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.

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.”
ummoner 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 Californiа'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

Negotiations on Health Benefits Continue

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

he 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

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.

Staff Box

The newsletter of the
LA College
Faculty Guild

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