

OCTOBER 2009

union action

VOICE OF AFT 2121



AFT Fights Back Against Cuts

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Community College
Federation of Teachers

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From the President: Fight Back!



By Gus Goldstein
AFT 2121 President

First, thanks to all who participated in the ratification of the contract—from voters, who cared enough to bother, to all the people who volunteered to be ballot box watchers; without their help the ratification could not have gone nearly as smoothly. Thank you!

With the contract ratified, we need to turn our attention to the *Fight Back* campaign. Currently AFT 2121 is part of a local coalition of educators and activists working to plan actions in support of funding for education and other human services. At the state level, CFT is organizing to sponsor events leading up through the spring

CFT convention and on to the November 2010 election.

Get Involved; Attend Rallies, Wear AFT New Blue T-Shirt

Actions will be posted on our website, and you will be notified by email of opportunities to participate. Please be ready to wear your blue AFT t-shirt (more are on order, so call the office to reserve), write letters, make phone calls, show up at rallies. CCSF simply cannot survive - and the people of California cannot survive - on the starvation funding that the legislators and governor in Sacramento seem to think is sufficient. And we cannot continue to make concessions at the bargaining table. We have to carry the fight back to the Capitol!

Fight Against Tax Breaks

One particularly vicious piece of work coming out of Sacramento recently is the report of the “Commission on the 21st Century Economy.” Motivated by the desire to make California revenues more predictable from year to year – not a bad idea in itself – this plan is breath-takingly hostile to the interests of the working people of California. It recommends lowering taxes in such a way that the richest Californians would see a hugely disproportionate benefit. According to Jean Ross of the California Budget Project, the bottom 62% of Californians would see a \$4-per year income tax decrease; the top half of the income tax reduction would go to the very rich. Yes, it’s true that the very rich currently pay a disproportionate amount of the taxes in absolute dollars; 9.3% of a million dollars is a

lot more than 9.3% of \$50 thousand. But this proposal would try to flip this proportion on its head.

It is complex; as I understand it, it would repeal all corporate income tax and all state sales and use tax. It would shift the burden of taxation to the middle class by imposing a “business net receipts” tax, a variant of the value-added tax that would penalize employers for high wages and benefits and reward those who can manage to contract out the work that they do rather than employ their own California workers. Under this plan, groceries and services currently not taxed would be taxed. The governor likes the plan; Democrat Karen Bass said it is “intriguing.” Pay attention! This really bad idea is not about to die the natural death it deserves.

Community College Week Coming in November

Please be alert to upcoming announcements about Community College Week in San Francisco. During the week of November 1, both the California Community College Board of Governors and the Student Senate of the California Community Colleges will, by happenstance, be meeting in San Francisco. CCSF will be taking the opportunity to stage events featuring all that community colleges have to offer the public. A week of demonstrations and lectures will culminate in a march from the St. Francis Hotel to Yerba Buena Gardens and a candle-light vigil at Yerba Buena on Friday evening, November 6. Contact Leslie Smith or Diamond Dave Whitaker for more information or to get more involved.

Can We Smile Through This?

When I was a child and rather prone to tears, my father had a very annoying approach: He’d tell me to wash my face and smile. It infuriated me. Decades later, the research of Paul Ekman indicates that assuming the facial expression associated with a particular mood can actually create that mood - a mood-change-from-without. I know now – with apologies to my dad – that there is something to it; smiling actually does make me feel better.

A few days ago, already having in mind to share this bit of wisdom in my column, I found myself shocked at my own inability to rise out of a particularly unpleasant moment. A disagreement with a colleague was making me seethe inside. Trying to smile seemed beyond any possibility. Talk about cognitive dissonance! I felt like a hypocrite to have even thought about spreading the gospel of mood-change-from-without. But I did at least manage not to shout or cry - a small victory. And a few days later, we were able to joke about it.

Bad moods are, truly, contagious. Here’s an opportunity for a little enlightened self-interest: If you can’t spread sunshine, at least don’t spread rain, because whatever you spread will come back to you. Unlike the flu, a bad mood once suffered does not confer immunity. So this season, let’s cover our coughs, wash our hands frequently, and - if at all possible - smile! We really are all in this together. (Gus Goldstein also teaches ESL at Civic Center Campus. ggoldstein@aft2121.com)

On the cover:
Page 1, left to right: Faculty and student supporters enjoy a light moment at the September 24 Fight Back Rally against budget cuts on Ram Plaza, Ocean campus. Long-time AFT member and Dance Instructor Kathy Burick speaks to the rally supporters.

Cover photos by Chris Hanzo

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Join the Union to “Fight Back”

Our Union Fights Back Against Budget Cuts

By Pablo Rodriguez
AFT 2121 Political Action Director

Our City College of San Francisco is suffering the worst economic crisis in its history; as a result, we, the City College family, are losing tremendously on all fronts: Counselors, Faculty, Staff, and above all, our Students.

Entire programs are being or will be cut; counselors may be laid off, we may lose other faculty members, and student fees have gone up 30%. Next year, the legislature may further increase fees if the economy does not improve. Never before have we witnessed public education being decimated as it is today.

In the midst of this “financial tsunami,” our Union is fighting back. Throughout this past summer, we received endless phone calls and emails from many of our members expressing their frustration and anger at the current situation.

Legislators Lobbied Last Summer

From June to August, we at the Union local office were able to continue with our political work on many fronts. In fact, our local union office on Miramar was functioning at nearly its full capacity.

We, along with other sister unions, visited legislators at the local level and the state level. From Martinez to Fremont and from Sonoma to Santa Rosa, the Political Director of UESF, the State Political Director of California Federation of Teachers (CFT), and I were able to personally engage some of the legislators in con-

versations which in many cases ended up being extremely positive.

We learned that Congressman George Miller from Martinez—who attended a community college—is extremely supportive of public education because a community college made a difference in shaping his own future. Congressman Miller is making sure we are earmarked for some Federal stimulus funds. Additionally, at the state level, he is also making sure that his colleagues fight against the budget cuts to our beloved institution.

Local State Reps Promise Help

Also, our local state representatives, Tom Ammiano, Fiona Ma, Mark Leno and Leland Yee, were all in line telling us that they will not let community colleges down. We have participated in several town hall meetings with our elected representatives, and we have made our position very clear: We will fight the budget cuts with all our strengths and capacities.

We also told our local representatives in Sacramento that we expect they will not rest until funds have been restored to public education and access to education becomes affordable for all Californians. When we spoke to the Education and Finance committees, we were able to bring some of our own City College students and Faculty who gave their own testimonies on how the budget cuts are destroying their lives.

We Must Be United

Something that was very clear, though, from all these activities was that we must all be united in anything we do to restore our funding. We

can no longer afford to have budget-cut related activities or events where just few of us show up; neither can we afford to have just a handful of us doing all the work. It is time that we massively, in large numbers, state loudly and clearly that we are all in this together and must be more united than ever before.

Not working united will send the wrong message and will make us extremely vulnerable to even deeper cuts next year. Their agenda is clear: Terminate public education. Our agenda must also be clear: We will not let public education be privatized!

Currently, our local AFT2121 is a member of the “CFT Fight for California’s Future Task Force,” which is formed of the ten largest Community Colleges in California plus United Educators of San Francisco (UESF). We are holding planning meetings every month in order to coordinate state-level activities.

A recent protest activity was the Thursday, September 24 “Blue Over the State Budget” state-wide series of events. Here locally, we had our own rally on Ram Plaza at which our Chancellor, members of the Community College Board of Trustees,

faculty, staff, counselors, and students came together to send the message that we all must fight back.

Trustee John Rizzo shared the idea that the state is not doing the right thing in terms of fair and progressive taxation. Californians who are making more should pay more in taxes, and those who are making a lot more should be paying a lot more. This is only fair.

We need fair tax increases. It is clear now that there are real alternatives to the budget cuts to education. Our Union deeply believes that the state budget problem can be fixed with fair tax increases on the wealthy and the corporations.

Join the “Fight Back” Team

Lastly, as we approach major and devastating cuts, the Union will be counting on you to join en masse at the planned events that will be taking place. For a list of upcoming “Fight Back” activities, go to the union website at www.aft2121.com. If you would like to be a member of the Political Advisory Committee, call or email us at aft@aft2121.com (*prodri-guez@aft2121.com*)

Part-timers: New Online Questionnaire to Report Any Cuts in Hours or Layoffs

AFT 2121 wants to support and advocate for part-time faculty who experience cuts in their assignments or who are laid off due to the severe budget cuts underway at CCSF and community colleges in general. You can access this questionnaire at our website at www.aft2121.com. If you prefer that we mail or email you a copy, call 415-585-2121.

Bill Carpenter



Academic Senate President Hal Huntsman speaks to September 24 rally while Political Action Director Pablo Rodriguez holds the megaphone. To see a five-minute video of speakers at the rally, go to this webpage: <http://www.indybay.org/newsitems/2009/09/27/18623467.php>.

AFT/District 2009-2012 Contract Ratified

By Chris Hanzo
AFT 2121 Executive Director

CCSF faculty have voted to ratify the 2009-2012 contract. The new collective bargaining agreement grants no cost-of-living or step increases for 2009-2010, but provides important protections and rights in face of the deepening fiscal crisis in California and budget shortfalls at CCSF.

Highlights of the new contract include:

- * AFT's right to negotiate over the impact of layoffs on faculty working conditions, such as the "hold harmless" agreement whereby part-timers who drop below 50% due to the cuts retain District-paid health benefits through 2009-2010 provided they work a minimum 20% load.

- * AFT will continue to advocate against layoffs at the bargaining table and consult with the District over how to address budget shortfalls. While painful, reductions in overloads, part-time assignments of retired faculty, and summer school have so far kept job losses to a minimum.

- * No unilateral changes in salaries, benefits, and working conditions. Recently, in preparation for the September Board of Trustees meeting,

an agenda item surfaced suggesting that the Board "reserves the right" to amend the District budget and enact reductions in salaries and benefits for any group of District employees" or rescind "any prior resolution that appointed any employees." AFT, along with other constituent groups, immediately protested the resolution as an unfair labor practice. The resolution was quickly pulled from the agenda. AFT will remain vigilant concerning any further unilateral actions by the District.

- * Recall rights for part-timers who are laid-off, and recall rights and hearing rights for full-timers who receive "pink slips" from the District. AFT will advocate for any faculty member who faces potential layoff.

AFT 2121 Delegate Assembly Opposes Layoffs, Concessions

On September 22, 2009, the AFT Delegate Assembly voted to recommend a "Yes" vote on the 2009-2012 contract. Its resolution calls on the District to prioritize its resources to avoid layoffs. It calls for concerted action by the CCSF Board of Trustees, faculty and staff to fight statewide to restore funding to community colleges by raising new revenues. "Concessions

are not the answer to the crisis," says the resolution. "We must fight against further cuts and for new funding for education and social services."

You can see the full resolution at the AFT website: www.aft2121.com.

Demonstrate at the Thursday, October 22 Trustees Meeting

The CCSF Board of Trustees will adopt the final 2009-2010 District budget at its 6:00 p.m. meeting at 33 Gough Street on Thursday, October 22, 2009. AFT calls on faculty to attend this meeting to voice our budget concerns to the Trustees:

- * No layoffs; freeze hiring and scale back work force costs through attrition.

- * Scale back non-essential spending, e.g. realign District legal services to save money, reduce administration costs.

- * No wage concessions: faculty and staff are already hit hard and are seeing their real wages decline. Wage concessions would only further degrade our working conditions and cannot solve the budget crisis.

- * Mobilize against the State budget cuts and join the growing fight to fund education and other social services. (chanzo@aft2121.com)

Full-time Overload Assignments Now Pay-by-Load (PBL)

Many full-timers had their overload assignments eliminated as part of CCSF budget cuts and the scaling back of the instructional program. By giving up these assignments, full-timers have made it possible to minimize the layoff of their part-time colleagues who otherwise would have faced greater reductions. AFT appreciates this sacrifice.

Beginning Fall 2009, full-timers who retained an overload assignment have seen a change in the method of pay for these classes from hourly pay to Pay-by-Load (PBL). Several years ago, AFT negotiated a change in hourly pay to PBL for semester-long part-time instructional assignments. AFT sought this change so that part-timers would receive equal paychecks throughout the semester, rather than fluctuating pay each pay period depending on how many work days fell in each pay period. Currently, part-time and overload assignment are paid at 86% pro-rata of full-time salaries. Our goal is to achieve equal pay for equal work for all for all pro-rata salaries.

Full-timers with overload assignments can check the accuracy of their pay by using the "Check your Check" section at our website. Go to www.aft2121.com and click the box entitled "Full-time overloads now on Pay-by-Load."



Nadereh Degani, Photography Department Instructor, casts her ballot at Ocean during the voting period for the contract with poll worker and AFT Vice-President Ed Murray.

Patricia Arack

Right: Chancellor Don Griffin encourages "Fight Back" supporters at September 24 rally.

Below: Beth Freedman, Health Education Department, and Alisa Messer, English, beam for the camera at the September 24 "Fight Back" Rally at Ram Plaza.

Chris Hanzo



Chris Hanzo

Bill Carpenter



Chris Hanzo

Above:
Student Fidel Castro makes a point at the "Fight Back" rally on September 24.



Board of Trustee member John Rizzo tells September 24 rally supporters of "Fight Back" that Californians making more should pay more in taxes.

CCSF
BUDGET
CUTS
FIGHT
BACK

Patricia Arack



Political Science Instructor Michael Estrada boots up his Power Point lesson for his American Government class in Cloud Hall.

Students Struggle to Get into Classes

By Emily Wilson
Reporter, Union Action

Michael Estrada teaches Intro to American Government, a general education course, so he's used to full classes. But this semester, with fewer classes due to budget cuts and the economic situation sending students flocking to City College, is markedly different.

"It's obvious there are more students trying to squeeze in than normal, and the wait list is longer," Estrada said. "At times there have been people on the floor."

Estrada should have about 45 students in his class. But he has an average of 50 in all five of his sections with many more on the waiting list. This is hard on him, he says, but it really takes a toll on the students, both those who get into a more crowded class—and especially those who don't.

"They just look defeated or demoralized," he said. "I tell them their best chance is to try an evening class because they're less impacted, but every class is impacted."

No Classes to Add for Students New to CCSF

That's something Cheryl Campbell found out when she moved out from Detroit, MI, to live with her aunt and uncle and go to CCSF.

"I needed to take math and English, and since I'm a new student the registration date was very late," she said. "I went to register and all the classes were full, so I emailed the college and asked them what I should do and they said 20 percent of students

don't show up on the first day. The first week and a half I went to four math classes and three English classes to try and get in. One math class had 62 people on the waiting list, so it was pointless to even try."

Campbell spent the week going to classes from 9 in the morning to 5 in the evening trying to get classes. In the end she got into oceanography, computer networking, art history and Spanish—but no English or math classes.

"It was so frustrating," she said. "It sounds stupid to say, but it was heartbreaking in a way, but I couldn't really complain because so many other people were in the same position I was in."

Counseling Office a Madhouse

Marie Osborne, the coordinator of counseling for new students, described the first couple of weeks of school as frantic.

"There were so many students lined up waiting to see us that they get impatient," she said. "It was a madhouse—the line went from our end down to the chancellor's door of people waiting for services. That's no way to treat people when they're down."

Osborne said sometimes they have had to call the police because students get so angry about not getting their classes.

"Some people just lose it. They have lost their jobs and don't have much money, and they can't get the number of classes they need so they are eligible for financial assistance," she said. "When you're that frus-

trated who do you take it out on? The person you're dealing with at that moment."

Survey Reveals Low Morale

One math teacher in response to an email survey on how budget cuts are affecting the college wrote that a student got so angry about not being able to get into his class that he nearly hit him—a first in more than 16 years, the teacher wrote.

In other responses to the survey, several faculty members mentioned how library hours being cut leaves evening students without a quiet place to study, the added pressure on their classes of having so many people packed in, and computers in the lab breaking down and no lab technician to fix them. Some teachers said morale is low and that people are feeling anxious about the possibility of losing their jobs.

Even though he has tenure, Estrada, a fairly new teacher, worries his job could be in jeopardy.

"We're making backup plans to protect ourselves and our families—we're thinking about other career choices," he said about himself and his colleagues. "Personally I think I would move out of San Francisco and to Fresno, my hometown. There's a lot of added stress on us in a number of ways, the working conditions are worse, there's less pay, and knowing you might be laid off affects your health and wears you out." (Emily Wilson teaches part time in the Transitional Studies Dept. at the Mission Campus. exj@speakeasy.net)

Honduran Workers Fight Against Military Coup

By Allan Fisher
Labor Council Delegate

For eight days in August I was in Honduras to gather information and witness the resistance to the military coup and to represent the San Francisco Labor Council and the Bay Area Labor Committee for Peace and Justice. Our Global Exchange Human Rights Delegation of four people spoke with leaders of FR-ENTE (the national resistance movement), attended daily demonstrations and rallies, met with human rights and women's organizations, the U.S. ambassador, "the first lady" Xiamarra Castro de Zelaya, an indigenous priest leading the struggle for human rights and environmental justice, and people on a seven day march from the countryside into Tegucigalpa. I was inspired by the class consciousness, international solidarity, camaraderie, unity, and courage of the people.

On June 28, the right-wing military had kidnapped the lawfully-elected president, Manual Zelaya, and

transported him out of Honduras. Zelaya managed to sneak back in on September 21 and now is holed up in the Brazilian Embassy in Tegucigalpa.

Before the coup President Zelaya had opened the doors of the government to grassroots organizations representing the marginalized poor majority. Zelaya had supported a referendum to poll voters about changing the constitution. In doing so, Zelaya had threatened the entrenched power of the business elite and multinational corporations such as Dole and Chiquita and clothing maquiladoras.

Although Zelaya was elected as the candidate of the center-right Liberal Party, he raised the minimum wage from about \$5 a day to \$9 a day and supported land reform and environmental protection efforts, significantly increased funding for education, and opposed privatization efforts and outsourcing of unionized jobs. He also moved Honduras into ALBA (the Bolivarian Alternative Trade Association) and was attempting to close the U.S. military base in Honduras.

At the beverage workers' union hall, I attended the weekly assembly held to plan the resistance for the coming week. When I spoke before the several hundred delegates and observers, I expressed solidarity with the Honduran working class on behalf of the San Francisco Labor Council and North American workers and support for the unconditional return of President Zelaya, the right of the people to hold a constitutional assembly, and for workers rights. I received a standing ovation.

Expressing the same sentiments two days later before a demonstration of perhaps 20,000 people, I again

Allan Fisher



received a rousing ovation from the crowd. We had marched for many miles from the hills on the outskirts of Tegucigalpa past extremely poor neighborhoods into the center of the city.

Throughout my eight days in Honduras, many people came up to thank members of our delegation for our solidarity and told us that presence of visible international observers made repression less likely.

Abuses by the Police, Military

During my time in Honduras, I learned of abuses by the police and military against the resistance. A teacher had been severely injured by tear gas canisters fired directly into her leg and back by police at a demonstration with thousands of others who had come to support President Zelaya's unsuccessful efforts to return to Honduras in early July. I also spoke with a doctor who had been brutally beaten by police at the end of a demonstration, and with Presidential candidate Carlos H. Reyes, who had also been brutally beaten by police.

Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch have documented

these and other serious human right abuses against peaceful protestors. At least three teachers have been among those killed.

The United States has been slow to take measures against the illegitimate coup regime. The U.S. still has not cut its military ties with the Honduran military nor has it frozen assets of coup leaders and supporters. It has not withdrawn its ambassador. The U.S. has supported the Arias plan, which would grant amnesty to the coup leaders, require Zelaya to return to a government of "national reconciliation," and cease efforts to support the constitutional assembly.

With President Zelaya now living in the Brazilian Embassy and with increased brutal repression occurring, it is urgent for people to contact the Obama administration to demand stronger measures in support of human rights in Honduras and to support the unconditional return of the democratically elected Zelaya. Please contact me if you want to learn more or are interested in supporting the heroic resistance to the military coup. (afisher@aft2121.com)



Allan Fisher

Above left:
Several thousand protesters march daily through Tegucigalpa neighborhoods.

Top right:
Puppet effigies of leaders of the Honduran military coup are paraded at an August protest rally.



Donate Items for Oct. 24 Garage Sale on Friday, October 16 and 17

Former AFT President Rodger Scott suggested it, and now CCSF will hold its first garage sale to save classes on Oct. 24 from 8 am to 4 pm. Aft has rented three stalls in the upper Reservoir parking lot and volunteers are needed to help staff the booth during the sale. Please call Gus or Ed at 585-2121 or email aft@aft2121.com to volunteer for the AFT booth.

Drop-off for items began last weekend and will continue this Friday, October 16 from 9 am to 5 pm and Saturday from 9 am to 3 pm at the recycling center on the east boundary of the campus behind the 600 Bungalows. If more collection dates are scheduled, AFT will let you know.

The sale organizers need volunteer help. If you would like to volunteer for the behind-the-scenes tasks, contact Milton Marks at 415-846-1644 or mmarks@ccsf.edu. Complete information about the sale and volunteering can be found at the website, www.ccsf.edu/saveccsf.

Keep Yourself And Your Students Healthy Through Flu Season

By Ed Murray
AFT 2121 Vice-President

Flu vaccines are now or will be available soon. They work! If you are medically able, get both the H1N1 swine flu virus vaccine and the normal seasonal flu vaccines. The CCSF Student Health Center can help you out in a pinch, but please try to get your shots from your health care provider if at all possible. The Student Health Center is the only option for many if not most of our students.

► **Wash your hands** throughout the day with soap and hot water for at least 20 seconds each wash. Definitely wash before each meal; wash as soon as possible after coming in contact with someone showing signs of flu symptoms, and wash after sneezing, coughing, or blowing your nose.

► **Cover your own coughs and sneezes.** Use clean tissues, and dispose of them immediately in wastebaskets. If you don't have a tissue handy, cough into the clothing on your upper arm—copy the way elementary school kids do it. They have the technique down pat.

► **Please stay home if you become sick,** and stay home until 24 hours after your fever subsides. Don't hesitate to use your sick leave benefit—that's why you have it! The average flu attack lasts about a week, but some people take longer to recover. AFT has requested that the District relax its requirement for faculty to obtain a doctor's note for absences beyond 5 days. Why? First, your doctor will not want you to come to his/her facility because there is nothing she/he can do to help you; and second, you could wind up needlessly infecting the medical staff and other patients.

► **Encourage your students to stay home if they become sick.** A

prime way to demonstrate your support is to **relax attendance rules** for flu-bugged students. It would also be good to devise ways your sick students can stay abreast of class material and assignments in long-distance mode. Remember, it's in everyone's best interests for sick students to stay home until they are healthy students once again.

CCSF Dean of Student Health Services **Sunny Clark** kindly provided much of the information included in this article. For further information and continuing updates on the H1N1 virus, you can look up the AFT Pandemic influenza Information Center at: www.aft.org/topics/h1n1. (emurray@aft2121.com)

Voluntary Sick Leave Bank (VSLB) Opens In October for Deposits

We need to replenish the sick days and hours in the VSLB. This is the last time that donors to the bank will be on the "opt in" system, meaning that when the bank opens, they must re-join in order to be a member.

In the future, when the bank opens, people who are already members will automatically have their sick leave debited by a day for full-timers or an hour for part-timers. Those who decide not to stay in the bank will have to notify the District at that time and "opt out." So be looking for the announcement of the bank's opening, probably in late October. Please join! The catastrophic illness you help someone survive may be your own!

AFT 2121's Support of Part-Timers Amazes CFT Statewide Meeting

By Carmen Roman-Murray
AFT 2121 Part-timers Committee Chair

CFT representatives recognized our AFT 2121 union with a loud round of applause during the sharing of local news segment at the CFT Community College Council meeting on September 25. The applause reflects the respect and admiration of other local unions for the work that AFT 2121 has done to fight for all our faculty, including our part-time members.

AFT 2121 President **Gus Goldstein** reported that the City College of San Francisco administration had agreed to implement the union's

"San Francisco does things the right way!"

proposal to protect part-timers' jobs during the present budget crisis. Under this plan, part-timers with rehire rights—that is, those with two years or more of seniority or a satisfactory evaluation—have received their normal teaching loads this semester.

No One Has Been Laid Off

Assignments for retired faculty returning as part-timers, overload assignments for full-time faculty, and classes of recently-hired part-timers were eliminated before any reductions of part-timers with rehire rights. As a result, few if any part-timers lost hours this semester, and no one has suffered a total layoff.

At the CFT State Council meeting the following day, President Marty Hittelman singled out AFT 2121 for our achievement in protecting jobs for all its members. He praised our union

as "progressive and visionary," and remarked that AFT 2121 is unique in the state and even the country for standing and protecting part-timers' jobs, while thousands of part-time faculty at other two-year and four-year colleges are being laid off around the country during this economic crisis.

"I don't know how you do it."

As Community College Council President Carl Friedlander remarked, these achievements for part-time faculty "could only happen in San Francisco. I don't know how you guys do it." We are able to do it because our union members, part-time and full-time, are united. Part-time activists throughout the years have worked through the union structure tirelessly to improve our pay and working conditions; part-timers in turn support our full-time faculty as valued colleagues. Most of our full-time members come from the CCSF part-timer ranks, and they value our contributions and support us.

Gus Brings Down the House

When President Gus Goldstein reported to the Community College Council that part-timers who may suffer a load reduction in coming semesters will retain their medical health benefits and that CCSF administrators' salaries have been reduced by 6% for the 2009-10 academic year, CCC reps were amazed.

And when she mentioned that our Chancellor Don Griffin has voluntarily reduced his own salary by 25%, she brought the house down. A rep from another community college union local shouted out, "San Francisco does things the right way!"

CCSF part-timers wholeheartedly agree. (*Carmen teaches ESL at John Adams.* croman@ccsf.edu.)

First Annual Retirement and Financial Planning Day a Big Hit

By Cliff Liehe
AFT 2121 Grievance Officer

It might be an aging faculty, the recession, or something in the water. Whatever the reason, the union has been receiving more and more questions about retirement from Faculty.

In response to this growing demand, AFT 2121 presented its highly-successful first annual Retirement and Financial Planning Day on August 13. The union asked some outside experts to share their expertise about retirement issues with our faculty.

CalSTRS counselors explained the CalSTRS Defined Benefit plan. An instructor talked about retirement options and issues unique to part-timers. Financial TSA vendors explained optional payroll deduction plans, long-term care insurance, and the Retirement Manager software available on the CCSF website.

A financial planner simplified the world of financial planning. An estate planning attorney discussed wills and living trusts. And a Social Security representative gave an overview of Social Security retirement benefits and Medicare.

The positive feedback from the over 150 attendees was universal. These comments about the workshops were typical: "Informative, crystal clear, and organized"; "Very informative and helpful"; "Very knowledgeable and easy to understand"; and "This should be done every year".

In fact, the union does hope to repeat this event every year. Future events might be expanded to include topics such as health insurance, other contract benefits, disability insurance, or repeal of the Social Security offsets. If you have suggestions for next year's event or would like to volunteer to help plan it, please call the union at 415-585-2121 and let us know. (*Cliff Liehe teaches Litigation and Paralegal Studies at Downtown Campus.* cliehe@aft2121.com.)



what's the union done for me lately?

Additional Pay Restored

In Spring 2009 a part-time instructor was offered additional non-instructional duties. The instructor accepted an amount of hours that caused the instructor's load to exceed .60 but to not exceed .67, the new statutory limit effective 1/1/09.

Mid-way through the semester the instructor was told that hours in excess of .60 were not allowed. The instructor had not been paid for any of the additional hours, and appropriate district paperwork had not been submitted or processed.

Because of union and district negotiations delaying implementation of the new .67 limit until Fall 2009, the instructor was not allowed to continue the additional hours. However, the union was able to get the assignment and hours worked verified, get the proper paperwork processed, and get the instructor paid for the additional hours worked.

14 ½ Years Step Credit Restored

A part-time instructor who had been teaching at CCSF for 14 ½ years was at pay column Step 1 and had "00" seniority. This was caused by the fact that the 3-unit credit course taught by the instructor was on a condensed calendar 12 weeks long, due to the needs of an outside agency. Our contract required an instructor to teach at least 75% of the weeks in a semester for the semester to count towards pay step and seniority advances. The instructor did not teach the required number of weeks.

Because the instructor taught 4 ½ hours per week, the instructor was teaching 54 hours per semester, more than the 52.5 hour standard for a 3-unit credit course. The union convinced the district to agree to modify the contract to allow exceptions to the 75% rule on a case-by-case basis.

Once the modification was negotiated, the district agreed to give the instructor credit for 14 ½ years service and to advance the instructor's pay step and seniority accordingly.

District Grants "No Break in Service"

A part-time instructor returning to CCSF was treated as a retiree and given 3rd semester status with respect to seniority and salary. However, the instructor had never retired or started receiving a pension from CalSTRS. The instructor had started at CCSF part-time, then worked full-time, then taken an approved leave, and then returned part-time. The union convinced the district that there was no "break in service" under the contract. The district then agreed to give the instructor credit for the prior years of part-time service and to adjust pay and seniority retroactive to the time the instructor returned part-time.

Room Change Arranged

Just before classes began for the semester, an instructor discovered that a room assigned for one of the instructor's classes was totally inappropriate for the content and size of the class and should not have even been assigned for a class. After some effort, the instructor got another room for the class starting about the third week of the semester. But then the instructor repeatedly could not get into the new room because it was always locked. The union was able to arrange for the room to be unlocked in the future.

Defined Benefit Information Provided for Part-timer

A part-time instructor was considering changing from the CalSTRS Cash Balance (CB) retirement plan to the CalSTRS Defined Benefit (DB) retirement plan. To help make that

decision, the instructor wanted to know how much DB service credit could be purchased with the instructor's CB balance. However, CalSTRS does not usually provide this information unless and until an instructor first makes the change to DB. The union was able to get CalSTRS to make an exception to its usual rule and provide the desired information.

EDD Problems Solved

This semester the union once again assisted many part-time instructors with unemployment issues such as how to calculate and report pay-by-load income for flex week, how to correct errors on claim forms and handle overpayments, and how to appeal improper denials of unemployment benefits.

Many if not most part-timers who applied for unemployment benefits this summer were subjected to a variety of problems. Part-timers who contacted AFT 2121 for help reported the following problems: No response by EDD after a claim had been filed; follow-up phone appointments scheduled weeks after a claim had been filed; the failure of EDD to keep its phone appointments; and, in several cases, a mistaken denial of benefits by EDD. In one or two cases, our members had made errors in making

their claims. All of the above instances caused the delivery of our members' unemployment benefit checks to be delayed, some by many weeks.

In response to our members' problems, AFT succeeded in making contact with Karen Parrow, a senior manager in the EDD Unemployment Insurance Policy and Coordination Division. AFT would describe in as much detail as possible the nature of our members' difficulties on an individual basis, and Ms. Parrow would investigate the cases and intervene when needed to resolve the problems. She did an amazing job untangling the bureaucratic complexities; and as a result, AFT 2121 was able to assist about fifteen City College part-timers in receiving their benefit checks.

Part-time community college faculty are eligible to receive unemployment benefits during winter and summer breaks if not otherwise employed. We encourage you to apply because you are entitled to your benefits. If you need guidance, check out the Union's website at www.aft2121.com. Please call us at (415) 585-2121 if you have additional questions or if a problem ensues with your claim. If you are denied benefits, a Union grievance officer will represent you at your appeal hearing—and we have a very high success rate in reversing denials.

AFT Calendar

Friday, Saturday, October 16, 17
Drop-off for Garage Sale
Ocean Recycling Center,
9 am-5 pm Friday; 9 am-3 pm Saturday

Thursday, October 22
AFT Presentation to Board of Trustees
Gough, 6:00 pm

Tuesday, October 20
General Membership Meeting
Mission, Room 109, 3:00-5:00 pm

Saturday, October 24
CCSF Garage Sale

Monday, November 2
Kick-off Community College Week
Yerba Buena Gardens, 6:00-7:00 pm

