

Membership Campaign Entering Next Stage

The Faculty Guild's membership drive, Faculty Guild Rising – Building Guild Power Campaign, has entered its next phase. The campaign has already converted 486 agency fee payers into full union members, far surpassing the preliminary goal of 400.

This effort aims to strengthen the union with more full, voting members. This is particularly important since a lawsuit before the Supreme Court this fall, *Friedrichs v. CTA*, would eliminate the agency fee, a move that would eviscerate the power of unions to effectively negotiate for their members and protect their rights.

In other news, CFT has selected AFT 1521 as one of 16 locals to participate in a pilot program to create a structure that continues to engage membership.

Stay tuned for more information on how you can help your union in this campaign.

Health Benefits and Retirement Conference Draws Hundreds

By Michael Messina

The 13th Health Benefits and Retirement Conference hosted by AFT 1521 on Oct. 16 was a great success. The event at the JW Marriott in downtown Los Angeles drew 374 attendees.

"The reason we put this great conference together is so that our faculty can be informed of all the wonderful benefits that are offered to them as part of the LACCD family," said coordinator and Joint Labor Management Benefits Committee (JLMBC) Chair Paulina Palomino. "It's part of our Guild's mission to educate our members."

Palomino said focusing on new faculty this year was one of the

union's goals, not only to inform them of their benefits, but also to give them a head start on planning for retirement.

Kim Dinh, a chemistry professor for three years at L.A. City College, said her 1521 chapter president, CalSTRS representative Sharon Hendricks, gave her the nudge to attend. "I have a good feel of how the health benefits work," she said. "But I really don't know anything about retirement, and I figured, why not find out?"

Maria Yanez is a new librarian at West L.A. College. "I just started in August," she said. "I'm new to the

CCC Board of Governors Recommends a New Accreditor

The California Community College Board of Governors went on the offensive last month against the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges (ACCJC) when it sent a report to the United States Department of Education recommending a replacement accreditor.

The ACCJC has consistently shown its incompetence and blatantly ignored the law in its accrediting process, most notable in its attempt to disaccredit City College of San Francisco.

State Community College Chancellor Brice Harris led the task force that came up with the recommendation. In an op-ed piece, California Federation of Teachers President Joshua Pechthalt said the group "has starkly exposed the commission's problems."

Facing this attack on its credibility, the commission held a meeting to garner support, with the response lukewarm at best. ACCJC Chair Steven Kinsella and two board members wrote letters of their own to the DOE critical of the chancellor's task force.

The National Advisory Committee on Institutional Quality and Integrity (NACIQI) will make the final decision regarding the commission's status.



California State Treasurer John Chiang delivers the keynote speech to AFT 1521 members at the Health Benefits and Retirement Conference.

President's Message

ACCJC

By now, you've probably heard a great deal about the controversy surrounding the operations of the ACCJC (the agency that oversees accreditation for community colleges in California). The numbers tell the story:

- **15** – the number of reports over the past decade from various constituencies to the ACCJC—each identifying deficiencies and requesting collaborative changes—each ignored by the ACCJC.
- **67%** – the percentage of California community colleges placed on sanction by the ACCJC—including our nine LACCD colleges.
- **13** – the number of years since the ACCJC crossed the collective bargaining line—insisting that colleges include SLOs in the evaluation process (which we did, naively believing “if we just do this one small thing, they’ll leave us alone”). Evaluation processes are, by statute, within the scope of collective bargaining.
- **\$350,000** – the estimated cost of accreditation per campus/year.
- **16** – the number of CCC Board of Governors who enthusiastically accepted the report from the Task Force and directed State Chancellor Harris to send it to the Depart-

ment of Education as a third party comment for December's hearing before NACIQI (the body that 'accredits the accreditors').

In January 2015, the State Chancellor's Office convened a Task Force on Accreditation to respond to the State Auditor's report on accreditation. Fifteen previous reports written over a decade were reviewed and a strategy was agreed upon. From the first meeting of the Task Force, despite the differences among its members, there was consensus about the outcome of the work. The Task Force report was delivered to the State Chancellor's Office in September with what have been characterized as “three bold recommendations”:

1. Investigate all available avenues for establishing a new model for accreditation, including
 - a single community college and senior college model
 - another regional accreditor
 2. Working through consultation processes, bring a recommendation for action to the Board of Governors by Spring 2016
 3. In the meantime, work to maintain accreditation with ACCJC.
- Why?—because the California Community

Guild President
Joanne Waddell



College system— from Northern California, from Southern California, from coastal to inland communities, from urban to rural communities and from all levels of the CCC bureaucracies (elected Trustees, CEOs, CIOs, other VPs, exclusive representatives of faculty and the State Academic Senate) all agreed that the current accreditor—ACCJC gets a failing grade.

- It no longer meets the needs of the CCC system.
- It has failed to meet expectations.
- It has made promises that were too little, too late.
- It no longer has the confidence of the CCC system.

You can read the full report by [clicking here](#).

State Chancellor Harris intends to bring recommendations for a new accreditation system to the Board of Governors for their approval in April 2016.

So what does all this mean for this year's LACCD accreditation-palooza? It doesn't change anything for this year. Between now and then, the “L.A. 9 + 1” will need to do everything we can to “meet the standards” and reaffirm each of our colleges' accredited status. But knowing that the future may hold a more fair system of accreditation may help us get through what will no doubt be a challenging year.

Spotlight on Contract Changes Articles 9: Work Environment

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

Background:

Both the Guild and management teams wanted to ensure that employee working conditions are safe, healthy, and conducive to effective teaching and learning.

What was deleted:

The words “whenever available” when referring to assignment of faculty office space.

What was added:

When private or semi-private space is not available, adjunct faculty need to be provided with space on campus that meets the requirements for faculty offices. Office space must be available during all college operational hours.

When possible, the District should use best practices for districtwide procurement to acquire software and online training programs for the colleges. Instructional support, including aides and/or instructional assistants, should be provided for laboratories.

In the area of safety and health, the colleges need to ensure there is adequate lighting with an emphasis on safety with special attention paid to time changes. College facilities, including restrooms, classrooms, common areas, pool areas, showers, locker rooms, and food service areas should be maintained to meet District standards. E-cigarettes and all tobacco products were added to the list of items whose use is prohibited in buildings.

The section on emergency preparedness was strengthened to require that earthquake, fire, active shooter, and threat assessment operational plans be updated annually and training provided that is consistent with the plans. A minimum of one drill shall be held per semester. Participation is mandatory for those on campus at the time, is encouraged, and may be used for professional development. The campus community is encouraged to sign up for the college's emergency notification system.

Staff
Box

The newsletter of the
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DHLI Director to Teach at Pierce

By Kelly Ross

Shigueru Tsuha has left his post as Director of the Dolores Huerta Labor Institute (DHLI) for a full-time teaching job at Pierce College.

Tsuha served as the Director of the Dolores Huerta Labor Institute for four years, where he worked with students at all nine LACCD colleges to integrate Los Angeles' labor movement into the classroom. He educated students on labor issues, including the minimum wage, exposing them to the conditions of workers in L.A.

"I really felt that my work with these students was important," Tsuha said. "Many of our students are living the lives these workers described. That's why it's important to speak to them about these issues and inspire them to help change these conditions."

After working closely with students through the Institute, Tsuha recently decided that teaching was his true calling.

"Being a guest lecturer on campuses made me realize that I really missed interacting with students and being in the classroom," Tsuha said. So when a position teaching sociology opened up at Pierce, he jumped at the chance to teach again. "I needed to be with the students. I hope I will be doing this for the rest of my life. I can't wait to work with students to organize panels and encourage discussions about inequality and injustice."

Tsuha will maintain ties to the DHLI by serving as a member of its faculty committee, working with Interim Director Kenadi Le to continue educating community college students.

Adjunct Faculty Spotlight:

Jonathan Saxon, LA Valley College



The talents of adjunct faculty have been recognized in more than their teaching – and often they use their skills to branch out into other areas. Jonathan Saxon has been an adjunct assistant professor in the history department at Los Angeles Valley College for the last three years. This fall, however, his efforts have shifted to an exciting new venture as the faculty advisor in the college's Academic Resource Center (ARC).

Saxon got involved in the resource center in February of this year and has been working with ARC Director Scott Weigand on a regular basis. They have been trying to get the center certified by the College Reading and Learning Association (CRLA).

"They do a national certification of tutoring labs and we're trying to

get all our tutors to go through this program," Saxon said. "So I've been involved in the training aspect of that as well as helping to supervise the general tutoring center. A lot of kids come to college who are not academically prepared, so we help bridge that gap in the tutoring center."

Saxon also has a musical background that gives him a unique perspective in the field of history. He is a percussionist, playing the drum set mainly, along with many other instruments. He tries to intertwine the two fields in his lessons whenever he can.

"It's a huge part of what I do outside as well as inside the classroom. Music is a great way to see how different cultures have encountered each other and developed something completely new," he said. "There's a concept that I teach in my Latin-American as well as my Mexican history classes called 'transculturation,' which is about this idea."

Saxon recently completed a week-long series on world music put on by the Smithsonian Institution and will be taking a month-long class on music from India at Loyola Marymount. He makes it a point to continually improve his own education to pass along to students both in the classroom and tutoring center.

News in Brief

Unions Win – Bain Case Dismissed

Unions have been under heavy attack in the courts lately, but working men and women recently achieved a victory with the dismissal of the "Bain v. California Teachers Association" case. The suit, filed by the group Students First, argued that four union members were deprived of their right to free speech because their union dues went toward advocacy. U.S. District Court Judge Stephen V. Wilson announced the dismissal of the case on Sept. 30.

Push for Reversal of Vergara by Scholars, Civil Rights Groups

Five amici curiae, or "friend of the court," briefs were filed last month in the Vergara v. California case, contending that students would be harmed should the ruling

be upheld on appeal. The plaintiffs in the case are backed by the group Students Matter, who are painting Vergara as a fight for students' rights in the classroom. Labor groups, on the other hand, see the case for what it really is: a blatant corporate attack on due process rights and the power of unions. Supporters included legal scholars and civil rights groups, among others, each presenting information that showed the flaws in the case. Some of the most damning evidence demonstrated that there was no basis for the challenge and that it would ultimately cause more harm than good.

Tech, Valley to Benefit from Workforce Development Grants

Los Angeles Trade Tech College recently found out that it will be

recipient of a workforce development grant, as announced by U.S. Transportation Secretary Anthony Foxx. With the funding, LATTC will establish the Institute for Advanced Transportation Technology Training. The grants – \$9.5 million worth, spanning

19 projects across 13 states – are meant to train new workers in the transportation industry, eventually leading to long-term careers. Los Angeles Valley College will be partnering with organizations to help recruit candidates in Los Angeles for transportation training.

Motions Passed at Executive Board August 18, 2015

- Contributed \$1000 to the Think Inc. film fund, a documentary about the privatization of education, being produced by the Palomar Faculty Federation, Local 6161
- Approve the 2015-16 Faculty Guild goals
- Contributed \$1500 to the FACCC Diversity, Culture, and Learning Conference September 19 in Los Angeles

RETIREMENT

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District, so what they offer is different from what I'm used to." She attended the CalSTRS 101 workshop and said it was very informative. "I had a lot of questions going in and I didn't have as many coming out," she quipped.

Other workshops for the day included information on the adjunct health benefits program and "What I Wish I Knew about Retiring," which featured emeriti sharing experiences, giving suggestions, and speaking about adjustments after retirement.

The conference's keynote speaker was California State Treasurer John Chiang. He opted to step down from the podium and walk among the attendees, going for a conversational approach. He talked about the importance of upward mobility in California and the nation and retold the tale of the financial crisis' toll on the state, referring to himself as "the last man standing" for CalSTRS mem-

bers, and reminded everyone to thank Sharon Hendricks for the often difficult decisions she faces as CalSTRS Board Vice Chair.

The day was meant to assist all faculty – those just starting out as well as those well into their careers. Vilma Bernal, a business professor in her 15th year at L.A. Mission College attended the CalSTRS Fundamentals session, where she learned about some of the intricacies of the retirement system. "I learned how to make better decisions [with my money] today so that I can maximize it when I retire," she said.

Attendees also took advantage of the many health benefits and retirement professionals who were at resource tables to answer questions and provide information throughout the day.



Almost 400 AFT 1521 members attended the 13th Health Benefits and Retirement Conference.

Adjunct Faculty News

By Kathy Holland, chair

Are you up-to-date on the benefits and retirement programs offered to adjuncts? If you attended the Guild's Benefits and Retirement Conference on Oct. 16th you've received a great deal of useful information. If you didn't, you can find out about them on the Guild website (under the Adjunct Faculty tab) and from the much-requested, updated Adjunct Survival Guide, which combines in one place essential information important to adjunct faculty from our collective bargaining agreement. The Survival Guide can be found on our Guild website. [Click here](#) to access the Guide.

Among the improved negotiated items for adjuncts in our current collective bargaining agreement is the language about seniority lists. The contract still only guarantees just one assignment for seniority-listed adjuncts. However, new language states that "consideration for additional assignments should first be given to temporary adjunct faculty" and these additional assignments

"should be offered to those on the seniority list as a pool." Most significantly, "A faculty member not on a seniority list will be limited to one assignment unless approval is granted due to the need for special expertise or innovation."

Negotiations are hard-fought encounters with management. The gains we win at the bargaining table reflect the strength of our membership. Membership matters. Are you a member of the union? Or are you a fee-payer, paying your fair share without the benefits of membership? If you're not sure, look at your pay warrant in the right-hand column where the deductions are listed: is the deduction listed as a "1521 member" or "1521 service fee"? If you are a member, you get union benefits! We will have Guild elections in spring 2016, and as a member, you will have the right to vote in that election. Being a member also means that you are a member of the American Federation of Teachers (AFT). AFT Benefits include discounts on ATT cell-phone service, legal services, pet insurance, shopping discounts, travel discounts on rental cars, and many others. [Click here](#) for the AFT benefits page.

If you are not a member, see your college chapter president or call the Guild office at 323-851-1521.



Joint Labor Management Benefits Committee (JLMBC) Chair Paulina Palomino addresses the crowd at the Health Benefits and Retirement Conference, with CalSTRS representative Sharon Hendricks (L) and AFT 1521 President Joanne Waddell.