

Faculty at PCC Organize to Affiliate with CFT

Full and part-time instructional and non-instructional faculty at Pasadena City College (PCC) have come together to decertify their existing independent association in order to form an inclusive and representative union with the CFT. With their petition accepted by the Public Employee Relations Board (PERB), faculty are now working to educate and organize their colleagues to get out the vote for CFT in a secret ballot election. Adjunct professor in social sciences Dr. Mer-



Meredith Goldsmith

Dr. Meredith Goldsmith prepares to vote “Yes” for CFT at PCC. As for a future with CFT, she asks, “With the resources and support of CFT, what if we could push for the resources we actually need to achieve the ambitious initiatives the administration sets for us?”

edith Goldsmith, comes to this effort with experience as a CFT member, and, most importantly, a drive to be a part of a strong and democratic union.

Have you been a member of CFT or AFT before? What was your experience?

I have been a proud member of the Cerritos College Faculty Federation (CCFF), Local 6215 since 2018. I have experienced the CFT through the support they give all faculty, regardless of classification. I remem-

See **Faculty at PCC** page 4

YC-AFT Member Organizers End Summer with a Bang



Trevor Krapf

YC-AFT Member Organizer Trevor Krapf hangs out on a boat.

When approached to become the new member organizers for Yuba College Federation of Teachers (YC-AFT), Local 4952, instructors Trevor Krapf and Noah Gardner were very excited. “As a political science instructor, I’ve always had an appreciation for the force for positive change organized labor can be,” said Krapf. “The escalating attacks on education by the right prompted me to get more involved. I truly believe that education is the most powerful tool we have for preserving democracy. Organizing was something I could do that had a positive impact on my profession, community and my colleagues.” Krapf and Gardner began their organizing in June 2022 in preparation for YC-AFT’s fall contract campaign. They had a tough task ahead of them: signing up at least 20 new members and getting members scattered across five campuses to fill out a bargaining survey. Through strong relationship building and persistent phone conversations, in just two months Gardner and Krapf signed up almost 30 new members and got an impressive 97 bargaining survey responses, especially impressive since YC-AFT has never put out a bargaining survey before. As YC-AFT heads into bargaining at the end of summer, Krapf is excited to continue to organize part-time faculty to win a fair contract. He says, “If part-timers are ever going to achieve equity in the CCC system, we need to work as a community and have each other’s backs”.

—By CFT Organizer Annika Mellies

ArtCenter Faculty Win Union Election and Prepare for Contract Campaign Summit

After winning their election in June to recognize their union, ArtCenter Faculty Federation (ACFF) leaders look forward to a collaborative and empowering bargaining process.

The next steps in building a foundation for ACFF include establishing a bargaining committee, contract action team (CAT) and department representative structure. Earlier this summer more than 450 of the 700 faculty cast a ballot to elect their representative bargaining committee. The bargaining team has been meeting weekly to prepare contract proposals and create an all faculty bargaining survey. Other leaders

are preparing the CAT members to circulate the bargaining survey to their colleagues and get them committed to taking action so they can win their first contract.

As the bargaining process moves forward at a clipped pace, still other leaders have filled the role of department representative. Twenty-two faculty members volunteered to act as a liaison between their department colleagues and their union leadership team. Representatives went through an all-day training one Saturday in July to learn about their legal rights and responsibilities, and practice conducting Weingarten meetings with college adminis-

trators. The representatives have already been successful at identifying department problems to resolve at the individual and collective level. For example, department representatives have helped faculty request performance reviews that were, in some cases, years delayed.

The communications committee rounds out the nascent union structure. This group of seven leaders has been responsible for updating all faculty on bargaining and worksite issues through tools like Action Network and social media. They have acted as liaison between their union and local media, and were instrumental in getting

positive coverage of the union campaign in Pasadena Weekly and other outlets. A keen eye on design drives the communications team's work, with new graphics coming out on their impressive Instagram grid.

In September, all four committees will join together for a contract campaign summit to create their strategic plan to win a contract. The retreat will also include training on bargaining strategy and campaign escalation. Dozens of leaders have committed to participating in this historic event with ACFF.

—By CFT Organizer Erin Conley

ACFF Talk Unionization with Amazon Labor Union



CFT members from San Mateo Community College and Dominican University of California celebrate labor victories with ALU President Chris Smalls (center) and ACFF organizer Arden Stern (far left).

ArtCenter Faculty Federation (ACFF) organizer Arden Stern joined Amazon Labor Union (ALU) President Chris Smalls in a discussion panel with the California Labor Federation on July 25 at the San Francisco Regency. The topic, the momentum of labor organizing and unionization spurred not only by the success of the ALU but that of educators like Stern, who led 700 faculty at the ArtCenter College of Design to unionize with CFT.

Under the theme of "How to Organize the Unorganized" union members and organizers like Stern joined ALU President Chris Smalls to share and discuss their campaign victories. For Stern, "it was such an honor to share space on the dais with Chris Smalls and other seasoned organizers writing this incredible new chapter of labor history."

—By CFT Organizers Jessica Conte and Laila Molina

CCFF Wins Big at the Bargaining Table

After a long and tumultuous round of negotiations between Cerritos College Federation of Teachers (CCFF), Local 6215 and Cerritos College, members overwhelmingly ratified their new collective bargaining agreement. CCFF President Dr. Lynn Wang credits this victory to the long-term goal of building power in her union, “When I was elected as union president, my goal was to rebuild trust for faculty to believe in their union again. I think we’ve accomplished that as a team, and by our ratification vote of 98% yes speaks very highly of that.”

CCFF Lead Negotiator and Full-Time Faculty Vice President Dr. April Bracamontes pointed out that this was a new executive board that or-



Grant Stover

CCFF members rally for a fair contract.

ganized to win this contract, “As a new board, we were able to run a real contract campaign with the help of member organizers leading the way. We identified our members’ strengths, leaned on them to get and keep people engaged, kept lines of communication open and consistently up-

dated members on negotiations.” This change in leadership coupled with member organizers who were brought on through the CFT Member Organizer program, and rank and file members taking ownership of the contract campaign showed the district that CCFF was ready to fight for the contract that faculty deserve.

CCFF Part-Time Faculty Vice President Dr. Mariam Youssef is excited about closing the gap and working towards parity for part-timers, “We won a 23% raise for part-time instructional faculty, held the line with COLA and increased rates for workers with different education levels.” Rank and file part-time faculty activist Dr. Bobbi-Lee Smart also noted that, “Getting more office hours for part-time faculty was also big. We do

a lot of work outside of the classroom that isn’t compensated, and now we’re able to actually get paid for at least some of it.”

Member organizer and co-chair of the membership committee Lisa Blod saw a difference in how organizing with students shifted the balance of power as well, “We brought pom poms to commencement, and we were able to have a presence that supported our contract campaign. We brought faculty together in a very tangible and visible way. It fostered a sense of community and strength in our union, and with our students. Also, the presence of faculty, staff and students at the board of trustees meeting was big. We had members and student allies speak to our issues.”

Dr. Bracamontes noted that the contract cam-

See [CCFF Wins](#) page 4



Grant Stover

CCFF President Dr. Lynn Wang speaks to the urgency of an inclusive union contract.

paign took real membership participation to win and that there was an added challenge of being a majority women leadership, "There was a lot of invisible labor that was done and that goes unacknowledged. It wasn't seen as work, and that was a struggle because it felt like we were working all the time drafting emails, creating hustles, phone banking, negotiating, gathering public comments and the day-to-day work that isn't seen. As women, we got a lot of criticism for being soft on the district. When our plan started to work, we saw our members who brought this

criticism buy into our plan. We recognized the talents we had weren't enough, so gaining the last push of trust and influx of members, and incorporating our former president on the team to show their support really showed that our union was united."

Dr. Wang summed up her view of union leadership, "I view union work as service. I view it as a way to help people, to make sure our members are safe and have what they need to find success. Over the past two years, we communicated the policies and procedures to our members. It built trust among our

membership and even members that disagreed with us, they recognized our commitment to sharing the facts, fighting for our issues and for our health and safety in the middle of a pandemic."

The contract campaign and ratification not only succeeded in energizing the current membership, but 16 new members joined directly after the vote. The organizing doesn't stop here, but CCFF showed building power through union organization is the best way to win at the bargaining table.

-By CFT Organizer Grant Stover

Faculty at PCC continued from page 1

ber attending a workshop they organized for adjuncts learning how to access Employment Development Department (EDD) benefits. They show up in-person to our demonstrations against the administration and board of trustees. They supported us as we sought the COLA that the governor earmarked for us. They have all of our backs, and adjuncts are never pitted against full-time or non-instructional faculty.

What does union membership mean to you? What role does it play in your organizing?

It means we have a strong community and a culture of supporting

each other at our workplace. We get detailed updates about contract negotiations. There are seats dedicated to all types of faculty on our board. My positive experience as a member of CCFF drove me to organize at Pasadena City College, as I saw CFT as the main difference between feeling like a supported member of a strong campus community at Cerritos, and feeling devalued and exploited at Pasadena.

What do you think you will gain from being a union member with CFT at PCC?

I think we will create a union structure with dedicated representation

for all faculty-- adjuncts, librarians, non-instructional and full-time. From this organizing effort with CFT, I have learned about some of the poor pay and working conditions for counseling and non-instructional faculty, which I was ignorant of as a siloed adjunct. With a union that truly represents all of us, we will have the power to make much-needed changes that will benefit the students, not the administrators.

-By PCC Adjunct Faculty Meredith Goldsmith and CFT Organizer Jessica Conte



California affiliate of the American Federation of Teachers, AFL-CIO, representing education 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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