



Quality Public Education Campaign Moves Ahead: New Strategic Campaign Initiative Organizing (SCIO) Grants Awarded

The CFT Executive Council has voted to provide sixteen locals with SCIO grants, which will direct significant funds into supporting organizing work (see below). These grants will help us in our work to organize locally in schools, colleges, universities, and communities. They will also facilitate collaboration with like-minded education stakeholders to rebuild a California public school system that works to equip students with the knowledge, skills, and capacities they need to be successful in life.

At this year's convention, the CFT passed a resolution committing itself to working with community partners on a Quality Public Education Campaign



CFT Executive Council members discuss and make final determinations on SCIO grant recipients.

(QPEC) that addresses the issues of equity, access, pedagogy, funding, and other elements needed for progressive educational improvements. Our general campaign goal is to foster solutions that work locally, consider the needs of a school's surrounding community,

and defend the integrity of educators in the process. "To succeed we will have to engage the CFT membership as never before, which requires updating and realigning program resources to provide effective support," said Sandra Weese, the CFT Organizing Director.

Over the last couple of years, the CFT has increasingly organized its work under the Strategic Campaign Initiative (SCI). The key programmatic elements of the SCI have been the Member Organizer Committee (MOC) and the Political Leaders United to Create Change (PLUCC) programs. These CFT-funded grant programs have helped locals plan and implement external and internal organizing campaigns, training scores of members across the state in the process.

Now, the PLUCC, MOC, and Community Solidarity Grant (CSG) programs have been merged into one new Strategic Campaign Initiative Organizing

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Grant recipients...

ABC Federation of Teachers
Berkeley Council of Classified Employees
Berkeley Federation of Teachers
Cabrillo College Federation of Teachers
Cerritos College Faculty Federation
Coast Federation of Educators
Greater Santa Cruz Federation of Teachers
Jefferson Elementary Federation of Teachers

Los Angeles College Faculty Guild
Newport-Mesa Federation of Teachers
Oxnard Federation of Teachers and School Employees
Pajaro Valley Federation of Teachers
Palomar Faculty Federation
Peralta Federation of Teachers
San José/Evergreen Faculty Association
UC-AFT Los Angeles

CFT Leaders Honored for Efforts Supporting Workers and Quality Public Education

CFT President Josh Pechthalt and Newport-Mesa Federation of Teachers President Kimberly Claytor were honored for their extraordinary work at separate events last month.

The Orange County Labor Federation (OCLF) paid tribute to Kimberly Claytor with the Cesar Chavez Leadership Award during its 13th Annual Solidarity Dinner on May 9. This prestigious award has been called “the most coveted award in labor,” said Teferi Gebre, Executive Director of the OCLF. It is presented annually to an outstanding labor leader. Claytor was selected for her leadership and solidarity with workers in Costa Mesa, Orange County, and in the statewide fight for Proposition 30 and against Proposition 32.

With over 600 people in attendance at the Ana-

heim Convention Center, Jeff Freitas, CFT Secretary Treasurer, introduced Claytor and Dr. Reverend Sarah Halverson, Claytor’s pastor, presented the award. “Kimberly is a true

inspiration, as anyone who has had the chance to work with her will attest,” said Jeff Freitas, “we are so very fortunate to have her as a leader in the CFT.”

Josh Pechthalt was also honored last month at the UCLA Labor Center Banquet in Los Angeles. This annual event celebrates outstanding labor, community, and political leaders, and was attended by more than 500 people.

This year marks the ten-year anniversary of the UCLA Labor Studies academic minor and the banquet also celebrated the graduation of 45 students, the largest class ever.

Josh Pechthalt and the



Newport-Mesa Federation of Teachers President and CFT Executive Council member Kimberly Claytor accepts the Cesar Chavez Leadership award at the annual Orange County Labor Federation dinner.

SANDRA WEESE

“Josh Pechthalt is a champion for students, for workers, and for public education.”

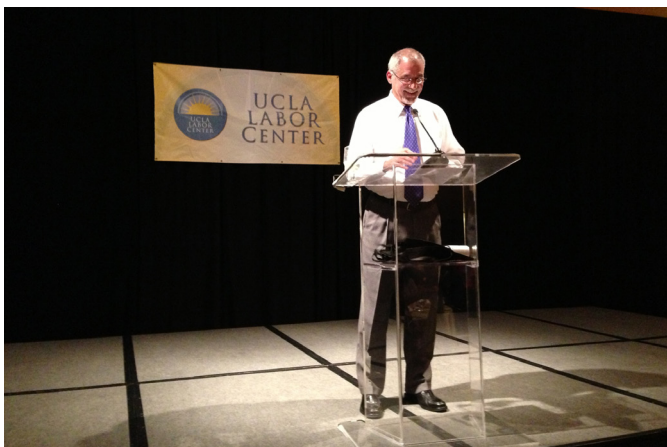
-Kent Wong, Director, UCLA Labor Center

CFT were lauded for their historic work in advancing the millionaire’s tax, and in the successful passage of Proposition 30 in November 2012. He was also recognized for his visionary work to build a state campaign for quality public education, and in promoting labor and community alliances for social justice.

“Josh Pechthalt is a champion for students, for workers, and for public education,” said Kent Wong, the director of the UCLA Labor Center, who presided over the evening’s festivities.

In his remarks, Pechthalt described how the CFT is working with our community partners on a statewide grass roots campaign for quality public education that can begin to turn around the narrative on public education.

“The CFT can’t make this change alone,” Pechthalt said. “We need support from all of the unions and community organizations in this room. We need the support of parents and students. We need to build a movement for quality public educa-



DANI PECHTHALT

CFT President Josh Pechthalt thanks the UCLA Labor Center for recognizing the leadership and work of the CFT to advance and pass Proposition 30 and build a Quality Public Education Campaign.

Spring Area Council Meetings in Full Swing: Meeting Participants Discuss Quality Public Education Campaign

At our CFT Convention in March, delegates voted to make the Quality Public Education Campaign (QPEC) the top programmatic priority of the CFT. This campaign is centered around the belief that high-quality education is a human right, vital to the health and well-being of our neighborhoods and central to our democracy.

With many challenges and opportunities facing our members across California we'll need to forge an alliance led by those with the most direct knowledge, experience, and understanding of the needs of our students – parents, educators, community residents, and students themselves. Toward this end, the organizations that comprise the QPEC are uniting to organize locally and statewide in our schools, colleges, universities, and communities around a vision of education reform that develops critically thinking students prepared for participation in all aspects of life.



ZEV KVIKY

Bay Area local leaders and staff discuss CFT's Quality Public Education Campaign at their area council meeting. Left to Right: Ana Turetsky from Oakland Adult Ed, Michelle Squitieri from UC-AFT Berkeley, Dana Blanchard from Berkeley Federation of Teachers, Emily Rappaport from Treasure Island Job Corps, CFT staff Patty Cox and Sandra Weese, and Matthew Goldstein from Perla Federation of Teachers.

Since the Convention, our elected leaders and staff have been attending the CFT Area Council meetings and numerous membership gatherings across the state, laying out the initial plans for the campaign while learning how best to proceed in working with local unions as they build the educator/parent/student/community coalitions central to this effort.

“With all the challenges facing CFT members, students, parents, and com-

munities across this state, we must build broad, progressive, community based coalitions to win not only at the bargaining table and at the ballot box, but also in the court of public opinion” said Dan Martin, CFT Executive Director.

When CFT locals from Oxnard, Ventura, and Santa Barbara met for a recent Area Council meeting, they were joined by special guest Maricela Morales, a board member for Central Coast United

for a Sustainable Economy (CAUSE), which is based in Ventura County and is a partner of the CFT in the region.

Maricela shared details of the CFT/CAUSE collaboration efforts during the November 2012 election -- key in bringing thousands of new voters to the polls. She also gave an update on the recent merger between CAUSE and its sister organization, People United for Economic Justice Building Leadership Through Organizing (PUEBLO) which is based in Santa Barbara County.

“It’s so important to be engaged with community partners. Our alliance and teamwork give us more clout. Currently, we are working with CAUSE to hold the elementary school board accountable for a Bond Measure, which is important to help us ensure quality public education,” said Kassi Hawkins, an Oxnard Federation of Teachers and School Employees PLUCC organizer.

Jefferson Elementary Federation Membership Organizing Committee Meets Goals and Redoubles Efforts for the Coming Year

“Thank you to everyone who helped us attain our internal and external membership organizing goals for this school year,” wrote Elaine Francisco, Executive Board Member and MOC organizer of

Jefferson Elementary Federation of Teachers, Local 3267 in a letter to her colleagues. “You have my sincere appreciation for all the good work you’ve done.”

In a recent communica-

tion Elaine describes some of the challenges the local faces and identifies opportunities ahead. What follows below draws from Elaine’s letter.

As in other K-12 districts around the state, the re-

sponsibilities of Jefferson Elementary Federation members have increased exponentially over the last several years. Faculty has

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scores while dealing with many other things that impact student progress. Year after year, they've gone about the business of educating their students, accepting the challenges while pay and compensation has not kept pace. Classroom teachers have received only three modest raises in the last 11 years.

Although, the fiscal situation of the state and local school districts over the last few years has been abysmal, there is now additional revenue in the mix – generated by local Measure I and California's Proposition 30 – and things should start to improve.

Indeed, looking ahead, the Jefferson Elementary School District expects stable funding for the next seven years. Today, the district has over \$18 million in reserves. Teacher salary increases would cost approximately \$1 million, or about 7% of the total reserve. Regardless



Parents, students, and educators participate in one of Jefferson Elementary Federation of Teachers, Local 3267's Parent Education Nights.

of the district's improved budget outlook, there continues to be struggle over how the general funds are to be distributed.

Local 3267 decided the time has come to mobilize and speak out. They are building allies and creating opportunities to let the public know how complex and demanding the teaching profession has become. Their message is that many things have to come together to ensure student progress and all are orchestrated by the consistent daily efforts of Jefferson's teachers.

They have launched their Campaign for Quality Education Committee and so far over 125 parents have signed up during their Parent Education Night meetings at district elementary schools. Speaking with parents and community members as allies is a critical link to extending the local's message. "The parents are very supportive and appreciate hearing from us, whether by emails, phone calls, or fliers," said Melinda Dart, President of Local 3267.

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grant program. Twenty-six locals applied for single-semester (six month) renewable grants of up to \$18,000.

Many of the sixteen locals receiving these SCIO grants are getting underway immediately planning a number of exciting organizing projects, including:

conducting membership drives, building up their COPE membership, recruiting candidates to contest important school board elections, constructing alliances with parent advocates, deepening ties with labor councils, interfaith councils and other community

partners.

"This grant will enable us to reach out to a dozen districts and begin to mobilize students enhancing their voice around issues of community college access and affordability," said Joanne Waddell, President of AFT Local 1521.

California Federation
of Teachers
AFT, AFL-CIO
A Union of Professionals



ELAINE FRANCISCO

The California Federation of Teachers is an affiliate of the American Federation of Teachers, AFL-CIO. The CFT represents faculty and classified workers in public and private schools and colleges, from early childhood through higher education. 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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