

**Thinking pink: Women's March motivated and inspired**  
Why the mass protest touched lives

**Accreditation restored at last!**  
Strategic union campaign results in turnaround at accrediting agency

**Organizing on the night shift**  
Custodians push to end short staffing

# CaliforniaTeacher

FEB ■ MAR 2017

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

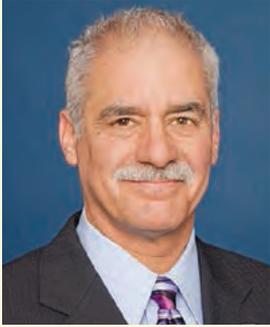
**MAKING OUR CAMPUSES  
SAFE HavENS FOR ALL**



**Unions stand strong**

**ORGANIZE. RESIST.**

Joshua Pechthalt, *CFT President*



Supporting a moratorium doesn't necessarily mean opposition to charter schools. It just means that for a host of reasons stopping the expansion of charters is sensible.

## How can we find common ground with the charter school community?

I recently attended a forum with Secretary Treasurer Jeff Freitas organized by the NAACP to examine charter schools. America's oldest civil rights organization is hosting a series of events around the country to get feedback on a proposed national policy calling for a moratorium on new charter schools.

Supporting a moratorium doesn't necessarily mean opposition to charter schools. It just means that for a host of reasons stopping the expansion of charters is sensible.

Charter schools were initially thought of as unionized schools that could be incubators of innovation. However, many operators see charters as a way to distance themselves from unionization, and their academic performance remains a mixed bag. At the end of the day, schools where certificated and classified employees have collective bargaining rights is what we want, no matter where they work.

And like it or not, charters seem to meet a need. Even though my neighbors don't send their kids to charters for ideological reasons, parents do what they think is best for their kids, whether it's the promise of smaller classes, increased safety, or a more innovative program.

Calling for a moratorium on the expansion of charter schools makes sense. There

should be a thorough examination of the policies and practices of charter schools before more are opened.

For example, how do charter schools respond to efforts at unionization? Most charter schools are not unionized and many seem to resist it. The biggest chain of charter schools in Los Angeles — Alliance — has waged an anti-union smear campaign to discourage their teachers from joining United Teachers Los Angeles. If charter schools are engaging in anti-union behavior, then national charter school organizations need to address this before a proposed moratorium is lifted.

Examination would help determine if there are widespread practices that keep special needs children out of charter schools. Do the governing boards of charters operate in a transparent manner? And do parents, students, and teachers have a real voice in school operation?

A common practice among Los Angeles charter schools, and one of the reasons the NAACP voiced concerns, has to do with the practice of counting so-called disruptive kids prior to enrollment tabulation, and then pushing them out after. If this is a widespread practice, it should end before a moratorium is lifted.

Finding common ground with charter schools is a laud-

able goal. I know charter school operators who are good people, concerned about their students, running schools that encourage creativity and critical thinking. They send many young people to college.

But when the California Charter School Association uses its political muscle to kill a modest piece of legislation like Senate Bill 322 that called for more transparency and accountability, it makes collaboration difficult.

When the charter association spends \$20 million in the recent California elections, and when they and their allies spend millions of dollars to unseat Steve Zimmer, president of the Los Angeles Unified school board, that's a real problem.

At the NAACP forum, Cristina de Jesus, head of the Green Dot charter schools in Los Angeles, said, "Unions are not the problem."

One would hope that she and others open to talking about the practices of charter schools would put pressure on the charter association and its wealthy benefactors to lessen conflict between the charter and non-charter worlds. That could be the beginning of finding common ground that benefits the entire education community.

*Joshua Pechthalt*

**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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**ON THE COVER**

A leading force in securing safe haven for immigrant students, the Berkeley Federation of Teachers helped pass district policy to guide teachers and staff.

PHOTO COURTESY LOCAL 1078



United Teachers Los Angeles: Shielding students from a hostile environment and creating safe havens.

## ON THE FRONTLINES

# Unions create safe

Last fall, Olga Shewfelt took a group of her West Los Angeles College political science students to the border town of Nogales, Arizona. Some of her students are part of the Obama administration's Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals. This was during the end of the presidential campaign and, along with saying he would build a border wall with Mexico and deport undocumented immigrants, Donald Trump talked about ending DACA, which allows people who came to the country as minors to get a work permit.

When Trump won in November, Shewfelt, a member of the **Los Angeles College Faculty Guild**, saw the level of fear among her students ratchet way up, and in response she authored a resolution to create a sanctuary for them on campus. The

local unanimously passed it with backing from faculty, students and community members.

"People are fearful and constantly worrying and it's impacting their studies," said Shewfelt, who is also union chapter

information from federal officials. She said they are asking the board of trustees to pass a sanctuary resolution, which will bring more attention to the issue while showing students that faculty and staff are on their side.

**"Our students deserve better. This is taking the promise of America away from them in a way we believe is morally unconscionable. We want our students to know first and foremost that we will protect them and their families."** — Joanne Waddell, President, Local 1521

president at the West L.A. campus. "It's been wonderful to gather the support of everyone and build another ring of safety around the students."

Local President Joanne Waddell is proud that the union supports shielding student

"Our students deserve better," she said. "This is taking the promise of America away from them in a way we believe is morally unconscionable. We want our students to know first and foremost that we will protect them and their families. This is

## Members shift into high gear to protect immigrant students and communities

a lot of lives we're talking about."

At Los Angeles Unified, the second largest district in the nation, and serving a large population of undocumented students, **United Teachers Los Angeles** is on the cutting edge, says local Treasurer Arlene Inouye. The mayor, the police, and the school board president all say they support safe zones and won't cooperate with Immigration and Customs Enforcement.

UTLA has been working with community organizations and setting up centers to share information about DACA at high schools, Inouye says. The day before the inauguration, the union joined forces with the Alliance to Reclaim our Schools, and 400 schools protested President-elect Trump's policies. People carried signs in the shape of shields, protesting homopho-

Guzman, who became a teacher to help people like her undocumented mother, says to learn critical thinking skills, she has her students read the orders on the White House website once a week.

"We're going to the primary source. To me that's a form of resistance," Guzman said. "Let's put aside the division between conservatives and liberals and ask 'what kind of nation do you want to live in?' I want to live in a nation where every student can get an education."

COURTESY LOCAL 2030



## IT'S NOT JUST URBAN CENTERS

like L.A. and Berkeley that are concerned about safe havens. At Yuba College in the Sacramento Valley, where farm crops include rice, peaches and almonds, the executive board of the union passed a resolution to create a sanctuary campus.

Neelam Canto-Lugo, a speech teacher and representative of the **Yuba College Federation of Teachers** on the Marysville campus, said while white students are in the majority in the district, the student body includes Latinos, Punjabis, and Hmong. Many of her neighbors are concerned about Trump's statements and actions on immigration.

"Some people are worried about losing federal funding," she said. "But we need to take a stand and show we support our students at any cost. What are we without our students?"

The nearby Los Rios district also passed a sanctuary resolution in collaboration with the faculty union, the **Los Rios College Federation of Teachers**. Bill Miller, a chemistry teacher at Sacramento City College and a Building Power

# havens on campus

bia, deportation, and Betsy DeVos, the new Secretary of Education, who has never attended or worked in a public school and uses her billions to fund charters.

**IN THE BAY AREA**, the **Berkeley Federation of Teachers** quickly passed a resolution to show their support for undocumented students, which the school board then adopted as policy. The district's mission statement promises safety, but many of her students don't feel safe, says Rosa Guzman, an English teacher at Berkeley High School.

"How do they analyze a poem when all they want to talk about is what's going to happen to them?" she asked. "The district policy makes them feel a little better, but our president signed seven executive orders in 10 days."

Berkeley High Spanish teacher Susi Lopez says the policy reassures students, and she hopes it will become a national model.

"We have a very supportive, compassionate, well-informed union with active members who understand the gravity of the situation," she said. "We want to be on the forefront of preventing ICE from having any information about students."

Jocelyn Foreman, a family engagement and equity specialist at two elementary schools and member of the **Berkeley Council of Classified Employees**, supports that. A little boy from Yemen reminds her how important that is.

"Whenever a siren went off from the Lawrence Hall of Science, he used to drop down and scramble along the ground," she said. "We need to make school a safe place. And it has to stay that way."

COURTESY LOCAL 61



**United Educators of San Francisco:** All students deserve an education regardless of their immigration status.



**UC-AFT Davis:**  
Lecturers and librarians condemn the actions of the Trump administration and call for higher values.

COURTESY LOCAL 2023

organizer there, says they got funding from the board of trustees for a workshop series to educate people on immigration policies. The first session helped faculty understand how to support students and the next two will have an immigration lawyer on hand to answer questions.

“The union should be as proactive as possible to support faculty, staff and the community,” Miller said. “We’ve gotten people out to events and we’re working to get faculty more involved.”

**PRESIDENT TRUMP’S** executive order to temporarily ban refugees and people from

**“The union should be as proactive as possible to support faculty, staff and the community. We’ve gotten people out to events and we’re working to get faculty more involved.”**

— Bill Miller, Los Rios College Federation of Teachers

seven poor, predominantly Muslim countries spurred thousands of people across the country to protest. Among them were lawyers offering assistance.

Holly Cooper, a lecturer member of

**UC-AFT Davis** and co-director of the campus Immigration Law Clinic, was with her children and couldn’t make it to the airport. But she went into the office with them and some students and alumni. There they collected information from other students and alumni at the airport and used it to write habeas petitions for the people being detained.



Bill Miller

Cooper, who has practiced immigration law for 20 years, had never seen anything

like this.

“People were blindsided and not given a fair hearing or access to a lawyer, and it hit a raw nerve,” she said. “People were behind us. It’s the first time in my legal career I’m

witnessing a legal injustice, and I’m hearing people on TV chanting about it. At one point they were saying, ‘Let the lawyers in!’



Holly Cooper

So it was unexpected — the harshness of the order coupled with people supporting immigrant rights.”

**UC-AFT Santa Cruz** faculty wanted to make their support for immigrant rights clear.

Lecturer Chris Gray wrote a resolution for UC-AFT on Trump’s immigration actions. The purpose was to show solidarity with the students — and to go a little further.

“We wanted to comment on the illegality of the Trump administration in the White House and his racist, discriminatory, small-minded policies,” he said. “We’ve been working for years to build solidarity with the communities under attack.”

Gray too believes in proactive unions that support schools and diverse communities.

“We are in unions not just for a better paycheck. We want a better world.”

— By Emily Wilson, CFT Reporter

# Protecting Our Students

Resources for educators, students, and families impacted by immigration actions

A movement is underway in California and across the nation to protect our most vulnerable students and their families from

President Trump's anti-immigrant executive orders. The CFT has created this online resource for educators, students and families with resources from numerous organizations. Some of the links and downloads you can find there are listed below.

**Sample union resolutions, district board resolutions and policies:** Many school and college districts have passed resolutions asserting their right to keep public education safe for all students. You will find a resolution protecting public schools, model language for declaring a college a safe zone, and a sample letter for higher education campuses.

**Undocumented Students and Families: The Facts** is a two-page summary prepared by the Association of California School Administrators outlining student rights, staff rights, and parental rights.

**American-Arab Anti-Discrimination Committee** has a complete toolkit for students and educators who may be impacted by the Trump administration's executive orders on immigration. Find out who these orders directly affect and what action to take as a result.

**American Association of University Professors** has created a guide for locals to use to educate their members. Informed by faculty experience, it is designed to prepare academics for the possibility of increased attacks on campus.

**Protecting Our Students** is AFT's helpful online resource. You will find the following materials here.

**Immigrant and Refugee Children, A Guide for Educators and School Support Staff:** This excellent booklet includes an educator's FAQ about immigration raids, what do if ICE comes to your door, and things educators can do to protect undocumented children and their families. Available in Spanish and English.

**Know Your Rights:** A series of helpful fact-sheets, in English and Spanish.

**Share your story:** If you, a co-worker, a family member or a member of your community is affected by Trump's executive orders, please share your story with AFT by emailing [online@aft.org](mailto:online@aft.org).

[cft.org/safe-haven](http://cft.org/safe-haven)

**Share My Lesson** website offers dozens of lesson plans for all grade levels on dozens of immigration-related topics as well as resources

from AFT, the ACLU, and the Anti-Defamation League.

**United Autoworkers, Local 2865**, has compiled a list of resources specifically for UC students.

**United We Dream** has created Deportation Defense Cards in Arabic, Chinese, Korean, Spanish and English that can be downloaded to your phone. You can also download hotline numbers to report ICE activity in your city.

**American Civil Liberties Union** offers a comprehensive and easy-to-use question-and-answer section on numerous topics such as from ICE raids, demonstrations and protests, and anti-Muslim discrimination. Some videos in Spanish.



COURTESY LOCAL 2023

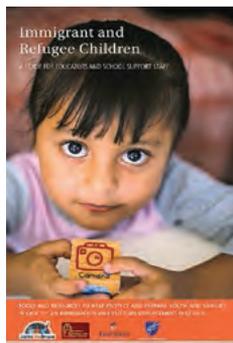
## STATE LEGISLATION AND REACTION

**The California Values Act: Senate Bill 54**, sponsored by Senate Pro Tem Kevin De León will provide essential safeguards to ensure that police, schools, hospitals and courts remain accessible to Californians from all walks of life and that California's limited resources are directed to matters of greatest concern to state and local governments.

**California Religious Freedom Act: Senate Bill 31**, authored by Ricardo Lara, would prevent local and state government agencies from collecting data, sharing data, or using resources to participate in any program that would create a list or registry of people based on their religion, ethnicity, or national origin — a direct response to President Trump's call for a Muslim registry.

**Statement from the California Superintendent of Public Schools Tom Torlakson:**

**"Our schools are not and will not become an arm of the U.S. Customs and Immigration Enforcement. Instead, they will remain safe places for learning and teaching for all students, regardless of immigration status."**



**Join the movement: #organizeresist**



# Six "Aha! moments" from the

**M**y flight out of SFO was delayed and I nearly missed my connecting flight. But this time it wasn't just me running from one end of an airport to the other. It was a posse of determined women — many in pink hats with ears — a teenager, a college student, a few of us in that indeterminate age between 40 and 70, including two grandmothers. I ran ahead to make sure they'd hold the flight with one of the grandmothers right behind me. When we got to D.C., the city was teeming with marchers. You didn't need to see a pink hat with ears to know who we were.

I have a long protest history. I started marching when I was 12, walking picket lines in front of car dealerships in San Francisco. We were marching for civil rights and for jobs. We sang freedom songs like *"This Little Light of Mine"* and *"We Shall Not Be Moved."* I watched my sister get arrested and carried into a paddy wagon. When I was 16, I started a High School Students Against the War group. Later, I helped keep Planned Parenthood open when Operation Rescue tried to keep women from getting in the door, and I came to Washington D.C. in 1989 to march for reproductive rights. But this time was different. I'll tell you why.

## 1 Echoes of the '70s women's movement — with a twist

I was in college in the '70s. Women were learning to be assertive, to talk back, and to be independent. We took assertiveness training workshops, signed up for karate classes, and learned to change our own tires. We pointed out misogyny and patriarchy wherever we saw it. We were angry a lot. At the Women's March, I saw women of all ages expressing an assertiveness that came naturally, with an authority they owned and didn't have to prove. I saw outrage combined with calm determination, fury combined with absolute confidence. I didn't see the strident attitudes of the '70s, when women were trying to be tough. I saw women who are tough.

By Katharine Harer

## 2 Sisterhood is powerful kindness

It was very crowded at the march. We were slammed together, listening to speakers for five hours before the marching even started. Early on I got a taste of claustrophobia and moved to a small rise covered with mud and slippery plants. A constant flow of people circulated around me, everyone trying to find their little space. Throughout all this standing and shifting, we talked to one another kindly. We lent a hand or an arm when it was needed, when someone was unsteady on their feet and would start to slip or fall. Despite the biting cold weather and uncomfortable conditions, I didn't hear a snitty comment or see an ungracious act. Kindness ruled the day.

## 3 First-timers and old hands

The march was a pilgrimage, thousands of us streaming into the capital from different parts of the country. I met a woman doctor from Florida who practices internal medicine in a conservative town and couldn't tell her patients why she was taking off work. "I just had to come," she told me. She brought her niece, an elementary school teacher, who'd never protested before. I talked to a trio from Oakland who decided to go at the last minute: a young woman just starting college, new to marching; her grandmother, a veteran protester; and a family friend who leaned across the aisle on the plane and told me, "I had to come. I just had to come."

## 4 Recognition of our mutual history

Even though many were new to marching and protesting, we all knew what women had fought for, and we were there to defend it. Women fought to be treated with respect, not as objects of beauty or sexual plunder. Younger women, who had benefited from access to reproductive choice, sex education, and Planned Parenthood, knew older women had struggled for them. When Gloria Steinem spoke, many of us had tears in our eyes. As a foremother, she represented the long hard battle for women's rights. Women like me, who



# Women's March on Washington

came up in the 60s, were shoulder to shoulder with women from different eras, and one thing was clear: It was absurd, impossible to imagine going back.

## 5 Respect for women's institutions

I witnessed deep, unshakable respect for the organizations that have defended, and continue to defend, the rights of women. The ovations for Cecile Richards, the president of Planned Parenthood, and for Ilyse Hogue, president of NARAL Pro Choice America, were as loud and prolonged as the applause for celebrities Ashley Judd, Scarlet Johansson, and Alicia Keys. When Richards and Hogue spoke, the younger women in the crowd made an immediate connection; they knew these national organizations and their dedication to helping women take control of their own bodies. And for those of us old enough to have mothers and grandmothers who didn't have strong women's organizations to protect them, we'd heard about how bad it used to be. Cecile Richards proclaimed to the crowd: "Our doors stay open!" We cheered and clapped, and some of us shed a few more tears.



COURTESY KATHARINE HARER  
Katharine Harer, right, and a friend at the Women's March.

## 6 Women's rights are human rights

Something I never bothered to think about deeply — it just felt true. At the Women's March, it was repeated by nearly every speaker and reflected in every issue that was addressed. Michael Moore spoke about defending public education. Other speakers talked eloquently about the rights of immigrants and refugees, respect for the LGBTQ community, the need to stand up against racism and police killings.

One of the most moving parts of the day was when singer Janelle Monae brought to the stage the mothers of African American men who had died at the hands of the police, as well as Sandra Bland's mother. She introduced each one and had them say the name of their child. Then she led a call and response with all 600,000 of us repeating: "Say his name," "Say her name." It was a powerful invocation.

Katharine Harer is an English teacher, Co-Vice President of the San Mateo Community College Federation of Teachers, AFT Local 1493, and Lead Organizer for her local as part of the CFT Strategic Campaign Initiative.

**POSTSCRIPT** Shortly after I returned home, I planned to make a short presentation to our Board of Trustees. Our local has been organizing a member-driven contract campaign since the district prematurely declared impasse. Faculty have been wearing our AFT 1493 t-shirts on *No Take Back Tuesdays* for nearly three months, and the union has shown up at every trustee meeting. I wanted to do something we hadn't done yet; I wanted to tell my story and link it to our top issue — the need to set reasonable limits to our non-teaching workload.

I decided to take a page from Scarlet Johansson, who announced at the march that she was going to be "personal." She told a story about finding Planned Parenthood in New York, on her own, when she was just 15. The story I decided to tell our board was about a stress-related illness

I developed while working as a full-time instructor. I suspected at the time that it was triggered by my heavy non-teaching workload, and it was one of the reasons I retired three years ago.

I went on to connect my story to faculty activism and to all the members who've been wearing their AFT shirts on Tuesdays, signing petitions, and showing up at board meetings. I said I wasn't unique, that others were getting sick, disillusioned and burned out. Talking on such a personal level in that very formal boardroom was a little scary for me. But being at the Women's March, surrounded by the power of kindness and spurred on by the confidence and strength of so many women, showed me another way to address a union issue — as a human issue.

TOP: MICHAEL CAMPBELL



BOB RIHA JR

### CFT Racial Equity Task Force

**FRONT ROW, LEFT TO RIGHT:** Susan Solomon *United Educators of San Francisco*, Gemma Abels *Morgan Hill Federation of Teachers*, John Perez *United Teachers Los Angeles-Retired*

**SECOND ROW:** Carl Williams *Lawndale Federation of Classified Employees*, Kofi Opong-Mensah *United Professors of Marin*, Juan Ramirez *UTLA*, Cecily Myart-Cruz *UTLA*

**THIRD ROW:** Michael Tompkins *Los Angeles College Faculty Guild*, Veronika Huntsberry *Berkeley Council of Classified Employees*, Dennis Cox *ABC Federation of Teachers-Retired*, Fernando Oleas *L.A. Faculty Guild*, Jeffery M. Freitas *CFT Secretary Treasurer*, Frank Lara *UESF*, Bill Pritchett *Facilitator*, Martha Figueroa, *CFT Field Representative*

**NOT PICTURED:** Ingrid Gunnell *UTLA*, Elaine Merriweather *UESF*, Walter Mitchell *Berkeley Classified*, Dinesa Thomas-Whitman *L.A. Faculty Guild*, Angelo Williams *Los Rios College Federation of Teachers*

## Racial Equity Task Force delivers draft report to CFT Convention

The 18 members of the CFT Racial Equity Task Force have forged a solid draft plan after three weekend meetings of facilitated discussion and analysis.

Representatives from the task force presented the 20-page draft report and its recommendations to the Executive Council on January 28. Council members voted unanimously to put forward a resolution to adopt the report at the upcoming CFT Convention.

“Purposeful.” “Timely.” “Concrete and specific: Our local could take these recommendations and implement them right now.” “Challenges us.” These are some highlights of the executive council members’ reaction to the draft plan.

The task force report is the result of delegates adopting Resolution 16 titled “Close the opportunity gap for Black males,” at last year’s Convention. It named 2016 as the year for racial equity and authorized the creation of a CFT task force on racial justice to further develop and implement the proposals contained in a broad framework outlined in a report from the AFT Racial Justice Task Force in 2015.

Now, the CFT report, *Reclaiming the Promise of Racial Equity for Black Men and Boys in California*, challenges the union to put its commitments to racial justice into action in new and meaningful ways. The report contains a framework for a four-year plan replete with specific racial equity

recommendations for the CFT and local unions to consider. The plan’s goals and objectives are aimed at helping the union achieve four major priorities identified by the task force. (See left)

Task force members urged the CFT to “reality-check” the recommendations by soliciting feedback from Black men in the constituencies the recommendations are aimed at serving. The CFT will hold a focus group in early March; participant feedback will be analyzed and incorporated into the final report. Focus group participants will include Black men from schools and colleges, workplaces, and the community; CFT members as well as nonmembers.

If Convention delegates vote to adopt the final report in April, CFT will make it available to all members online.

### Four priorities identified by task force

1. Develop and implement programs designed to help identify, recruit, develop and retain Black male educators and staff.
2. Provide professional development and cultural competency, racial equity, and unconscious bias training that helps all teachers and staff understand their own biases.
3. Establish partnerships with trade unions and industry groups to develop apprenticeship programs that provide job training and placement in trade careers that open the door to economic opportunity and independence for young Black men by empowering them to choose their own paths.
4. Change K-12 school discipline practices to include restorative justice practices and fairer processes.



## Union moves priorities in new session CFT seeks paid maternity leave, technology audit, labor education

**EACH YEAR OUR MEMBERS RECOMMEND** legislation that will address important issues to educators and the students we serve. Based upon these recommendations and Executive Council approval, the CFT is sponsoring four new bills, an audit and two budget proposals aimed at improving our working conditions, and strengthening the labor movement and public education.

### SPONSORED LEGISLATION

#### Prohibit new teachers from paying for state-mandated support program

The Commission on Teacher Credentialing estimates that at least 12 percent of beginning teachers pay up to \$3,500 to participate in the state-mandated Beginning Teacher Support and Assessment Program.

**AB 410** (*Cervantes, D-Corona*) would prohibit districts from charging teachers for the cost of BTSAs, thereby helping to retain new teachers and removing a disincentive for people to enter the profession.

#### Rein in for-profit management of charter schools

Current law allows for-profit charter management companies to establish non-profit entities to open charter schools and then require those schools to contract with the company for services. This allows for-profit corporations to siphon millions of state dollars from public education for profit. **AB 406** (*McCarthy, D-Sacramento*) would prohibit this practice.

#### Provide paid leave for pregnancy and maternity

Many education employees not covered by State Disability Insurance do not receive paid leave through that program. This forces female employees to deplete their sick or vacation leave for pregnancy and childbirth, “schedule” pregnancies around the academic calendar or try to get by without pay, and frequently return to work before fully recuperated.

**AB 568** (*Gonzalez Fletcher, D-San Diego*) would end this discrimination by requiring K-14 districts to provide female certificated and classified employees with paid leave when absent from work due to pregnancy, miscarriage, childbirth, and recovery.

#### Include more professionals on school safety plan committees

Schools are required to develop an annual safety plan, but they are often written by an administrator and focus on reaction to campus violence, as opposed to proactive strategies that can prevent violence and disruptive behavior. **AB 1029** (*Weber, D-San Diego*) would require more professionals to serve on school safety planning committees, including a community schools coordinator, restorative justice practitioner or mental health professional, or both.



STEVE YEATER

Members of the Pajaro Valley Federation of Teachers meet with a legislative aide in the state Capitol on February 2 as part of the CFT Leadership Conference.

### BUDGET PROPOSALS & AUDIT REQUEST

#### Increase funds to pay part-time faculty for office hours

The appropriation to fund office hours for part-time faculty remains at pre-recession levels and, as a result, many community colleges do not fund them. The CFT wants more funding for paid office hours to ensure students have the opportunity to meet one-on-one with their instructors and receive the assistance and support critical to academic success.

#### Launch pilot project to teach labor in the schools

Few students in California understand the importance of labor unions and the role that immigrants have played in their development and evolution. This proposal seeks one-time funding to be used over three years to release one teacher in each of six school districts chosen as pilots. The teacher would develop curriculum and provide professional development so more educators can deepen their understanding of labor history.

#### Request audit of classroom technology

Access to and implementation of classroom technology varies widely across the state, with teachers and classified employees often not receiving adequate professional development about how to integrate technology effectively. The CFT is requesting the Joint Legislative Audit Committee approve an audit to analyze implementation and use of technology in schools.

— By Ron Rapp, CFT Legislative Director



A delegation of members from the East Bay talk about CFT priorities with Assemblyman Tony Thurmond and his aide.

STEVE YEATER

## STATE EDUCATION BUDGET

# Highlights and lowlights in governor's initial proposal

**ON JANUARY 10**, Gov. Brown released his proposed budget for the 2017-18 fiscal year amidst uncertainty about how federal actions may impact California. Federal funds currently account for more than one-third of the state budget, and according to the California Budget & Policy Center, 7.9 percent of federal dollars currently go to K-12 education and 5.2 percent to higher education.

More information will be available in coming months and in the governor's updated proposals in his May Revision.

### HIGHLIGHTS

■ **Proposition 98 funding is up \$2.1 billion** from 2016-17 for a total of \$73.5 billion. Voters passed Proposition 98 in 1988 to establish a minimum guarantee for funding schools and community colleges and it largely governs K-14 budgeting.

■ **Passage of Proposition 55 in November** allows the state to continue the higher income tax rates on the wealthiest Californians contained in Proposition 30, which CFT and other organizations won in 2012. Prop 55 was a top CFT priority and designates those funds for education and healthcare, preventing billions in budget cuts once Prop 30 expires.

■ **For K-12 schools, the Local Control Funding Formula is funded at 96 percent** of the target, with full implementation still expected in 2020-21. Under this school funding mechanism enacted in 2013-14, districts receive base funding plus supplemental and concentration grant funds based on their percentage of English language learners, low-income families, and foster youth.

■ The governor proposes a **long-awaited stakeholder review of the special education funding system** this spring. The CFT Special Education Committee will be involved.

■ \$10.1 million is available to school districts as **grants to establish community schools and restorative justice programs**. This money

comes from Proposition 47, passed in 2014 to reduce penalties for certain non-serious and non-violent crimes. Some of the savings are to be invested in schools to reduce truancy and decrease the dropout rate.

■ **For the community colleges**, the governor proposes a 1.48 percent fully funded cost-of-living adjustment to Apportionments. This will also be applied to the following programs: Apprenticeship, EOPS, DSPS, CalWORKs and Child Care Tax Bailout. In addition, he proposed increasing base operating dollars to cover general expenses by \$23.6 million.

■ **Growth funding increases by 1.34 percent**, representing the addition of approximately 11,500 full-time-equivalent students throughout the community college system.

### LOWLIGHTS

■ **State revenues are lower than projected** for 2016-17 so far. This means growth in Proposition 98 funding will be lower than recent years.

■ **No COLA for adult education.**

■ **For early childhood**, the governor wants to extend the current three-year plan to increase state preschool slots, and increase provider reimbursement rates over four years. This would delay reaching the goals established in the plan passed last year.

■ **A one-time deferral** of \$859 million in LCFF funds to K-12 districts from June to July 2017. While this is only a one-week deferral, it raises concern about this practice being used again on a larger scale in future years.

■ **No increase in funds for part-time faculty parity issues** such as paid office hours.

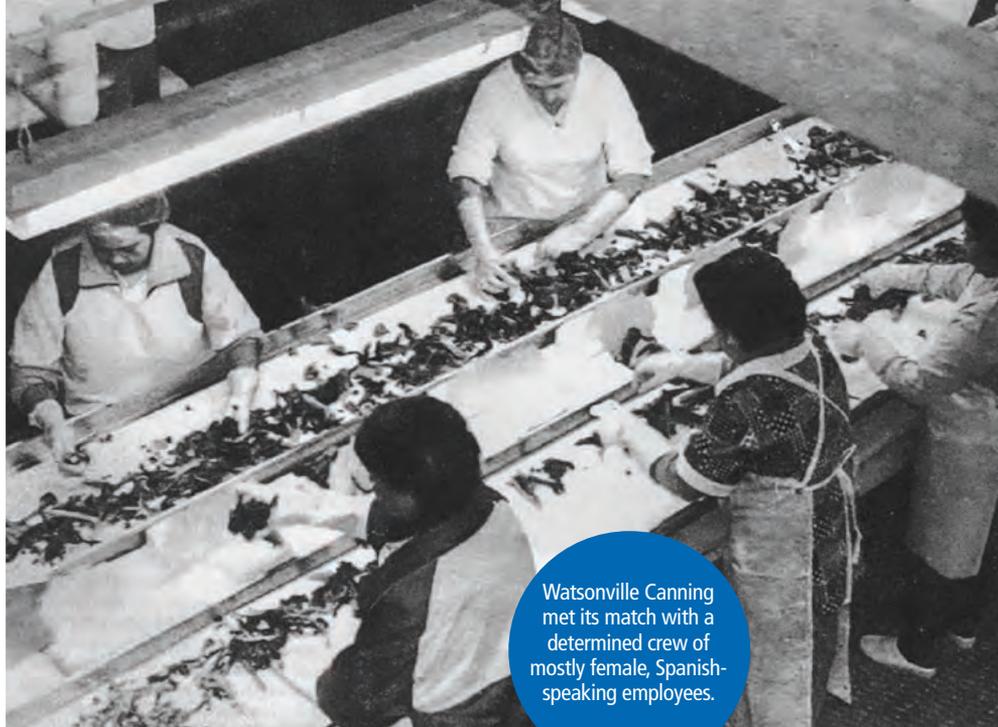
— By Emily Gordon, CFT Research Director

> Find budget updates and analyses at [cft.org/take-legislative-action](http://cft.org/take-legislative-action).

**W**atsonville, California, a produce powerhouse — July 1985: Mort Console, owner of Watsonville Canning, the major company in town, suddenly cuts wages by 40 percent and reduces health benefits. The factory workers of Teamsters Local 912 immediately vote to go out on strike, just as Console’s anti-union law firm has advised him they would: “Make outrageous demands; the workers will strike. Replace them with scabs. After 12 months, request a union decertification vote, which will then include the strike-breakers too.”

Local 912’s leaders rely on cordial relations with Console. The union’s English-speaking president has very little contact with his mostly female, Spanish-speaking rank and file, nearly half of whom are single mothers.

DAVID CONWAY, COURTESY OF THE LABOR ARCHIVES & RESEARCH CENTER, SFSU



Watsonville Canning met its match with a determined crew of mostly female, Spanish-speaking employees.

## Victory in Watsonville: Cannery workers show how solidarity works

KURT ELLISON, COURTESY OF THE LABOR ARCHIVES & RESEARCH CENTER, SFSU



Uh-oh, you might say, another tale of a noble defeat.

You would be wrong.

When the strike ended a year and a half later, not one striker had crossed the picket line, the local had chosen a new president and the union was transformed. The workers had won against a determined employ-

er who had a lot of support.

The courts — traditional allies of growers and packing companies — weighed in right away: Mass picketing was effectively prohibited. Hundreds of picketers were arrested by the police, who openly sided with the strikebreakers. Strikers were arrested for, among other things, writing down the license numbers of scab vehicles. One

### KNOW OUR HISTORY



grower hired 50 strikebreakers to help keep the plant open, but they found it difficult to even reach their workplace. They were harassed and threatened on and off the job.

The strikers were determined. “Just because you are Catholic,” striker Gloria Betancourt remarked, “doesn’t mean you can’t throw rocks at scabs.”

Margarita Paramo found herself physically blocking a police car to save another picketer from a police beating. “I don’t know how I did it,” she said later. “The strike did that to people.”

The strikers hunkered down. They got other jobs, moved in together, fed and clothed each other, and cared for one

another’s children. Community organizations, student unions, and churches joined the effort. Rank-and-file union members led the effort to make the local more democratic and responsive.

And when, after a year, the union certification vote came up, the strikers responded. Many were now working in other places, some as far away Mexico, but they showed up and voted overwhelmingly in favor of the union.

Console had overplayed his hand. One fired worker revealed that 20 tons of vegetables unfit for human consumption had been knowingly shipped to distributors. Console and his company were deeply in debt and the union was able to convince his bank to take over the company and find a new owner. After a brief struggle regarding health benefits, a new contract was signed.

When their welfare was threatened, the Watsonville workers had responded as a community. They hung together and challenged Console and his union-busters.

And they won.

— By Bill Morgan, a member of the CFT Labor in the Schools Committee who taught elementary students in San Francisco for 34 years.

### Learn more

» Find an excellent blow-by-blow account of the Watsonville strike in *Song of the Stubborn One Thousand* by Peter Shapiro, published by Haymarket Books last year.

## Local unions confront the post-election environment

### Four leaders talk about union priorities in their districts

Since Donald Trump was elected president, it has become clear: It's a new day for educators, their unions, students and communities. *California Teacher* asked the presidents of four local unions from different regions of the state to voice their concerns.

communities. It's a massive organizing opportunity." In his largely conservative region of Orange County, Dowdy explains, "Our communities overwhelmingly send their children to public schools and support public education. We can focus on what's

district will shift those costs to employees.

Newport-Mesa is working on building a more collaborative relationship with administration. Dowdy believes this will increase member engagement and help convert fair share payers to full members.



**BRITT DOWDY**  
Orange County

STEVE YEALER

"It's a massive organizing opportunity."



**CATHY CAMPBELL**  
Berkeley

SHARON BEALS

"We will fight for our public schools, Constitution and democracy."

**Britt Dowdy** of the Newport-Mesa Federation of Teachers says, "The attacks on public education, unions, and the many other challenges we will face require us to get our boots on the ground, increase membership, and reach out to our com-

going on inside our district to mobilize members and communities."

Dowdy is concerned that repeal of the Affordable Health Care Act will drive up already escalating costs because fewer people will be in the insurance market, and that the

**Cathy Campbell**, Berkeley Federation of Teachers, says there is a great deal of fear about changing immigration policies in Berkeley, one of many Bay Area sanctuary cities. Members have been participating in immigrant support actions

## News you can use in teacher credentialing

**RICO TAMAYO** COUNCIL PRESIDENT

**Representatives from the EC/TK-12 Council** monitor statewide policymaking bodies and advocate on our behalf. Here's are some considerations on the table at the Commission on Teacher Credentialing:

- Reducing the number of Child Development

Permits from six to four to better align with job functions.

- Encouraging teachers with a Single Subject Credential to also qualify for a Career-Technical Education Credential. And vice versa, for career-tech teachers to add a Single Subject Credential.
- Allowing greater flexibility for those seeking a Multiple Subject Credential to demonstrate

subject matter competency.

- Reviewing criteria to make sure out-of-state institutions and for-profit schools have the capacity to offer high-quality programs, because some seek to benefit from the teacher shortage by establishing new programs in our state.



and working to reassure students and their families that school is a safe place. (See page 4) “We will defend their rights under the law to have access to education,” says Campbell. The local will continue working to make Muslim and LGBTQ students feel welcome, too.

With support from a school board member, the union helped pass district policy to clearly direct staff how to respond should immigration agents appear on

Employees is focused on increasing membership and member commitment, with special outreach to classified employees in this northern Central Valley rural high school district.

The union plans to expand member communications by email and is starting a Facebook page. Carter says, “I will be spending more time at the school sites talking face-to-face with our teachers and staff.”

Because union-district relations have

been strained, Carter worries that negotiations may be drawn out. It’s been difficult to agree even on small language changes. Plus, the local is in mediation over the layoff of a classified position and district attempts to shift those duties to counselors.

Though monetary issues are on hold for the local, “We can strengthen contract language and work on important side projects like the PBIS,” he says of the Positive Behavior Intervention and Support program that helps students achieve social,



**CLARK CARTER**  
Central Valley

STEVE YEATER



**RAY GAER**  
Los Angeles County

SHARON BEALS

“I will be spending more time at the school sites.”

“...a bump in the road that we have to weather.”

campus. Also, safety officers and other classified staff on the front lines — represented by the AFT classified local — are trained in response techniques.

Though Campbell worries about privatization threats, she sees strong community support for public education. The local continues its successful outreach to city businesses, with many posting BFT’s signature placards celebrating teachers. “We will fight for our public schools, Constitution and democracy,” says Campbell. “They are the bedrock, where students learn American values and to be successful citizens.”

**Clark Carter** with the Galt Federation of Certificated and Classified

been strained, Carter worries that negotiations may be drawn out. It’s been difficult to agree even on small language changes. Plus, the local is in mediation over the layoff of a classified position and district attempts to shift those duties to counselors.

To expand the union’s reach, the local is identifying members who are not in union leadership positions to meet with board members so that more educator issues can be heard. “Our members are simply the best in describing what the work really entails,” Carter concludes.

**Ray Gaer** at the ABC Federation of Teachers in southeastern Los Angeles County, calls these times “a bump in the road that we have to weather,” akin to sur-

emotional, and academic success.

The local benefits from a strong school site rep structure, and a collaborative relationship with administration. Leaders meet regularly with principals to review best practices, school climate, and leadership teams.

The ABC Federation also has the strong community ties needed to face increased competition from charter schools. The union and the board recently addressed the community together for the first time on how to spend district funding and the benefits of art and music. To allay community fears about immigration issues, the union is working with the district to set policies that will protect undocumented students at school. — By Mindy Pines, CFT Reporter

# Night shift custodians work together, fight short staffing

## Midnight organizing at El Camino College pays off

**D**uring the day, Manhattan Beach Boulevard overflows with traffic, but the only thing whipping down the street at 10 p.m. is a cold night wind. To the north, the lights of approaching jets trace the landing path to LAX in the night sky.

Darlene Esquivel pulls into a staff parking lot alongside the facilities management building at El Camino College. Esquivel is one of about 30 custodians on the graveyard shift who put the Torrance campus back in shape nightly while more than 22,000 students sleep.



PAUL TURANG

“We do everything, from mopping and waxing to dusting,” she said. “And whatever the day shift missed, we do that, too.”

The custodians are members of AFT Local 6142. About 380 staff belong to the El Camino Classified Employees. Local President Luukia Smith said the CFT’s Building Power campaign was a shot in the

arm for midnight activism.

“Night shift is out there by themselves. There was no union rep, and they felt alone,” Smith said. “This campaign was our opportunity to make changes.”

Five new organizing committee members — Onnis Flores, Barry Cunnigan, Earl Eiland, Lenya Bernal and Esquivel — dedicated two nights to speak one-on-one with all the night shift custodians.

“Night shift is out there by themselves. There was no union rep, and they felt alone. This campaign was our opportunity to make changes.” — Luukia Smith, President, El Camino Classified Employees

Union organizers held a training session at which the night crew identified short staffing as the most pressing issue and drafted a petition calling on the district to collaborate on workload.

“Short staffing has been an ongoing problem for years,” Flores said. “We feel the pressure to do more and more, to the point that we feel bullied.”

Custodians presented the petition to the district in December. Except for two probationary employees, all had signed it. In January, El Camino supervisors, the facilities director, and human resources director set a precedent and met with the full night crew.

“The district accepts that they’re short-staffed, but claims they can’t hire right now,” Smith said.

Short staffing caused by budget cuts

during the past decade has worsened when districts build new facilities but fail to increase maintenance budgets. El Camino, for example, has construction plans through 2025.

Custodians are assigned “runs,” a regular set of rooms or floors in a building or facility, similar to workloads assigned to hotel staff. A typical floor might include from 10 to 17 classrooms and four to six

bathrooms. Esquivel’s run, for example, includes a dean’s office, lounges, photo labs, and other spots.

There are nearly 50 runs on campus and only 30 custodians to do them. When vacations and sick coworkers are taken into account, staff are almost always expected to work two or more runs per shift. They can be written up for insubordination if they don’t do their regular run and any extra assignments.

“Management claims they are demanding more from custodians because they have higher expectations for cleanliness in the new buildings,” Smith said.

The district may have higher expectations, but Smith said they aren’t based on having deployed more custodians or more advanced equipment. According

LUCY LANGWORTHY

## Organize, build power, defend public education

**PAULA PHILLIPS** COUNCIL PRESIDENT

**Hiding behind his false promise** to “Make America Great Again,” President Trump brings the threat of privatizing public education and denigrates the values that unite our country. As unionists, we have two essential jobs.

Our job inside the union is to organize and

educate members and work to improve our professional lives. In the months ahead, our priorities must be to educate our colleagues about the importance of unions, strengthen our power at bargaining tables across the state, and shape public policy. We must share and apply the best practices of organizing classified employees to create a shield against anti-labor forces.

Our job outside the union is to stay connected with the larger world and unite with those who share our values in order to defend unions and public education. And we must harness our diversity — because we are all in this fight together.





There are nearly 50 "runs" on campus and only 30 night shift custodians to do them at El Camino College.

to the levels of cleanliness developed by the Association of Physical Plant Administrators, El Camino can expect an environment that ranks as "moderate dinginess," the fourth of five levels. (*See The five levels of clean*)

The district argues that the custodians' runs don't need to be recalculated because new buildings replaced old ones without adding square footage. Which might be true if it wasn't for the major new stadium on campus.

"Game days mean long nights for custodians," Cunnigan said.

Short staffing isn't the only problem on night shift. Encampments are common in the adjacent public park, leading to security concerns. When homeless come on campus, college police are supposed to handle encounters with students, faculty and staff. Protocols aren't followed as closely, however, at 3:30 in the morning.

## The five levels of clean

**A national study of college students** found a correlation between the cleanliness of a school's facilities and academic achievement. Cleanliness and Learning in Higher Education ranks clean environments fourth after noise, air temperature, and lighting.

Conducted by the Association of Physical Plant Administrators, the study was based on the group's five levels of clean identified in its Custodial Staffing Guidelines for Educational Facilities. The rating system takes into account square footage to be cleaned, number of custodians, and efficiency of the equipment they will use. Using that formula, El Camino can expect the fourth level of cleanliness, Moderate Dinginess. Here is the entire yardstick:

**Level 1** – Orderly Spotlessness

**Level 2** – Ordinary Tidiness

**Level 3** – Casual Inattention

**Level 4** – Moderate Dinginess

**Level 5** – Unkempt Neglect

» Learn how each level is defined in detail at [goo.gl/SVSeuy](http://goo.gl/SVSeuy).

Esquivel said the district expects custodians to clean buildings even when timers have turned off the lights for the night.

"We go into restrooms and don't know

if we're in there alone," she said. "It's dangerous. I have three kids and I want to go home after work."

— By Steve Weingarten, CFT Reporter

## Fair accreditation: The long arc of our successful campaign How a rogue agency damaged colleges in Compton and San Francisco

The Accrediting Commission of Community and Junior Colleges, a private 19-member panel that oversees community colleges in California and Hawaii, has been much in the news over its threat to pull City College of San Francisco's accreditation — a battle the union and college recently won with the January 13 news that its accreditation is fully restored for the next seven years.

But the fight started in 2005 when the ACCJC pulled the accreditation of Compton College. Only this February was the governing power of the Compton Board of Trustees finally returned.

The commission's treatment of City College has been particularly shocking, resulting in the school losing almost a third of its enrollment. Critics have called the commission punitive, harsh, and unregulated, and the CFT has led the fight for a new accreditor.

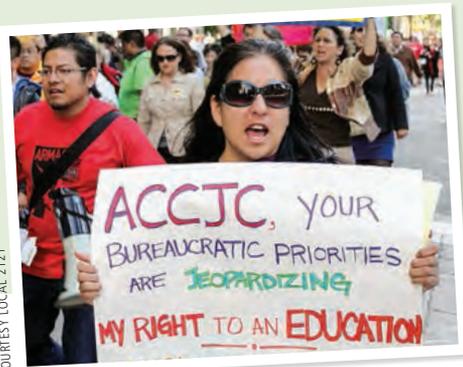
What follows is a summary of the events and the CFT's winning fightback campaign.

**July 2005:** ACCJC President Barbara Beno tells Compton College of the decision to terminate its accreditation. After an appeal, the college loses accreditation in August 2006. Compton is able to keep its doors open as a satellite campus of the neighboring El Camino College.

**During the following years:** CFT leaders call to national attention that the commission sanctioned colleges at a rate star-

tlingly higher than that of other accreditation agencies, with nearly 90 percent of the sanctions in the country from 2003 to 2008, and more than half of the state's community colleges being put under sanction since Beno became president of the commission.

**June 2012:** The ACCJC places City College of San Francisco on "show cause" — meaning it has to show why it should remain accredited. Going from no sanction to the highest level except closure was unprecedented — as was the amount of



time City College was given to deal with addressing the issues raised — about eight months rather than the usual two years.

**In the following months:** The CFT launches a campaign to fight back against this arbitrary, unwarranted decision. The union challenged the commission in a process known as "third party comment," and with the faculty union at City College,

AFT Local 2121, jointly filed a 280-page complaint with both the commission and the U.S. Department of Education. CFT also filed a lawsuit, *The People vs. ACCJC*, (along with a lawsuit filed by San Francisco City Attorney Dennis Herrera) to get an injunction to keep City College of San Francisco open.

**July 2013:** ACCJC votes to terminate City College's accreditation effective July 2014; the college and the state Board of Governors authorize a special trustee to manage the district.

**January 2014:** A San Francisco Superior Court judge grants an injunction to keep City College open.

**June 2014:** The union's campaign led the California State Auditor to examine the ACCJC. Sen. Jim Nielsen (R-Tehama) who requested the audit, called commission President Beno the most "arrogant, condescending and dismissive individual" he had ever dealt with.

**July 2014:** The union secured stabilization funds in the state budget for City College to counter declining enrollment caused by the ACCJC sanctions.

**August 2014:** In response to the "third party comment," the Department of Education stated that ACCJC was deficient and had violated state law and federal regulations.

**September 2014:** The governor signs CFT-sponsored bills requiring the

## Reconnecting with what "union" means

**JIM MAHLER** COUNCIL PRESIDENT

A union is "an organized association of workers formed to protect and further their rights and interests." Digging deeper, a union is a "unification" that seeks to merge people through shared interests.

Historically, unions are relatively new. They began in the 19th century but did not gain

legal recognition and the power of collective bargaining until the New Deal in the 1930s. For the public sector in California, basic union rights arrived in the 1970s.

Many things we take for granted, such as salary schedules that improve our pay over time, health benefits, and pensions are not just historically new, but fragile and subject to political attack.

And now the new administration in Washington, D.C., is planning to take these hard-fought gains away. I would be lying if I told you this is going to be easy, but I believe we can stand together, weather the storm, and come out stronger — if we commit to staying unified. That, after all, is the meaning of union.



COURTESY, LOCAL 3486



Compton College meets Barbara Beno

JANE HUNDERTMARK



Congresswomen led public forums

MICHAEL CAMPBELL



On Capitol Hill to garner support

JANE HUNDERTMARK



The ACCJC on trial

ACCJC to submit biennial reports to the Legislature (AB 1942) and the state Board of Governors to set benchmarks for returning an elected board of trustees if a special trustee is appointed (AB 2087).

**October 2014:** The five-day trial takes place in *The People vs. ACCJC*, which charges that the commission “engaged in unfair and unlawful business practices in sanctioning City College,” and that “these reckless actions have already caused harm to students, faculty, and other employees of City College, and will cause much greater harm both to them and to San Francisco if the college closes.”

**January 2015:** The judge’s ruling from *The People vs. ACCJC* affirms that ACCJC broke the law in denying the college due process rights during accreditation review and orders the ACCJC to revisit its decision. A California Court of Appeals confirmed the ruling in June.

**August 2015:** The state Chancellor’s Task Force on Accreditation released a

JANE HUNDERTMARK



report criticizing the way the ACCJC does business, capped with a recommendation that California find a new accreditor. The Board of Governors directs the report to the U.S. Department of Education.

**December 2015:** Members travel to Washington, D.C., to speak before the National Advisory Committee on Institutional Quality and Integrity, or NACIQI, which oversees regional accreditors, about the need to remove the ACCJC and replace it with a fair and capable agency.

**December 2016:** Commission President Beno placed on administrative leave ahead of her expected retirement in June 2017.

**January 2017:** The ACCJC grants City

College full accreditation for seven years.

**February 2017:** The state chancellor announced that the elected board of trustees of Compton College would be allowed to govern the district again, and proposed that accreditation be fully restored by 2020. Members and leaders travel to Washington, DC again to speak before NACIQI.

**Going forward:** The CFT continues a federal lawsuit against ACCJC, the state chancellor and Board of Governors, and its fight for a new accreditor. The U.S. Department of Education has recommended that the ACCJC retain its authority over community colleges for another 18 months despite complaints that the agency failed to meet standards, treated City College of San Francisco unfairly. NACIQI will vote on this recommendation and then it goes to the new Secretary of Education, Betsy DeVos.

— By Emily Wilson, CFT Reporter

## Members unite to fight Trump's immigration orders Council builds solidarity by engaging with members on issues that unite

**B**efore the election our focus was on leadership development,” says Mia McIver, vice president for organizing for the University Council-AFT, “and the election brought us a sense of new urgency.” Strong leaders will provide the underpinning for the campaigns the union will undertake as it faces the Trump administration and a predictable tsunami of anti-union and anti-education measures.

Twelve members recruited as organizing fellows last year were trained to lead workshops on their home campuses, develop local activists and brainstorm ideas for increasing the power of the union. The program was funded by a grant from the CFT.

On January 28, lecturers and librarians got together to coordinate a statewide campaign plan. That includes several elements, McIver explains. “We are building coalitions, lobbying our legislators, developing stronger community relations, and exercising the rights we already have, especially in terms of academic freedom and job security.”

The greatest threat to the union is a new court case that will again challenge



agency fees, as the *Friedrichs vs. California Teachers Association* case did last year. The contract between the UC-AFT and the university contains a clause stating that employees in the bargaining unit who are not members of the union and not paying dues shall, as a continued condition of employment, be required to pay a fair share service fee to the union.

“Loss of the agency fee is extremely important to our union,” McIver warns. “It is an existential threat.” The *Friedrichs* case sought to bar the fee, and it went to the U.S. Supreme Court.

**“We really want to connect with the issues we know people care about, and to a sense of a greater purpose beyond education and labor issues.”** — Mia McIver, UC-AFT Vice President of Organizing

Previously the court found, in *Abood v. Detroit Board of Education* that all employees who benefit from the provisions of a collective bargaining agreement — including non-members — must pay their “fair share” of the costs of bargaining wages, benefits and working conditions, and representing employees in grievances.

After Judge Antonin Scalia died, the court split 4-4, in effect upholding agency fees. New cases have already been filed which will undoubtedly go to the Supreme Court as well, however. After

the Republican-dominated Congress refused to hold a vote on President Obama’s nominee to replace Scalia, within days of taking office President Trump nominated Neil Gorsuch as a replacement. It is widely believed he would overturn the *Abood* decision and bar agency fees.

The UC-AFT organizing strategy is not waiting for the decision. “We’ve developed commitment cards, in which lecturers and librarians say they’re sticking with the union,” McIver says. Activists are developing their arguments to persuade members, and non-members alike of the union’s

importance, and the way agency fee money helps finance organizing and representation.

“We really want to connect with the issues we know people care about, and to a sense of a greater purpose beyond education and labor issues,” she explains. “Our members are generally very opposed to Trump’s immigration orders, so we try to show that one value of the union is that it gives people a structure for working on political issues. It’s like saying, ‘Are you opposed to this? Then come work with us.’”

### UC-AFT wins significant ruling in support of librarians

Since 2013, the library administration at UCLA has contended that 13 librarian positions should be removed from the bargaining unit on the grounds that they are “supervisory,” as defined by the Higher Education Employer-Employee Relations Act. Eventually the university filed a claim with the Public Employee Relations Board to remove the positions and incumbents from the bargaining unit.

The case went before a PERB hearing officer a year ago. UC-AFT argued that the duties singled out by UCLA as supervisory did not meet the legal definition under HEERA. In January, PERB decided in favor of UC-AFT and ruled that all 13 positions will remain in the bargaining unit — a significant victory in the union’s fight to maintain the professional status of librarians at the University of California.



UCLA librarian members of UC-AFT perform specialized services for students on campus.



PHOTOS BY BOB RIHA JR.

In between meetings with her students on the UCLA campus, Mia McGiver, vice president of organizing for UC-AFT, is crafting plans to strengthen the union.

The same is true for the way people see the appointment of Betsy DeVos as a threat.”

The UC-AFT has also concentrated on the fights that affect members directly. “We just had a big victory at UCLA,” McIver enthuses, “where the university tried to remove 13 librarians from the bargaining unit. The PERB decision in our favor was so strong that the administration didn’t even try to appeal it.” (See opposite page)

The union’s organizing strategy isn’t just a defensive one, however, and is moving beyond the lecturer and librarian bargaining units it has historically represented. Recently 94 percent of the 50 teachers at the Preuss School, a grade 6-12 school for low-income students on the UC San Diego campus, chose UC-AFT in a card check process. The union already represents teachers at the similar Lab School at UCLA.

“There are other groups of non-represented faculty on UC campuses,” McIver says, “including visiting assistant professors, adjuncts [a very specialized title in the UC system] and others. Where there is interest we look forward to working with people, and given our members’ creativity, I’m sure we’ll be hearing more soon.”

— By David Bacon, CFT Reporter

## The dangers of rating professors in politicized times

**BOB SAMUELS** COUNCIL PRESIDENT

**Now that most of the faculty** teaching in the United States do not have tenure, it is important to think about how the current political climate might affect these vulnerable teachers.

One thing to keep in mind is that many of these faculty members rely on getting positive student evaluations in order to keep their jobs

or earn a pay increase. This emphasis on pleasing students can result in grade inflation and defensive teaching, and it places the teacher in an impossible situation when dealing with political issues in a polarized environment.

A way of countering this culture is to stop relying on student evaluations to assess contingent faculty. If we want teachers to promote

open dialogue in their classes, they should not have to be afraid that they will lose their jobs for promoting the free exchange of ideas. We also have to make sure that all faculty have their academic freedom protected and are given full shared governance rights.



**C**andidate Donald Trump told the American people he didn't want to cut Social Security, but Republicans have opposed the system since its creation during the Depression.

Speaker of the House Paul Ryan has talked about "means testing" Social Security. In other words, wealthy seniors wouldn't get benefits because they don't need them. But they wouldn't pay into the system, either, and losing the top 10 percent of contributors could lead to financial havoc.

If that happens, the leader of the CFT Council of Retired Members expects conservatives to argue for ending Social Security or making the system voluntary because it no longer benefits all Americans. "They hate single payer plans because they work," said John Perez. "When everyone pays into it, costs go down and everyone benefits."



Members of United Educators of San Francisco take to the streets to support Medicare — the single payer system that works!

COURTESY LOCAL 61

## Retirees prepare to stand firm in a hostile new world Social Security and Medicare targeted by majority party

And while Trump hasn't yet attacked Medicare, or even tweeted about it, for tens of millions of seniors who could not afford health coverage without it, the stakes couldn't be higher. More than 55.5 million Americans — including nearly 6 million Californians — are Medicare beneficiaries.

The average teacher in California retires at 62, but Medicare doesn't kick in until 65. During those three years, retirees pay more for coverage than active employees of any age. When Medicare does become their main insurer, premiums plummet. At Kaiser, for example, they decrease by 80

percent and at Anthem, by 60 percent.

Ryan has wanted for years to turn Medicare into a voucher plan. "And he doesn't want a voucher that increases with the cost of living," Perez said, "so its value will go down every year because of inflation. That means retirees will pay more of the cost, plus any increases in the premium."

The California Retired Teachers Association and others are channeling a growing wellspring of support for Medicare and Medicaid into sending the Republican majority in Congress a message: Protect, improve, and expand

Medicare and Medicaid.

"Congress is already discussing 'reforms' to Medicare and the Affordable Care Act," said CaIRTA Executive Director Angelique Hill, "but Ryan has blocked his office email and toll-free phone to prevent opponents from sharing their opinions."

Hill said retirees are mailing cards directly to Ryan's home address: Honorable Speaker of the House Paul Ryan, 700 St. Lawrence Ave. Janesville, WI 53545.

— By Steve Weingarten, CFT Reporter

## Don't believe "fake news" about unfunded liability

**JOHN PEREZ** COUNCIL PRESIDENT

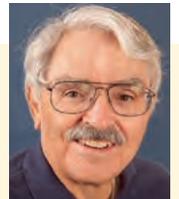
**There are a lot of stories** floating around the media claiming that CalSTRS and CalPERS are in trouble and going broke. Don't believe it. The two largest retirement systems in our country have hundreds of billions of dollars in assets and are financially sound.

The "unfunded liability" of these systems

is actually like a mortgage on your house. My "unfunded" mortgage liability is just over \$100,000 and there is no way I could pay that tomorrow or next year. But it is a 30-year mortgage and I am paying it off month by month. The unfunded liability of our retirement systems is like this and the liability will not come due on any one day, in any one year.

Also, these systems have the ability to increase contributions from our employers and the state, and from us, so the liability can be eliminated over a period of years.

Your pension check will continue to come right on time, every month.



## MANY LOCALS

**#DumpDeVos:** Demonstrators at a boisterous event in Oakland — organized on social media in just a few days — denounced the nomination of Betsy DeVos for U.S. Secretary of Education. Hundreds of parents, educators, and students gathered at a noon rally on January 31.

Speakers raised concerns about DeVos's fundamental lack of experience in public education, her support for corporate charters and school vouchers, and her track record dismantling public schools in her home state of Michigan.

The protest played out in schools across the state too. The **Salinas Valley Federation of Teachers** waged a “Wear Red for Ed” campaign in support of public education and in opposition to the DeVos appointment. With less than a day's notice, many members donned red to draw attention to the dangers facing public education.

Despite the passionate protests, DeVos was confirmed in February by a one-vote margin. The AFT and other national groups have ramped up their watchdog efforts in the Capitol.

COURTESY LOCAL 61



Cathy Campbell, president of the Berkeley Federation of Teachers, and a CFT vice president, spoke at Oakland protest organized quickly on social media.

## LOCAL 1911

**#AcademicFreedom:**

Following last November's election, the Republican Club at Orange Coast College sent a member into the class of instructor Olga Perez Stable Cox. His mission: record her. During her human sexuality class, answering a student's question, Cox said that in her opinion Trump was a “white supremacist,” and that Vice President Mike Pence was “anti-gay.”

The video was posted on the internet, and abetted by a conservative media push, she faced a blizzard of insults, called a “libtard,” “Marxist,” “nutcase,” “vile leftist filth” and a “satanic cult member.” Death threats forced her to move out of her house and go on leave for the remainder of the semester.

Meanwhile, her union and student supporters came out, 200 strong, for a campus rally in her defense.

The student who recorded her ignored the policy in the syllabus, campus policy, and

California state law, in recording Cox without permission. College administrators suspended the student, but then retracted the suspension after another wave of right-wing emails and phone calls.

The faculty union, the **Coast Federation of Educators**, issued a statement saying the union is “deeply disappointed that the Coast Community College District administration has capitulated to individuals and groups who threatened and bullied students, faculty and administration. On behalf of a planned, covert partisan agenda, one student's actions have harmed the educational experience for all students and made classrooms less safe.”

## LOCAL 2121

**#FreeCity:** In November San Francisco voters passed Proposition W, which promises to raise \$44 million annually through a small increase in property tax rates on properties worth over \$5 million. Although

it was sold as a mechanism to make City College of San Francisco tuition-free, the measure also sent money to numerous programs. Subsequent negotiations between Supervisor Jane Kim and the mayor resulted in an agreement.

Starting this fall, residents already receiving financial aid will be eligible for more assistance — reimbursement for books and transportation vouchers. Students taking 12 or more units can receive an additional \$500, and those taking 6 to 11 units \$200.

## Union's Building Power program works

**FIVE LOCALS IN THE** Building Power program last fall developed organizing plans to increase member engagement.

**Coast Federation of Classified**

**Employees** increased membership to 79 percent and strengthened its Committee on Political Education. The local scheduled mini-trainings with the executive council and conducted “Walk with Me” visits to recruit site reps.

**El Camino Classified Employees** increased membership to 78 percent and developed a plan to win better conditions for night shift custodians. (See story page 16)

**Glendale College Guild** increased membership to 91 percent, activating new members through its Membership and Mobilization Task Force and welcoming over 100 people at its annual fall meeting.

**Lawndale Federation of Classified Employees** added 34 new members while focused on winning a strong contract for noon duty employees and recruiting new site reps.

**Los Rios College Federation of Teachers** added 24 new members, and mobilized faculty to attend trustees meetings to secure sanctuary status for students, faculty and staff. (See story page 6)



**Janice Lobo Sapigao**, a part-time English instructor at Skyline College and member of the San Mateo Community College Federation of Teachers, AFT Local 1493, published



a documentary poetry collection *microchips for millions* about the exploitation of immigrant women in the Silicon Valley — those like her mother, an assembly line worker there. The book, published by the Philippine American Writers & Artists, Inc., uses binary code, the Filipino language, personal observation, and scholarship, to draw out the social layers of a global commodity — the microchip. Learn more and order the book at [pawainc.com](http://pawainc.com).

**David Mielke**, teacher of sociology and psychology at Culver City High School, president of the Culver City Federation of Teachers, AFT Local 1343, and a CFT vice president, was the guest on the radio show Dr. Peter Breggin Hour on the Progressive Radio Network, where he discussed an alternative view of psychology and the issues that arise from teaching psychology from that point of view. Breggin has questioned the use of drugs to treat what he believes are family or social issues. Mielke gave vivid examples of the disabling effects of diagnoses such as ADHD, and how they can push

students toward learned helplessness and self-doubt. Listen to the January 18 show or download the podcast at [breggin.com/the-dr-peter-breggin-hour](http://breggin.com/the-dr-peter-breggin-hour).

**Christian Clifford**, a teacher of theology at Serra High School in San Mateo, and a member of the San Francisco Archdiocesan Federation of Teachers, AFT Local 2240, has written a third book about California's colonial history — *Meet Pablo Tac: Indian from the Far Shores of California*

— the story of a Native Californian Catholic. Pablo Tac (1822-1841) was Luiseño Indian, born and raised at Mission San Luis Rey de Francia, located in present-day Oceanside. Learn more about his unique story at [Missions1769.com](http://Missions1769.com).



cently had his 14th story published in *Chicken Soup for the Soul, Random Acts of Kindness*. The book features "101 Stories of Compassion and Paying Forward" including Karrer's story "Faith Restored."

**Paul Karrer**, a retired elementary teacher and member of the North Monterey County Federation of Teachers, AFT Local 4008, re-

**Steve Harris**, a retired member of the ABC Federation of Teachers, AFT Local 2317, and an elected school board member in the Centralia Elementary District since 2012, worked with district stakeholders to pass a school bond in November. After touring the Union Iron Workers Training Center in La Palma with a representative from the Building and Construction Councils, the board voted to hire union labor, bringing journeyman construction skills to district upgrades, as well as living wages, health benefits, and safe working conditions to the workers.

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



JAMIE LITTLE

**Megan Gross**, member of the Poway Federation of Teachers, AFT Local 2357, and special education instructor at Del Norte High School, was named as one of the four finalists for National Teacher of the Year.

Gross teaches an autism spectrum disorder day class and is an advocate for fully integrating students of different ability levels into classroom and school activities. She was previously honored as one of the five California Teachers of the Year.

"Megan has worked diligently to end the social and physical isolation of people with intellectual and development disabilities," said State Superintendent of Public Instruction Tom Torlakson. "I am proud to have her represent California."

The National Teacher of the Year will be announced this spring.

## May is Labor History Month!

**CFT sponsored the landmark legislation** that encourages schools and educators "to commemorate this month with appropriate educational exercises that make pupils aware of the role the labor movement has played in shaping California and the United States."

**Plan your lessons in advance!** Find free and engaging curricula (for preschool through university) created by your colleagues.

[cft.org/member-services/labor-education](http://cft.org/member-services/labor-education)

