

## CURRENT ISSUES

### Legislation That Affects Part-Timers

by Linda Chan

**AB 1690 Medina (D)** – Community Colleges: Part-Time, Temporary Employees. This very controversial bill sponsored by CFT would give seniority rights to part time faculty on classes that become available after the full-time assignments. It is currently in the *Assembly Suspense File*. The Appropriations “Suspense” file is where bills with major fiscal impacts are placed and considered right before the deadline for bills to be moved onto the floor of their respective chamber. This is not unusual for the Assembly. Assembly committees send any bill with an annual cost of more than \$150,000 to any fund to the “Suspense” file. We need to be concerned if it goes to the *Senate Appropriation Suspense File*. The Senate has different rules with endless variables. Does it create a new program with ongoing costs? Is it a one time general fund or special fund expense? Are the cost pressures known or anticipated? These questions, and the cost of their answers, all add up determining whether or not a bill will be placed on Suspense.

However, the *Community College League of California* (of which our very own Board of Trustee president, Sue Keith is a member) is very much against this bill and has been

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### Mission Statement

Citrus College Adjunct Faculty Federation, (CCAFF), is dedicated to serving its membership by working to:

- Assure a level of professional respect from the District reflected in its policies and practices consistent with the achievement, dedication and professionalism of its adjunct employees.
- Through contract negotiations, maximize members ability to earn a fair wage consistent with education industry standards.
- Work to provide working conditions for adjunct faculty that maximize their effective interactions with students and co-workers.

trying to stop it with explanations that include objections to the projected cost of implementing evaluation processes at each college.

Other important legislation to watch –

**AB 1582 Allen T (R)** – Conflict of Interest Codes: Education Institutions. This bill requires the Conflict of Interest Code for each post-secondary institution require an employee of that institution to disclose any item of value, any royalties, or any other compensation the

employee receives as a result of making or influencing a decision to adopt specific course materials required for coursework or instruction. This is going to be particularly difficult for part-timers since we work at many different institutions. This would include materials sent to the bookstore for the students to purchase as part of the course. CFT has taken a watch position on this bill.

**AB 1995 Williams (D)** – Community Colleges: Homeless Students: Shower Facility. This bill requires that for community colleges with shower facilities to grant access to homeless students who are registered for classes. It also requires that the college develop a plan that includes outreach services. One of the expressed concerns is that it would require students to self-identify as homeless. CFT is in support of this bill.

**AB 2018 Ridley-Thomas (D)** – Mandated Child Abuse Reporting Employee Training Act. This CFT supported bill requires that the colleges provide an annual training on mandated reporting to its employees. One of the concerns is that part-time employees would have to be compensated for attending mandated, required training.

**SB 1038 Allen (D)** – Community Colleges: employees. This would substitute the Tuberculosis test with a risk assessment and if there are risk factors identified then the employee would undergo a tuberculosis examination. CFT is opposed to this bill. Many members are concerned that too many possible cases would go undetected.

## An Uncertain Attitude toward Unions

by Laura Wills

Several months ago I was talking to a newly-hired public high school counselor who had previously worked as a psychotherapist in a county sub-contracted agency. Since I have worked as a therapist in the past, we mainly spoke about the differences between “traditional” therapy and high school counseling. Eventually our conversation moved to the topic of unions.

At that time, the Friedrichs case was still very much at the forefront of union news as many following the case were waiting to see how the U.S. Supreme Court would eventually rule. We talked about the case itself and the future of unions should the plaintiffs win their case. Finally, we discussed whether we saw any merit in the plaintiff’s claims. My acquaintance explained that she commiserated with the plaintiffs’ complaints; slightly surprised at this, I asked her reasoning. She explained that she wanted the ability to choose whether to support her union and additionally felt that there was not much point in being a member since her pay and benefits were significantly better than where she worked previously.

Eventually we moved on to other topics, but this conversation led me to recall my own first impressions of unions when I transitioned from the private human services industry to community college. I recognized her inability to see the importance of unions as one that I had also initially shared. Like my acquaintance, I too had worked several years as a therapist for sub-contracted human

services agencies. In this industry, unions are all but nonexistent. Over time I grew to consider this par for the course. I had also -albeit grudgingly- become accustomed to the relatively low hourly pay, increasing micromanagement, the capriciousness of administration and the lack of solidarity among coworkers. So much so that when I first began working as an adjunct in the community college system, I was highly impressed with the higher hourly lecture pay and the freedom from overt oversight. I considered these luxuries. I too, like my acquaintance, failed to make the connection that these perks were not the result of a magnanimous and generous administration, but were won through years of consistent pressure and hard work by the union.

This was the reason why I was only slightly surprised by her response. After working for so many years within an industry with little protections and virtually no union presence, union legitimacy and importance may not be immediately apparent to those that have become accustomed to being wholly dependent on upper administration. I certainly didn’t understand that and for the most part remained largely naïve and thus, apathetic toward my union.

In time, I made the connection that if there are certain differences in hourly pay between the community college and the industry I worked in, it is precisely because there is a union. Embarrassingly, it took me several years before I made that connection. In the years since I began regularly attending union meetings however, I have gained a much greater understanding and appreciation for the role our union has in protecting and promoting its workers. I understand that there may

be many of you that find yourself in a similar position to where I was initially. And for those of you that may feel unclear, apathetic or even doubtful of the union role, I invite you to voice your questions, doubts or concerns. Whether in person, during meetings or via e-mail, let us know how we can answer your questions and offer support.

## Benefits Information

by Anne Battle

As an adjunct, looking for ways to stretch dollars over the summer months is a full-time job. As a CCAFF member, some of the legwork has already been done for you by our national organization, AFT. Your membership entitles you to a number of discounts on everything including your cell phone bill, auto buying, shopping, and even car rentals or a dream vacation trip.

The partners that offer services and programs offer great selections at competitive prices. Many of the AFT’s benefits are through Union Plus, the AFL-CIO benefits program. New Union Plus programs have been added to the AFT+ roster of benefits to bring you a wide array of products and services.

Just look in your wallet for help – your membership card has all the contact information for you. If you’d like to see the variety of benefits available to you, a current Membership Benefits booklet can be found in our adjunct office in the CFI building. Please check CFI 323 for our office hours when you are on campus, or email:

abattle922@yahoo.com. for help.

## Bill's Beef

### Why Unions are Still Relevant and What Your Union does for You

by Bill Zeman

Last year in 2015, we celebrated our 15th anniversary as a union here at Citrus College. In the last 45 years there has been a concerted attack on unions by rich people and their supporters with the result that today many believe either unions are bad or no longer necessary. Scientific studies prove this wrong.

According to academic studies, unions raise worker wages and benefits an average of 28%. Here at Citrus College, I make over \$70 per classroom hour and at a non-union school where I teach, I make only \$60. Unions even help non-union workers. In addition, workers in industries that are 25% unionized make 5% more than workers in fields that are less unionized. This reduces wealth disparity because most union workers are low and middle wages workers and economic studies show that the more money in the hands of the low and middle classes, the better the economy does.

Unionized workers are more likely than their non-unionized counterparts to receive paid leave, are approximately 18% to 28% more likely to have employer-provided health insurance, and are 23% to 54% more likely to be in employer-provided pension plans. Unionized workers receive more generous health benefits than non-unionized workers. They also pay 18% lower health care deductibles and a smaller share of the costs for family coverage. In retirement, unionized workers are

24% more likely to be covered by health insurance paid for by their employer. Here at Citrus, we have negotiated \$500 a semester for health insurance and we get one hour of paid sick leave for every 18 hours we work. One third of our sick leave can be used as "personal days."

Unionized workers receive better pension plans. Not only are they more likely to have a guaranteed benefit in retirement, their employers contribute 28% more toward pensions. Unionized workers receive 26% more vacation time and 14% more total paid leave (vacations and holidays). Here at Citrus, we get access to a high quality traditional defined benefit plan even as part-timers.

Before the birth of our union 15 years ago, we were part of the Citrus College Faculty Association, (CFA) that still exists here today representing our full-timers. As California politicians cut taxes for the rich and gave less funding for our colleges, the numbers of part-timers increased as a way to balance the budget in higher education. We broke away from the CFA because of the perception that they were not representing our interests.

The main function of unions is to negotiate contracts through collective bargaining. After we formed our own union in 2000, we were able to

negotiate a contract and get regular pay raises before the Panic of 2008. We were not able to get another raise until our mother union, the California Federation of Teachers, (CFT) led the fight to pass Proposition 30 in the 2012 election, effectively increasing the budget by 33% by just causing the most wealthy to pay a very little more. Because the budget was enlarged, in 2013, our union was able to negotiate a 2% wage increase. Then last year we got 3% and 2% more for both 2016 and 2017. This negotiating activity perfectly illustrated the benefits of unionism. The non-credit adjuncts were not part of our union and did not get the 2% raise in 2013. They noticed this and contacted us, desiring to join our union. We made this happen and they got the 3,2,2 that we did and we also negotiated 2% more for them to bring them up to parity as of 2013. That is what a solid chunk of our dues go for. It pays a stipend to elected officers that do the administrative work of the union including negotiating the collective bargaining.

The contract that we have with Citrus College also includes a formal grievance process. Since I have been an officer, we have helped two teachers remove unfair disciplinary letters from the employment files using this process.

A little more than half our dues go to our state and national affiliates the CFT and the American Federation of Teachers, (AFT). These use the money to hire staff that will assist us with organizing and collective bargaining. They also coordinate state and nationwide advocacy for our profession. You may remember when California could never agree on a budget and they were

## AFFILIATIONS

Citrus College Adjunct Faculty Federation (CCAFF) maintains an affiliation with:

- The American Federation of Teachers (AFT)
- The California Federation of Teachers (CFT)
- AFL-CIO
- The California Labor Federation
- The Los Angeles County Federation of Labor

## CFT Convention 2016

by Linda Chan

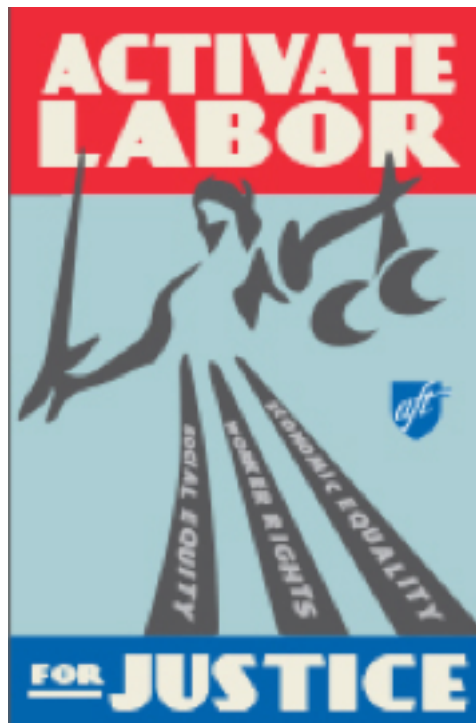


CFT Convention Attendees march on City College of San Francisco administration building

(Bill's Beef continued from page 3)

always running a huge deficit. Your dues directly contributed to solving this problem. In 2010 CFT paid to pass Proposition 25 that allowed the state legislature to pass a budget with a simple majority vote instead of a two thirds super-majority. This stopped the minority anti-government party from holding the state hostage and demanding spending decisions that stripped our state budget of education funding. Then in 2012, the CFT paid to pass Proposition 30. Remember when no new full time positions were being added? Remember when adjuncts were being laid off? Since 2012, community college faculty numbers have increased along with our wages and the students no longer have such difficulty getting classes. Both propositions were passed by large coalitions of voters and civic society, but the CFT wrote the laws in a professional fashion. They ran focus groups and polling to see what kind of changes the voters would accept. The progressive taxes of Proposition 30 expire in 2019. Today the CFT is

one of the major leaders in a new proposition that will be on the 2016 ballot to extend the taxes many more years. We would like to have made them permanent, but the focus groups and polling we did again showed the voters would not support making the taxes permanent. We would rather win than insist on our preferences. Unionism is practical.



This year's convention was held in San Francisco in the middle of a storm. Not only did we have such bad weather that many members could not make it due to airport closures but we also had a march on the City College of San Francisco administration building. Luckily the rain stopped just long enough for the protest to occur but continued relentlessly afterwards. The convention had guest speakers; Tim Wise who talked about racial inequalities in education and how educators can create change, Jeremy Brecher who discussed the labor movement and of course no convention would not be complete without AFT President Randi Weingarten. (You can hear her speech on our website: [www.ccaff.com](http://www.ccaff.com))

Randi cautions us not to let our guard down even though the Supreme Court upheld the lower court's decision in the Friedrich vs. CTA case. Assemblyman Jose Medina, a champion for part-timers rights and who was also a part-timer, was recognized as our CFT Legislator of the Year for his dedication to equity in higher education. There were many wonderful workshops including information on retirement. If you want to know more about any of the workshops please ask one of the attendees (Linda Chan, Bill Zeman, Anne Battle, Antonio Anfiteatro, or Elaine Jefferson).