



Tilden Contract Victory

In June 2020 despite a global pandemic and months of virtual negotiations, the teachers at Tilden Preparatory School ratified their first contract. With a phenomenal 80% voter turnout and 97% voting in favor of contract

ratification, this thrilling and euphoric moment for the Tilden community was a hard-won victory and the direct result of tremendous unit support and teamwork.

Teachers at Tilden Prep, a small private school that specializes in one-on-one education, organized

with CFT in June 2019 to address a lack of adequate preparation time and unstable hours. These problems contributed to a stressful workplace for teachers and students alike. A passion for educating students at a high standard led a dedicated group of teachers to reach

out to CFT, and an enthusiastic union campaign resulted in a supermajority voting yes. At the bargaining table, teachers turned out by the dozen to advocate for their students, tirelessly dedicating their evenings off to union work and often staying late into the night. Many teach-

ers also signed petitions, advocated for school safety at city council meetings, and joined committees to enlist parent and teacher involvement.

When COVID became a reality, teachers continued their hard work by continuing to show up to Zoom negotiations, holding signs that advocated for fair working and learning conditions alongside community leaders and activists. Parents joined in as well voicing their sup-

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Tilden Bargaining Team after reaching an agreement at their final Zoom negotiations session.

Solidarity at Lone Mountain



Pedro Lange Churión

Faculty at the University of San Francisco have felt the economic impact of the ongoing public health crisis particularly hard. Yet the administration's initial response asking workers to shoulder the burden instead of utilizing the reserve fund, showed just how far they have strayed from their values of justice through education.

In response, around 50 activists from 5 different campus unions and the San Francisco Labor Council turned out to Lone Mountain campus on June 27. The socially distant action, with most people in cars and a small but mighty loud contingent on the sidewalk, took the issue directly to University President Father Fitzgerald who was 20 feet away at an official function. And it had the intended effect! Just 18 days later members of the University of San Francisco Faculty Association, Local 4269 (USFFA) were voting to ratify a memorandum of understanding that protected hard won conditions in the long term and saved jobs in the short term.

-By CFT Project Organizer Lachlan Batchelor

USFFA members show their passion and pride.

ADFAC Organizes Anti-Racism Town Hall

“Actually, we who engage in nonviolent direct action are not the creators of tension. We merely bring to the surface the hidden tension that is already alive.”
- Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

Letter from a Birmingham Jail

On July 16, our union Adjunct Faculty United, Local 6106 (ADFAC) held its first online townhall on anti-racism in our district, North Orange County Community College District. The idea was sparked by the resurgence of the Black Lives Matter movement this summer and the work our union did to remove the portrait and honorary webpage of Louis E. Plummer. In the words of our President Lauren Mata, “As a union, our work in the labor movement should be to ensure equitable treatment for our campus community.”

Louis E. Plummer was the founding president of Fullerton College. Plummer “dedicated” over 30 years of his life to his lifelong passion: education (at a time when segrega-

tion was the law of the land). “The next time you walk past the blush pink elaborate structure at the intersection of Chapman Avenue and Lemon Street, remember the countless contributions of a great man: Louis Plummer” writes a staff writer for the Fullerton College newspaper, The Hornet.

What is often left out of the story is that Plummer was an open member of the Orange County Ku Klux Klan.

At the time that this article was written in 2016, his portrait was on display in the Fullerton College Library. In my time as a faculty member in the Ethnic Studies department at Cypress and Fullerton Colleges, I had no idea that the portrait, let alone Plummer, ever existed. In all the “diversity” or “equity” related meetings I attended, it was never brought up. Not once. I knew something was wrong.

I, like many of us, became involved with ADFAC because we saw injustice at work. Instead

of leaving, we committed ourselves to making a difference in our district. We weren’t “overexaggerating” or “being snowflakes.” We were just doing what Dr. King did in 1963, “we merely bring to the surface the hidden tension that is already alive.”

This webinar was first conceived in the midst of the George Floyd and Black Lives Matter uprisings. We, ADFAC, maintained our commitment to anti-racism by putting our values and morals into action. We began with the question “what would anti-racism in our district look like?” In order to answer the question, union leadership reached out remotely to the membership over the summer.

On July 16, faculty showed up in force. Over 25 faculty members logged into the Zoom webinar. I moderated with the help of ADFAC President Lauren Mata, CFT Organizer Grant Stover and ADFAC Executive Director Dr. Bobbi-Lee Smart. Our main goal for the webinar was to listen and strat-

egize.

The results were as intersectional as we expected them to be. Women faculty of color spoke about past instances of racist harassment and until now had not had an opportunity to speak up. Other faculty expressed frustration regarding re-hire rights and protections for adjuncts.

Challenging racism is a dangerous endeavor, but a mandatory one. It is even more challenging during a global pandemic, but through organizing tools like Hustle, Zoom and phone banking we’ve been able to build our union community and fight racism, historically and presently, in our district.

Our union will be hosting more webinars and town halls in the future. We are always asking members to make their voices heard. We are here to help. We are here to fight. We are here to win. Can you help too?

-By ADFAC Grievance Chair Jose Zamora

UC-AFT Ramps Up Contract Campaign With Big Hello for President Drake

A summer heatwave and the COVID-19 pandemic didn’t stop University Council AFT members from making a big statement to newly appointed University of California President Dr. Michael



UC-AFT members line the street in front of the UCI Chancellor’s residence on August 17 to deliver a letter welcoming President Drake and demanding job security for lecturers.

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Marin Educators Organize Around School Reopening

In early June, the Marin Public Health Office alongside the Marin County Superintendent of Education released lax guidelines around K-12 schools reopening. In order to push back and demand safe working conditions for all educators and staff in Marin, education leaders came together to form the Marin Educators for Safe Schools coalition. In a few weeks, over 500 educators and 1,500 parents and community members mobilized to support the coalition. They attended zoom meetings, mobilized to attend local board of trustees' meetings, talked to their friends and neighbors and signed petitions. Keeping the pressure on, education leaders planned and mobilized for a press conference and car caravan to



Educators, parents, students and community members rally for the safe reopening of schools in Marin.

the Marin County Office of Education. Over 250 cars participated in the caravan, 100 people attended the press conference live and over 150 watched it live on Facebook. The next day Governor Newsom announced new guidelines for school reopening for counties on the watchlist like Marin. Armed with the new guidelines and the mass showing of public

support, education leaders negotiated distance learning protocols and in-person safety protocols. The work isn't over yet. With the election right around the corner, the Marin Educators for Safe Schools will now begin to organize around Proposition 15, the Schools and Communities Ballot Measure. If passed, Prop. 15 would bring in billions of dol-

lars for schools and vital services by taxing large landowning corporations like Disney and Chevron. People power ensured that schools would open safely this year, and people power is needed once again to ensure that all California schools are fully funded.

-By CFT Organizer Valarie Bachelor

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port for the educators who work with their children every day.

Due to our unity in negotiations, Tilden teachers succeeded in ratifying

a contract that includes such contractual gains as binding arbitration and union security. And perhaps even more gratifying, Tilden teachers are now

closer and stronger than ever. At one late night bargaining session, a teacher expressed how wonderful it felt to be amongst family. Indeed, we are a fam-

ily now and proud of the partnership with CFT that helped bring us together.

-By Tilden Teacher and Bargaining Committee Member Lara Fowler

ERFT Wins Excellent Contract That Improves and Protects Working Conditions

After successfully recalling two problematic school board members at El Rancho Unified School District, (see June 2020 Get Organized for more info) El Rancho Federation of Teachers, Local 3467 (ERFT) settled their contract with major improvements and wins for members. ERFT was in negotiations for over nine months prior to the recall, and in just two bargaining sessions post-school board recall elections ERFT was able to secure a solid contract.

Bargaining victories include a 2% wage increase, an additional 6 step wage increase for Mental Health Liaisons and Psychologists, continuation of National Board Certification which guarantees step increases for teachers upon board certification and as of now no changes in health care.

These achievements were only possible after organizing to recall the school board members and involving hundreds of members in the process. For icing on the cake, the third problematic school board member, whose term was up in November 2020, will not be running for re-election! After over two years of hard work, ERFT is a model for how to organize members and the community in a fight that achieves gains both at the bargaining table and at the community level.

-By CFT Project Organizer Charlotte Bowman

Antelope Valley Unions Work Together for Change

No one from Antelope Valley College (AVC) was shocked when they opened their email accounts to find another long missive from Antelope Valley College President Ed Knudson. Although, they were shocked to read his personal attack of a current student who criticized his use of the campus listserv.

It was the last straw for union leaders at AVC. For months leaders of Antelope Valley College Federation of Classified Employees, Local 4683 (AVCFCE) and Antelope Valley College Federation of Teachers, Local 4683A (AVCFT) had been go-

ing back and forth with campus administrators on agreements related to COVID-19. But they had also been subject to the whims of a campus president pushing through a reorganization plan that many say overlooks longstanding district employees because they are black.

Frustrated with the racist campus climate, AVCFCE President Pamela Ford and AVCFT President Aurora Burd organized their members to make public comments at a board of trustees' meeting in July. More than 25 members from both locals submitted comments criticizing the reorganization and

condemning Knudson's egregious treatment of the student he targeted.

Following the successful mobilization at the board of trustees' meeting, the classified and faculty unions at AVC developed a plan to circulate a campus climate survey to members and present the findings at an upcoming trustees' meeting. The unions are using the momentum from this summer to ask members to fill out the survey and invite nonmembers to join so their voices can finally be heard.

-By CFT Organizer Erin Conley

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Drake. Dozens of members across the state joined caravans of cars and bikes decorated with messages from their contract campaign to mark the beginning of Drake's tenure on August 17.

The August 17 car caravans were the latest in a series of mobilizations that UC-AFT leaders have implemented since last year when lecturers began negotiating with UC management. Before the pandemic, members mobilized for in person negotiations and added their names to banners declaring support for contract demands. Leaders made quick adjustments to their plans when the

pandemic hit, and shifted their efforts to digital mobilizations and actions.

Members were excited for the first in person action since March, and followed all social distancing and mask guidelines for groups. Over 35 cars participated in the UCLA caravan where UC-AFT members met up with allies from UAW 2865 and AFSCME 3299 to circle in front of the UCLA chancellor's house for an hour. At UC Irvine, the caravan stopped in front of the gated chancellor's residence to deliver their letter, and were met by a friend of Chancellor Gillman who offered to take the letter directly to him.

Each campus determined the route for the caravans and how to deliver their messages, but the actions were connected by a shared campaign priority: job security for lecturers.

Lecturers must reapply for their jobs every year unless they have continuing appointments. In order to qualify for a continuing appointment, a lecturer must teach at a UC campus for 18 quarters or 12 semesters. It takes six years for a lecturer to experience any kind of job security, but members are determined to change that.

-By CFT Organizer Erin Conley

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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