

# Perspective



Community College Council of the California Federation of Teachers  
American Federation of Teachers, AFL-CIO



## Bernie Sanders likes 'Free City College'

Amid a crush of fans at City College of San Francisco, Senator Bernie Sanders praises the college's program to make education free for all its students as a model for the nation.

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## Teaching in the time of Trump

A San Jose CC instructor shares her thinking and approach to some of the anxieties and strategies many faculty and students are feeling and devising in the current surreal political environment.

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## Signing up new members

Dedicating the time of one volunteer to reach out to new hires can reap big rewards, as Doug Thiel has shown in the Ventura County Community College District. New employee orientation is the right time to ask faculty to join the union.

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16 Case No. \_\_\_\_\_  
 17 CLASS ACTION COMPLAINT FOR  
 18 INJUNCTIVE RELIEF FOR VIOLATIONS  
 19 OF BUSINESS AND PROFESSIONS CODE  
 20 SECTION 17200

21 AFT LOCAL 2121 ON BEHALF OF  
 22 ITSELF AND ITS MEMBERS,  
 23 CALIFORNIA FEDERATION OF  
 24 TEACHERS, SHANELL WILLIAMS,  
 25 KIMBERLY M. GINTHER-WEBSTER,  
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 COHEN, ADRIANA GUTIERREZ,  
 BROOKE DAWSON, ON BEHALF OF  
 THEMSELVES AND ALL OTHERS  
 SIMILARLY SITUATED,  
 Plaintiffs,  
 vs.  
 ACCREDITING COMMISSION FOR  
 COMMUNITY AND JUNIOR  
 COLLEGES; and DOES 1 through 50,  
 inclusive,  
 Defendants.

**GAME OVER**  
**A win for fair**  
**accreditation**

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and more...



# President's Column

Jim Mahler, president, CFT Community College Council

## Staying united: the answer to the challenging times we live in

Underway in the new academic year, we find ourselves starkly confronted by two dangerous threats looming ominously on the horizon.

First, the US Supreme Court, now with a full complement of justices, will rule this academic year on a case, originating in Illinois, that will make it *unconstitutional* for unions to collect “fair share” agency fees from their bargaining unit members—members that the union is legally obligated to negotiate on behalf of and provide legal representation for. The Court will keep in place

rather than solid legal theory, it’s what happens when five of the nine justices are supported by—and ideologically aligned with—powerful corporations and billionaires rather than caring first about social justice and fairness.

What does that mean within each of our locals? It means every unit member will soon have a choice to make: do I stay in and keep the union strong, or do I drop out and hope for the

**If we want to maintain the working conditions, and the social environment of inclusion that has taken us decades to achieve collectively, with many lives lost in the process, then we must stick together and support one another.**

the mandate that unions must represent everyone, member or not, but their ruling will allow anyone who desires to “opt out” of paying union dues to do so. That’s like your local gas and electric company being told they must continue to keep your lights on, but you should be able to “opt out” of paying the bill. It’s a logically flawed premise, and runs counter to a 40 year old unanimous US Supreme Court decision; but when partisan politics are the rule of the day

best?

### The union makes us strong—but how?

What keeps us strong currently? First and foremost, our ability to elect our bosses. Unlike our brothers and sisters in the private sector, we are able to elect our bosses—the members of our community college district Governing Boards. And more importantly, because of our strength in this area, we are able to keep out potential candidates who, if elected, would quickly move to erode the gains we have struggled for so many decades to win.

However, our strength comes at a cost, and that cost is the dues that we all pay. Our dues provide us with the resources to wage political campaigns, hire attorneys to provide our members with top quality legal representation, and to provide staff so that we may negotiate solid union contracts and provide representation to our members.

You may ask yourself: “Why would large corporations and billionaires care about what happens in the public sector?” The answer is in the end game, which they have carefully scripted. The public sector is



CHRIS CRIDER PHOTO

virtually the last industry where union density is still significant. High union density means good wages and good benefits. High union density also means that industries around us also benefit. In regions where union density is high, non-union jobs prosper as well. In regions where union density is low, non-union jobs do poorly. Weaken the public sector, and you suppress wages in the private sector as well. That’s their end game. What pressure will there be to provide employees and their families with health benefits when no one else has them?

### Sanctioning white supremacy

The second threat we all face is the sanctioning of white supremacy and hate violence by the White House. The threats from those who are now finding their voice are real, and they must be stopped now. We can’t

stand by silently on the sidelines and hope they go away. We must meet any efforts by people who espouse such principles with an equally forceful repudiation of their hatred and intolerance of others who do not look like them. This is our time to stand up and be our own heroes. We must protect our students, our neighbors, our colleagues, and our families. We must not let these forces divide us. We must remain united, and resolute, in the face of these attacks.

In both cases above, the solution is identical. If we want to maintain the working conditions, and the social environment of inclusion that has taken us decades to achieve collectively, with many lives lost in the process, then we must stick together and support one another. No one is going to do it for us. **CC**

## MARK YOUR CALENDAR

December 1-2	Higher Ed Collective Bargaining Conference	CSU Long Beach
December 2	CFT Executive Council	Burbank CFT office
January 10	Deadline: Teilhet Scholarship for high school students	
January 20	CFT Executive Council	CFT Sacramento office
February 2	Community College Council CFT Committees	TBA (north)
March 23-25	CFT Convention	Hilton/Costa Mesa



The California Federation of Teachers is an affiliate of the American Federation of Teachers, AFL-CIO.

The CFT represents over 120,000 educational employees working at every level of education in California. The CFT is committed to raising the standards of the profession and to securing the conditions essential to provide the best service to California’s students.

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## CFT staffer and labor historian

## Telling the story of the union

[After editing *The Perspective* for fifteen years, and serving as CFT's communications director for twenty-nine, I'm retiring November 1. CCC president Jim Mahler insisted that this issue's profile feature me. I find this slightly embarrassing, but agreed in order to use David Bacon's interview as a way to sum up and say 'so long.'—Ed.]

Telling the story of working people is what Fred Glass does. Twenty-nine years ago he convinced Miles Myers, then president of the California Federation of Teachers, to create a communications position where he could use his skills for teachers and education workers. Neither Glass nor the union ever looked back to regret it.

But his drive to explain workers to workers goes far beyond the world of the school or campus. Last year Glass published the first comprehensive history of California's labor movement since the 1970s.

According to AFT President Randi Weingarten, *From Mission to Microchip: A History of the California Labor Movement* (University of California Press, 2016) shows unions "serve the

coalition. Older friends in the New Left told him they were part of the problem, not the solution. But when he went to study at UCLA, his vision expanded.

"I got a job on campus, and became a member of the AFSCME local," he says. In his first meeting he found progressive activists of all political stripes, and realized that unions could be more interesting than

in 1978, *Rank and File Review*. One episode featured taxi drivers, another the upsurge of activism in the hotel and restaurant union. When they had a screening in Fresno of a third, an organizing video made for Teamsters for a Democratic Union, shots were fired through the window of the home.

Teaching at San Francisco State after taking his MA, Glass joined United Professors of California, AFT Local 1352, which was vying for representation rights with three other faculty organizations. He helped form a part-timers organizing committee, "because it was clear that part-timers had different interests and needs from tenured faculty—guaranteed classes, rehire rights and access to health benefits. These are the same things part-timers are still fighting for."

At SF State he got a second masters degree in education technology, just as microcomputer use was starting to take hold, and video technology becoming more accessible. He wrote a research paper about how unions were using these new technologies, published in *Labor Studies Journal*. This degree got him a job at College of San Mateo, where he became an active member of AFT Local 1493 and to the chagrin of his department head, a CTA member, signed up his entire department into the union, helping AFT become the faculty bargaining agent.

The union offered him the job of executive secretary. As the union grew he computerized it. From the union's shoebox of index cards with membership records, Glass fashioned a Filemaker database. And replacing the old paper cut-and-paste, Glass laid out the local newsletter on the first Mac, using PageMaker 1.0.

As he grew active in the statewide CFT, he realized the federation had no communications director and convinced then-President Myers to hire him in 1988. His first assignment: write a history of the CFT in time for its 50th anniversary. Glass' research found the union had actually been founded 70 years earlier. "At least it was a round number," laughs Glass. He also put together a set of brochures and started up a number of organizing



Fred Glass, editor of *The Perspective* for the past fifteen years, and CFT communications director for nearly three decades, is retiring. Here he leads a workshop for delegates at a CFT convention on union communications.

SHARON BEALS PHOTO

**"Unless the educational system could help students understand the role of unions and workers in American society, the labor movement would be in deep trouble."**

same purpose they always have: protecting and empowering workers in their quest for their fair share of the American Dream."

The skills Glass uses to tell this story convincingly took a lifetime to build. He grew up in a Jewish family in west Los Angeles. His father was a member of Musicians Local 47, and various uncles and aunts worked in the needle trades, and belonged to the International Ladies Garment Workers. "But no one talked to me that much about unions," Glass says. "It was just part of the backdrop."

#### Impact of the Vietnam War

Then came the Vietnam War, as Glass attended Birmingham High in the San Fernando Valley. "The war radicalized me," Glass remembers. "I knew a lot of kids who got drafted right after high school. One boy, a track star, went to Vietnam and came back with one leg." The school team was called the Braves, so when Fred and his fellow student radicals published an underground newsletter to stir anti-war sentiment, they named it after Aldus Huxley's novel, calling it "Braves' New World."

He and his friends organized a high school chapter of Students for a Democratic Society, and shut the school down to protest the war on November 15, 1969.

At first, Glass didn't think of unions as part of the antiwar

he'd thought.

At UCLA he majored in English and film, and put to work ideas inherited from his father, who had built a big library of 16mm films. "He knew people in Hollywood, and the highlight of those years was when Fritz Lang came to the house to see a complete print of his film *Metropolis*," Glass remembers. "As I got political it was natural that I looked at film as a way to do something to help peoples' struggles."

Toward the end of Glass's senior year he went to a meeting. The speaker was Fred Ross, legendary community and union organizer best known for mentoring Cesar Chavez and Dolores Huerta. Glass, who had been looking for another political project as the war wound down, became a volunteer boycott organizer for the United Farm Workers.

At San Francisco State Glass got a graduate film degree, making a film, *What is Socialism?*, through a series of interviews with people on the street in San Francisco. "The point was to show that the key to change was collective action."

#### Active participant

Glass didn't just document struggle; he was an active participant. With a group of San Francisco media activists he started the first West Coast public access television show on labor

newsletters aimed at various constituency groups within the union.

Since then he's edited each of the CFT's publications at one time or another, oversaw its website and media relations, and worked with locals on their communications efforts.

"I've enjoyed it all," he says. "But my favorite parts were two long-term projects—progressive tax policy and teaching labor in the schools."

#### Common wisdom

In the years following passage of Proposition 13, the common wisdom, even among public sector unions, was that California was an unchangeable anti-tax state. But in 1992, after a union coalition lost a statewide progressive tax ballot measure, Proposition 167, CFT leaders realized that the opposition had only won, narrowly, because they were able to dump huge amounts of money into the campaign right before the election. With adequate resources, the reformers might well have won. This insight stuck with Glass.

He made sure CFT's publications emphasized the importance of progressive tax policy continuously, not just in election year campaigns. When the Great Recession hit, the union began to put resources into systematically educating members and the public about the progressive tax solution to the state's revenue problems. By 2010 that led to the March for California's Future, where CFT activists marched from Bakersfield to Sacramento to highlight three messages: restore the promise of public education; a government and economy that work for all Californians; and fair

taxes to fund California's future. The labor coalition that emerged from the March crafted the victory of Proposition 25, which changed the two-thirds legislative vote requirement for the state budget to a simple majority.

Encouraged, the union came up with a Millionaire's Tax in 2011, and battled head-to-head with Governor Jerry Brown over his more regressive rival proposal until the governor called CFT President Josh Pechthalt, and a compromise was reached on Proposition 30, which essentially saved the public sector through its combination of income tax bumps on the rich and a modest sales tax increase. Four years later Proposition 55 eliminated Prop 30's sales tax. "California now has a more progressive tax structure, and while we have a long way to go before state revenues match our population's needs, we don't have the revenue problems other states do," Glass says proudly.

#### Telling the union story

From the beginning of his time with CFT, Glass was convinced that telling the story of California labor was a key contribution the union could make to strengthening the labor movement. Thirty years ago Glass chaired the first meeting of the Labor in the Schools Committee, attended by former CFT President Raoul Teilhet, future president Mary Bergan, prominent labor historians David Brody and Will Scoggins, and talented rank and file teachers like future Ben Rust award winner Linda Tubach. "All agreed that unless the educational system could help students understand the role of unions and workers in American society,

Continued on page 4

## Important accreditation policy changes

## CFT, AFT 2121 reach settlement with ACCJC

On August 7 the California Federation of Teachers (CFT) and AFT Local 2121 announced they had reached agreement with the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges (ACCJC) to settle their long-standing lawsuit against the agency. Filed more than four years ago, but creatively stalled by ACCJC's battery of lawyers, the out-of-court settlement lays to rest one of the most important weapons deployed by faculty in a long campaign that had two goals: to keep the doors of City College of San Francisco (CCSF) open; and to broadly reform the accreditation rules and practices that had allowed the accrediting agency to go off the rails.

The campaign, which in addition to the legal actions mustered legislative assistance, street demonstrations, media events, congressional interventions, a team of CCSF speakers dispatched to colleges across the state, and countless hours volunteered by stressed-out CCSF faculty, students, and community supporters mobilized to save their college, ended with the achievement of both goals.

The agreement lays out a

of San Francisco, the lawsuit sought an injunction to keep the college open, and to force the agency to stop violating its own rules and the rule of law. That injunction was granted through a separate lawsuit filed by San Francisco City Attorney Dennis Herrera in San Francisco Superior Court, and as a result of that lawsuit ACCJC was found to have broken several laws in its decision to terminate CCSF's accreditation.



CFT president Joshua Pechthalt announced the filing of a lawsuit against the ACCJC at a press conference in front of San Francisco's City Hall in September 2013. Also shown are, from left, CCSF student Shanell Williams, SF Supervisor David Campos, faculty member and then-AFT 2121 president Alisa Messer, and Supervisor Scott Weiner.

**"This agreement represents a sea change in the ACCJC's operations in a number of significant ways. We believe that as a result of this settlement, fair accreditation practices will be the norm going forward."**

number of important accreditation policy changes, some of which have already been put in place. The others await ratification the next time the full Commission meets in January. It states that, "These changes have institutionalized many of the remedies which were initially sought by the plaintiffs at the time of the filing of this case."

CFT president Joshua Pechthalt said, "This agreement represents a sea change in the ACCJC's operations in a number of significant ways. We believe that as a result of this settlement, fair accreditation practices will be the norm going forward."

#### Broken laws

Originally filed in September 2013, following the ACCJC's reckless decision to terminate the accreditation of City College

The CFT/2121 lawsuit addressed broader concerns than Herrera's, seeking to end years of punitive, arbitrary, inconsistent and expensive actions by the Commission. The agency's behavior brought to light by the suit led many observers to decry the Commission's lack of transparency and "culture of fear," culminating in sharp criticism by the Chancellor's office, the Board of Governors, the State Auditor, elected leaders in San Francisco, Sacramento, and Washington D.C., and sanctions by the U.S. Department of Education.

#### Changes in agency leadership

Last year, however, a number of changes in Commission leadership—including placing its controversial president, Barbara Beno, on administrative leave—ultimately led to fruitful discussions between CFT and

the ACCJC, and to the agency's decision in January to fully reaccredit CCSF for seven years. But the lawsuit continued forward after that joyful moment because, in the eyes of CFT and 2121 leadership, the other goal—securing fair accreditation practices—required legal guarantees.

Toward that end, the Settlement Agreement included the following changes:

The ACCJC agreed not to interfere with community colleges' collective bargaining process;

The commission's executive committee would recommend deleting accreditation standard III.A.6, requiring student learning outcomes (SLOs) to be used as a component of faculty evaluation;

The Commission would adopt a policy to ensure at least three active duty faculty members are assigned to each college evaluation team;

The Commission would adopt a policy establishing clear criteria by which the ACCJC may extend for "good cause" the two year period for a college to comply with accreditation standards

as to which it has been found deficient;

In determining a college's financial stability, the accreditor will apply its metrics consistently from college to college, and refrain from directing colleges as to what specific steps must be taken to achieve that stability;

The ACCJC will typically reaffirm accreditation for seven years, with a follow up report for colleges with minor compliance issues, instead of the recently-adopted eighteen month period of reaffirmation; and

The agency will strengthen conflict of interest safeguards for commissioners and evaluation team members.

The settlement also established a dispute resolution procedure that begins outside of court in the event that CFT or AFT Local 2121 believes the ACCJC is not living up to its commitments.

#### ACCJC intent to implement

Jim Mahler, president of the CFT's statewide Community College Council, said, "In fast-tracking these reforms, the ACCJC's leadership has

indicated the seriousness with which they view the settlement and their intent to implement it. We look forward to strengthening and improving the educational opportunities for the community college system's two million students, no longer distracted by the accreditation problems of the past."

CCSF faculty union president Tim Killikelly said, "On the heels of ACCJC finally granting City College of San Francisco full accreditation, and putting Compton College on a firm path to reaccreditation, this settlement is a vindication of our union's decision to fight back against the illegal and unfair actions to which we had been subjected, and to fight for the literal future of the college."

"This struggle took a big toll. What the agreement should mean is no one else will ever again have to go through what we at City College went through. We believe this agreement and our vigilance together will help ensure a robust and fair accreditation system for California." ☐

—by Fred Glass

#### Telling the story of the union continued from page 3

the labor movement would be in deep trouble," he remembers.

That meeting led to Glass writing and directing *Golden Lands, Working Hands*, a ten-part documentary video series dramatizing the state's labor history. The committee raised over \$250,000 to produce it. It

was eventually shown on most of the state's public television stations, and the legislature funded a copy for every California public high school.

Glass used the video series as the basis for a new evening course at City College of San Francisco. "Then I realized that

we also needed something for students to read," Glass says. It took him twenty-five years to chip away at it but by 2016 *From Mission to Microchip* was published by UC Press.

A working class history of the state is a necessary alternative to the official history, which, says

Glass, can be summed in four words: "Come here, get rich." The counter narrative is that the majority didn't get rich, but that in their best moments, they found a way to work together and organize," he observes. "We moved over 150 years from xenophobia to an inclusive

embrace of immigrant workers, and as a result, we have 16% union density here while the rest of the country is stuck at 10%. That's the takeaway. The best way forward for labor is to be inclusive, not exclusive." ☐

—By David Bacon

Proposition W

# Bernie Sanders highlights success of 'Free City College' in San Francisco

“Don’t you think that young people and working class people all over this country are asking their local leaders, ‘How come in San Francisco they are making college tuition free, why don’t you do it in our community?’” queried U.S. Senator Bernie Sanders on September 23, as the overflow crowd at City College of San Francisco’s main campus roared its approval.

“Our job now,” said Sanders, “is to make certain that we are talking about making public colleges and universities tuition-free at every institution in the country.” He called CCSF “a model for the nation,” due to its brand new status as a free college for all San Franciscans, thanks to Proposition W, passed by the city’s voters in 2016.

AFT 2121 political director Alisa Messer followed Sanders to the stage, thanking everyone who had worked on the years-long battle to save City College’s accreditation and on the Prop

offense for a better world, and that’s the world we want to live and love in together.” Messer then invited student speakers to the mic to share personal stories.

### Turnaround at CCSF

Sanders’s speech at the college’s Diego Rivera Theater came at the invitation of AFT Local 2121 and San Francisco Supervisor Jane Kim (endorsed by Sanders in 2016, and the sponsor of Prop W). The event underscored the turnaround taking place at CCSF.

After the Accrediting



U.S. Senator Bernie Sanders with Alisa Messer and San Francisco Supervisor Jane Kim, who sponsored Proposition W.

PHOTO COURTESY OF AFT 2121

Last year San Francisco voters approved Prop W, a ballot measure that promised to make ‘Free City College’ a reality to all San Francisco residents. As a result, 6,450 new students have enrolled this fall semester in credit classes, a 51% increase over a year ago.

W campaign. She told the crowd, “We have not only won an important defensive battle. Collectively, we’ve gone on

Commission for Community and Junior Colleges attempted to close CCSF in 2012, enrollment plunged from its high of 67,485

students in fall 2008 to 36,453 in fall 2016 as students worried they would lose course credit and access to federal student loans. Local news coverage of the crisis—nearly all of it negative, inaccurate, and confusing—contributed to the steep enrollment losses.

Although CCSF was ultimately fully reaccredited earlier this year, the public relations damage to the college had been severe. Making matters worse, top college administrators, most of whom

had been hired while the college was under the thumb of the ACCJC and a compliant “super-trustee” appointed by the state chancellor, had overseen several years of budget cuts and reductions in classes, faculty, and staff.

AFT 2121 and the CFT were able to convince the legislature to extend stabilization funding to the college to temporarily replace lost state revenues beginning in 2014. But faculty union leaders knew that that stopgap, brokered by state senator Mark Leno, would end this year.

### The emergence of Prop W

Prop W emerged from discussions within the union, led by political director Alisa Messer, pondering how to restore the college’s revenue stream and its ability to deliver a quality education to all San Franciscans who need it.

Last year, in a faculty union-driven election victory strongly supported by the San Francisco Labor Council and a coalition of community groups, San Francisco voters approved Prop W, a ballot measure that promised to make ‘Free City College’ a reality to all San Francisco residents. As a result, 6,450 new students have enrolled this fall semester in credit classes, a 51% increase over a year ago.

“That percentage is huge. That is the number that really shows the impact of Free City,”

said Tim Killikelly, president of AFT Local 2121. “Those are people who are new, attracted by Free City. You see a huge difference between people living in and outside of the City. That’s a much bigger number than the overall college numbers.”

Student fees and other expenses are covered through W’s progressive transfer tax on high-end San Francisco real estate parcels. The tax, which funds other city programs as well, provides \$5.5 million for the Free City effort.

As a result of the ‘Free City College’ program, attendance at CCSF has rebounded to 47,000 students.

Said Killikelly, “The vision for Free City is to create a broad program that will give students educational access regardless of their circumstances, because it benefits all of us to have an educated population.”

Senator Sanders was happy to pose for pictures with faculty and students following his remarks. He was also in town to promote his Medicare for All single payer legislation in another appearance with the California Nurses Association. [CC](#)

—By Fred Glass



Students, faculty and other supporters of City College of San Francisco mug for the camera outside the Free City College rally with Bernie Sanders.

PHOTO COURTESY OF AFT 2121



## Legislative Update

Bryan Ha, CFT Legislative Advocate

Earlier this year, CFT-CCC approved a legislative package that included a Part-Time Faculty Office Hours Budget Augmentation, Assembly Bill 568 (paid maternity leave), Assembly Bill 45 (California School Employee Housing Assistance Program), Senate Concurrent Resolution 30 (Educational Technology), and an Audit Request on Technology Study at the Community College level.

Great news! We were five-for-five on our sponsored asks this year. We began this legislative session with Governor Brown's budget proposal urging restraint. Fast-forward to mid-May; community colleges fared better than initially anticipated by many budget policy experts.

### Office hours augmentation

Study after study has shown that office hours are an effective tool for instructors and students in higher education. They provide an invaluable means for students to interact with faculty outside of the classroom and/or lecture hall. Few items are more important for student success. We also received solid guidance every step of the journey from CFT-CCC leadership.

CFT helped secure a \$5 million augmentation of on-going funds for the Community College Part-Time Faculty

Office Hours program. This appropriation went into effect on July 1, 2017. We received abundant support from our locals. Mark James Miller, President of the Allan Hancock College Part-Time Faculty Association (Santa Maria) testified at Budget Subcommittee hearings. Several Los Rios College Federation of Teachers (LRCFT) members attended most of the budget hearings as well. Their testimonies were compelling.

### Most California teachers don't get paid maternity leave. That could soon change

California K-14 school employees, who often must scrape together sick days to take time off when they get pregnant, could soon receive maternity leave for the first time.

Assembly Bill 568 by Assemblywoman Lorena

Gonzalez-Fletcher (D-San Diego) received final legislative approval on Monday, September 11 with bipartisan support and headed to Gov. Jerry Brown. It would require school districts, charter schools and community colleges to provide at least six weeks of paid leave to certificated and classified employees before or after giving birth.

AB 568 will help address California's teacher shortage by providing a benefit that makes the job more accessible to women who start a family. Female school employees are left with the decision to either "schedule" pregnancies based on the school calendar, or try to get by without pay. This current practice discriminates against women as only they are required to deplete their leave balances in order to bear children.

School and college administrators raised concerns about the financial burden of covering additional wages. Most teachers do not currently receive paid maternity leave because they do not participate in the state's worker-funded disability insurance program, which includes family leave. About

73% of California's teachers are women, according to the state Department of Education, and over 40 percent of classified employees at schools in the 2015-16 academic year. This means that issues around pregnancy leave are particularly important to school employees. AB 568 will keep valued school employees in the workforce after having children and will end the current discriminatory practice that only applies to female employees.

### Housing assistance for school employees

One reason for California's teacher shortage is a lack of incentives for young individuals to consider entering and staying in the profession. AB 45 by Tony Thurmond (D-Richmond) could help by requiring the Housing Finance Agency to administer a program to provide financing assistance to a qualified school district and to a qualified developer for the creation of affordable rental housing for K-12 teachers and classified employees. This bill could help community college adjuncts who moonlight as certificated or

classified employees.

### Educational technology

In order to improve the ongoing implementation and use of technology in educational institutions and identifying best practices for technology equipment upgrades, CFT secured Senate Concurrent Resolution 30 by Senator Richard Pan (D-Sacramento). This measure was chaptered by Secretary of State on July 5, 2017. Resolution Chapter 97, Statutes of 2017.

### Technology audit request

The Joint Legislative Audit Committee approved CFT's Audit Request on Technology Study during its first committee hearing on Wednesday, March 29. This audit request calls on the Auditor General to review a sample of community college districts to determine if they are engaging in long-term strategic planning for replacing and upgrading their instructional technology support structures.

Thank you for being part of a very successful legislative year. If you have any questions, please contact me at [bha@cft.org](mailto:bha@cft.org).

## Teaching in the time of Trump

Well, the nuclear threat is the highest it has been since I was a child when, ironically, "the Russians" were the "enemy." Parents of a sick baby are followed around a hospital, considered some kind of danger to the American public because of their immigration status. Victims of sexual assault are apparently creating the problem by speaking out about a violent sexual culture on many residential college campuses. Waters are whipping across the Atlantic, but that is not because of environmental changes. Young people who have lived their entire lives in this country are again afraid for the future.

What am I missing? Oh yeah, the call for police brutality, the boy scout speech, the military transgender ban, Charlottesville, the NFL comments, health care... each day stacks a new threat to all of the principles of America. But I'm thinking about how America has rested on principles, and in the status quo of mass culture, the contradictions are forever ignored; maybe this is a time that highlights that principles are meaningless, until they are tested and lived by.

I've experienced some personal good from living in this time of Trump, a good laugh with my dad when Scaramucci climbed on the crazy train, got a little too crazy, and fell off in a matter of hours. If you don't remember Scaramucci, it doesn't matter. But I had a good laugh with my dad when I really needed it. Humor is a tricky antidote, and laughing at the laughable tragic is respite, but we can't just eat sheet cake. (Thanks Tina, but no thanks, but it was funny, but no.)

### Being informed

In my first reflection on my teaching during this historical moment, I thought I had two choices, cocoon or become the outspoken, politically charged riot citizen I've always been ashamed I'm not, doing stuff I don't really do: marching, organizing, holding sit-ins and teach-ins and walk-outs. But now that this is my every day, I've settled for consciously politicizing my students by building class activities around being informed, staying engaged with social issues, learning how to find news and read news and make news, and stay critical about it. I'm strengthening a liaison with librarians to get students utilizing the resources we offer, so that they can be more aware and more engaged as a result. And politicizing my students does not mean influencing them to think like I think.

Because I teach in the basic skills classroom, many of my students are shaped by a fight for survival. In both physical and psychological ways, my students are often precariously seeking space from the prosaic concerns that dictate how life can be lived,



Marlise Ajanae Edwards

so my classroom as a haven has worked for all of us: a comfort zone to craft, to find confidence, to develop in a way that does not rush, or insist or create anxiety. I still want the kind of classroom that offers many moments of slowness and space-between, but I feel urgent to teach how to engage, even when overwhelmed by an overwhelming every day.

I'm beginning with projects that in the past I've ended with, asking students to start with looking at the world around them and figuring out what they acutely care about and feel connected to through a social issue paper. Instead of waiting until mid-semester to get into library skills, I started with a library orientation the first week of school,

and we are building library skills throughout the semester. In this time of Trump, the library is sacred space. We are surrounded by head spinning spin, and "alternative facts." In response, I want to teach one enduring act; that act is the independent investigation for truth. I was taught this as a religious principle growing up, and it's what I'm passing on to my students as my critical work in the time of Trump.

### Their engagement matters

Assumptions and opinions, one point perspectives, or the beliefs of others are not enough. This is a time to seek to know more, as a daily ritual. We stumbled on a quote in class, a quote by Plato,

**My work as a teacher is to offer tools that can help [my students] insist on their own loud calls against what affronts their lives and all that would destroy their ability to assert a place in this society.**

**Continued on page 7**

## Follow the money to the Lumina Foundation, child of Sallie Mae

# Who's bankrolling the campaign to shrink our colleges and promote student debt?

The Lumina Foundation, rooted in the student loan industry, is the largest foundation in the United States focused on postsecondary education. With over \$1 billion in assets, Lumina funds a whole network of think tanks and advocacy groups that work together to shift community colleges nationwide from “access” to “success,” with success defined as “obtaining a credential of economic value” as quickly as possible. This “completion agenda” threatens to downsize community college enrollment, mission and offerings, and increase student debt. It would end the era of community colleges as open access, community-serving institutions that offer opportunities for exploration and lifelong learning alongside vocational training. Instead, the schools would become sites for highly prescribed full-time degree and certificate programs, unwelcoming to part-time and non-credit students.

“Lumina, and later the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, played a major part in shifting the focus of national higher education policy from access to completion” in much the same way that corporate interests fueled the K–12 education reform project, writes Barbara Bowen, president of the faculty union at the City University of New York.

### Lumina, child of the student loan marketing corporation

The nation's dominant student loan company, the Student Loan Marketing Corp. (Sallie Mae), infused \$770 million dollars into a small foundation and renamed it the Lumina Foundation in 2000. Three loan company officials took places on the new foundation's board and staff: its president and chief operating officer, James Lintzenich; a senior vice president; and a director.

In 2009, Lumina teamed with the Gates Foundation to bankroll Complete College America as a state-level advocacy organization. The foundation also sought to amplify its policy efforts by working with the American Legislative Exchange Council (ALEC), becoming a lead sponsor of the 2011 ALEC conference, and only cutting those ties in 2013 after the Center for

college as the place for second and third chances.

Before the BOG approved the new regulation, it reviewed a scenario detailing exactly who would be impacted by the new policy—42,116 students statewide, with African Americans, Latinos, Pacific

Media and Democracy exposed ALEC as a right-wing corporate legislative bill mill.

In 2010, 58.8 percent of Lumina's grants (more than \$25 million) supported so-called “student success” projects. In 2011, it funded California's Student Success Task Force and the Campaign for College Opportunity, a non-profit that coordinated advocacy for the Student Success Act of 2012. “Open access and our students' freedom to engage in an exploration of their interests and abilities is at stake” with the Task Force proposals, said Richard Hansen, president of California Community College Independents and a member of the Task Force (*CFT Perspective*, November 2011).

### Downsizing enrollment

Several measures in the Student Success Act tend to downsize enrollment, most notably the state Board of Governors' (BOG) “academic progress” regulation. When that policy took effect in 2016, students who failed to complete at least half their classes, or whose grades fell below a C for two semesters in a row, faced cancellation of their Board of Governors (BOG) fee waivers and loss of priority for class registration—ending community

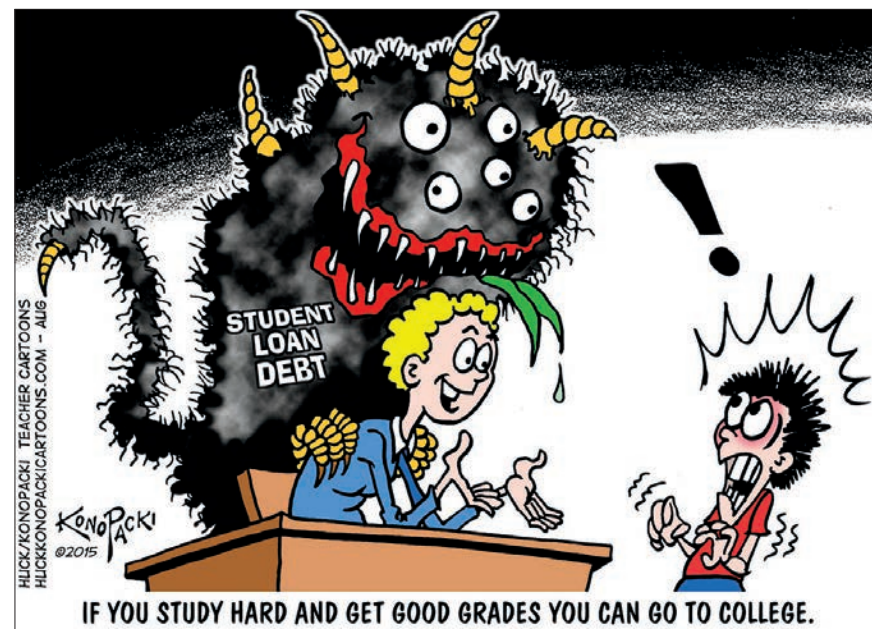
**If restrictions need to be put in place, let's do so logically, program by program, as the athletic exemption illustrates, with some vision; not as one cookie cutter solution that slices through all programs.**

Islanders, disabled, and young students experiencing the harshest impact. Nearly one in ten of 18-19 year olds then receiving fee waivers stood to lose them.

Other restrictive provisions of the Student Success Act include unit caps, which push students who have accumulated more than 100 units to the back of the enrollment line, and the requirement for all students to take a placement test, declare a major and complete an education plan in order to enroll. This falls particularly hard on lifelong learners, working adults and parents who can only take one or two classes per semester, and creates bottlenecks when students cannot access a counselor because of understaffing.

### Upsizing debt

California's new “Full Time Student Success Grant” comes straight from the Complete College America playbook, aggressively pushing fast time



to graduation. CCA suggests that states “create incentives for students to take 15 [units] to finish.” With \$25 million in the 2017-18 education budget,

outcomes-based funding, appeared in early versions of the Student Success Act, but opposition swept them off the table. The proposal, which would tie colleges' revenue to specific performance targets, such as the number of students completing in a specific time window, continues to be a top Lumina priority.

Lumina's newest tool for building influence at the state level is the “Strategy Lab,” which provides information, research and analysis to further the foundation's agenda. Its California state policy consultant is Amy Supinger, a legislative analyst who left her state government job and became the executive director of the Student Success Task Force. Supinger also co-authored the recently released strategy plan for the California community colleges, “Vision for Success,” though acknowledgement of her current Lumina position appears nowhere in that document.

The state legislature's hearings on revising the California Master Plan for Higher Education will show how much the corporate agenda has eroded the state's historic commitment to open access. The first hearing took place August 31 and others are expected within the year. ☐

—By Mickey Ellinger and the Research Committee serving the struggle to Save City College of San Francisco, at [rescomm11@gmail.com](mailto:rescomm11@gmail.com)

### Narrowing offerings

Lumina is promoting “Guided Pathways to Success,” which would narrow the curriculum to six to ten meta-majors, and identifies student choice and exploration as a problem. The current state budget includes \$150 million to initiate Guided Pathways.

Recommendations for performance funding, or

### Teaching continued from page 6

“Your silence gives consent.” This is a moment when every silence determines the kind of society we consent to live in. We have to insist on developing those enduring habits that give us confidence to live out loud. My students are from many communities: they are black,

they are brown, they are poor, they are immigrants, they are first generation, they are DACA, they are women, they are lgbtq, they are veterans, they are the formerly incarcerated, they were foster youth, they are disabled; and my work as a teacher is to offer tools that can help them

insist on their own loud calls against what affronts their lives and all that would destroy their ability to assert a place in this society.

The crazy, sad, shocking whirlwind that currently describes American politics gives me an opportunity to insist with

urgency that my students know that their engagement matters; and that as they develop their own habits to deeply engage with the truths shaping their lives, they will engage more in shaping the society towards a new future, where America is not struggling with contradic-

tion and hypocrisy, not asserting beautiful principles while masquerading. ☐

—By Marlise Ajanae Edwards  
San Jose City College

# Local Action

## Los Angeles

### Declining enrollment becomes a crisis

Many community colleges throughout California are facing declining enrollment, but in the huge Los Angeles Community College District, falling numbers of students has become a crisis. According to administrators, three of the district's nine campuses face double-digit declines.

"We did a good job in California during the recession warning students that they might be locked out of the classes they needed," says Joanne Waddell, President of the Los Angeles College Faculty Guild, AFT Local 1521. "We never told them that we are open again, though. We didn't go out to the high schools, the farmers markets, the community events, and urge students to apply, and now we're paying the price."

Housing and transportation costs, food insecurity, and the cost of books, tools and tuition have also created challenges. These have all forced students to take on more hours of work instead of attending school.

The union has been warning administrators about the growing crisis for several years, and has been met with disinterest until recently. "Administrators have said, 'There's no crisis' and 'We're working on it day and night,'" Waddell charges. "But tell that to the part-timers who have seen their classes cut or who just lost eligibility for benefits. Tell that to the full-timers who lost the capstone classes or programs they'd spent years developing."

### No enrollment management plan

Six years ago money became available from the state to do targeted outreach, but the board recommended first allocating \$8 million, then cut it to \$5 million, and then to \$1 million. Finally each campus was given \$20,000, for a total of \$180,000. The rest of the money was never spent.

"The problem is that there's no enrollment management plan," Waddell explains. "The administration thinks that whatever they did in the past is fine to do now. But doing the same thing in the same way and expecting different results will not help us change course."

She believes that the most important thing the district can do is to set policy, beginning with providing

research and data to pinpoint where the population is and where outreach should be concentrated. Then the individual colleges need to plan their outreach to high schools and communities.

### Avoid reduced budget allocation

"The time has passed to make a difference for fall, but we are urging the District to move ahead to implement it for spring," Waddell says. "Decisions need to be made

law to overcome the potential impact of the Janus case, now before the U.S. Supreme court.

### Fair share fees at risk

The court's new rightwing majority is likely to strike down a forty-year old ruling, 'Abood v. Detroit Board of Education,' invalidating the provision in most public sector contracts requiring non-members to pay a fair share service fee for union representation.

To make it easier for the union to reach new hires, the

**"I think people would reject the notion that they could save a few dollars, but at the cost of weakening the structure that fights for better conditions."**

and actions taken immediately if we are to avoid 'Stabilization,' the first step in reduced budget allocation from the state."

In the campaign for Proposition 55, the faculty and union at many colleges invited people from the community to come onto the campuses to see the new libraries, buildings and resources made available by Proposition 30. "That was very well-received," Waddell emphasizes, "and it could be part of a larger campaign. We have to offer what people want, and it's too bad we had to wait for a crisis to realize all this." **CCC**

— By David Bacon

## Ventura

### Using new hire orientation to sign up members

On college and university campuses throughout California, unions are seeing the implementation of AB 119 as an important tool for introducing themselves to newly hired instructors. Nowhere has this been more successful than in the Ventura County Community College District.

Doug Thiel, a longtime adjunct on the Oxnard and Moorpark campuses, has signed up every incoming faculty member—a total of 26 people. This has not only resulted in new membership for his local union, the Ventura County Federation of College Teachers, AFT Local 1828. It points the way toward use of the new



STEVE HALL PHOTO

**Doug Thiel has signed up all twenty-six faculty members hired recently in the Ventura CCD.**

while if they become a union member they'll get many more for the same amount of money. There's no down side for them, and everyone signs the form."

Afterwards, Thiel emails them with more information, and sends them a welcome package that includes a part-timers survival guide.

### Personal contact required

"It's a lot of work, and I must have come to fourteen or fifteen orientations, since they're often given for just four or five people. I've even had to do two in the same day," he says. "As union vice-president it's my job to contact new people, but it's very hard to hunt them down. I've tried email, and even made a YouTube video I sent as an

attachment. But people don't respond that way. To get someone to sign up you have to have personal contact, and the orientation allows us to meet one-on-one."

If and when the Janus case invalidates the fair share provision of contracts, Thiel recognizes that his argument to new hires about the benefit of joining the union will have to change. "But I believe I can still get people to sign," he predicts. "I'd describe the [court] decision as union-busting, and explain that it's not favorable to them. I think people would reject the notion that they could save a few dollars, but at the cost of weakening the structure that fights for better conditions." **CCC**

— By David Bacon



Ed Jaramillo

**On September 5, 2017 Ed Jaramillo passed away after a long illness. Ed was most recently president of the Peralta Federation of Teachers. He served in the faculty union's top job from 2015-2017, heading the PFT during a challenging transitional period. He led AFT Local 1603 with grace, composure, and humility. Prior to his service as president, Ed sat on the PFT executive council for more than two decades and taught in the Automotive Technology Department at College of Alameda since 1989. Ed Jaramillo, ipresente!**