



## UC-AFT Builds Power Through Membership Drives and Open Bargaining

University Council AFT lecturers across the state supported negotiations and built worker power through member-to-member outreach drives this February. Volunteers at UC Davis and UCLA conducted one-on-one organizing conversations with dozens of potential members on both campuses.

Eleven volunteers at UC Davis held 48 conversations with faculty and signed up 25 new members. They also collected 75 signatures for the Schools and Communities First ballot initiative. Local leadership and members felt energized after this successful outreach, and are excited to continue engaging their membership



Andrew Pagan

Left to right: Valarie Bachelor, Cassie Hemstrom, Lachlan Batchelor and Katie Rodgers celebrate a successful membership drive at UC Davis.

and plan another drive in the near future.

Sixteen volunteers at UCLA were joined by supporters from the Los Angeles County Federation of Labor and the California Federation of Labor.

Together they conducted 61 organizing conversations and recruited 18 new members to the union.

UC-AFT members who participated in the membership drive at UCLA say that University of Califor-

nia Office of the President (UCOP)'s unprofessional treatment of bargaining team members is another reason to get involved in the union. "Their treatment of our bargaining team is another reflection of how they want to de-professionalize teaching," notes UC-AFT Vice President of Organizing Daniel Schoolr. Bargaining demands for this contract focus on continuing appointments, academic freedom and workload.

UCOP continues to stall, and most recently refused to meet on campus at UC Riverside citing "concerns about disruption" from faculty and students. This follows a bargaining session at UCLA in the

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## Schools and Communities First Initiative – the Final Push!



Athena Waid

Left to right: Local 2121 member Kathe Burick and UESF member Lisa Guzman stand together in support of the Schools and Communities First initiative.

With only a few weeks left before the deadline to collect signatures for the Schools and Communities First ballot initiative, educators in northern California are going all out to make sure Californians have a chance to vote on this proposition in November 2020. San Francisco Community College District Federation of Teachers, Local 2121 recently hosted an event where volunteers went to different locations in San Francisco to speak to the general public about the Schools and Communities First initiative and to gather signatures. They were joined by CFT organizers, who provided training on the proposal and best practices in general public canvassing as well as volunteers from other locals including Jefferson AFT Federation of Teachers, Local 1481. After a day of many conversations, these volunteers had collected 169 petition signatures! All of our locals combined efforts contributed to the initiative qualifying for the 2020 ballot, ensuring our chance to fully fund California schools.

–CFT Project Organizer Andrew Pagan

# Tilden Teachers Keep up the Momentum

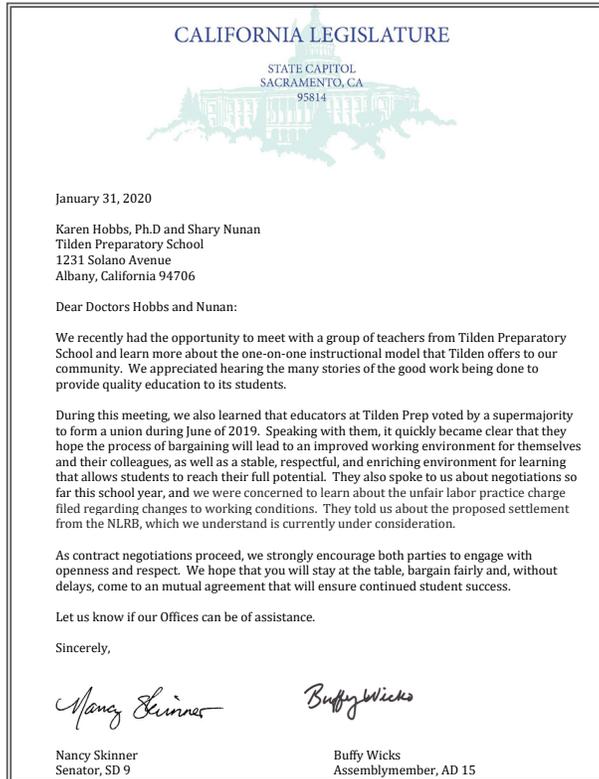
Last June, educators at Tilden Prep voted to join CFT by forming a union that includes the teaching staff at their three campuses. Tilden Preparatory Academy, a network of three private schools touting a unique “one-on-one” instructional model, serves students in the California bay area cities of Albany, Walnut Creek and Sausalito. Since their election, these teachers have been hard at work negotiating their first contract. In addition to holding many bargaining sessions over the last few months, members of the Tilden Union leadership team have constantly engaged all of their membership in actions to build power and show teacher support for their proposals. Most recently, they collected a supermajority of their colleagues’ signatures for a petition in support of their economic proposals. These leaders have also made an effort

to reach out to the broader community during their contract campaign, and met with various elected officials to inform them of their decision to organize a union and describe

their vision for improving working conditions and student learning conditions at their school. These visits paid off, as four elected officials sent Tilden management let-

ters expressing support for the teachers and hopes that a fair contract agreement be reached soon. In addition to their contract campaign, Tilden teachers have used their newfound organizing skills to advocate for solutions to issues outside their school walls. Early in the New Year, after a Tilden teacher was hit by a car in a crosswalk near the school (luckily, she was okay after a brief hospital visit) Tilden staff decided to take action. They organized their colleagues to attend a city council meeting, which resulted in additional police presence at the intersection and a promise from leaders to address the lack of adequate signage or traffic signals there. As they head into spring, Tilden teachers are excited to continue working together to build the power of their union.

–CFT Project Organizer Andrew Pagan



State Assembly member Buffy Wicks and State Senator Nancy Skinner’s letter in support of Tilden Teachers.

## Part-Time Faculty, Full Time Unionists

As a local of part-time only faculty at a private institution, University of San Francisco Part-Time Faculty Association, Local 6590 (USF-PTFA) understands the challenges of organizing today’s higher education workplaces. Yet they’re not letting any structural impediments stand in their way, rather they’re using their own experience and vantage point to guide the way for other locals facing similar circumstances.



USF-PTFA members take a stand!

A recent membership outreach drive on the university’s Main and Lone Mountain campuses showed how successful workers in contingent labor can be in building their union. The numbers speak for themselves with 10 activists, many for the first time participating in a training on how to talk to their colleagues about power in the workplace. Twelve members volunteered their time to join five CFT organizers at scores of class visits throughout the week and collectively we received 55 membership recommitment cards. Additionally, 15 people RSVP’d to one of the events in the local’s informative spring semester workshop series. The first of these workshops was a student debt clinic, part of CFT’s efforts to let members know that even at a private institution like USF they may be eligible for public service loan forgiveness.

–CFT Project Organizer Lachlan Batchelor

# Together We Win: El Camino Federation of Teachers Builds Power

Movements are not started easily. When you are anticipating Janus v. AFSCME to pass in the upcoming year, it feels like an uphill battle and yet as we executed CFT's strategies on "Building Power" our membership grew. It grew not only in numbers, but also in strength, confidence, visibility and power! El Camino Community College is a district that historically weakened the voice of unions. They used their resources to minimize the workers' experiences and value during negotiations, and stripped us of our dignity and ability to feel proud to be working at the institution. We stay because we value the students and we want to advocate and fight for change.

Structurally, our union lacked continuity and



El Camino College faculty gather for a weekly "Red for Ed" photo in support of contract negotiations.

we experienced a huge change in leadership. Three years ago, our executive director of 20+ years retired during a negotiation year, our chief negotiator quit and our E-board was new. Extremely green, we tried to rally as best we could and vowed to reconnect with the CFT for guidance. Over the past few years, the union's executive board has been attending several CFT trainings, summer institutes, workshops, conventions and networking with other unions to gather ideas to

effectively implement. We have held a member-to-member drive for the past three consecutive semesters, and we have created manageable ways to visibly support CFT. We've revived our "TOGETHER Tuesday" and "Red for Ed" campaigns, and we have become more vocal and visible at board meetings and other campus events.

Our executive board has also been working on listening and collaborating with our colleagues from the other two unions on campus. Collectively we aim to identify our com-

monalities and differences, so we can work together to advocate for better working conditions for all. With ongoing negotiations for all three unions, together we have created a pin with all three union logos and posters that are hung up all across campus. Our hope is that all of this momentum and togetherness translates in our favor at the negotiations table, and builds a stronger community and culture showing El Camino College is UNION STRONG!

—ECFT President Kelsey Lino

## Local 1521 and 1521A Mobilize at Board of Trustees' Meeting



Over 70 faculty and staff showed up at the board meeting to show their strength in the midst of contract negotiations.

Over 70 faculty and staff members attended the March meeting in addition to students and community members. The board of trustees unanimously passed a resolution in support of the Schools and Communities First ballot initiative, which will bring additional revenue into Los Angeles Community College District to help address class size and other problems.

—CFT Project Organizers Charlotte Bowman and Laila Molina

As part of Los Angeles College Faculty Guild, Local 1521's contract campaign, members are attending board of trustees' meetings to show the board that faculty are engaged, organized and mobilized to achieve the working conditions that their students deserve. At this particular meeting, community members, students and faculty spoke on the importance of smaller class sizes.

AFT College Staff Guild, Local 1521A is preparing for negotiations and members also attended the board of trustees' meeting to show the board that members will be active in the negotiation process. Local 1521A will also be voting on whether or not classified employees can select their own personnel commissioner in the coming weeks, and showed up to the board meeting to show the trustees that 1521A members will be voting yes on this question.

# ERFT Organizes to Win Supportive Board

Teachers, staff and community members attended the February school board meeting for El Rancho Unified School District to show their disapproval of the current school board. El Rancho Federation of Teachers, Local 3467 (ERFT) has been fighting to win a fair contract through negotiations but has been hindered by a school board that is working against the community's best interest. There is a recall process underway to remove two school board members: Jose Lara and Leanne Ibarra. ERFT President Lilia Carreon states, "Our community, ERFT and CSEA, has come



ERFT teachers, staff and community members attend the school board meeting to show their disapproval of the current board.

together to change the direction of the district. As result of our unity, we have joined forces to support two school board candidates who will prioritize our students, staff and teachers, which up

until now has not occurred in the school district." Although Jose Lara has already resigned, the recall special election will be held on June 2, 2020. -CFT Project Organizer Charlotte Bowman

## Cuesta College Student Debt Clinic



Nancy Steinmaus (left), part-time representative at Cuesta College Federation of Teachers, Local 4909 with new member Emily Resner (right), adjunct biology professor. Emily joined her union after participating in a student debt clinic, which Nancy had asked CFT organizers to facilitate at Cuesta College. After the clinic Nancy reported, "faculty were very grateful." These student debt clinics have consistently been acknowledged to be very beneficial to our members, and as proven by this Cuesta example often inspire non-members to join. Please contact Sandra Weese if you would like one for your local.

-CFT Organizing Director Sandra Weese

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fall where management called the bargaining team "jerks" and walked out of negotiations.

Following their contract expiration on January 31, UC-AFT members

sought to escalate their actions in response to lagging proposals from UCOP. UC-AFT bargaining team leaders share that open negotiations, which members can observe

in person, have been a powerful tactic to increase their strength at the table.

-CFT Organizer Erin Conley and Project Organizer Andrew Pagan

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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