees at the CFT Convention. I’ve worked 30 years as a classified employee at El Camino College and the last 16 years as president of the El Camino Classified Employees, Local 6142.

My family is from Hawaii and I embrace much of the laid-back island culture. My leadership

style, too, is pretty informal. However, laid-back and informal does not mean I am a pushover, quite the opposite.

During the coming year, our council wants to contact locals to identify the needs and issues facing our classified employees. I would like us to shine a brighter light on the important role classified employees play in the lives of the students we serve. I would also like to have a stronger classified voice in Sacramento. These

two goals, though difficult, can be accomplished if we work together.

Let’s start with an opportunity to celebrate us:

May 21-27 is Classified School Employee Week. You can find a poster to display in your workplace and graphics for sharing on Facebook at cft.org/your-work/classified.

Celebrate yourselves!





“I’m here for the kids. They’re like our own children. That’s the way you must look at this job. If you’re here for the money, you’re wasting your time. I’m embarrassed to even say what I’m paid.”

— Lesa Estrada, Noon Duty, Anderson Elementary

BOB RYHA, JR

Playground supervisor Lesa Estrada doesn’t allow bullying on the playground. “And if I see a child sitting alone, I’ll approach them and find out if something is wrong.”

The Federation held the district to its word and the playground aide was paid, but Meseraull was just getting started. He put on his organizer’s hat and didn’t take it off until he had more than 40 signed union cards in hand. The noon dutys first contract proposal focuses on job security and an increase in pay.

In Sacramento, meanwhile, Assemblyman Thurmond’s AB 670 would remove an exemption under current law that excludes part-time playground positions from being classified employees. The CFT supports AB

670, which is sponsored by the California School Employees Association.

In 2002, the CFT sponsored similar legislation signed by then-Governor Gray Davis that remains the law. AB 2849 opened the door to official classified status for many part-time noon dutys who also working another staff position in the district.

AB 670 goes a step further by counting part-time playground workers as staff, even if they don’t have a second part-time classified job. The bill passed out of the

Assembly Education Committee in April and was referred to Appropriations.

— By Steve Weingarten, CFT Reporter

Learn more

Follow the legislation! AB 670 (*Thurmond, D-Richmond*) would remove the exemption that disallows noon duty aides and playground supervisors from being counted as classified employees. Go to leginfo.legislature.ca.gov.

Faculty grill replacement leader of the ACCJC Interim commission president listens, pledges some new ways forward

At the end of a Friday night Community College Council meeting that went over the 10 o'clock ending time, Richard Winn said he wanted to continue being a "thinking partner" with the CFT and thanked everyone for their honesty.

He might have preferred a little less honesty. Winn is the interim president of the Accreditation Commission of Community and Junior Colleges, and the assembled members of CFT had plenty to say about the commission's unfairness, lack of transparency, and



Jenny Worley

meddling in collective bargaining. The CFT has a federal lawsuit against ACCJC and continues to fight for a new accreditor.

How will the commission address the past and all the harm done to the students and the state's community college system, asked Wynd Kaufman, executive board member of AFT Local 2121 at City College of San Francisco, which had its accreditation revoked by the ACCJC (this was stopped by a court injunction). Recently, City College got accredited for the next seven years. That happened because political pressure forced the commission to finally do what it should have done to begin with, Kaufman said.

"I don't think the commission is ready to accept that narrative," Winn told her to hisses from the room.

In spite of the hisses, Winn stayed up on stage as long as there were people lining up to ask him questions, gamely talking about trying to work with faculty members and to regain trust. Many of the speakers ac-

knowledged this as brave. Or foolish.

AFT 2121 President Tim Killikelly told Winn he liked his tone and what he'd been saying.

"Coming here is not an act for the faint hearted, but really the question is where's the beef?" Killikelly said before talking about how the ACCJC has impeded collective bargaining rights, required prefunding



RICHARD WINN ACCJC INTERIM PRESIDENT

of retirement benefits, and pushed for far more in college's reserves than the five percent legally required.

Winn responded that the ACCJC would not tell an institution what it needed to do or impede collective bargaining.

The commission members' sincerity in



Tema Staig

Joanne Waddell

Recognize May 1st as the workers holiday

JIM MAHLER COUNCIL PRESIDENT

May Day is an international holiday honoring the working class, celebrated throughout the world except in the country where the holiday began: the United States.

Today, we must find our collective voice as workers if we are to survive the onslaught of anti-worker legislation from #45 and his fellow

oligarchs. They are poised to attack unions, destroy our collective bargaining rights, dismantle the public sector, and curtail or end living wages, Social Security, Medicare, and a host of other worker rights, all while rolling back occupational safety and environmental quality.

Most Americans are unaware of the struggles workers undertook to win basic labor rights and don't know about the deplorable conditions

before the New Deal. Thus, the time has come for us to reclaim May 1st and to recognize that this country is only great because of those who have given their labor to make it great.

Stand with us to reclaim May Day as a major American celebration and join with fellow workers around the globe.





Mark Miller

rebuilding the trust of the faculty was called into question when Jessica Buchsbaum, secretary of AFT Local 2121, read text from a workshop at a conference the ACCJC was hosting the week following the CFT Convention.

The workshop, entitled “Do Educators Have a Prima Donna Complex?” argued that educators think they don’t need the oversight of a regulatory agency and that they do “just fine” on their own and resent the ACCJC telling them what to do. The pre-

agency. She asked Winn how he could justify the millions that accreditation costs colleges and if the agency had plans to repay them for mistakes courts had deemed to be the fault of the ACCJC.

Winn responded that he understood her outrage, but there was nothing he could say to assuage it — he likened it to asking Obama to apologize for Bush sending troops into Iraq. He added the agency was trying to reduce costs to the

dance teacher at City College and a representative on AFT Local 2121’s executive board. The harm that the ACCJC has done to CCSF is far from over, said Burick, and morale at the school is the worst she’s experienced in her 37 years there.

“We’re on our third interim chancellor. It’s been horrific,” she said.

“What was a sane and humane place is now being

turned into something cheap and cheesy.”

Mark James Miller, president of the Part-Time Faculty Association of Allan Hancock College in Santa Maria, told Winn that the commission listens to the administrators, but not members of his local. Winn said he’s working on changing that.

“Going forward every voice will be heard,” he said. “We’re going to try and listen to everyone.”

—By Emily Wilson, CFT Reporter



Barbara Hanfling



Jessica Buchsbaum

“We’re not afraid of accreditation. What we fear are the arbitrary, capricious, and punitive responses that our self-studies receive.”

— Joanne Waddell, President, Los Angeles College Faculty Guild

sender promised to cure this notion.

Buchsbaum pointed out this was particularly offensive in how it targeted faculty members and Winn said he deeply regretted this. Jim Mahler, CCC president, suggested inviting an opposing voice and paying for their registration.

Joanne Waddell, president of the Los Angeles College Faculty Guild, made it clear she had no problem with oversight of a regulatory agency.

“We’re not afraid of accreditation,” she said. “What we fear are the arbitrary, capricious, and punitive responses that our self-studies receive.”

Sometimes, Waddell added, even if you want to save a building, if the wiring is shot, the plumbing is bad and there are toxic chemicals, you should tear it down and begin again — a metaphorical argument for getting a new accreditation

colleges and that a whole new accreditation institution was not the answer.

Both Barbara Hanfling, executive director of the San José/Evergreen Federation of Teachers, and Jenny Worley, vice president of AFT Local 2121, spoke about Student Learning Outcomes. Worley, an English teacher, said they take time she could use helping students with their writing.

Hanfling said that the ACCJC had illegally inserted itself in collective bargaining by requiring SLOs. Winn seemed to say that the agency will back off on SLOs, maybe phasing them out eventually.

Winn kept repeating he wasn’t there to redeem the past. That’s what he told Kathe Burick, a PE and



Li Lovett



Dean Murakami

PHOTOS: SHARON BEALS / LORI EAMES

Contingent faculty and academic freedom in the age of Trump Organizing the disenfranchised is the key to success

Now that more than 75 percent of the instructors teaching in higher education in the United States do not have tenure, it is important to think about how the current political climate affects those vulnerable teachers. Although we should pay attention to how all faculty are being threatened, non-tenured faculty are in an especially exposed position because they often lack any type of academic freedom or shared governance rights.

In other words, they are a class without representation, and they usually can be let go at any time for any reason. This type of precarious employment, which is spreading all over the world to all types of occupations, creates a high level of professional insecurity and helps to feed the power of the growing managerial class.

This new higher education faculty majority often relies on getting high student evaluations to keep their jobs or earn pay increases. The emphasis on pleasing students not only can result in grade inflation

and defensive teaching, but it also places the teacher in an impossible situation when dealing with political issues in a polarized environment. While some students want teachers to talk freely about politics, many students will turn against an instructor who does not share their own ideological perspective. This type of political disagreement can appear in student evaluations as vague complaints about a teacher's attitude or personality.

In this fraught cultural environment, practically everyone feels that they are being censored, silenced or ignored. Some of my conservative students have told me they feel like the real minorities on campus, and even though Donald Trump won the U.S. presidency, they still think

since anything can be perceived as a microaggression, people tend to silence themselves. Moreover, the themes of political correctness, safe spaces, trigger warnings and free speech have become contentious issues on both the right and the left.

This creates an educational environment where almost everyone is afraid to speak. Non-tenured faculty members fear losing their jobs, conservative students see themselves as a censored minority, and progressive students are afraid of being called out for their privilege or lack of political correctness. Making matters worse is that students are often socialized by their large lecture classes to simply remain passive and silent.

While we appear to be facing a perfect



BY BOB SAMUELS

The only way to protect the quality of instruction in higher education is to generate the collective power of the disenfranchised faculty.

they cannot express their true opinions. Conversely, some of my self-identified progressive students believe that political correctness makes it hard to have an open discussion. From their perspective,

storm where free speech and real debate are no longer possible, one obvious and readily available way of countering this is to stop relying on student evaluations to assess non-tenured faculty. If we change how non-tenured faculty members are evaluated and rely much more on the peer review of instruction, teachers will not have to be afraid that they will lose their jobs for promoting the free exchange of ideas in the classroom.

Non-tenure-track faculty should be empowered to observe and review one another's courses using established review criteria, with experienced faculty having expertise in pedagogy involved in the peer-review process of teaching. All faculty members can and should examine and discuss effective instructional methods.

The majority of faculty members no longer have academic freedom or the right to vote in their departments and faculty senates. To change this undemocratic situ-

UC-AFT wins top organizing award at Convention

The University Council was honored for significantly growing its membership last year by organizing 259 members into their statewide union with nine chapter campuses. Shown accepting the award from CFT President Josh Pechthalt are UC Riverside lecturer Raj Singh, UC-AFT Treasurer and CFT Vice President Miki Goral, and UC-AFT President-Elect Mia McGiver.



SHARON BEALS

If we change how non-tenured faculty members are evaluated and rely much more on the peer review of instruction, teachers will not have to be afraid that they will lose their jobs for promoting the free exchange of ideas in the classroom.



DAVE-MARK/ISTOCK

ation, and to protect free speech and open academic dialogue, tenured professors must realize that it is to their advantage to extend academic freedom and shared governance to all faculty members, regardless of their tenure status. Either we work together to resist the current authoritarian political climate or we will all suffer together.

Unfortunately, during the last round of contract bargaining for the UC-AFT lecturers, our team was unable to win a reduction the role of student evaluations in assessing the performance of non-tenure-track faculty. Although we presented solid evidence that these assessment tools often undermine education and are sometimes

based on racial, gender, and age discrimination, the university administration told us that it would be too costly and time consuming to develop a different model of performance evaluation. When we asked them why they did not support the peer review of instruction, they responded that tenured faculty did not have the time to perform these reviews.

We cannot know if the administration is telling the truth about the views of tenured faculty because these faculty members are rarely involved in bargaining. Thus, we are left with a confrontation between contingent faculty and professional administrators, and it is because of this structure that we need to push for all con-

tingent faculty to be unionized.

In short, the only way to protect the quality of instruction in higher education is to generate the collective power of the disenfranchised faculty. Since the future will surely test our ability to organize and fight together, we must act on the principle that our power comes through organization and collective action.

Bob Samuels is a lecturer of writing at UC Santa Barbara and served as president of UC-AFT for the last 12 years. Follow him on his thought-provoking blog at changinguniversities.blogspot.com.

For years, people have been trying to attack pensions with ballot propositions, said Doug Orr, an economics professor at City College of San Francisco and the chair of the of the CFT Retirement Policy Committee. Those propositions always go down in defeat, Orr said, and now those attacks on pensions are coming to the courts.

CFT legal counsel Robert Bezemek outlined the legal challenges, joining Orr in a workshop on pension activism at the CFT Convention. Bezemek started with the good news — how hard it is to take benefits away from people who have already retired.

“The burden of proof rests with the employer and it’s a really high bar they have to meet. If they claim there’s a fiscal crisis, for example, that isn’t enough by itself — they



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Pension battles shift from ballots to courts

Tracking the latest strategies that attack public employee pensions

have to prove a serious fiscal necessity,” he said. “They also have to show what they planned and how it worked for the benefit of individual retirees.”

But a recent decision heading to the California Supreme Court, *Marin Association of Public Employees v. Marin County Employees Retirement Association*, causes grave concern, says Bezemek. Called MCERA, it threw out 75 years of precedent that said for employees with vested rights any disadvantages in changes to retirement benefits had to be balanced with comparable advantages. This was something

that “shall” be done. MCERA, found that “shall” actually meant “may,” meaning that balancing was optional.

This means that retiree benefits for educators — as well as their health benefits — hang in the balance, Bezemek said, as a decision upholding MCERA could allow CalSTRS or CalPERS to make serious adverse changes to teacher and classified employee retirement benefits.

Orr called this the single most important attack on pensions in decades — maybe ever. Orr talked a little about the history of pensions, and how they were first created

for the railroads as a way to tie workers to a firm. Pensions were pay as you go, but in the 1960s due to corporations going bankrupt and being unable to pay their workers, Congress passed a law in 1974 that created pre-funding of pensions. This same principle has been applied to public sector workers even though it’s extremely unlikely school or college districts will go bankrupt.

“People say the sky is falling and we gotta get rid of pensions,” Orr said. “You have to counter that the sky is not falling, and it’s not a problem.”

— By Emily Wilson, CFT Reporter

The four things retirees *really* think about

JOHN PEREZ COUNCIL PRESIDENT

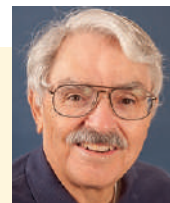
While most retirees continue to take a keen interest in politics, I have found that there are four things that truly motivate our retired members — our pensions, our healthcare, our grandkids, and our next trip.

At our just-concluded CFT Convention, the political climate, which we need to play close

attention to, was a prime topic. The California Supreme Court may decide a case that will allow the state government to reduce our pensions. House Speaker Paul Ryan wants Congress to make Medicare a voucher program and that would negatively affect our healthcare. Without help from the Congress or our state, our grandkids will continue to pay exorbitant tuition

for their university degrees, and all of these combined may have us putting off our next trip.

As retirees we need to remember that anything that negatively affects our active colleagues will ultimately negatively affect us.



MANY LOCALS

#ScienceMarch Numerous local unions took a stand for reason, facts and scientific analysis in the Science March and Climate March held during the month of May. Pictured here are groups from the **Greater Santa Cruz Federation of Teachers, AFT Local 2030**, and **UC-AFT San Diego, AFT Local 2226**.



COURTESY LOCAL 2226

COURTESY LOCAL 2030



LOCAL 6215

#Organizing Seventeen member organizers with the CFT Strategic Campaign Initiative helped recruit 100 new members into the **Cerritos College Faculty Federation** on April 24-27 as part of spring training drive.

Cerritos members volunteered more than 100 hours to accompany the organizers on class visits to have one-on-one conversations with faculty. More than 60 new members signed commitment cards to participate in union activities such as an upcoming workshop on unemployment benefits.

“This drive shows how essential it is to talk to members face-to-face to get to know them and learn about their working conditions,” says Lyndsey LeFebvre, Local 6215 vice president of part-time faculty and bargaining team member.

Organizers also learned that human resources at Cerritos College informs new part-time

ers that union dues are more expensive than agency fees, and they were able to start dispelling the misinformation during the drive.



ERIN CONLEY

Cerritos faculty members and SCI organizers Stephanie Rosenblatt and Lyndsey LeFebvre helped manage the successful membership drive.

LOCAL 1881

#FairContract Petaluma teachers are fed up. The cost-of-living in this Sonoma County town has risen 17.5 percent since 2007, but the district offered teachers a 0 percent increase in pay.

“We have been working without a contract all year,” said

Carrie Caudle, a member of the **Petaluma Federation of Teachers**. “We have waited and waited for the district to get their numbers together... and to treat us with respect. We are done waiting.”

In April, teachers participated in a “silent march” through dis-

trict offices with nearly 175 people marching. No one said a word, but carried well-crafted message on signs. During the first week of May, teachers “worked to rule.”

At press time, the Petaluma teachers continue in their determined fight for a fair contract.

#UnionStrong: Top union builders

SEVERAL LOCALS were honored for significantly growing their unions last year, largely by converting agency fee payers into full members. The Menifee Council of Classified Employees proudly boosted its membership through outstanding local organizing efforts and won awards in both categories.

LARGEST GROWTH IN MEMBERS: University Council-AFT organized 259 members into their statewide union (See page 20); State Center Federation of Teachers in the Fresno region added 195; and Menifee Classified added 151 new members.

LARGEST GROWTH IN PERCENTAGE: AFT Part-Time Faculty United in Victorville increased membership by 46 percent; Menifee Classified by 42 percent; and Part-Time Faculty United at College of the Canyons in Santa Clarita by 35 percent.

SHARON BEALS



Josh Briggs from AFT Part-Time Faculty United accepts first place award for a 46 percent increase in membership.



David Stein, lecturer of history and African-American studies at UCLA and member of UC-AFT Los Angeles, Local 1990, received the Maria Stewart Best

Journal Article Prize from the African American Intellectual History Society for his article titled "This Nation Has

Never Honestly Dealt with the Question of a Peacetime 'Economy': Coretta Scott King and the Struggle for a Nonviolent Economy in the 1970s." Stein also co-hosts a monthly podcast called *Who Makes Cents* covering the history of capitalism.

Betty Forrester,

retiring CFT Vice President and AFT Local 1021 president of United Teachers Los Angeles, was the recipient of the EC/TK-12 Council's Raoul Teilhet "Educate, Agitate, Organize" Award. Telling people they needed to be there for each other in hard times, Forrester told people at the ceremony to be sure to get together with others, to have



breakfast or a drink, to be social. "Over my 42 years, I think what's most important is the relationships," she said. "We have some tough times ahead — put your arms around everyone."

Axel Borg, wine and food science bibliographer at UC-Davis, and member of UC-AFT Davis, Local 2023, won the 2017 Charles P. Nash Prize, which acknowledges achievement in and commitment to promoting shared governance

and promoting and advocating for faculty interests and welfare. Both Borg's professional service and union achievements were considered by the selection committee.

Man Phan, professor of business and marketing at Cosumnes River College, and member of the Los Rios College Federation of Teachers, Local 2279, was appointed by Gov. Jerry Brown to the California Community Colleges Board of Governors. Prior to

Phan's teaching, he was a business development manager and a member of the San Diego City Council. He holds a doctorate in educational leadership and master's in business administration.

Daniel Tsang, librarian emeritus, and member of UC-AFT Irvine, Local 2226, won a Fulbright U.S. Scholar grant to research how protest literature, media, and art



in Hong Kong is being safeguarded and preserved for future generations. Tsang will spend next year in Hong Kong, his birthplace, as the island marks 20 years since its return to China. At UCI, Tsang was the data librarian and bibliographer for political science, economics and Asian American studies.

David Burke, teacher at North Monterey County Middle School and member of the North Monterey County Federation of Teachers, Local 4008, was named Unionist of the Year by the Monterey Bay Central Labor Council. State Senator Bill Monning, left, presented the award.



BOB COBLE

Raoul Teilhet SCHOLARSHIPS



THIS SPRING, the CFT awarded \$3,000 scholarships to 21 high school students through its Raoul Teilhet Scholarship Program. The recipients

are listed below. For continuing college students, the deadline to apply for a CFT scholarship is July 1. »Learn more at cft.org/scholarships.

Irianna Agnew, daughter of Marisa Alviar-Agnew, Los Rios College Federation of Teachers

Rylee Arnott, daughter of Michele Arnott, Los Rios College Federation of Teachers

Cuauhtemoc Collazo-Muñoz, son of Antonia Collazo, Pajaro Valley Federation of Teachers

Hannah Davis, daughter of Hilary Davis, Jefferson Elementary Federation of Teachers

Nathan Fillingim-Selk, son of Jeff and Cherene Fillingim-Selk, Berkeley Federation of Teachers

Amanda Fowler, daughter of Lisa Fowler, Lompoc Federation of Teachers

Valerie Laufer, daughter of Alice Laufer, Lompoc Federation of Teachers

Kristen Lee, daughter of Michael Lee, Los Rios College Federation of Teachers

Christina Li, daughter of Dejun Li, Cerritos College Faculty Federation

Daphne Lun, daughter of Monica Lun, United Educators of San Francisco

Alma Moreno, daughter of Daniel Moreno, Pajaro Valley Federation of Teachers

Eva Polanco Gruszynski, daughter of Victoria Doll-Polanco, United Educators of San Francisco

Kyle Reif, son of Mitch Reif and Leslie Laurence,

United Educators of San Francisco

Anna Repetto, daughter of Deanne Repetto, Los Rios College Federation of Teachers

Devin Romines, son of Terrie Romines, Oxnard Federation of Teachers and School Employees

Rachel Sjostedt, daughter of Ronald Sjostedt, Morgan Hill Federation of Teachers

Arden Tanner, daughter of William D. Tanner, Oxnard Federation of Teachers and School Employees

Elena Torres-Pepito, daughter of Gabriel S. Torres, Los Rios College Federation of Teachers

Benjamin Tucker, son of Tiffany Tucker, Poway Federation of Teachers

Bryan Wintermantel, son of Ann Statler Wintermantel, Salinas Valley Federation of Teachers

Natalie Wright, daughter of Suzanne Wright, Berkeley Federation of Teachers