



STUDENT DEBT
CLINICS

GUILD AFFIRMS
SUPPORT FOR
STUDENTS



January 2017

www.AFT1521.org



The Guild recently endorsed Dr. Gabriel Buelna, right, for LACCD Board Seat No. 6. The Guild has also endorsed Steve Veres, left, for Seat No. 2.

Guild Endorses Gabriel Buelna for LACCD Board

(The second in a series of articles on Guild-endorsed candidates for the Board of Trustees. Our first article, on Steve Veres, who is running for Seat #2, ran in our November issue.)

With the election for Board of Trustees set to take place on March 7th, the Guild's Executive Board, at its December meeting, voted to endorse Dr. Gabriel Buelna for Seat #6.

A lecturer in Chicana/o Studies at CSUN, Buelna is the Executive Director of Plaza Community Services, a nonprofit social services agency serving Boyle Heights, the downtown L.A. area, and East L.A. His experiences running the agency for the past 10 years have given him the skills necessary to take on the role of trustee. He has taught many of our former community college students, managed a large budget, and dealt with a large staff.

In addition to this work, he previously served as a Human Relations Commissioner with the City of L.A. and is on the Miguel Contreras Foundation Advisory Board and the Board of the Salvation Army.

Buelna believes there should be more tenure-track positions, improved health benefits for adjunct faculty and their families, and more funding for the colleges. As a Board member, he vowed to work with his colleagues to provide leadership and ensure the bond money is well spent, with sufficient oversight of the projects.

When asked about the major challenges facing our District, Buelna said it's crucial to decrease the amount of time it takes for students to transfer. We need to improve communication on available resources so students can get through system more quickly. In addition, he said we need to open more classes and hire more counselors. "Through our colleges' CTE programs, students gain the vocational skills they need to succeed, which in turn gives our communities more skilled labor so manufacturing stays in the area."

Continued on page 2

AROS Day of Action Jan. 19

In response to Donald Trump's intentions to dismantle the public education system in this country, the Alliance to Reclaim Our Schools is holding a national Day of Action on Jan. 19. With one voice, educators and students alike will come together at these events to say they will not comply with Trump's destructive education agenda.

"It's a growing movement. It's very exciting to be at the beginning of this movement," said Strategic Campaign Initiative Organizer and L.A. City College Instructor Tema Staig. "With the coming administration and the potential pick of Besty DeVos for Secretary of Education, who wants to completely dismantle our educational system, we see that as a problem. We need to fight the idea of privatizing our schools. A voucher program would be a disaster. It would basically be a discount for wealthy kids and leave middle class and poor kids in the dust. We're going to do whatever we can to fight against that."

Events and actions vary with location. Check the Guild for more info, or visit www.reclaimourschools.org.



AFT 1521 Executive Board officers enjoyed the festivities at the annual holiday party in December. From left to right: Treasurer Grace Chee, President Joanne Waddell, Recording Secretary Deborah Kaye and Executive Vice President Bill Elarton.

President's Message



Guild President
Joanne Waddell

Happy New Year! And with that greeting we should be feeling that all things are possible. But this New Year, I'm not so sure. In the 10 weeks since the November election, what's in the bull's eye has become clear: health care, public education, collective bargaining, agency fee, health care, and personal rights and freedoms.

In response, we're taking action. Rallies have focused on immigration and health care. We've had powerful reminders about how much more we need to do so that justice — economic, political, social, environmental — is truly a reality for all. On January 19th we'll join with our UTLA colleagues at LAUSD campuses to "shield our students" from the deplorable public policies we may face. On January 21st we'll take to the streets in a declaration of human rights. We hope to see

you at Pershing Square on Saturday.

We need to stay informed and involved. As U.S. Senator Kamala Harris reminds us, "Now is not the time to throw up our hands in despair. Now is the time to roll up our sleeves and get to work." As we walked in Monday's MLK Kingdom Day Parade, the theme — "Now More Than Ever, We All Must Work Together" — could not be more relevant.

You will soon have an opportunity to be involved -- to ensure that the LACCD continues to institute policies we believe in by electing Board of Trustee candidates who share our values. The Faculty Guild has endorsed two outstanding candidates for the March 7 election: Steve Veres for seat #2 and Gabriel Buelna for seat #6. These candidates will work collegially with other Board members to create policies that lead to a fair

collective bargaining agreement, oversight of our construction program, and sufficient resources for our colleges that lead to student success.

Magnify your voice and your vote by sharing your Guild's endorsement of Steve Veres and Gabriel Buelna. Your family, friends, and neighbors trust your recommendation—in fact, they rely on it. Use the Dear Friend cards that you'll soon receive at your home. Use the Facebook and Twitter links available through the www.aft1521.org website. With vote-by-mail ballots arriving soon, don't wait! There will be no run-off election in this race -- this will be our only chance to elect our endorsed candidates!

In unity,
Joanne

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

(Continued from Front)

"We need a Board that understands the challenges facing students today," said Buelna. "In addition to teaching, I work every day with families and children who are struggling to make it. So I know the kinds of barriers that discourage too many students from starting (and finishing) their educations. I want to focus on support services that help students overcome those barriers."

"I believe the community colleges are a gem of the nation," he said. "It will be exciting to be in a position to improve these dynamic educational institutions."

Guild Affirms Faculty Support for Students

Concerned about the divisive rhetoric that has surfaced both during and after the 2016 national election, the Guild Executive Board passed a resolution at its November 15th meeting to affirm faculty support for our students, especially people of color, immigrants, Muslims, members of the LGBTQ community, and Dream Act and DACA students.

As the resolution states, the AFT Faculty Guild:

- Reaffirms its commitment, as a representative body of the LACCD faculty, to fostering a diverse, inclusive, and safe learning environment for all students, free from discrimination, bullying, harassment, and fear
- Encourages faculty members to use the learning environment to show compassion and support for students who may be experiencing anxiety, uncertainty, and fear in the current political climate
- Declares that LACCD colleges should be sanctuary colleges, safe places for the continuation of the education of all our students, and in particular for our DACA and DAPA students and all other targeted populations

"We've seen our students express their uncertainty and anxiety, as well as their fear for their physical safety and well-being," said West L.A. College's Chapter President Olga Shewfelt, who is a member of the Guild's Committee on Political Education, which crafted the motion. "We felt it was important to show our students that we are there to support them in these uncertain times."

Student Debt Clinic, Train the Trainer

To help students manage and reduce their sometimes overwhelming student debt, AFT will be holding Student Debt Clinics, as well as a training program for union members who want to lead one of these sessions.

The Train-the-Trainer workshop for those who want to lead a student debt clinic will take place on Saturday, Jan. 28 and Sunday, Jan. 29 from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. at Trade Tech College room TE 101. Register at <https://leadernet.aft.org/webform/student-debt-clinic-train-trainer>.

The Debt Clinic itself will be held at Trade Tech College room TE 101 on Monday, Jan. 30 from 5 to 6:30 p.m. Register for the clinic here: <https://leadernet.aft.org/webform/student-debt-clinic>.

Motions Passed at Executive Board Meeting

November 15, 2016

- Approved the proposed minutes of October 18, 2016
- Approved the resolution "In Affirmation of Faculty Support for Students"
- Approved the COPE report
- Approved two new scholarships to be named for Don Misumi and Sylvia Lubow
- Agreed that issues brought up in the Treasurer's Report be referred to the Executive Committee

Staff Box

The newsletter of the
LA College Faculty Guild

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