

union action

VOICE OF AFT 2121



By Chris Hanzo
Executive Director, AFT2121

Despite enormous sacrifices by CCSF staff and students, CCSF faces a continuing and likely deepening crisis next year unless political action is taken to begin to restore funding to community colleges. Of course, we are not alone. Funding of education at all levels has been slashed along with state services of all kinds. It is hard to contemplate further cuts, but this is exactly what appears to be in store for California next year.

Our union, in concert with a growing movement that began with the UC walkout in October, will be on the offensive in the spring to demand new funding for education and social services. Actions will include major demonstrations in both Los Angeles and San Francisco, intense lobbying in the legislature, and media messaging. In Fall 2010 we hope to have a referendum before the California electorate to restore democratic decision-making in the state legislature that would rollback the two-thirds requirement to pass a state budget.

The strategy at CCSF has been to reduce costs and weather the state budget cuts through the following measures designed to avoid significant layoffs of employees and maintain classes and student services:

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CCSF Faces Deepening Fiscal Crisis

AFT2121 on the Offensive to Demand New State Funding

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AFT
2121

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Federation of Teachers

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Shared Governance 101



By Gus Goldstein
President, AFT2121

At a recent Board meeting students protested that they had not been included in the budgeting process and decisions. I didn't know if their accusation was justified, but a little research revealed that there are four students on the Planning and Budget Council, the shared governance committee charged with exactly that, planning and budgeting, which includes making recommendations such as elimination of summer school. (Faculty have seven positions, administrators five, classified four.)

The real problem here is not so much that students didn't have input as that they didn't *know* they had input. And it may not only be students who do not understand how shared governance works at CCSF, but also a good many faculty. How does one get to know about shared governance? Longevity helps, so eventually faculty do get a sense of how it all comes together, but students aren't here long enough to get it by osmosis. By the

time they even hear of "shared governance" and the "PBC," they are on their way someplace else.

How Do Community Colleges Work?

What we need is an actual course in how the College works – how it is organized, who it is staffed by, what shared governance is in all its parts. It should include basic issues of state and district budgeting, planning, and accreditation processes. Of course, it would be open to anyone who wants to get a clearer understanding of CCSF and community colleges in general. Is there someone in Poli Sci who is willing to create the course outline?

The students' point of contention specifically was the proposed cancellation of summer school. It is really important for us faculty to understand the reasoning of the PBC and the administration when it comes to this. First, one needs to know that the District would save \$4 million by not holding summer school. If the summer school were to be held as usual, then that four-million-dollar savings would have to be found by cutting four million dollars'-worth of classes during the fall and spring, instead.

Why Cut Summer School?

Summer school serves many who are not our regular community college students, which is not a bad thing when we can afford it, but it does dilute our resources for our regular students. Cutting summer school, then, would hurt fewer of our regular students than cutting the same \$4 million out of fall and spring.

And for those unfortunate students who have been counting on

finishing up their transfer programs in the summer, they need to consider that at the rate the CSU system is limiting access, they may have no place to which to transfer in the fall, anyway. Lastly, though cutting summer school may mean a loss of income for part-timers and some full-timers, it is not the loss of *regular* jobs, which would be the case if the \$4 million were to be cut from fall and spring.

We Need FT Emergency Hires

One of the issues currently being negotiated is a solution to the problem departments face when a faculty member dies or becomes too ill to teach for an extended period. In most community colleges, an emergency part-time hire is often the answer, but at CCSF, we have been trying to limit the number of new part-timers in order to consolidate part-time positions into full-time.

Such consolidations have been taking place alongside replacement and new full-time hires, though recently those have been limited by the budget. But all these positions must be approved by the Faculty Position Allocation Committee (FPAC); then the departments must go through the hiring process itself, which can take the better part of two semesters from start to finish. So clearly this process is not useful for filling positions made suddenly vacant mid-semester.

Recently, under pressure not to hire new part-timers, departments have resorted to assigning current part-timers to work in excess of 67% of a load, picking up one or more of an absent faculty member's classes and resulting in these part-timers' working at or near 100% while still being paid at their usual 86% pro rata.

FTT 100% Pro Rata, Not 86%

The Union has grieved this and gotten retroactive 100% pro rata for part-timers who have done this work. The Union understands the problem and would like to help with the solution. We believe that it makes sense to have a rapid, in-house hiring process from among the qualified current part-timers to fill in and be temporarily upgraded to what we would term a "full-time temporary" (FTT) assignment. Such a position would be part of a department's position allocation only temporarily, until the request for a replacement position could be sent to the FPAC and a formal replacement hiring could take place.

Recently AFT 2121 leaders met with Academic Senate leaders to discuss this, among other issues. We were happy to hear that they had no objections and, in fact, felt that since any candidate for an FTT assignment would already have gone through a hiring process, an FTT position would be a matter of assignment, not hiring; no changes would need to be made to the Hiring Document. The details are still up for negotiation, but we envision the assignment to be based on availability at the needed times, possession of any specialized skills needed for the assignment, and seniority.

Hang in there. The semester is almost over. For some this means relief; for others, increased fears about what next semester will bring. Don't forget to go to AFT 2121.com to report any reduction in load, and then give us a call, as well, so we can review your case and make sure that your department is following prescribed procedure. We will do whatever we can to help. (ggoldstein@aft2121.com)

On the cover:
CCSF student joins Carmen Roman-Murray (center) and Robin Mackey (right) in singing "La Llorona" at Candlelight Vigil on November 6 at Yerba Buena Gardens.

Cover photo by Chris Hanzo

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“Fight Back” Looks Forward To 2010 with CSF Taskforce

By Pablo Rodriguez
Political Action Director

Since our last *Union Action* in October a lot has happened. One thing is clear: our Union is fighting back with all the strength possible and our strength is our unity. AFT 2121 is fighting on different fronts, and we need to be because our own jobs and the future of our state is at stake.

We have a full calendar of activities this semester, and there will be many more in the future, so make sure you respond to your union's call to *Fight Back!*

Locally, our Union has joined with faculty, students, administrators and staff to form a common, united front against the destruction of our institution through the budget cuts. From last September's "Blue Over the State Budget" state-wide series of events, including our own rally here at City College on September 24, to the Community College Board Meeting on October 22, our Union was able to mobilize students, faculty, counselors, and administrators. The presentation at the Trustees meeting was extremely successful, showing the high level of unity that is starting to take shape at our community college.

Also, from Monday, November 2, though Friday, November 6, our Union proudly co-sponsored *Community College Week* with the State Student Senate and CCSF, where we had the opportunity to work together in unity with staff, faculty, students, and the administration.

Our Union was actively present from the kick-off ceremony on Monday, November 2, at Yerba

Buena Gardens to the Candlelight Vigil—a march and rally on Friday from Union Square to Yerba Buena Gardens. It was a week of unity, of working together; we showed that, in these times of uncertainty, we are together and clear in what we want to accomplish.

CFT's "Fight for California's Future"

Our Union is also actively involved at the state level through the newly formed CFT "*Fight For California's Future*" Taskforce (FFCFT) which is made up, among others, by the ten largest community colleges in our state. Our local is one of the strongest components of the task force. We are holding meetings across the state, gearing towards what will be "a decisive year," 2010.

The FFCFT leadership believes we must inspire ourselves in order to participate in an ongoing campaign that unifies our local with all the other neighboring locals and allies to work toward achieving the goals listed below. Our objective is to have a significant majority of locals and members over the course of 2010 and beyond to participate in the campaign.

Goals of FFCFT

1. Build a rank-and-file movement of CFT members across locals that participate in the following:
 - a. Each local gets 30% or more of its members to participate in Talking Taxes/Progressive Reform workshops.
 - b. Each local identifies 5% or more of their members will-

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Voluntary Sick Leave Bank Is Open for Faculty Deposits

The Voluntary Sick leave Bank (VSLB) will be open from November 30 to February 1. For the donation of one day of sick leave for full-timers or one hour for part-timers, you can become a member of the Bank. Membership means that if you use up all your sick leave and still need more for a catastrophic illness, you can draw on the Bank to receive up to 100 days of half pay. (For part-timers, this half-pay ends with the end of the semester.)

In practice, "catastrophic" is understood to refer to either the severity of the illness or the severity of its financial impact. You can draw on the bank twice in your tenure at CCSF.

For more details, read Article 17.E in the contract, online at aft2121.com. But you must be a member of VSLB to use this great benefit, and you can't join at just any old time. You must join either when you are first hired or whenever the Bank is open. It will be open very soon!

You Must Opt In

If you are currently in the Bank and want to remain in the Bank, you must sign up to donate either one hour (for part-timers) or one day (for full-timers) of sick leave. In other words, you must OPT IN.

If you are NOT in the Bank and want to become a member, you must sign up to donate either one hour (for part-timers) or one day (for full-timers) of sick leave.

If you are in the Bank and do not want to remain in the Bank, do nothing.

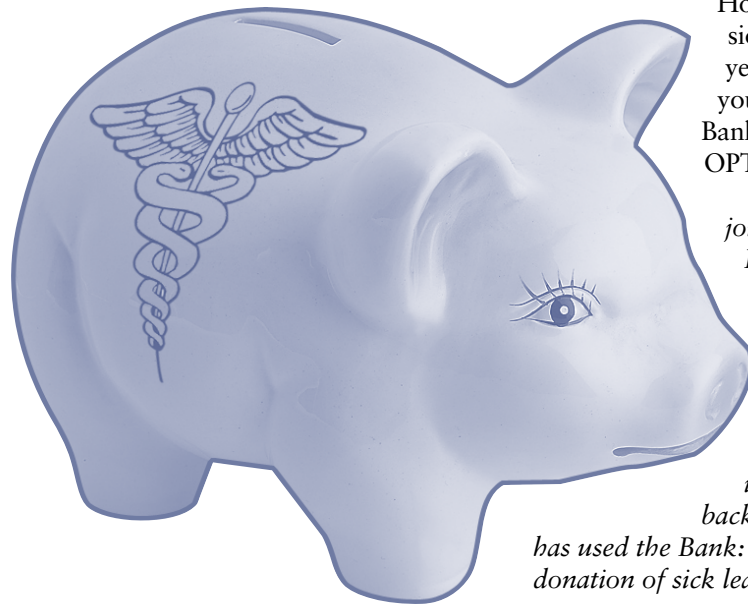
If you are not in the Bank and do not want to be in the Bank, do nothing.

The NEXT time that the VSLB is open, a new provision of the contract will be in effect. That means that if you are already in the Bank, you will automatically have your sick leave debited for your contribution to the Bank unless you notify the District that you want to OPT OUT of the Bank.

However, that provision is NOT in effect yet. THIS TIME, if you want to be in the Bank, you still have to OPT IN.

Be looking for joint letter from the District and the Union being sent both to your home and to your campus mailbox. Don't set it aside! Fill it out and send it back. Ask anyone who

has used the Bank: it is well worth the donation of sick leave.



Connect online to AFT 2121

Here is just some of what you can do at www.aft2121.com:

- * Read the latest about the growing statewide "FightBack" against budget cuts and hear announcements of upcoming activities. Access the latest AFT bulletins and newsletters.
- * Check Your Check – All faculty pay is based on a pro-rated percentage of the full-time salary scale. Access the pay scales and formula for calculating your correct pay.
- * For part-timers, read the best primer available on retirement options by Cliff Liehe. Learn how to collect unemployment during the winter recess and summer.
- * Access the 2009-12 AFT/District Contract with bookmarks that will take you where you want to go.
- * Keep up-to-date on union resolutions and actions by accessing Minutes from Union meetings.

CCSF Far from Out of the Woods

State Fiscal Crisis Deepens

(continued from page 1)

- ◆ Reducing administrative overhead through consolidation of administrative duties, attrition, and the reduction of top level salaries.

- ◆ Implementing salary step freezes for all CCSF employees for 2009/10.

- ◆ Rolling back 6.5% of the instructional program in the Fall/Spring semesters while maintaining sufficient enrollment to capture available State funding.

- ◆ Avoiding layoffs by first reducing all “extra pay” assignments, including overload and retiree assignments, to achieve the 6.5% goal.

- ◆ Reducing student services in the face of a draconian 40% cut in state categorical programs such as EOPS, matriculation, and DSPS.

- ◆ Drastically reducing summer school offerings—thus saving \$4 million—while maintaining sufficient enrollment overall to garner all available state apportionment dollars and minimizing the cuts to Fall and Spring classes.

- ◆ Cutting non-essential expenditures, including travel and other costs.

- ◆ Pursuing existing and new grant-funding opportunities to fund salaries and other costs to save jobs.

- ◆ Analyzing all programs to minimize transfer of monies from the Unrestricted Budget.

- ◆ Transferring monies from the CCSF budget reserve to shore up any remaining budget deficit.

Have These Strategies Worked?

How well has this budget strategy been working? What has been the impact on CCSF faculty and staff? What problems do we face next year?

- ◆ The District has significantly reduced expenditures this year. For example, we know that total faculty salary costs are running approximately 6% below last year's. However, a partial drawdown of the District reserve in the present fiscal year means that there will be less of a reserve next year to absorb a possibly even greater budget deficit.

- ◆ While job loss has been minimal, many faculty have already lost or will lose significant income that they need to live on because of the reduction of overload and summer classes.

- ◆ Some departments evidently held off making cuts in the Fall 2009 program, thus compounding the Spring 2010 cuts needed to reach the 6.5% goal. These larger spring cuts are causing some part-timers with several years' seniority to be laid off or suffer cuts in assignments.

Despite the cost-cutting measures instituted this year, CCSF faces additional cost increases next year that will somehow have to be covered: (1) The Health Service System, which provides health care to CCSF employees, may propose significant increases in premiums for 2010/11; (2) The federal stimulus money that came to CCSF this year and has been used to backfill some of the cuts in the categoricals is one-year money and will dry up at the end of 2009/10. Thus, the full impact of the state cuts to categoricals won't be felt until 2010/11. (3) Salary step advancements for CCSF employees are scheduled to resume next year. (4) CalSTRS may demand greater contributions from districts. Currently, CCSF pays 8.25% of base salary for the Defined Benefit pension plan.

What is the Union doing in the face of this crisis? What can faculty do?

We recognize that this crisis represents the most serious threat ever to public education in California and to CCSF in particular. Although AFT 2121 itself is facing cuts in its dues revenues from faculty, we have resolved not to cut back on our work. Our Executive Board has authorized running a deficit in this year's union budget by drawing from our savings. Representation demands have increased on AFT representatives and staff. Our CCSF budget analysis and advocacy for faculty (especially for part-timers facing assignment cuts) has intensified. We are expending more time and effort protecting faculty from the impact of the budget cuts. We are determined to protect faculty rights and to maintain a faculty voice in critical decisions facing the College over the next few years. The Union and our members must also:

- ◆ Continue to advocate at CCSF against layoffs and for maintaining classes and student services. Push for cuts in nonessential services and for shared sacrifices to the extent that they are needed.

- ◆ Participate and help organize the growing “Fight Back” movement in California against budget cuts. This means joining students and other unions in education and the public sector in coalition-building and direct action.

- ◆ Gear up for our California Federation of Teachers statewide offensive to fight budget cuts and restore funding to education and public services through progressive taxation and prioritizing of state spending.

- ◆ Increase our public visibility through rallies, vigils, and marches and presentations to the CCSF Board of Trustees, all while wearing our blue faculty solidarity t-shirts.

- ◆ Do everything we can at CCSF to economize while fighting staunchly to preserve jobs and CCSF programs and services.

- ◆ Help make our case to the public and to the City of San Francisco to garner their support and assistance.

- ◆ Keep communicating with faculty as this struggle unfolds. We call on all faculty members to join with us in the common effort to secure our future and the future of California. More than ever, we need your support and participation. (chanzo@aft2121.com)

Students and faculty from around California rally against fee hikes at Candlelight Vigil at Yerba Buena Gardens November 6.



Above: Student displays signs created by AFT2121 staffers.



Candlelight Vigil Raises Awareness of Budget Crisis

By Patricia Arack
Editor, Union Action

AFT2121 worked energetically with Leslie Smith and her staff at the CCSF Office of Governmental Relations and members of the State Student Senate to make the first Community College Week, November 2-6, a high-profile public relations success for community colleges throughout the state.

From the opening rally at Yerba Buena Gardens Monday to the final march from Union Square to the rally at Yerba Buena for Friday's Candlelight Vigil, AFT2121 was on the game, helping to plan the event and distributing blue t-shirts, lights, skull posters, and updated lyrics of "La Llorona."

Smith lauds AFT2121 for their contributions. She notes, "It was a great rally. The skull and 'No Fee Increases' signs were very effective, as were the blue t-shirts. The location, Union Square, couldn't get any more central on a Friday night, and the closing of the streets for the march was perfect—the streets were full of Friday-night shoppers. I loved Carmen and Ed's rewrite of 'La Llorona.'"

This was the first Community College Week and the first statewide fall action against the cuts. About 500 supporters from AFT, CCSF and students from around the state turned out on a clear Friday night in support of the message, which was to fight fee increases and keep the door to college open. State Assembly members Tom Ammiano and Fiona Ma, along with SF Supervisor Candidate Janet Reilly, spoke at Union Square and pledged to help community colleges.

Then AFT, students, and faculty marched en masse from Union Square

to Yerba Buena Gardens, carrying signs, holding lighted candles, and chanting. They filled the streets, and their voices could be heard two blocks away. Gathering around the Stone Stage at Yerba Buena Gardens, the vigil ended with State Student Senate speakers rallying the crowd against fee increases and more budget cuts.

Smith had installed the powerful *Student Success Stories* sculptures at Yerba Buena for the entire week. These life-size "dolls" proclaim individual stories of student success from an extremely diverse community college student body. She points out that these sculptures show the positive outcome of robust community college funding, and comments, "I think our advocacy efforts focusing on what community colleges do for California, rather than whining about the cuts, has been the exact right approach."

However, Smith cautions, "We are not out of the economic downturn by any stretch of the imagination, and the approach talked about recently by our governor of 'no new revenues' is not promising. We need to stick to their tactics, i.e., 1) we are the solution to California's economic problems; and 2) we change people's lives for the better."

"We are the only place Californians can go if we want a globally competitively educated workforce for retraining when workers are laid off, to close the achievement gap, and to remove the basic skills gap," concluded Smith.

AFT staff and members who contributed to the success of CC Week were Carmen Roman-Murray, Gus Goldstein, Ed Murray, Robin Mackey, and AFT graphic designer Gwynnd Maestre, among others. (*parackaft@aft2121.com*)



Chris Hanzo

AFT2121 President Gus Goldstein and Debbie Wilensky, John Adams ESL, join Vigil Rally at Yerba Buena Gardens.



Patricia Arack

Rodney Robinson, Student Trustee for the Los Angeles Community College District, leads the rally at the Candlelight Vigil, Yerba Buena Gardens, November 6.

CCSF Social Science instructors Kimberly Keenan and Tom Menendez, joined by Tom's partner (left), enjoy a moment during the vigil.

Chris Hanzo



Part-timers Active in Budget Fight

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

CCSF part-time faculty members during this late fall season have experienced some emotional highs along with pervading doubt and uncertainty over our continued employment at the college.

After raining all day on Friday, November 6, the sky cleared and a beautiful, crisp night embraced us. The night was ours. Patches of blue blanketed the corner of Powell and Geary in Union Square in San Francisco as CCSF faculty and students in their respective blue solidarity t-shirts gathered for the march and vigil. I tell my students, "Sacramento took our funding, they didn't take our voices." So my students and I joined my colleagues from the John Adams Campus, including many JAD part-time ESL instructors and other students and faculty from other CCSF Campuses and other community colleges from around the state, and marched through the downtown streets at the last event of Community College Week in San Francisco, the Community College Candlelight Vigil.

"La Llorona" Decries Budget Cuts, Looks to the Future

We sang an English-language adaptation of an old Mexican folk song, "La Llorona." We carried AFT-provided candles, song sheets, and masks created at the AFT office with a crying skull on one side (drawn by a non-credit ESL student), the lyrics of our song on the other.

State student government leaders expressed their outrage at the budget cuts, politicians pledged support for the students, and all the 300-plus crowd sang, "We are the wave of the future, California."

At the end of the march, the candlelight vigil in the darkened Yerba Buena Gardens was a smashing success, and was, in the words of one of my John Adams students, "emotional, memorable, unforgettable."

**"Sacramento took our funding—
they didn't take our voices."**

ESL Field Trip to Trustees

On Thursday, October 22, my ESL colleague at John Adams Campus Elgie Gillespie and I took our night ESL classes on a field trip to the San Francisco Community College Board of Trustees meeting so our students could learn first hand how their school is governed.

I spoke before the board in my capacity as chair of the AFT 2121 Part-timers Committee during a special presentation of our Union about the negative effects of the state budget cuts on CCSF faculty. After thanking the Board and Chancellor Griffin for the fine job they have done supporting part-timer issues, I told them that the college should eliminate unnecessary expenses before cutting any part-timers' class assignments.

I also urged the board to go to Sacramento to lobby our state legislators to get our funding back. This budget advocacy is extremely important for part-timers, since the first to go will be us if we are unable to get our funding back from the state.

FACCC Part-time Symposium

At the state level, I have represented part-timers as a panelist at the Faculty Association of California

Community Colleges, FACCC at its latest Part-Time Symposium in San Francisco on November 7, 2009. In my remarks during the panel discussion, I related how our union has worked successfully to protect part-timers assignments so far during this crisis.

Part-timer Meeting December 4

Finally, I would like to invite all part-timers to the AFT 2121 general Part-Timers meeting on Friday, December 4, 2009, from 3:00 to 4:30 p.m. at the John Adams Campus, Room 316. Ample parking will be available, and the campus is accessible by Muni lines 21 Hayes and 43 Masonic. We hope to see you at this meeting, which will provide the opportunity to exchange information and express your concerns about employment issues. (croman@ccsf.edu)

La Llorona

Hear this tale of sorrow, California
We need your help now
They cut our classes and budget
Llorona
We need your help now

For we are the treasure of our state,
California
And we are the wave of the future
For we are the treasure of our state,
Llorona
And we are the wave of the future

Ay de mi Llorona, Llorona
They've cut thousands of classes
Ay de mi Llorona, Llorona
Our budget's been cut to the bone

Before college funding was a marvel,
California
But now it's only a shadow
Before college funding was a marvel,
Llorona
But now it's only a shadow

Ay de mi Llorona, Llorona
We are quietly dying, California
Ay de mi Llorona, Llorona
Our funding is nearly dry

We need to fight for our future,
California
The time to fight is now
We must take a stand for our future,
Llorona
The time to fight is now.

Lyrics adaptation copyright by Ed
Murray & Carmen Roman-Murray

Carmen Roman-Murray, Chair
of AFT Part-timers Committee,
preparing signs for the Community
College Candlelight Vigil.



Chris Hanzo

What CalSTRS Options Do I have?

By Ron Bixler
AFT Retirement Specialist

On Independent Flex Day, August 13, 2009, AFT 2121 sponsored a highly successful Retirement and Financial Planning Day. Among the informative presentations, the State Teachers' Retirement System's local representative Martin Bloch gave an overview of the retirement programs available to faculty.

While a small number of faculty are covered by the San Francisco City and County retirement system or Social Security, the majority of our members belong to STRS. The City College faculty audience's enthusiastic response to Mr. Bloch's explanation of the retirement system has encouraged us to present the basic information about the plans STRS offers.

Here is a short summary of the California State Teachers' Retirement System's Defined Benefit Plan, Defined Benefit Supplement Account, and Cash Balance Plan.

Defined Benefit Plan

All full-time faculty (who do not opt for Social Security) and those part-time faculty who choose to join, are members of the Defined Benefit Plan. As the name indicates, this is a pension that pays a set monthly benefit from retirement to the member's death. To be eligible for this benefit a member must have five years of full-time service and be at least 55 years old, unless s/he has 30 years of service credit prior to reaching 55.

The formula for benefits is based on three factors: age, service credit, and highest earnable salary. At age 55 the age factor is 1.4. This increases over

time until it reaches 2.4 at age 63.

Service credit is the number of years of full-time equivalent service earned. For full-time faculty it is ordinarily one per year, but for part-time faculty it is equal to the percentage of full-time load worked.

The third factor, highest earnable salary, is based on the single highest year for those members with 25 years or more of service. Those members with less service have their highest earnable salary computed as an average of their highest 36 consecutive months of earnings.

Part-time Calculations for Defined Benefit

Part-time faculty members have their highest salary calculated on earnable rather than earned income. This means STRS calculates what a part-timer would have earned had he or she worked 100% of a load at their rate of pay. Age factor times service credit equals the percent of highest salary paid as the annual pension benefit. This is called the member only benefit. It may be reduced to give a surviving beneficiary ongoing payments over his or her life through one of several options.

Defined Benefit Supplement Account

All Defined Benefit Plan members have a Defined Benefit Supplement Account. This program began on January 1, 2001 and is funded with one fourth of a member's normal retirement contributions, or 2% of gross salary. These contributions will cease at the end of 2010. Also, any extra paid work beyond one's regular salary has the normal 8% deduction taken, but that

deduction is placed in this DBS account along with most of the employer's contribution.

This account is wholly vested with the employee and earns interest set annually by the Teachers' Retirement Board. The extra work contributions will continue being placed in the account beyond the end of 2010. The Defined Benefit Supplement Account can be taken in several forms as an annuity or taken as a lump sum.

Cash Balance Benefit Program

Part-time faculty, especially those who do not aspire to a full-time teaching career, may join the Cash Balance Benefit Program. The Cash Balance Program deducts 4% of a member's earnings which go into an individual retirement account along with a matching 4% from the District.

Unlike the Defined Benefit Program, the Cash Balance Plan gives immediate vesting rights to the employee. All the money in the account is the employee's without a five-year vesting period. When the member leaves his employment, his account is portable. The member may continue participating with another STRS employer, or convert his credit if s/he joins the Defined Benefit Plan.

If the member leaves STRS-covered employment, he may either leave his contributions in the Cash Balance account to draw interest or roll them into another retirement plan or an IRA. At retirement, if the account is more than \$3500, the member may choose an annuity or take his contributions in a lump sum, which may be rolled over into an Individual Retirement Account. (rbixler@ccsf.edu)

Fight Back Looks Forward to 2010

(continued from page 3)

ing to volunteer in 2010 election work.

c. Each local recruits at least 10% of its members to participate in a CFT statewide action.

2. Work toward proposed election goals for 2010, 2011, and 2012:

a. Lower the threshold required to pass a local parcel tax from two-thirds to 55%.

b. Overturn the two-thirds requirement for passing a state budget and raising taxes.

c. Pass an initiative that closes the over \$1 billion in recent corporate tax loopholes.

d. Defeat anti-union/anti-worker initiatives.

3. Elect a progressive majority at the state level that protects and promotes education, vital public services, healthcare, and the environment.

As you can see, there is plenty of work for the next two to three years. We strongly believe that only with your support will these goals be achieved. Thus, our strength must be our unity. *Yes, we can!*

If you want to join the AFT 2121 Planning Committee (AFT,PC), email me at pabrodriguez@yahoo.com for details.

Former AFT2121 President Rodger Scott, who suggested the October 24 garage sale fund raiser idea to the Board of Trustees, and Trustee Steve Ngo, who happily clutches his CCSF student artwork purchase.



Photos: Patricia Arack



Yolanda Chrystal, AFT member and Continuing Student Counselor, helps out selling items at the garage sale.

College of Marin Instructor Kay Ryan Poet Laureate's Eye Is on Community Colleges



Christina Koci Hernandez

By Emily Wilson
Transitional Studies

All poet laureates have done slightly different things with their position as chief poet of the United States. Joseph Brodsky focused on getting poetry into airports, supermarkets and hotel rooms. Gwendolyn Brooks encouraged children to write poetry, and Robert Hass started River of Words, a K-12 international children's poetry and art contest.

Now Kay Ryan, the 16th Poet Laureate of the United States, will be focusing on community colleges, God love her. Ryan has taught remedial English part time at College of Marin for about 30 years, and her ties with community colleges go very deep. Her late partner, Carol Adair, taught at College of Marin as well, and Ryan attended Antelope Valley College in Lancaster, CA, before getting bachelor's and master's degrees at UCLA.

In October, Ryan announced a community college poetry project, which will include a web page "Poetry for the Mind's Joy" on the Library of Congress website, a poetry contest for community college students, and April 1 has been designated as National

Poetry Day on community college campuses. On that day there will be a videoconference with Ryan along with students and teachers from seven community colleges, which will be streamed live to the web.

When she launched the project at the Library of Congress on Oct. 21, Ryan called community colleges great, distinguished institutions—that are pretty much ignored.

David Berry, the executive director of the Community College Humanities Association, hopes this project can do something to change that.

"It's a way to feature the work students and their professors do and give them some visibility," Berry said. "Our public image needs to have this kind of corrective."

Patricia Gray, head of the Library's Poetry and Literature Center and a poet herself, says with budgets being cut and enrollment rising, there needs to be more attention to the education opportunities two-year colleges provide.

"These college students deserve the full extent of the humanities," she said. "Poetry extends the mind and makes it possible to use more than the rational mind. You use your whole self to understand a poem."

In January 2010, the Community College Humanities Association will invite community colleges to select the best poem written by a student from that college, which will then be sent to the Library of Congress for possible display on the poetry page. Contact the CCHA at www.ccha-assoc.org.

Also, in early 2010, the Library of Congress will launch Ryan's webpage "Poetry for the Mind's Joy" on its poetry pages, which are found at www.loc.gov/poetry. (*exj@speakeasy.net*)

what's the union done for me lately?

AFT 2121 Saves Lost Pay, Benefits

Seniority List Error

A part-time instructor contacted the Union about his seniority on the part-timer seniority list. At the Union's request, the District investigated, confirmed that an error had occurred, and arranged for the department to manually correct the error pending the next computer generated seniority list.

Lost Pay Restored

The Union discovered that a part-time instructor teaching a Monday course on a condensed schedule was being paid hourly instead of by the load, resulting in reduced pay. This was in spite of the fact that the part-timer was scheduled to teach more class hours on the condensed schedule than if the course were not on a condensed schedule. The Union was also concerned that other part-timers teaching condensed Monday schedules in the same department might be in the same situation. This turned out to be the case. At the Union's request, all affected part-timers were converted to pay by load

and appropriate salary adjustments were made.

Health Benefits Saved

A part-time instructor was assigned a .493 load for Spring 2010. This was just shy of the .5 load required for part-timer eligibility for health benefits. Although the assignment was for eight hours in the credit program, it included a lab/lecture course with a load differential. Pursuant to the contract, the Union consulted with the District and asked that the part-timer be granted health benefits. The District agreed, subject to confirmation of the assignment.

Unemployment Benefits Saved

Even this late in the semester, the Union continues to assist part-time instructors with unemployment issues such as an improper denial of benefits by EDD on the ground that the part-timer has reasonable assurance of employment. The Union also continues to assist faculty members with various CalSTRS issues which seem endless in number and type.



Nancy Husari Exhibits Her Art at Alameda Museum

Union Action's wickedly brilliant cartoonist, Nancy Husari, is exhibiting some of her artwork with *Alameda Women Artists* through December 5 at the Alameda Museum, 2324 Alameda Avenue in Alameda. The closing reception and a holiday art boutique is on Saturday, December 5, from 1-3 pm. Let's support her work! nhusari@ccsf.edu.

AFT Calendar

Tuesday, November 24
Delegate Assembly Meeting
JAD, Room 109, 3:00-5:00 pm

Tuesday, December 8
Executive Board Meeting
Union Office, 3:00-5:00 pm

Tuesday, December 15
Delegate Assembly Meeting
Ocean, Arts Room 316, 3:00-5:00 pm

Thursday, December 17
CCSF Board of Trustees Meeting
Gough, 6:00 pm