



UC-AFT Collaborates to Build Power and Solidarity Using Opportunities to Activate and Engage Members!

On February 26, University of California unions held rallies during the “Together We Rise” Day of Action which coincided with the opening arguments on the Janus vs. AFSCME case. Workers rose against attacks on their ability to join together and collectively negotiate better working conditions. UC-AFT members at Berkeley also participated in a rally supporting David Cole, an AFSCME worker who was attacked and arrested at a UC Regents meeting, as well as turning out to a demonstration for International Women’s Day on March 8.

Lecturers and librarians at UC Berkeley held a week-long membership



Honora St. Clair

The UC Irvine Union Coalition rallies for solidarity on February 26. Members from UC-AFT, UAW 2865, UPTe and the student body attended.

drive in February which provided an opportunity for member-volunteers to visit lecturers after class to discuss the importance of becoming active members of the union with Janus v. AFSCME on the horizon. Over the course of the week, UC-AFT gained 30 new members - many

of whom committed to taking on leadership roles within the union

The UC Student-Workers Union held a parallel drive with UC-AFT Berkeley, during which they shadowed UC-AFT members to learn how they find and talk to faculty with varying schedules and classrooms

all over campus. Together, the two unions ran a workshop on Janus where they brainstormed talking points and practiced conversations.

At UCLA, the “Together We Rise” rally marked the end of a long multi-union membership drive and the beginning of a stronger workers’ coalition on that campus. Leaders with the UC-AFT Los Angeles local participated in a multi-union membership recruitment drive on February 5-14. Over 20 UC-AFT members participated along with 18 trained member-organizers from the Los Angeles County Federation of Labor. Participants from all unions conducted 306 one-on-

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Antelope Valley College Classified’s Successful Membership Drive



CFT CCE Council Southern Vice President Carl Williams practicing his one-on-one rap with Antelope Valley College Classified President Pamela Ford.

Matthew Hardy

Antelope Valley College Federation of Classified Employees, Local 4683 hit the ground running this year by organizing a membership drive during the second week of January. In preparation for the four-day drive, they participated in a two-hour training where they reviewed logistics and best practices. They worked hard and came up with a variety of creative and strategic ways to have the best outcome.

Tabling was set as the visible focal point where members could stop by to receive information, swag, update their membership form and satisfy their sweet tooth with what everyone agreed were exceptionally good donuts. During the day, member-volunteers and staff-organizers visited workers throughout the campus to have one-on-one conversations about the importance of becoming an active member. The leadership ended the drive with general membership meetings during the day, graveyard and swing shift. Having

a meeting at the end of the drive added an extra layer of purpose and urgency to our visits. The meeting updated workers on upcoming negotiations and was an opportunity to recruit new members and gain support.

In a very short period, their membership was increased by 9% with a total recruitment of 25 new members. In addition, 64 members recommitted to their union with updated membership forms. - By Project Organizer Lucy Langworthy.

Janus vs. AFSCME: Union-Busting Coming to Supreme Court

This spring, the Supreme Court is expected to rule on a case called Janus vs. AFSCME, an attack on public sector unions led by the right-wing National Right to Work Foundation and funded by billionaires and corporate CEOs. With Trump's appointee, Neil Gorsuch, on the Court, their ruling will undoubtedly overturn a 40-year-old unanimous Supreme Court decision that approved the kind of cost-sharing arrangements known as "fair share," which provide for the collection of "agency fees" from non-members of public sector unions. Unions will still be required to represent ALL employees in the workplace, but will only receive financial support from union MEMBERS with signed union membership forms on file. All unionized public sector workplaces will become "right to work" sites.

The results of the Janus decision could be devastating to unions, which currently rely on both dues and fees to pay the costs of the legal defense of workers, to staff and maintain union offices, and to carry out all the other activities necessary to represent, inform, negotiate contracts, and ensure contracts and workers' rights aren't being violated. Under current law, while every union-represented



Courtesy of Local 1493

CFT Project Organizer Emily Rose, Skyline Economics Professor Masao Suzuki, Local 1493 Co-Vice President Katharine Harer and "The Advocate" newsletter Editor Eric Brenner help sign up non-members at Skyline College

teacher, police officer, caregiver, or other public service worker may choose whether or not to join the union, the union is required to negotiate on behalf of all workers whether they join or not. Since all the workers benefit from the union's work, it's only fair that everyone chip in toward the cost. How does paying fair share violate free speech?

Here is what our state chapter, the California Federation of Teachers, has to say: Under the current system, public employees can choose whether or not to join a union. First, workers vote on whether or not to form a union in the workplace. After a workplace majority votes for a union, workers who don't want to join

the union don't have to; they just pay a reduced fair share (agency) fee to cover the cost of bargaining and representation that the union is legally required to provide to everyone in the workplace.

However, full union dues go further, supporting political and legislative work because what can be won in collective bargaining can be taken away through politics and legislation. The Janus plaintiffs contend that their free speech is abridged by fair share fees, even though they are not paying for political advocacy. If you disagree with the outcome of a political election, you still pay taxes to the government. So, too, everyone needs to pay a fair share for the gains of union representation. When "free riders" pay nothing for the benefits all employees in a union workplace enjoy,

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Escuela Bilingue Internacional, one of the newest additions to the Bay Area French-American Federation of Teachers, Local 6563, voted to ratify their first contract with 92% approval after a year of bargaining. Members organized, reached out to parents and took action at work to ensure that they won a fair contract. Together they negotiated:

- 4% salary increase for all employees retroactive to the start of the 2017-2018 school year
- Partially covered medical, dental, vision, LTD and life insurance for part-time staff
- Ending "at-will" employment and gaining real job security after probation
- More vacation for non-teaching staff
- "Just cause" and a fair process for handling disciplines
- Arbitration to enforce the contract

"Ratifying our first contract was a wonderful experience. It was the culmination of 18 plus months of hard work and dedication. It was gratifying to see the process through with my colleagues," said Rosa Huezo, Learning Specialist and bargaining team member. Union members are excited to celebrate their success and begin to work on salary improvements for next year. - By Project Lead Organizer Valarie Bachelor



EBI Teachers filling out their CFT membership forms.

Valarie Bachelor

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others must shoulder that much heavier a burden and the union is weaker at bargaining time.

Our union, AFT 1493, has been able to actively fight for stronger contract language and regular salary increases as well as workplace protections and the ongoing defense of faculty members under attack because our union membership is robust, at just over 85%, AND because we collect monthly dues and fees from all SMCCCD faculty members. Our AFT union reps are on the ground, working with faculty to ensure our rights aren't being violated, and we maintain a full-service union office, an award-winning website and newsletter, *The Advocate*, and many other services for faculty.

Are you sure you are a union member?

Starting this month, we are contacting people who we currently have on file as "agency fee payers" to ask them to sign up to be full members. During

the week of February 5-8, we conducted a targeted campaign with the help of organizers from the CFT, asking non-members to sign up to support their union. We've found that a number of faculty think they are full members, and want to be full members, but don't have signed membership applications on file in the AFT office and are designated as "fee payers." Maybe they checked the wrong box when filling out the multitude of forms when they were hired. It happens. We've been working hard to get these faculty members signed up before the Janus case is decided. You can help by checking with us and confirming that you are a full member of the union and that you have a signed form on file to safeguard your union membership and keep our union strong!

- By Local 1493 Organizer Michelle Kern and Co-Vice President Katharine Harer, with Editor Eric Brenner, reprinted excerpts from *The Advocate* newsletter, Local 1493



Frida Caro

Cerritos College Faculty Federation of Teachers, Local 6215 member-volunteers, staff and volunteers from affiliated locals walked the college grounds for a six-day drive the last week of February. This effort is part of an ongoing campaign to prepare for the loss of agency fee and strengthen their membership unity. Cerritos added 33 new members 12 new COPE participants and had 15 local volunteers working the drive. Pictured: Pauline Acosta, part-time member-at-large.

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one organizing conversations and were able to collect over 170 membership cards. UC-AFT alone recruited 55 new members and recommitted 65 existing members.

Since last fall, UC San Diego has recruited 61 new members through the implementation of a site leadership structure. Librarians and lecturers

also had the opportunity to support their colleagues at the UC San Diego Preuss School as faculty negotiated their first contract. These hardworking teachers won job security, salary steps that support collaboration, a transparent evaluation process and salary raises for the newest teachers.

- By Organizer Erin Conley and Project Organizer Emily Rose



Valarie Bachelor

CIA faculty filling out their CFT membership forms.

negotiation," says President Ken Woytisek, Local 6439. Union member Aaron Brown said "I'm very excited about the ratification of our first contract. This will allow us to play a more significant role in the education of our students, provide greater job security and create a platform for a better communication with the college administration." - By Local 6439 Secretary Sanna Delmonico

Faculty at the Culinary Institute of America at Greystone, Local 6439, voted to ratify our first contract with 100% approval after a year of bargaining. We organized, talked to students and reached out to local elected officials during their contract campaign. Together we won:

- 3.5% salary increase for both full and part-time faculty retroactively effective to June 2017, for a total of 12.25% increase on-schedule over four years
- Labor-management committee that will work with the institute on issues that affect faculty and students
- Transparent grievance process

"I was really amazed as to how my colleagues embraced the idea of a union and their willingness to commit to over a year's



On February 26, while SCOTUS was hearing Janus, the Peralta Federation of Teachers, Local 1603 connected with members asking them to “stick” with the PFT. Stickers reading “I’m sticking with the PFT” were handed out and faculty were encouraged to recommit by signing an updated membership card, making a sign with a positive statement about the union and getting their photo taken. After that week-long membership drive, PFT reached 81% membership. With one more college drive left to go, PFT is excited to continue to grow and engage their membership. - By Local 1603 President Jennifer Shanoski

AFT Western Regional Meeting of Presidents



Sandra Weese

Local leaders Joanne Waddell and Jennifer Shanoski share their experiences running successful outreach drives. Thanks to Jennifer’s kids for supporting their mom’s presentation.

On February 9-10 in Oakland, CFT leaders from California joined AFT’s national officers and local and state federation presidents from across the Western Region to discuss and prepare for the challenges ahead.

Our members, our unions and our institutions — democracy and voting, the labor movement and public and higher education — are under attack like never before. They are going after public schools and unions because they know the labor movement and public education are the institutions in our democ-

racy that enable voice, opportunity and security.

Whether it’s the Janus case, or battles over healthcare or budgets or taxes or vouchers or voting, the lines are drawn. To win, we must engage our members and communities around the values and issues we share and this regional meeting was an opportunity for local leaders to discuss, plan and strategize.

CFT Leaders Connie Marten from Coast Classified Faculty Federation of Teachers, Stephanie Rosenblatt from Cerritos College Federation of Teachers, Jennifer Sha-

noski from Peralta Federation of Teachers, Joanne Waddell from Los Angeles College Faculty Guild, and Tim Killikelly from SF Community College Federation of Teachers along with Organizing Director Sandra Weese, hosted one of the workshops during the meeting discussing member-to-member outreach drives. The workshop focused on asking fair share agency fee payers to join the union, as well as asking existing members to recommit to our effort to build strong local unions. The Member-to-Member Outreach Drive Planning Checklist and practical tips for planning and running an effective drive were shared. Those attending the workshop gave positive feedback and appreciation to the leaders for sharing stories, lessons learned and concrete examples from their successful drives.

- By Organizing Director Sandra Weese

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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