

The Voice

Part-Time Faculty Association of Allan Hancock College • Parity & Fairness Through Advocacy



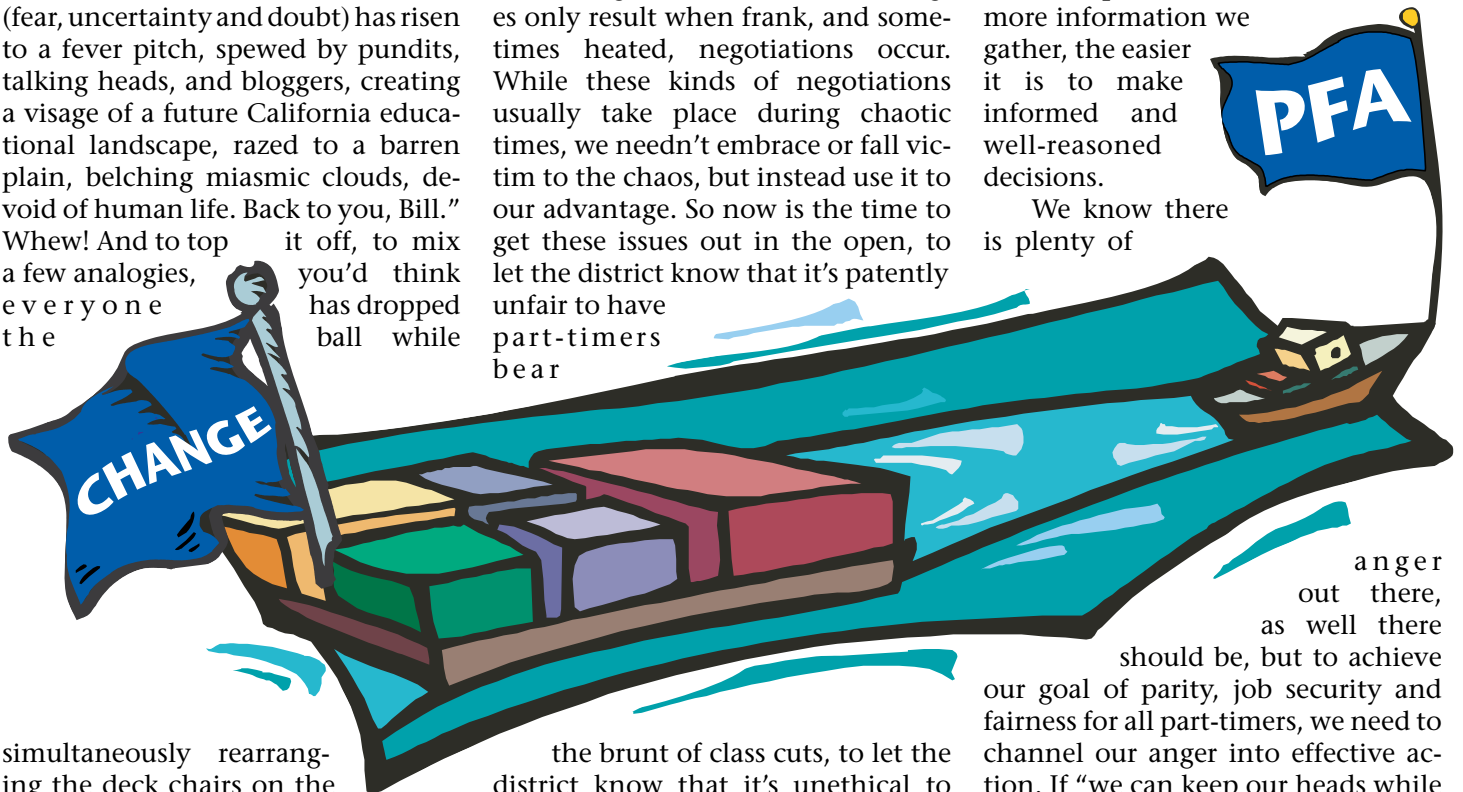
GOT CHANGE?

Let's face it: California's educational system is one humongous, chaotic mess at the moment. As a newscaster would tell it, with a feigned smile of course, "It seems that the FUD factor (fear, uncertainty and doubt) has risen to a fever pitch, spewed by pundits, talking heads, and bloggers, creating a visage of a future California educational landscape, razed to a barren plain, belching miasmic clouds, devoid of human life. Back to you, Bill." Whew! And to top it off, to mix a few analogies, everyone has dropped the ball while

But we shouldn't. If I've learned anything throughout my (many) years, it's that fundamental changes don't result from squabbles. People hate change, and fundamental changes only result when frank, and sometimes heated, negotiations occur. While these kinds of negotiations usually take place during chaotic times, we needn't embrace or fall victim to the chaos, but instead use it to our advantage. So now is the time to get these issues out in the open, to let the district know that it's patently unfair to have part-timers bear

our members. Many of you are e-mailing and calling us about problems; we thank you and hope to hear from more of you when you have a problem. The more information we gather, the easier it is to make informed and well-reasoned decisions.

We know there is plenty of



simultaneously rearranging the deck chairs on the Titanic and fiddling to the flames of a plummeting jetliner. Sounds kind of bad, like, you know. Maybe we should just stick our heads in the sand and hope that all we lose is our derrières.

the brunt of class cuts, to let the district know that it's unethical to use part-timers only when they need us, but to discard us as second-class citizens when they don't. (For more on this, see *Got Classes?* on page 3.)

But the PFA board can't do it alone—we need participation from

anger out there, as well there should be, but to achieve our goal of parity, job security and fairness for all part-timers, we need to channel our anger into effective action. If "we can keep our heads while others are losing theirs," we can harness our collective abilities to change working conditions for part-timers.

—Dorran Nadeau

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Nancy Jo Ward
Graphics instructor



Some good news—for a change

MARK JAMES MILLER, PFA President

As some of you might have noticed, this is the March/April issue of *The Voice*. There have simply been too many urgent problems to deal with to get our “monthly” newsletter out on time. On a positive note, our efforts have been fruitful—in particular see *Reduction rescinded* below. We hope to get back on track with the May issue.

Reduction rescinded

We are happy to report that we reached an agreement with the administration regarding its proposal to shorten non-credit classes by three weeks this Spring. It was our belief that such a reduction, once the semester had begun, would have constituted an unfair labor prac-

best newsletter in the state and they did...” Editor Dorran Nadeau also won 3rd Place for Best Use of Graphics, Susan Case and Roberto Armstrong earned Honorable Mention for Best Continuing Column or Department, and I received an Honorable Mention for Best Persuasive Writing.

“Who are they?”

The convention was held at the Sheraton Grand Hotel in downtown Sacramento. The Awards Ceremony took place in the hotel’s huge Camellia Ballroom on the ground floor. Gary Aston and I were sitting toward the back as the awards were announced. When our name was called as the winner in the Best Newsletter cat-

very capable people on our executive board, a group that later morphed into our newsletter committee (listed below), determined to make our newsletter the best it could be, and then some. Last year we won one award, an honorable mention in the Best Newsletter category. This year we quadrupled that. We are extremely proud of this, and special thanks must go to our newsletter committee: Dorran Nadeau, Susan Case, Roberto Armstrong, Vivian Bryan, and I. Kudos to all.



Competing against locals that have thousands of members and enormous resources is no small task. The first year we won nothing. Last year we won one award, an honorable mention in the Best Newsletter category. This year we quadrupled that.

tice. When we brought our concerns to the attention of the administration, the decision was rescinded. We appreciate the administration’s willingness to work with us on this issue.

The Voice wins four CFT Communications Awards

Before we wrestle with the unpleasant subjects of job losses and class cancellations, let’s have some happy news. Our very own newsletter, *The Voice*, came away with no less than four Communications Awards at the California Federation of Teachers 2009 Convention, held in Sacramento from March 20—22. Among the awards we took home: *The Voice*, which features articles by PFA board members and is edited by Dorran Nadeau and Gary Aston, won First Place for the Best Four Page Newsletter. The judges’ comments read, “Great member profiles. Interesting typography. Short and sweet teasers. Tight editing. Very professional... They set out to make the

egory I made my way toward the podium in front to receive it. Before I could return to my seat the other honors we won were announced, one quickly following another. As our name was announced over and over Gary overheard a delegate sitting behind us ask, “Allan Hancock? Who are they?”

In order to fully appreciate this honor, you need to remember that we are a small local with less than 500 members in our bargaining unit, going up against locals from places like Los Angeles, San Francisco, and San Jose that have thousands of members and enormous resources. (United Teachers of Los Angeles, for instance, has 48,000 members). Competing against them is no small task. We only began entering our newsletter in the CFT Communications Awards two years ago. The first year we won nothing. We felt we had the talent and the ability to produce a memorable newsletter, one that could compete with the larger locals. Some

The Voice

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The Voice is published by the Part-Time Faculty Association of Allan Hancock College, Local 6185, California Federation of Teachers, American Federation of Teachers, AFL-CIO. The PFA’s goal is to attain respect, achieve parity, and improve working conditions for our bargaining unit members.

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Got Classes?

Budget cuts are hurting part-time instructors and students:

- Winter Intersession 2008: cancelled; 70 FTEs cut.
- Spring 2009: credit course offerings reduced by 230 FTEs.
- Summer 2009: 350 FTEs cut.
- Fall 2009: Uncertain, but the picture isn't rosy.

Granted, these are tough times. Our district, like all districts, has some difficult decisions to make as it wrestles with the budget crisis. But should the

entire burden be carried by those least able to shoulder it? Should those who are being hurt the worst by the current financial meltdown be asked to sacrifice even more? Would it not be more fair and equitable, as well as sending an important message in these troubled times, if those at the top made some of the sacrifices too? Part-time instructors at Allan Hancock College, as well as the students, are being asked to bear all the losses and all the pain. Every section cut from the schedule is a potential job loss for a part-time instructor, as well as a class lost for a student. This is especially

painful now as more and more students are returning to school after losing their jobs. They are coming to Allan Hancock College in hopes of learning new skills and being able to re-enter the job market. Is this the only way to deal with the budget crisis? Are there other options? The Part-time Faculty Association believes every conceivable avenue should be explored before classes are cut and jobs lost. Eliminating sections should be the district's last resort. In this issue and in future ones we want to examine these questions.

—Mark Miller

Got Options?

It is our position that while we appreciate the need to save money, we believe reducing course offerings should be the last resort our college or any community college should take. The people of our community need us now as never before. Educating our fellow citizens is not about dollars and cents. Educating our fellow citizens is not about a bottom line. It is about who we are, what we value, and where we place our priorities. We feel the following options should be explored rather than cutting classes and jobs.

Reduce administrators pay

At the moment Allan Hancock College has 33 administrators, both classified and educational, earning an average sal-

ary \$129,394 per year. If each of these 33 individuals took a 10% reduction in pay, the district would save \$427,000 per year. Such a gesture would also send an important message to students, faculty and classified staff that the pain and sacrifice is being shared by all.

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Reduce Board of Trustees perks

Each member of the Board of Trustees receives a stipend of \$240 per month for their service as board members.

Five board members each receiving \$240 a month equals \$14,400 a year. Reducing these stipends by 10% would save \$1,400. Although this is a small amount, it would send an important symbolic message: That the elected officials in our district are willing to share in the sacrifice others are being asked to make.

More significant, however, would be the board giving up its medical benefits. Some years ago the Board voted to give itself full medical benefits, just as if they were all full-time employees of the college. While we appreciate the board's work, and understand its importance, a few hours per month is all they are required to put in, and no other part-time employees of the college receive *any*

medical benefits. A substantial amount could be saved if the board was willing to make this sacrifice.

The suggestions we have made here would save the district in the neighborhood of \$450,000 per year. Since next year's budget shortfall is projected to be \$1.5 million, this would offset it by nearly one-third. To fund the remainder of the budget shortfall, we suggest that the reserve fund be used as noted below.

Use the reserve fund

Our CFT Budget Specialist examined Hancock College's books and discovered that the District finished the 2007-2008 fiscal year with an extremely healthy 8.8% reserve. Her analysis indicates the District will finish the present fiscal year with a reserve of 11% (1% is equal to \$500,000).

The State Chancellor's office recommends that community college districts maintain a reserve of 5%. That means, with an 8.8% reserve, nearly \$2 million dollars are available for use and the 5% reserve could still be maintained. An 11% reserve means \$3 million is available to keep classes open, to save jobs, and to educate our community.

Again, cutting classes and jobs should only be the last resort. We have made a few suggestions and there must be others. Surely there is a less draconian solution that doesn't prevent our community from receiving a much needed education.

—MARK MILLER

New Members

- Jeff Allen
- Norma Hernandez
- Janet Lester
- Nancy Jo Ward
- Why Not You?

Focus On: Nancy Jo Ward—Inspiration in action

BY VIVIAN BRYAN

Nancy Jo Ward remembers the magic of drawing beautiful worlds from her own imagination during her childhood in Dayton, Ohio. She kept on making art, and after graduating from high school she went on to the Cleveland Institute of Art, and then to New York City's School of Visual Arts, where she majored in Illustration, minored in Painting, and received a B.F.A. with Honors in 1980. She shares how her father would call her on Sundays from Ohio and say, "How are you going to make a living? Take Graphics classes." She followed his sage advice.

each Introduction to Graphics class, for example, she always has a number of students who are there mainly to fulfill a humanities requirement. For a number of them she opens the door to art as a professional path, something they would have never considered before.

To balance her long weekdays in front of the computer, managing her business, and teaching, Nancy Jo is also an avid bicyclist and loves to

**How wonderful it is that Nancy Jo Ward is a teacher...
a true shining example of what teaching is about!**

In the early 1980's, she applied and got a part-time position at Allan Hancock College teaching art. Around the same time, she also started her own graphics design business. She taught Drawing and Painting in the AHC Fine Art Department from 1982 to 1987, and after a hiatus during which she grew her own company, got married, and had a child, she returned to AHC in 1997. Nancy Jo continues to instruct and inspire students in the college's Graphics Department through course offerings like Introduction to Graphics, Digital Illustration, Electronic Imagery, and Digital Portfolio. She guides her students to connect personally and practically with art, which she views as integral to everyday life. In

travel. She and her husband Rick ride 40 to 60, sometimes 100 miles around the Central Coast.

There is one more thing I want to share about Nancy Jo, something that shows her heart. She makes the time to awaken creativity and outside-the-box thinking in students at elementary, junior high, and high school levels. She goes to K-12 classrooms and assembly halls to share her personal story, show her work, and encourages them to embrace technology and study art. I hear compassion and passionate commitment in her voice as she shows me a letter written to her by an elementary school boy from a troubled home in a poor neigh-



Nancy Jo Ward, Graphics instructor, with students.

borhood. Her eyes well up as she reads his words to me. As I listen, I think *how wonderful it is that Nancy Jo Ward is a teacher, an accomplished, successful working artist and business owner, a dynamic, passionately creative, compassionate, inspiring, and dedicated guide to her students, a true shining example of what teaching is about!*

And I find my own eyes welling up with tears, and my own teacher's heart being filled with inspiration.

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