



NEGOTIATIONS
ON HEALTH
BENEFITS
CONTINUE

PERSONAL
ANNUAL
LEAVE...USE IT
OR LOSE IT!



July 2017

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Guild Members Gather in May



Over 70 faculty members enjoyed an enlightening and festive Guild Annual Membership Meeting on May 19th at Trade Tech College. This spring's retirees were honored for their service to the District. Attendees heard inspiring presentations by Assemblymember and former LACCD trustee Miguel Santiago (right), who outlined his "free college for all bill," and Dr. Miguel Coronado (left), describing his journey from foster care and juvenile detention to his current occupation as a counselor to foster youth and at-risk students at Los Angeles City College.

Contract Negotiations Continue Into the Summer

By Louise Barbato, Guild Chief Negotiator

After months of tough, non-productive bargaining, on June 26th, we began to make significant progress in negotiations when the District demonstrated its willingness to take a more problem-solving approach. As a result, tentative agreements are being prepared for Article 9 (Work Environment) and Article 24 (Personnel Files).

On July 24th discussions will continue for Articles 8, 13, 16, 36 and 40.

Regarding Article 29 (Salary), the District brought an unreasonably low salary proposal to the table about a month ago. Our negotiating team responded with a request for District budget data and is awaiting a response.

We expect to be bargaining through the summer. Your team continues to work diligently on your behalf to defend and enhance your working conditions and employment rights.

Labor Rights Threatened By Special Interests

Janus v AFSCME Latest Case Challenging Fee-Payer System

By Jacob Bourne

Anti-union forces have been attacking fee-payer laws for decades, seeking to undermine unions by arguing that mandatory collective bargaining fees are unconstitutional, despite the higher wages and better benefits enjoyed by all members of a bargaining unit.

Janus v. AFSCME, a case that may soon be heard by the Supreme Court, challenges mandatory public sector union fees, stating that they violate the First Amendment. Janus's lawyers are arguing that public sector unions are forcing political speech when they require fair-share fees from non-members.

"The argument is a logical fallacy" said Joanne Waddell, Los Angeles College Faculty Guild president. "They're tweaking the meaning of First Amendment rights and making the claim that because all money comes from the state it's inherently political. The goal of this case is to silence our voices."

This is one of many cases that have sought to weaken unions. Despite a split decision in the 2016 Supreme Court case Friedrichs v. California Teachers Association, the scales are now precariously tipped with the recent

appointment of conservative Associate Justice Neil Gorsuch.

The stakes are high.

"The ability of the Guild to serve its members is being threatened," said Waddell. "Funding losses could severely restrict access to representation and hinder the Guild's ability to hold events such as our annual retirement/benefits conference that inform members of their rights."

There are 28 states with right-to-work laws. The Laborers' Health and Safety Fund of North America cited data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics showing that the rate of workplace fatalities in those states is 54 percent higher. On average workers in right-to-work states also earn nearly \$6,000 less annually and are less likely to be offered health insurance.

Waddell expressed concern but also sees an opportunity to raise awareness about what the workplace would be like without empowered unions. "It's important to stay engaged and involved. The 'right-to-work' forces have been trying for 30 years to silence the voice of organized labor. We can't let that happen."

President's Message



Guild President
Joanne Waddell

Summer is thought of as our “down time” – a time to travel and relax. But not for many of our Guild members, who have attended workshops to prepare for the next assault on organized labor, spoke at Board of Trustees meetings, negotiated our CBA, and contacted and met with our elected officials about health care and education policy (including student debt policy). Labor doesn't rest.

The past 10 years have not been easy for California's community colleges. The recession. Reduced workloads. The tyranny of the ACCJC. Board policies that have exacerbated statewide low enrollment trends, bringing us to the brink of stabilization. In each case we fought back. During the recession we saved public higher education by passing Prop 30. Last year we helped pass Prop 55. We successfully elected two new Trustees. And we have begun a campaign to remind the Trustees – both publicly and privately – that they have a fiduciary responsibility to help increase enrollment.

And the next fight: *Janus v. AFSCME*. Janus hits at the very core of who we are as a union. So – why should you be a union member? Why should you be part of the campaign to increase Guild membership in your department and on your campus? Why should

you increase your engagement in Guild activities and actions on your campus, district-wide, statewide, and at the national level? Because only when working people stand together can we negotiate better wages, safer working conditions, and improved learning environments for our students.

Together, we can successfully demand that our working conditions are safe and conducive to teaching and learning. Together, we can ensure that hiring and evaluation policies are followed. Together we can ensure that all employees have due process and access to representation.

Janus v. AFSCME, if decided as expected, will change our ability to impact our wages, hours, and working conditions. If we maintain our Guild membership and add to it by signing up fee-payers as members, we have a chance to maintain our way of life. As I learned at CFT Summer School this year, not all union locals will survive *Janus v. AFSCME*. Those that do will do so because they organize, serve, and engage their members.

We are counting on you for our survival.

In unity,
Joanne

Personal Annual Leave...Use it or Lose It!

By Grace Chee, AFT 1521 Treasurer

Faculty have asked a lot of questions about PAL (Personal Annual Leave). Those faculty “in the know” are excited about having this benefit. However, you use it or lose it. This leave day does NOT accrue and will NOT factor into your CALSTRS formula at retirement. You can use it for any personal reason (e.g., attend a graduation, move to a new home, commemorate a religious holiday, or celebrate your birthday -- that's how I use it).

To take this day, you need to complete this form on the District's website:

<http://www.laccd.edu/FacultyStaff/forms/Documents/TA-1-Absence-Certification-Request.pdf>

Under “B,” check the box: “Personal Absence Leave (PAL Day) - Unit 1 Employees Only” (Ignore the “Unit 1” part.)

Faculty do not have to ask for permission. I recommend that you complete the form and submit it to your chair in advance. I also let my students know well in advance.

Negotiations on Health Benefits Continue

By Bill Elarton-Selig
AFT 1521 Executive VP & Chair of the Joint Labor-Management Benefits Committee (JLMBC)

The District has presented its data estimating costs for various levels of improved health care coverage for our adjunct faculty members. We continue to negotiate for those improvements.

The JLMBC's Labor Caucus continues to advocate for the reinstatement of the popular HRA benefit. We are still fairly far apart but have been slowly closing the gap to try to reach an agreement.

The 2018 CalPERS medical rates are now out and are being used to support our negotiating efforts for improved PPO coverage.

The latest proposals were supposed to be considered by the newly-constituted Board of Trustees on July 12th, but the issue was postponed once again. We hope to be able to make progress and get the Master Benefits Agreement finished before open enrollment for the coming academic year.

Motions Passed by the Executive Board

April 18, 2017

- Approved the proposed minutes of March 21, 2017
- Endorsed Maria Elena Durazo for Senate District 24 and approved a contribution of \$4400
- Endorsed Eric Bauman for California Democratic Party Chair and approved a contribution of \$500
- Approved support for SB 562
- Endorsed Hilda Solis for re-election to the County Board of Supervisors and approved a contribution of \$1300
- Approved a contribution of \$1500 to Miguel Santiago for Assembly District 53
- Approved a \$1,000 contribution to the CSUDH Social and Environmental Justice Fair

SAVE THE DATE!

Friday, September 15
2017 Health Benefits &
Retirement Conference
Details to come

Staff Box

The newsletter of the
LA College
Faculty Guild

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