Time to extend Prop 30

It saved the public sector in California. Now CFT is helping to qualify a ballot measure to make sure that that continues to be true.
President's Column

Jim Mahler

2016 starts well for community colleges

As we begin 2016, we have a lot to be grateful for during the current fiscal year. The Community College system as a whole received nearly $1 billion in new revenues for the 2015-16 year, including $62.3 million earmarked for new full-time faculty hires, the first new monies earmarked to address this chronic shortage since the early 1990s. A decent base allocation increase, coupled with COLA and growth increases, provided virtually every district in the state with a record increase in revenues. You can view the most recent apportionment numbers for your District by visiting: tinyurl.com/2015-16-apportionment

For these reasons I hope that by the time you are reading this you have already settled your negotiations with an excellent compensation package, and are well on your way to hiring more full-time faculty in your District.

Clouds

Unfortunately, this burst of sunshine was seriously clouded over by the Governor’s January budget proposal for the coming 2016-17 fiscal year: a meager 0.47% COLA, and 2% growth (which most districts won’t be able to make). Those are the only new on-going revenue streams he is proposing at this time—no additional resources for new full-time faculty hires, or any of the part-time categoricals such as office hours, equity pay, or healthcare. As everyone knows, 0.47% COLA won’t go very far to pay for incremental step and column, healthcare, and PERS/STRS pension increases. CFT will continue to lobby hard for funding of these items to be included in the final 2016-17 budget that will be signed in June.

To make matters worse, the resources we currently receive from Proposition 30 are set to expire soon. The sales tax component (about one sixth of the revenue stream) will expire this year, and the more substantial progressive income tax on individuals who make more than $250,000/year (five sixths of the revenues) will expire in 2018. Currently, Districts receive approximately 15% of their operating budget from Proposition 30 funds.

Prop 30 extension

In an effort to put on more solid financial footing, CFT is part of a statewide coalition committed to getting a Proposition 30 extension ballot initiative qualified for the November 2016 elections, the “Children’s Education and Health Care Protection Act of 2016.” This new measure will preserve the additional income tax on high wage earners, and it will not include the regressive sales tax component. Signature gatherers will be coming soon to a supermarket near you; in fact, one of those signature gatherers might well be you.

Part-time job security bill

As we begin the 2016 legislative session, we will be re-introducing AB 1690 (Medina), our part-time faculty job security bill. CFT is a co-sponsor with CTA. Recall that last session, this bill died in the Senate Appropriations Committee. Our hope this year is to overcome that final hurdle and get it on to the Governor’s desk for his signature.

Lastly, to end on a positive note, it is looking as though all of CFT’s legal, legislative, and political action efforts are starting to pay big dividends as the Board of Governors has now directed the Chancellor to seek a new accreditor for the community colleges! That means ACCJC will hopefully sooner, rather than later, be a distant, although painful, memory.

Wishing you the best of luck in the New Year!

As The Perspective went to press, we received word of the death of Supreme Court justice Antonin Scalia. CFT president Joshua Pechthalt commented, “With Scalia’s passing, and short of another major change on the court, it is unlikely the Friedichs case will move forward this session. If a decision is rendered in Friedichs, it will likely be a 4-4 vote, in which case the US Ninth Circuit Court Friedichs decision affirming the status quo will be upheld, though it will not be a precedent-setting decision by the Supreme Court.”
**State Senator Marty Block**

**An educator in office**

Marty Block, California State Senator from San Diego’s 39th District, pays attention to the needs of educators, staff in community colleges, for a simple reason: he is an educator himself.

After getting an education degree from Indiana University, and then a law degree from DePaul, Block taught middle school in Skokie, Illinois, and later was the director of Student Legal Services at Western Illinois University. Thirty-five years ago, he moved to San Diego.

For twenty-six years he was a professor, dean and legal advisor at San Diego State University. “At one point I was teaching a class for student leaders,” he recalls. “There were 150 students in the class, including San Diego’s current mayor. Few of them had writing skills, however, and I complained to them about it. They can write right back at me. ‘If you want to change the K-12 prepares us for college,’ they said, ‘then run for office.’ I thought about it, and they all agreed to help me do it.’”

This began Block’s political career. He ran against a conservative incumbent for a seat on the San Diego County Board of Education and won. He spent eight years on the board. He was elected president of the California County Boards of Education during his tenure.

**Second chance**

Then he ran for trustee of the San Diego Community College Board, and was elected. “For students who need help, who didn’t get prepared in K-12, community college gives them a second chance,” he says. Block spent eight years on the board, and credits among his accomplishments hiring Constance Carroll, the current chancellor, and working closely with Jim Mahler, president of AFT Local 60.

“Resource allocation” with the state was right. And they all were working closely with Jim Mahler, president of AFT Local 60. Block says, “The Public Policy Institute of California predicts we’ll need a million more people with these degrees by 2035, and we’re nowhere near on track to accomplish this. The only way is to expand 4-year degree programs in community colleges.”

**Lowering college costs**

In the State Senate Block chairs the Education Budget Subcommittee and the Senate Committee on Banking and Financial Institutions. The subcommittee is holding hearings on President Obama’s proposal to make the first two years of college free for all students. “We’d all like to see the Federal government fund this,” he says, “but we know Congress at this point won’t pass anything the President proposes. So what can we do on our level to move toward this goal?”

He notes that 50% of all community college students already receive waivers for all their fees and tuition. “But if students graduating from high school know community college is free, there would be a huge increase in the number attending.” He also proposes to reduce the cost of textbooks, another financial hurdle for students.

In addition, he worked with former State Senator, now Secretary of State Alex Padilla, on a transfer agreement with the state university system, guaranteeing a place to any student who completes the required courses, and is now working on a similar agreement for the UC system.

**On ACCJC**

While the Senate has no direct jurisdiction over the accreditation of community colleges, as a former trustee and educator Block supports the legislation proposed by the Accreditation Commission for Community and Junior Colleges. “The concern raised by the CFT about the fairness of the process have been proven right,” he says. “We need to make changes.”

Block says he doesn’t want to micromanage the change process.

**I don’t care if workers democratically elected a labor union, I refuse to pay the dues that benefit all!**

By David Bacon

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By David Bacon
ACCJC on way out?

Moving on to a new accreditor

The long, uphill struggle for accreditation in California passed several milestones in the past few months, and there are signs the road ahead to a new accreditor is smoothing out.

First, in November the state Community College Board of Governors (BOG) accepted the Chancellor's Task Force Report on Accreditation. That report urged the BOG to create a plan by March 2016 to move away from the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges (ACCJC) and toward a new accreditor for the state’s 113 community colleges.

Second, the National Advisory Committee on Institutional Quality and Integrity (NACIQI), which oversees authorization of regional accreditors like ACCJC, recommended to the US Department of Education (USDOE) that ACCJC be given just six months to come into compliance with federal standards. The DOE denied ACCJC’s appeal and gave it a year to come into compliance.

Although these timelines do not entirely match up, the message arising from the three decisions nonetheless comes across loud and clear: the ACCJC, at long last, is being shown the exit.

Board of Governors action

Not everyone understands this. ACCJC’s chairman Steven Kinsella appeared before the Board of Governors in November in a futile attempt to convince the BOG that his agency had turned over a new leaf. He said that ACCJC has embraced a model of quality improvement. (He did not acknowledge that the new model had been urged on the commission for more than a decade without success.) When his plea failed to persuade the BOG members, Kinsella turned to deliver a stunnedly tone-deaf warning: “If you think you are getting away from regulatory compliance, I think you are mistaken.”

“No one involved in this battle with ACCJC is seeking to evade accreditation,” said CFT president Joshua Pechthalt. “In fact, what we have been after from the beginning is a robust and fair accreditation process, one that meets the needs of our students to have access to a quality education, and helps our faculty to provide it. And that’s just what the ACCJC has stubbornly gotten in the way of.”

Following its acceptance of the Task Force recommendations, the BOG instructed Chancellor Brice Harris to send the report to NACIQI, and to ask the Task Force to reconvene and draft a plan for transitioning to a new accreditor. Since that time the Task Force, expanded from its original nine to fifteen members, has been drafting that plan and will submit it to the BOG in March.

Before NACIQI

On December 16 CFT president Pechthalt, former president Marty Hittelman, and more than thirty faculty, students and trustees from City College of San Francisco spoke in Washington D.C. before the NACIQI. The travelers from California were well-prepared. In particular, the San Franciscans, organized by leaders of AFT Local 2121 and the Save CCSF Coalition, had met several times, talked through the often-arcane issues down in the thickets of Accreditationland, and coordinated their remarks.

Pechthalt told NACIQI, “We believe in a strong and fair accreditation body that protects and improves the quality of education for California’s two million students. Unfortunately, our accreditor, the lawbreaking ACCJC, does none of these things. We’d like NACIQI to be part of the process of helping...”

Continued on next page

CCSF faculty fights to remove ACCJC thumb from scale

AFT Local 2121 Secretary Jessica Buchbaum spotted the administrators starting to come out the door of the Diego Rivera Theater on the main campus of City College of San Francisco. She stepped to the microphone, interrupting Tank Farrar, who was speaking to the crowd of two hundred, apologized to him, and led the faculty in a simple chant for the next couple minutes: “What do we want?” “Fair contract!” “When do we want it?” “NOW!”

That rally followed an exodus of instructors from the auditorium before CCSF Chancellor Susan Lamb’s Flex Day address began on January 15. After speaking to a sparse auditorium largely populated by administrators, Lamb emerged into the sunlight to find she and the other administrators had to thread their way through the same faculty that her negotiations team had been stonewalling in negotiations over restoration of pay cuts faculty had absorbed for years.

Hiding the dollars

Over the previous weeks the AFT 2121 bargaining research team demonstrated convincingly that the administration had been hiding tens of millions of dollars and maintaining what turned out to be an enormous concealed reserve. The administration nonetheless refused to move from what the union considered its completely inadequate salary offer. Throughout months of bargaining, the reasons offered by the administration bargaining team for refusing to restore frozen salary steps and pay cuts vacillated between “We don’t have the money” and “ACCJC won’t like it.”

After analyzing the district budget, according to the union’s calculations, last year $10 million was budgeted but not expended, $12.9 million came to the district in a state refund that the administration admitted it had somehow “missed,” and the administration had created a set-aside of $7.7 million for “contingencies.”

The administration now acknowledges that with these corrections, it will end the year with a $57 million fund balance, or 28.4%, with which it could bargain if it chose.

The state recommends a minimum 5% fund balance. The union has also noted that since 2011, spending has increased on administration by 29%, while expenditures for faculty have declined by 12%.

In response, the union moved to bring in a mediator from the Public Employment Relations Board. “We are probably going to fact-finding,” AFT 2121 president Tim Killikelly told The Perspective, enumerating the steps laid out by California public sector negotiations law when bargaining stalls. “And if that fails, we’re probably going on strike.”
ACCCJ Continued from page 4

us find an accreditor that works on behalf of students and quality education.”

Other members of the California delegation laid out the many reasons why virtually every stakeholder now believes this rogue accreditor must be replaced. Citing examples based in experience and hard-won expertise in accreditation, faculty, students and others testified about the urgent need to “destab” the agency and replace it with one capable of fair and competent accreditation practices.

NACIQI had officially prohibited testimony regarding the ACCJC’s failure to comply with two important accreditor standards—the requirement that an accreditor be “widely accepted” by the colleges and constituencies it oversees, and that its site visit teams include adequate numbers of faculty. The agency had ruled that because these issues were still under appeal by ACCJC with the DOE, they were off-limits. But many of the Californians brought up the topics anyway. When the ACCJC’s lawyer asked if he could object, a NACIQI member responded, “This isn’t a courtroom.”

Tim Killikelly, president of AFT Local 2121 at City College of San Francisco, told NACIQI that “Not talking about these issues is like being on the Titanic and not being allowed to talk about the iceberg.”

“We’re not unrepentant and belligerent!” The ACCJC sent four people to testify: Commission President Barbara Beno, Chair Steven Kinsella, vice president Krista Johns and attorney Steven Winnick. One observer, Hank Reichman of AUP, noted, “Their response was unrepentant and in some respects even belligerent, as they refused to accept the staff recommendation.”

The ACCJC has been on a year-to-year reauthorization for the past two years. Normally accreditors receive five-year reauthorizations. While acknowledging significant problems with the agency, Department of Education staff had nonetheless, prior to the meeting, recommended to NACIQI another one-year reauthorization pending correction of the violations.

CCSF English instructor Alisa Messer told NACIQI, “I urge you to move beyond the staff report’s thoughtful but inadequate recommendation that ACCJC be granted further time. The ACCJC’s dismissive attitude to member institutions, students, and even to the Department of Education—its flaunting of rules and regulations, its numerous underground and opaque standards—all suggest that NACIQI should not be hopeful that the ACCJC can or will reform itself.”

NACIQI members asked Pechthalt, among others, a number of questions about how CFT envisioned moving forward. Members of the delegation felt the questions demonstrated a serious engagement by NACIQI with the issue of reauthorization.

Wendy Kaufmann, a CCSF engineering instructor, had been to the previous NACIQI meeting, after which ACCJC was put on notice. “Two years later, it was wonderful to see NACIQI members finally recognize that this very problematic agency needed to be shut down. I think that there was some question among them as to whether to do that immediately. So they were put in this dilemma, because shutting ACCJC down would mean California would be left without an accreditor. This has never happened before so they didn’t know what to do. It was gratifying to see their dilemma but disappointing that they kicked the can down the road.”

Six months

On December 17 NACIQI voted to recommend to the U.S. Education Secretary a six-month reauthorization, instead of the year extension DOE staff had recommended. It also voted to recommend revoking ACCJC’s current authority to approve four-year degree programs at community colleges. Clearly the presentations the previous day had had an impact.

Following the NACIQI meeting the California group, shepherded by CFT’s President Winnick and Coordinator Jessica Ulstad and joined by national AFT staff, split into teams to visit with eighteen Congressional offices. There they had substantive conversations, delivering the request for the Congress members to urge the Department of Education to support delisting ACCJC and help transition to a new accreditor.

Kaufmann reports, “It was a much harder sell back in 2013. They didn’t really know the issue. This time they seemed more aware of the problem, and agreed it needed to be solved. They too weren’t sure what the solution was but they definitely wanted to help.”

DOE denies appeal

On January 4, John King, Jr., Acting Secretary of the Department of Education denied ACCJC’s appeal of the DOE ruling from January 2014 that it had failed to comply with the “wide acceptance” and “faculty inclusion” standards. The DOE gave the ACCJC one year to come into compliance. While raising questions about how the timing lined up with the NACIQI’s six month stipulation, the ruling was welcomed by ACCJC’s foes.

Said Killikelly, “These issues have come into pretty clear focus. The City Attorney’s suit and Judge Karmow’s decision had already found ACCJC didn’t put enough faculty on site visit teams, yet ACCJC has continued to flaunt that rule. And on the question of “wide acceptance,” the Task Force Report has made explicit what everyone was saying for years: the ACCJC doesn’t have anyone’s confidence anymore.”

Next Steps

The road ahead may not be guaranteed, but plans are solidifying now at the top of the community college system to move into an accreditation future without ACCJC. The state Board of Governors will have the opportunity to respond to the plan at its next meeting in March.

By Fred Glass

Progressive Tax continued from page 8

new faculty and staff, bringing employment up to the pre-recession level. In particular, with the influx of Proposition 30 funds, the union was able to negotiate two new agreements covering both faculty and classified employees.

“We were finally able to conclude the SDCCD faculty Agreement,” Mahler reported to Guild members, “which includes many gains for faculty such as inclusion of Continuing Education adjunct faculty into the same job security provisions community college adjunct faculty have enjoyed for the past 16 years, a strengthening of the college adjunct faculty job security model, an overload banking provision for contract faculty, 11-month contracts for college faculty assistant department chairs, and a strengthening and clarification of the evaluation article.”

Among the economic achievements for faculty, effective January 1 of this year, adjunct salary schedules will increase across the board by 8%, and contract faculty salary schedules by 5%. The office hours funding pool for adjunct faculty will increase compensation for adjunct office hours to the $25 to $30 per hour range, depending on the number of years of experience.

Conditions for classified staff have also improved dramatically, with an across the board salary increase of 5.722%, and an increase in the percentage between top salary steps from 1.35% to 3.5%. Early retirement health plans and the ability to now receive fully paid health coverage until their 65th birthday.

Mahler goes on to state, “Our political capacity makes it possible for us to do things like pass Proposition 30, which saved California from the budget crisis we all endured for many years, and ‘We were able to get the funds and program cuts we need to keep the sun shining on our students for the foreseeable future. We need to make sure that this temporary tax is extended,’” said Mahler.
Building the Golden Gate Bridge: A Workers’ Oral History

By Harvey Schwartz, University of Washington Press, 2015, 187 pages

In a book released about five years ago, the former California State Librarian, Kevin Starr, a prolific writer about California history, examined just about every aspect of his topic: Golden Gate: The Life and Times of America’s Greatest Bridge. But while Starr devoted a chapter to the bridge’s construction, and paid attention to the often unsung role of the workers who built the iconic structure, it is that specific emphasis on workers and their work that animates AFT 2121 member Harvey Schwartz’s newest book, Building the Golden Gate Bridge: A Worker’s Oral History.

As Starr himself noted in a blurb on the back cover, “Harvey Schwartz follows the example of Studs Terkel by allowing workers to speak for themselves,” and this is the key to his success in Building the Golden Gate Bridge, as it was in his previous Solidarity Stories: An Oral History of the ILWU.

The comparison with Studs Terkel is apt. Schwartz gives his interviewees space to talk, and when manual workers find themselves with an audience interested in the usually underappreciated topic of their occupational expertise, we learn things we can’t elsewhere.

In ten short but elegantly drawn chapters, we hear from the craft workers and laborers who brought the vision of the politicians, architects and engineers to life between 1933 and 1937, the hard middle years of the Great Depression. In putting together the Art Deco span, these workers earned a decent paycheck and bragging rights to one of the architectural wonders of the world. They also emerged with memorable, sometimes hair-raising stories.

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The new bills. The CFT will be actively supporting two of these new bills.

CFT supports new community college legislation

First, Assembly Bill (AB) 1653, authored by Assembly Member Shirley Weber of San Diego, would require the Board of Governors of the California Community Colleges, among others, to generate and publish a biennium report on new and recent administrative efforts intended to affect campus climate as well as new and recent campus program developments that impact campus climate (more or less defined as behavior and culture). More information on this bill can be found at http://tinyurl.com/bbejmske.

Second, Assembly Member Jose Medina of Riverside has introduced a new bill that will continue the fight for improved working conditions for part-time faculty. Last year the bill sponsored AB 1010, also authored by Medina, but the bill stalled in the Senate Appropriations Committee.

With a renewed commitment to creating minimum standards for part-time faculty at California’s Community Colleges, Assembly Member Medina and the CFT are working together to enact legislation that will require community college districts to engage in negotiations with the exclusive representatives for part-time faculty to address all of the following:

• Require evaluations of the instructor at least once every six semesters or nine quarters of service;
• Establish a seniority list for each assignment at each college during the seventh semester or ninth quarter of service for any part-time faculty member who has not received a less-than-satisfactory evaluation during the preceding six semesters or nine quarters of service;
• Require the district to establish a work-load equivalent that the part-time faculty member was assigned during the sixth semester or ninth quarter providing such assignments are available;
• Provide guidelines for allocating new assignments, reductions in assignments, and rejections of offered assignments; and
• Provide guidelines for removal of an instructor from the seniority list due to a less-than-satisfactory evaluation.

Additional information on this bill can be found at http://tinyurl.com/z97hdd8.

Governor’s budget proposal

Governor Brown’s state budget proposal for 2016-17 includes $30 billion for higher education. The Governor’s proposal for the Community Colleges focuses on four key areas, including the following:

Student success and program completion

The Governor’s proposal includes an increase of $114.7 million for the purpose of increasing access to the community college system. This includes an increase of $14 million for the Cal Grant program that will allow for an additional 3,250 Cal Grant awards.

Use of technology to improve efficiency and student outcomes

Governor Brown expressed his expectation that California’s Community Colleges will continue to develop and expand on-line courses. Additionally, he is proposing $5 million to support the creation of zero-textbook-cost degree, certificate, and credential programs.

Improving time to degree

The budget proposal also includes $10 million to implement successful strategies to improve student outcomes pursuant to the Institutional Effectiveness Partnership Initiative. These funds are intended to continue and expand services to improve a student’s likelihood of success and close gaps in achievement between underrepresented student groups and their peers.

Strengthening pathways through education and into the workforce

The Governor is proposing nearly $250 million in workforce development including the existing Strong Workforce Program and the continuation of the CTE Pathways Program.

The January proposal also includes $255 million in one-time funding that can be used for deferred maintenance, instructional equipment, and specified water conservation projects. For the 2016-17 fiscal year only, the Community Colleges will not need to provide matching funds for deferred maintenance. Additionally, there is a proposed increase of $76.3 million in one-time discretionary funding for the purpose of continuing to pay down outstanding mandate claims. These funds may be used to address one-time needs such as campus security, technology needs, and professional development. Additional and more detailed information on the budget proposal can be found at http://www.ebudget.ca.gov/.

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A plaque on the south tower provides the opportunity for visitors to find out that until February 17, 1937, four years after construction of the bridge began, just one worker had been killed on the job, a remarkable safety record in an era when the rule of thumb was that every million dollars worth of bridge building was accompanied by a death. The reader also learns that on that day ten workers fell
Emphasis on “efficiency” hurts students, programs and the whole college

A t our Fall College flex day, much of the data shared with faculty and staff was meant to reassure faculty that the college was in a great place. The deep cuts that we experienced in classes during the recession were cast as a distant memory, and it was noted that property taxes are higher than ever. At Cañada College, the focus of the day was on efficiency, the increased productivity of our college, and the possibility of what lies ahead.

The neoliberal drive to transform community college education from an opportunity for a broad education and personal growth to a data-driven jobs training system can be seen across the nation.

been cut—and not for the first time. Such cuts have been happening increasingly earlier, before faculty and students have returned to campus. The much-lauded efficiency levels, which mainly refer to high fill rates, are the other side of cancelled classes.

The entire strategy regarding course offerings has changed dramatically over the last few years. Rather than starting with a higher number of course offerings and cutting classes when necessary, a smaller number of courses are offered with the assurance that more sections will be offered if needed. When additional sections are inevitably needed, deans and departments are left scrambling to find qualified instructors at the last minute. Often these last minute classes are added as online sections, since it is difficult to know what the overflow students’ availabilities are.

While I understand the desire to prevent last minute cancellations that are extremely difficult for students and faculty, the increased efficiency comes at a high cost to departments. At Cañada, smaller programs and electives in the humanities pay the highest price. Mechanical course cutting hurts programs, faculty, and students. When the first-level courses in a program are cancelled, a chain reaction begins that prevents students from completing course sequences necessary to their degrees and certificates. Because of this, students are unable to meet their goals. At Cañada, our students tell us that they have given up taking literature courses and other electives because they are regularly cancelled. Interestingly, students look to other campuses and other districts to ensure that they will be able to register for the courses they need.

National trend emphasizes training over humanities

The experience at Cañada is, unfortunately, not unique. The neoliberal drive to transform community college education from an opportunity for a broad education and personal growth to a data-driven jobs training system can be seen across the nation. In addition, the recent focus on making students “transfer-ready” and regulations restricting repeatability have exacerbated the attacks on the humanities within all colleges.

Austerity measures that began during the great recession are being continued under the guise of efficiency. According to Nancy Welch’s excellent article, “Educating for Austerity,” colleges are... cutting faculty, moving classes online, and shuttering departments of French, philosophy, and theater. They are erecting new athletic and STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math) complexes, and expanding not only the size and expense of their administrations but also their managerial power. What they are not doing is using that power to jettison core curricular requirements. Instead, administrations and governing boards increasingly insist on holding faculty and students “accountable” for a growing list of required “outcomes” even as they hollow out the programs, faculty, and classes needed for such requirements. (http://screewin.org/issue/98/educating-austerity)

Creating transfer models and pathways does us little good if the students are not able to complete the required coursework. I believe that community colleges have another role to play as the site of lifelong learning, holistic development, and community engagement, but even the focus on transfer is hard to fulfill without the courses being available. I believe that we can do better. Our students deserve better and so do our dedicated faculty.

While I am happy that some faculty members were able to make passionate appeals for their programs and classes, I don’t believe that these sort of decisions should be made in backroom bids. Either we are committed to offering a multitude of unique and inspiring programs and certificates to our students and we commit to offering the courses needed to do that, or we will experience the gradual hollowing out of our college.

[This article originally appeared in the December 2013 issue of The Advocate, the newsletter of AFT Local 1493 in the San Mateo Community College District. See more at: http://art1493.org/doc-2013-advocate-emphasis-on-efficiency-hurts-students-programs/94shaz97zv5c52h.dpuf]

Reviewed by Daniella Maher

to their death in one horrendous accident.

Fifty years later Schwartz interviewed Evan “Slim” Lambert, who survived the same terrible fall that killed ten of his coworkers. Lambert fell two hundred feet into the turbulent tides of the Golden Gate, and despite a broken shoulder, ribs, and neck, rescued another bridge worker floating nearby, propping him up on a piece of wreckage until a fishing boat returned from the Pacific and hauled them in.

Recalled Lambert, “But when I was picked up, I had a dead man by the feet. That was Fred Dummatzen. Well, he wasn’t dead, he was alive then. He was alive until we were coming in on the crab fisherman’s boat. On the way in he died. He had been moving up until that time and finally he stopped.”

Astonishingly Lambert was back at work on the bridge just a month later.

Not all the stories in Building the Golden Gate Bridge are so dramatic. But that’s part of the point of workers’ oral history. Many if not most working people don’t consider their own work lives worthy of recording, an attitude heavily reinforced in our culture by academic elitism and an understanding of history filtered principally through the lens of presidents, generals, and captains of industry.

Refreshing in its alternative worldview and appreciation of working class life, Schwartz’s book would make a fine addition to the syllabi of community college courses in a number of disciplines beyond labor studies and apprenticeship programs. Its depiction of workers’ accomplishments in their own words might inspire today’s working students to consider their own experiences at work in a new light, and perhaps to wonder what stories might be hidden around them in the personal histories of their family elders, neighbors, and friends.

Reviewed by Fred Glass
Proposition 30
Progressive tax extension essential to district finances

For Rob Schneiderman, President of the Coast Federation of Teachers (AFT Local 2279), the passage of Proposition 30 in 2012 was transformative. “Before the proposition passed we were cutting so many classes that all the basic requirement sections were full,” he recalls. “Students couldn’t get into the English classes they needed to graduate, for instance. Faculty were losing classes too.”

Dean Murakami, President of the Los Rios College Federation of Teachers (AFT Local 2279) undoubtedly speaks for almost all community college faculty unions in saying that the money provided to districts by Proposition 30 made a big difference. “We’re very glad it’s there,” he says. “It accounts for 15% of our budget now, overall.”

“The money has been good at helping us to move in a conser-
vative situation for the rest of the country. We’ve been in an increasingly good situation for eventually replacing the Prop 30 funds. But we know how important it is to keep them.”

San Diego
That understanding was the basis for getting a record settlement in San Diego, according to Jim Mahler, President of the AFT Guild, San Diego and Grossmont-Cuyamaca Community Colleges, Local 1931. “Proposition 30 funds are fifteen percent of our apportionment—a huge portion.”

The district is now offering new courses and is back on schedule, he says. There are

Continued on page 5

Prop 30 Revenues by District

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District</th>
<th>Estimated 2015-16 Total Revenue</th>
<th>Revenue from Prop 30</th>
<th>Percent of Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Coast</td>
<td>$178,606,256</td>
<td>$26,231,492</td>
<td>14.85%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cuesta</td>
<td>$48,216,858</td>
<td>$6,656,448</td>
<td>13.81%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Los Rios</td>
<td>$287,506,945</td>
<td>$44,288,959</td>
<td>15.40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>San Diego</td>
<td>$231,518,224</td>
<td>$35,729,682</td>
<td>15.43%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: California Community Colleges 2015-16 Advance Principal Apportionment, September Revision, Exhibit C