

## Membership Drive in Motion

By Michael Messina

In an effort to increase the membership base of AFT 1521 in light of recent court developments that aim to curb the power of unions, the Guild is conducting a campaign to reach out to LACCD faculty, not only to explain the benefits of union membership but also to solicit their feedback about issues that concern them.

In an ongoing attack on unions in this country, court cases have been cropping up that challenge the agency fee payer rule. Any employee under a union contract, whether a union member or not, must pay a fee to cover bargaining and administrative costs. Many so-called “right to work” states have already eliminated this option. Unions took a hit last year when the conservative majority of the Supreme Court ruled against agency fee in the case of *Harris v. Quinn*. Another case in the works in California, *Friedrichs v. CTA*, poses a similar threat. If agency fee is eliminated, it would be a crippling blow to unions and their power to effectively bargain for and represent employees.

The Guild’s card-signing effort is an attempt to not just fight back but to educate, grow, and empower faculty by signing up agency fee payers as official members.

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## Victory!



Members of the Faculty Guild celebrated the victories of our candidates in the race for LACCD Board of Trustees on election night, March 3. Pictured here, from left: Guild Political Director Natalina Monteiro, Sydney Kamlager (Seat #2), Guild President Joanne Waddell, and Mike Fong (Seat #7).

See Complete Coverage on pg 4

## Intern Program Making a Difference

Two new coordinators join the team

By Kelly Ross

The AFT 1521 internship program continues to flourish and promote activism among youth. The program, which recently hired two new coordinators, allows community college students the opportunity to get actively involved in their community through firsthand experience in the world of organized labor and political campaigns.

“We teach student organizing and political skills,” said the program’s director Herlim Li. The 1521 sponsored program has roughly four to five interns on each of the nine LACCD campuses. “The interns register voters, staff phone banks, and are heavily involved in every aspect of cam-

aigning.”  
Marlene Buenrostro, one of the two new intern coordinators, is excited for what is to

come in 2015. “Our interns are currently working on the Los Angeles Raise the Wage campaign, so they are very busy with that right now,” Buenrostro said. The campaign calls for a minimum wage of \$15.25 an hour in LA, up from the current \$9 an hour; wage theft enforcement; and time off for illness. The interns are passionate that there must be a livable minimum wage and full time workers should not be living in poverty.

Juliana Nascimento has also joined the ranks of the intern coordinating staff. “Juliana is a recent Cal State LA grad who was involved in a similar



AFT 1521 interns rally to raise the minimum wage in L.A.

intern program there so she is a very experienced organizer,” said Li. “Marlene is a former intern from our program and recent Cal State Northridge grad so she knows what we do and how ben-

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# President's Message

## Strength of the Guild Lies in Its Membership



Guild President  
Joanne Waddell

There's a good reason for starting this issue of Read On with a page one article on our card-signing membership drive. The strength of our Guild depends on having a committed membership and is the primary reason for our success over the years. It's allowed us to focus on our two primary areas of member services. One is education – such as our Benefits & Retirement Conferences and our recent hiring workshops. The other is representation – going to bat for our faculty on the campuses by solving potential grievances before they arise, or if necessary, filing grievances and seeing them to resolution.

So we are returning to our roots, when in the early days of our union, member organizing was essential to build the strength of the Guild. Although the overwhelming majority of LACCD faculty have signed cards and are members, now is the time to get everyone on board to protect the

strides we have made.

Why? And why now? Recent and upcoming judicial decisions, going as high at the Supreme Court, as well as bills wending their way through the legislative system, threaten to undermine the power of unions. (See page 1 for more details.) These external threats call for extraordinary efforts to ensure that all of the faculty we represent are members of AFT 1521, and not just fee payers.

Over the next few months, the Guild will be undertaking a campaign to build power by signing up fee payers who are not official union members. We will be working closely with the CFT as part of its statewide membership organizing initiative.

We've just celebrated 50 years of affiliation with AFT and we are returning to our roots so that we can carry on from a position of strength as we face challenges from those who would like to see unions weaken and disappear. We are

stronger together – in bargaining and in enforcement of our contract. Join us! Be sure that the colleagues in your department are actual members of the Guild. They can check their pay warrants to see if it says “member.” Contact your Chapter President (they're listed under the College Chapters link at [www.aft1521.org](http://www.aft1521.org)) if you need membership cards. All it takes is a signature!

### SAVE THE DATE!

#### ANNUAL GUILD MEMBERSHIP MEETING

FRIDAY, MAY 29  
9 TO 11 AM  
LOCATION: TBA

## Motion Approved at Executive Board January 20, 2015

Approved an additional \$200,000 to elect Guild-endorsed candidates for the Board of Trustees

## Motion Approved at Executive Board February 17, 2015

Endorsed a resolution in support of the Black Lives Matter movement

## Scholarship Opportunities Available for Students

With multiple scholarships currently available through AFT 1521, it's time to spread the word to your faculty colleagues that this free money is out there for students. At \$1,000 each, these awards can be critical to a student's ability to attend college, so please let faculty and students know about these opportunities:

- Bill Doyle Scholarship – Deadline to apply is Sunday, May 17, 2015
- Jean Trapnell Scholarship – Deadline to apply is Sunday, May 17, 2015
- Hy Weintraub Scholarship (2 available) – Deadline to apply is Sunday, May 17, 2015

For application forms and more information, please go to [www.aft1521.org](http://www.aft1521.org) and click on the 'Scholarships' tab.



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### Staff Box

The newsletter of the  
**LA College  
Faculty Guild**

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# Campus Spotlight: LA Southwest College

Los Angeles Southwest College has been getting something of a facelift over the past few years with a number of new construction and renovation projects throughout the campus. The latest is the new School of Career and Technical Education and the renovation of the Cox Building, including the refurbished Little Theatre and Library.

A ribbon cutting ceremony commemorated the opening of the new facilities.

The new CTE building came in at right around \$17 million, totals 53,000 square feet and features solar panels and wind turbines on the rooftop. The building houses five 45-student classrooms as well as a variety of other spaces including faculty offices, computer classrooms, an environmental/chemistry lab, conference rooms and a 264-person capacity multipurpose room.

The Cox Building tops 115,000 square feet (not including the Annex and Little Theatre) and is home to the Founders Library on floors two through four. This includes a teacher learning center, music library, offices, study and reading rooms, library stacks and an art gallery. The Little Theatre is more than 35,000 square feet with almost 500 seats, an orchestra pit, stage and stage house.

## MEMBERSHIP DRIVE CAMPAIGN

(Continued from page 1)

“We represent all 4,200 faculty in the district, but not everyone is a member,” said AFT 1521 President Joanne Waddell.

Becoming a member is simple – all it takes is a signature – yet it offers a multitude of benefits and opportunities to have a voice and be a part of the decision-making process within the union.

Leading the charge for this initiative is Membership Organizer Elynar Moreno, who also teaches as an adjunct instructor in the Sociology Department at Los Angeles Southwest College.

“Unions in general are under attack, so we’re going on the offensive,” she said, noting that the idea is to let everyone know that the union is here for them and to shed light on how

the union can improve the lives of its members as well as the community. “When all is said and done, the members are part of the larger community. The advocacy our union provides extends to a wider population beyond those whom this union represents.”

With that said, the benefits of membership (which requires no additional fees or contributions) includes the right to vote on contracts and in Guild leadership elections, access to a variety of insurance options and benefits (including pet insurance!), discounts on health clubs, recreation, car rental, and phone plans, and the opportunity to serve as a Guild officer, executive board delegate, and convention delegate.

## IMPORTANT DATES

- **May 12 – Executive Council Training**
- **May 19 – CFT President Joshua Pechthalt and Executive Director Dan Martin to Speak at Executive Board**



## CFT Convention 2015

### Organize, Fight Back, Win the Future

Guild members joined 500 other delegates in Manhattan Beach in March for the 73rd annual CFT Convention. Its theme, “Organize, Fight Back, Win the Future,” was reflected in the line-up of speakers and workshops. Of particular concern were issues facing public education, such as accreditation, investment in public education, the student debt crisis, and improving our institutions to meet the needs of our communities.

State Superintendent of Public Instruction Tom Torlakson empha-

sized the importance of renewing Prop 30 or something similar to continue restoring programs that were cut during the recession. State Controller Betty Yee shared her personal story to explain how public education was the road to economic opportunity for her and her family. San Francisco State professor Jeff Duncan-Andrade spoke of the need to meet low income students where they are and be sensitive to the struggles they face in their everyday lives. Attendees also heard from a family member of one of the

43 Mexican students who “disappeared” last year, students who had been protesting the government’s draconian educational “reforms.”

AFT 1521’s EDD Ombudsman, Grace Chee, presented at a workshop on technology and the Guild’s Chief Negotiator, Armida Ornelas, presented at a workshop on the future of adult education.

Current statewide officers Joshua Pechthalt (President) and Jeff Freitas (Secretary Treasurer) were re-elected, as was 1521 Guild President Joanne Waddell as one of 24 CFT vice presidents. The Community College Council elected Waddell as its Southern California Vice President. The Council also re-elected Guild Treasurer Amy Roberts as one of its four Part-Time Reps and Pierce Executive Board delegate Kathy Holland as its secretary.

The Guild won a Member-to-Member Outreach Award for Political Activism for its student intern program as well as a Membership Growth Award. AFT 1521 walked away with nine communications awards, including best online newsletter for *Read On*.



CFT President Joshua Pechthalt.



L.A. County Federation of Labor Executive Secretary-Treasurer and AFT 1521 member Rusty Hicks.

# Election Results: Guild Welcomes New LACCD Trustees

**F**our Board of Trustee candidates – Mike Fong, Andra Hoffman, Sydney Kamlager, and incumbent Scott Svonkin – were elected on March 3 to the LACCD governing board.

Mike Fong was seated March 25 as an interim trustee to fill the seat vacated by Miguel Santiago when he began his term in the State Assembly. All four trustees-elect will be sworn in at the Board of Trustees meeting on July 8 and will begin serving their four-year terms.

“The Guild looks forward to working with these well-qualified and capable Board members to

move our District forward to fulfill our mission and achieve our goals,” said Guild President Joanne Waddell.

In other election news, several of our Guild-endorsed L.A. City Council candidates won their seats:

- For District 6 – Nury Martinez
- For District 8 – Marqueece Harris-Dawson
- For District 10 – Herb J. Wesson
- For District 14 – Jose Huizar

## Spotlight on Contract Changes – Article 15

### One in a series highlighting recent changes to our CBA

The changes to this article benefit adjunct faculty in a few ways. First, eligibility for the priority list is given to those adjuncts who are on a seniority list. (If there are enough assignments to go around, those not on a seniority list may be given one after eligible adjuncts are offered assignments.) Another change is the elimination of the priority calculation table for adjuncts. There is now one priority list for adjunct faculty rather than separate lists for sum-

mer and winter intersessions. This restructuring was made to achieve a true rotation, so that an adjunct instructor who taught in either intersession goes to the bottom of the list, giving those who haven't taught in an intersession a chance to do so.

These changes do not affect full-time faculty, whose priority for assignments remain the same and who still have separate priority lists for summer and winter.

beneficial to students. It gives them a great amount of exposure and life skills. It helps them develop abilities they never knew they had. It's a really amazing program and I'm just happy to be a part of it.”

### INTERN PROGRAM

(Continued from page 1)

eficial this is for students. We are very lucky to have both of them.”

The new coordinators are enthusiastic about working with the interns and helping them better their skills. “I was thrilled when Herlim called me and offered me a position,” Buenrostro said. “It is so

## Adjunct Faculty News

By Phyllis Eckler and  
Kathy Holland, co-chairs

**T**he Adjunct Faculty Issues Committee and the Guild hosted several workshops over the last month to share information about the application and interview process for the many new full-time positions that will be available beginning in fall of 2015. Adjunct faculty who attended these workshops learned the ins and outs of applying for tenure track jobs and even got to practice interview skills in small supportive groups. If you missed these “Get the Job” workshops, you can go to the Guild website at [aft1521.org](http://aft1521.org) to see the powerpoint presentations under the Adjunct Faculty tab and then by clicking on “Employment Resources.” The Guild hopes to welcome many of its adjunct colleagues back to LACCD campuses in the fall, as new probationary contract faculty!

AFIC and the Guild are discussing a proposal to move adjunct faculty toward parity by adding a step to all credit adjunct faculty load areas, using the State parity money (called the Equity Differential 1 in our District). This money

is not part of the salary agreement and so using it now to increase the pay of long-term part-timers would be a beneficial way of increasing retirement benefits and off-setting the cost of mandated health care premiums. This proposal would have to be approved by our Guild's E-board and then brought to the District in the form of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for agreement. We believe that adjunct faculty in credit load areas (especially those in the 12-18 hour disciplines, who only received a 2.5-2.8% raise in 2014-15) would welcome a move to increase pay for experience and longevity. The proposal would also clean up the adjunct salary schedule so that whatever differentials can be put into the base are placed there making the pay scale clearer to employees. For more information on this proposal please contact your Chapter President or Adjunct Faculty Issues Committee campus representative.

The Guild is embarking on a membership drive to increase awareness of the benefits of Guild membership. Adjunct faculty are encouraged to find out more about union representation and how it supports their work as faculty members. Our new contract has benefits for adjunct faculty that only an experienced union negotiating team could deliver. We hope you will join our ranks by filling out a membership card, if you are not already a member. Remember, membership costs you nothing extra!



CONGRATULATIONS – Student Intern Coordinator Herlim Li accepted the CFT's Outreach Award for Political Activism on behalf of the Guild. Herlim is pictured here with CFT President Joshua Pechthalt and CFT Secretary-Treasurer Jeff Freitas at the convention.