



BIG CHANGES FOR COMMUNITY COLLEGES?

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Vote For Education!

Dear Friend,

Please join me and other community college faculty by voting in the March 3rd election for the following highly qualified candidates for the Los Angeles Community College District Board of Trustees:

- Seat #1 – **Francesca Vega**, College Policy Director
- Seat #3 – **Sydney Kamlager**, Education Policy Advisor
- Seat #5 – **Scott Svonkin**, LACCD Boardmember
- Seat #7 – **Mike Fong**, Educator/Job Trainer

These candidates have the background, experience, and commitment to provide excellent leadership for our community colleges. There will be no run-off in this election so the highest vote-getter in each seat on March 3rd will be the winner.

Please spread the word with family, friends, and neighbors who live in our district. They count on you for advice in this race.

Thank you.



Francesca Vega
Seat #1



Sydney Kamlager
Seat #3



Scott Svonkin
Seat #5



Mike Fong
Seat #7



Los Angeles College Faculty Guild—AFT, Local 1521

Remember to Vote in Mar. 3 Election!

Proposed Budget Could Revitalize Community College System

Thanks in part to Prop 30, District to increase full-time faculty ranks

By Kelly Ross

California Governor Jerry Brown's 2015-2016 budget proposal allocated a significant amount of funds to both community colleges and K-12 education, welcome news to area community colleges struggling to provide a quality education on shoestring budgets.

According to AFT 1521 President Joanne Waddell, out of the total budgeted for education, community colleges will receive approximately 11 percent of the funding. Of that, the Los Angeles Community College District will receive about 9 percent.

"This is the best budget community colleges have seen in six years," Waddell said. "It signals the success of Prop 30 and the end of the recession."

One of the highlights of Brown's proposal is the return of

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Judge Rules Against ACCJC

LACCD gears up for Commission's visit in 2016

A San Francisco Superior Court Judge ruled against the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges (ACCJC) last month, finding that the accrediting body broke four laws in its reckless and unethical attempts to disaccredit City College of San Francisco (CCSF).

The City of San Francisco filed a lawsuit last year against the ACCJC after the commission issued a "show cause" sanction against CCSF that threatened to revoke the school's accreditation. In his ruling, Judge Curtis Karnow of the San Francisco Superior Court found that the ACCJC violated the college's right to due process and ordered the commission to reevaluate its decision to disaccredit the college.

Joshua Pechthalt, President of the California Federation of Teachers, felt that the judge's ruling in favor of CCSF was significant.

"It says clearly that the commission broke the law," Pechthalt said in a statement. "Its bad behavior was revealed in this trial and demonstrates the need for reform of community college accreditation in California."

Carl Friedlander, former President of AFT Local 1521 and current Faculty Grievance Rep at L.A. City College, is all too familiar with ACCJC's antics.

"With the ACCJC, it has always been a nightmare, and I'm sure it will be again," said Friedlander.

With the anticipated ACCJC accreditation review of the nine LACCD colleges scheduled for 2016, Friedlander does not know what to expect.

"Nobody is looking forward to it; you never know what they're going to do," he

said. "The only thing that would protect us from their sanctions is if we had a member of our staff on their council."

In a statement, CFT President Pechthalt said that "the ACCJC is not a fair and con-

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Raise the Wage!



Shigueru Tsuha (far left) and Zack Knorr (far right) represent AFT 1521 at the Raise the Wage rally outside Los Angeles City Hall on Jan. 30.

Spotlight on Contract Changes

Do you know what's changed for 2014-17?

This is the first in a series of articles explaining changes in our 2014-17 collective bargaining agreement.

Article 16: Adjunct Assignments, Retention and Seniority

Background: From the negotiations survey answered by faculty before negotiations began, we identified the following issue as a top faculty priority: Many adjuncts said that although they had taught in a discipline for many years, they were sometimes assigned one class while brand new adjuncts not yet on a seniority list were given more than one class. The implication of this concern is not only salary but also eligibility for adjunct benefits. The Guild team worked with management to address this concern.

What changed: Article 16.B limits faculty who are not on a seniority list to one assignment. Department/division chairs are to offer hourly rate assignments for

classroom and non-classroom faculty in this order:

1. By using the seniority list in order.
2. By using the second class/assignment seniority list, if one exists. (No new names have been added to this list since spring 2000.)
3. Once everyone on the first and second seniority lists have been offered an assignment, consideration for additional assignments should first be given to adjunct faculty on the seniority list, using the seniority list as a pool, not necessarily in seniority order.

A faculty member not on a seniority list will be limited to one assignment. However, a department/division chair may request an exception, which must be approved by the vice president or designee in consultation with the AFT chapter president. Examples of exceptions may include the need for special

expertise or innovation.

What now? Although ratification of the contract was delayed due to negotiations over salary and benefits, the Guild was insistent that this change be made promptly. Working with District HR and chapter presidents on the campuses, we were able to ensure that the campuses were using the new language when making spring 2015 offers of assignment. But as with all of the provisions in our contract, it's up to you – the faculty – to check the seniority lists and schedule of classes to be sure Article 16.B is adhered to. If you have any questions about the implementation of this new language, contact your chapter president.



Find Us On Facebook!

www.facebook.com/AFT1521

Motions Passed at the Nov. 18, 2014 Executive Board Meeting

Approved the hire of a full-time executive director to assist the Guild president, contingent upon presentation of a job description and salary.

Approved the revised proposed 2014-15 budget.

Accepted the CPA's audit report.

Endorsed Scott Svonkin for Seat #5 on the Board of Trustees.

Moved \$300,000 from the COPE fund to the Coalition for Community College Excellence to support our endorsed Board candidates: Sydney Kamlager, Francesca Vega, Mike Fong, and Scott Svonkin.

Agreed to print 6,000 copies of the contract.

Adopted the CFT 2015 Convention election timeline.

Approved reimbursement of mileage, parking, and Convention-sponsored meals for all Guild delegates who attend the 2015 CFT Convention.

Motion Passed at the Dec. 16, 2014 Executive Board Meeting

Approved an amended CFT Community College Council (CCC) resolution requesting that the Governor and the Department of Finance allocate additional funds in the January 2015 budget proposal for parity/equity compensation and paid office hours for part-time temporary faculty in the California Community College system in the amount of \$30 million for paid office hours and \$50 million for parity/equity compensation and that the Governor and State Legislature allocate \$100 million for the conversion of existing part-time temporary positions to full-time faculty positions.

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Big Changes for Community Colleges?

Free tuition, bachelor's degrees are
big-picture proposals

This isn't your mother's
community college.

Well, maybe it is.

Two new, distinct policies may revolutionize community colleges in California: the ability to earn a four-year degree, and the possibility of up to two years of free tuition.

President Barack Obama recently proposed making all community colleges free for students for up to two years as long as the student maintains a C average. If the proposal is passed, millions of new students could have the opportunity to further their education, making community colleges ubiquitous to K-12 education.

However, the President's proposal isn't exactly breaking new ground, at least in the Golden State. The California Master Plan for Higher Education originally dictated that community colleges in the state should be tuition-free. The passage of Prop 13 in 1978 eliminated free tuition.

"Free community college is how it should be," said Joanne Waddell, President of AFT 1521. "That's just how it was. The California Master Plan intended free college. We would welcome a return to that plan."

Implementation of a free community college system would be significant but not without its challenges, includ-

ing funding. The details of this proposal have not been fully disclosed, and various aspects of the plan were left up in the air, leaving several unanswered questions. So, it is natural for many in the education community to be a little skeptical of the proposal.

"With every silver lining there is a little rain," Waddell said. "Sometimes the devil is in the details. So, we would want to see the details of the proposal before it is something we commit to."

While the plan for free community college is still in its infancy, its fruition would be groundbreaking. Free community college "would be beneficial for faculty, staff and administrators, but mostly for the students," said Waddell. "That is who we are here for."

In other big news, the California Community Colleges Board of Governors approved four-year degree programs at 15 community colleges in the state. The scope of the degrees available is limited, and the pilot program will be implemented over the next three years. West Los Angeles College is one of the schools selected for the pilot program. West will offer a dental hygiene program.

"We haven't seen access to education like this since around 1985," Waddell said.

*"Free community college
is how it should be."*

— AFT 1521 President Joanne Waddell

Adjunct Spotlight: Denice Labertew

Putting Sociology into Practice

By Michael Messina

Denice Labertew, adjunct instructor in the Sociology departments of Los Angeles Valley College and Los Angeles Mission College, prides herself on making a real-world connection in her lessons and in her daily life. She describes sociology as the exploration of how society and individuality influence one another.

"It gives us information. It helps us to look at things a little differently about the connections between us and our systems at large," Labertew said. "But it also positions us to be able to really think broadly about some of the social issues that impact us every day."

Outside of the classroom, Labertew is the Director of Advocacy Services for the California Coalition Against Sexual Assault. For the last 20 years she has been an advocate and activist for women and women's rights.

"In particular, my experience has been working with victims of sexual assault and domestic violence and helping to ensure that their rights are protected, not only in courts, but also at the legislative level," Labertew said.

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Denice Labertew

PROPOSED BUDGET

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the Faculty Obligation Number (FON). As the community college system struggled to make ends meet during the recession, colleges were forced to put the FON for full-time hires on hold. That restriction has been lifted, and the LACCD will be hiring 150 full-time positions, 70 of those are replacement positions.

"This year the FON was reactivated, and we are thrilled to hire full-time faculty," Waddell said.

Waddell added that the District "will not be offering more sections commensurate with 80 new hires." When the recession hit, and faculty cuts took place, many courses were dissolved. However, the District is working hard and "we are still trying to restore courses that we had before," she continued. Waddell hopes that community colleges will flourish under this new budget and evolve into an even stronger education system.

Much of the credit for more funding for education is due

at least in part to the passage of Proposition 30, the 2012 ballot initiative that increased personal income taxes for the state's highest earners and added a .25 percent sales tax increase. The sales tax increase expires at the end of 2016, and the income tax increase expires at the end of 2018.

"Prop 30 sunsets in 2018, and we have already begun looking for something to replace it," Waddell said. She attributes a great deal of the success of community colleges in recent years to Prop 30.

"We had our toes on the cliff, and we were going over," said Waddell of the dire economic straits community colleges and the state in general were in only a few years ago.

Waddell is optimistic about the future of Los Angeles' community colleges and continues to work to ensure their success. Gov. Brown's budget is a step towards repairing the community college system, and faculty are excited about the future.

"They are pleased that the governor recognizes the worth of community colleges in California and has invested in them," she said.

both. Register on the Faculty Guild's website at www.aft1512.org.

Future Assignments (Fall 2015 and beyond):

Be aware that if there are any full-time positions being offered in your department/discipline this spring, it could mean that future adjunct assignments in your department/discipline might diminish for Fall 2015 and beyond. So keep your options open by becoming aware of available assignments at other colleges or districts. Positions can be found by searching the HR sections of district websites and the CCC Registry at the state Chancellor's website – www.cccregistry.org.

Sick Leave:

Finally, recent legislation (AB2295 Ridley-Thomas) gives adjunct faculty only three years after ending all assignments in a particular district, to move illness days from one district to another. If you used to teach in a district and are pretty sure that you won't be returning to that district again, you may wish to capture the illness days accrued and move them to the LACCD. For questions regarding illness days or moving sick days accrued at another district, contact your campus personnel department or the District's HR department.

When Louise Barbato was elected Los Angeles Mission College Chapter President two-and-a-half years ago, she was overwhelmed by the lack of civility she saw in the workplace. Employees were unhappy and felt antagonized, conflicts between faculty and administration were frequent, and many workers were disgruntled about violations of the contract. Tensions were rising, creating an unsettling work environment and endangering their accredited status.

"It seemed like an impossible situation," Barbato said. "Employees would tell me that when they got to the parking lot at work, their stomachs felt sick from all the stress." Barbato, who ran for AFT chapter president on a platform of creating a better work environment, definitely had her hands full.

Barbato united six unions on campus and initiated union summit meetings, at which deans and faculty could come together to air and resolve their grievances. The union summit created a collegiality pledge that was signed by faculty. The pledge included the promise to be respectful to colleagues, not to send nasty emails to one another, and to request peer

mediation in case of conflicts.

Additionally, Barbato worked with the union summit to train 19 faculty members in peer mediation, give employees access to workshops on anti-bullying and communication in the workplace, and was vigilant about ensuring that the union contract was adhered to.

On the negotiating team, Barbato worked to clarify Article 5, which deals with conflicts in the work environment. The article is now very clear about how specific conflicts, such as sexual harassment and interpersonal conflicts, are to be dealt with. Barbato said people know how to process complaints and feel that progress has been made.

Barbato is happy to report that the faculty at Mission College have filed almost no grievances in the past two years. "It's like a symphony right now," she said. "We really aren't having any problems and employees are happy." While Barbato attributed the institution's new civility to several major changes in policy, she added that the support she received from campus leadership was paramount to her success. "Without the good will of President Perez and other administrators, we couldn't have done this."

by Phyllis Eckler and
Kathy Holland, co-chairs

Employment opportunities:

Approximately 150 full-time tenure track positions will be filled in the LACCD for the 2015-16 academic year. Positions are posted on the District website and interviews will take place during the spring 2015 semester. Check the District website on a regular basis since the rollout of these job offerings will take place throughout the coming months.

Our Guild is offering several workshops to help adjunct faculty understand the hiring procedures and application/interview process. The first two workshops on the application/interview process took place Feb. 6 and 7 and were well attended. Upcoming workshops are:

- Get the Job: March 6 from 11 am to 1 p.m. at West L.A. College (GC160)
- Mock Interviews: March 14 from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. at Trade Tech (TE101).
Lunch will be provided at

DENICE LABERTEW
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This is where her teaching crosses over into practical application. She notes that her path toward becoming a professor started as a student at Valley College, where she took a Sociology of Women class taught by Pat Allen, an AFT Grievance Rep for LAVC who has continued to teach part-time after retiring. As a result of taking that class, Labertew volunteered at a local hotline for victims of rape and battering, went to law school, and eventually opened her own legal services program. This is the story she brings to the classroom.

"We talk about socialization and the impact of social change and how we can be activists," she said. "One of the things I credit a lot of my success to in life is that moment in that community college classroom that introduced me to a different way of thinking. So I decided I wanted to come

back and help another student do that same thing."

Labertew spends much of her time working on legislative policy as well. She has written state and federal laws and worked with colleges on ensuring effective responses to sexual assault and domestic violence on campus. Her expertise has gone beyond the U.S., taking her from Scotland to India to Mexico.

She is a proud member of AFT 1521 and has been since Allen, whom she credits for being one of her mentors, got her to fill out her union card seven years ago on her first day teaching and helped her to understand the benefits of the union.

"The thing that's so critical about unions is this idea of collective, a community of like-experienced people in the same position being able to have a bigger voice," Labertew said. "In my day job I'm an advocate for people to have a voice and that's also the role of the union."

ACCJC

(Continued from page 1)

structive overseer of accreditation for California community colleges." Friedlander shared this sentiment.

"They are unpredictable," Friedlander said. "Our community colleges can do everything right in our upcoming accrediting review, and still have sanctions brought against us. Everyone is pretty nervous."

In other ACCJC-related developments, the California Community Colleges Board of Governors made a change to its bylaws, stating that the ACCJC should no longer be granted exclusivity as an accrediting commission.

"Symbolically this means a lot, and it speaks to the general unhappiness with the ACCJC,"

"With the ACCJC, it has always been a nightmare."

— L.A. City College Faculty
Grievance Rep Carl Friedlander

Friedlander said. However, without the emergence of other accrediting agencies, the ACCJC maintains a sense of exclusivity.

Friedlander went on to say that he was "not sure there is any alternative to the ACCJC in terms of accreditation," and that "until an appropriate alternative arises, or we have faculty on their commission board, we are stuck with them."