

Part-Time Faculty Association of Allan Hancock College

PARITY & FAIRNESS THROUGH ADVOCACY



President's Letter

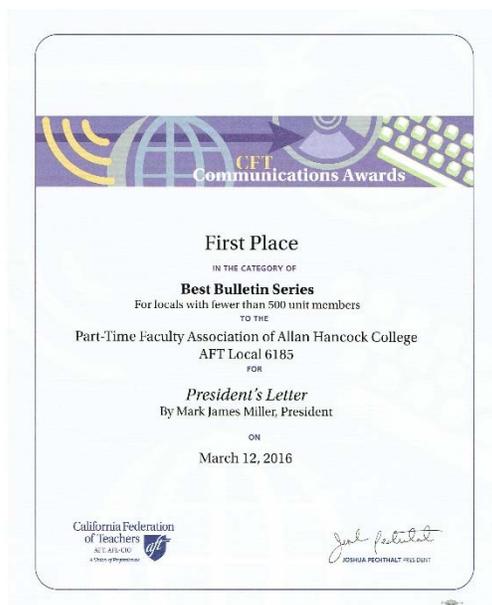
February–March 2016

By Mark James Miller, PFA President

Greetings fellow part-timers! I hope your semester is off to a great start!

2016 CFT Convention

I am very pleased to report that the President's Letter is now the "Award Winning" President's Letter. At the 2016 CFT Convention, held Mar. 11–13, our President's Letter was honored with First Place in the Best Bulletin Series category, something I am very proud of.



But that isn't all. We were also honored with five more awards, including a "First Honor Membership Growth Award" for increasing our membership by 27% in 2015, more than any other local in California (there are 54 in all). We were also given a 1st Place for Best Single Effort, 2nd Place for Best Website, 2nd Place for Best Public Relations, and 3rd Place for Best Editorial or Column.

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 achieve parity with the full-time faculty by improving pay, benefits, and working conditions of its bargaining unit members.

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For a small local, that is doing pretty good. As a leader from one of the biggest locals in the state, Local 2121 from City College of San Francisco, said on Facebook: “You folks kick***.” Praise indeed.

The theme of this year’s convention was “Activate Labor for Justice.” While there was a great deal of rain coming down outside, it did not dampen the spirits of the more than 600 delegates, guests and staff inside, all of whom came determined to continue the labor movements’ fight for justice, human rights, and equality.

The convention is always an exciting time, and 2016 was no exception. We were entitled to send 10 delegates, the most ever, but considering the high cost that would entail we settled on sending four: Myself, Danielle Blanchard from the Drama Department, Jeff Stein from Counseling, and David Yundt from the Math Department. This was the first convention David has attended.

On the first day of the convention many of the delegates braved the rain and held a march and rally to support the City College of San Francisco, which has been engaged in an ongoing struggle with the Accreditation Commission for Community and Junior Colleges, aka ACCJC. The latter has been attempting to shut City College of San Francisco down, despite the fact this would deprive more than 100,000 students of the chance of an education. The march was a reminder that the folks at City College of San Francisco are not alone in their fight, which is now turning in their favor.

I’ve been attending the convention since 2003, and know that one of the highlights is the fine speakers that are invited by the CFT. This year we heard from (via video) State Attorney General Kamala Harris, currently a candidate for the Senate from California; the CFT’s Legislator of the Year Jose Medina, D-Riverside, also Chair of the State Assembly’s Higher Education Committee, who addressed the opportunities higher education has provided for him and the need to ensure those opportunities remain open to all Californians. We also heard from Phil Ting, D-San Francisco, who spoke at the Community College Council meeting on the need to increase funding for California’s Community Colleges and give more students the chance for an education. CFT President Josh Pechtalt gave a rousing and emotional “State of the Union” speech.

This was the 74th annual CFT convention, and as 2016 also marks the 100th anniversary of the founding of the American Federation of Teachers, it seemed appropriate that the most passionate and rousing speech of all came from AFT president Randi Weingarten. Ms. Weingarten, who has been the president of the AFT since 2008, held the audience enthralled as she spoke of AFT’s triumphs and goals, as well as the hazards we are facing from millionaire and billionaire backed groups that want to destroy public education and replace with it with charter schools, and are equally determined to destroy the unions that represent public sector workers (such as teachers, firefighters, nurses, and police). The AFT, she said, is fighting for “a vision of America far different from that of the Koch Brothers or the Walton Family.” (Another speaker, Racial Justice & Equality Advocate Tim Wise, reminded us that six Walton family heirs have more wealth than the bottom 40% of Americans combined, a total of 127,000,000 people). “Promise me, promise me, promise me,” she said, “that you will continue the fight to the end.” The audience responded with a resounding roar and a standing ovation when she was finished.

Another highlight of this or any other CFT convention is the opportunity to attend and learn from the many workshops that are made available. This year delegates were able to go to workshops on topics as varied as “Campus Safety,” “Retirement,” “How the California State Budget

Works,” “Labor and Climate Change,” and “Planning and Running Effective Meetings.” Delegates also debated and voted on resolutions covering subjects like restoring the promise of free higher education in California, calling for the end of so-called “standardized tests,” and ensuring that adult education programs are fully funded.

Next year’s convention will be held in Sacramento. We are looking forward to another exciting event with our union sisters and brothers from all over California. As fellow attendee Danielle Blanchard notes, “in our collective coming together we had healthy debates with our union colleagues, inviting each person’s voice to be heard, along with good food and fellowship.” What could be better?

In Other News

Scholarship: Every year the PFA votes to contribute to the Allan Hancock Scholarship Foundation. As we did last year, in 2016 the PFA board voted to contribute \$700 to some deserving student, who will know that he/she was helped in their pursuit of their educational goals by the members of the Part-Time Faculty Association.

Evaluation: In what I think is a first, I will be evaluating another part-time faculty member next month. To my knowledge, this is the first time a part-timer has done an evaluation on another part-timer since we negotiated this into our collective bargaining agreement last year. My hope is that this will open the door for more evaluations of part-timers by fellow part-timers.

A reminder: The issues between the full-time faculty and the administration regarding the evaluation of part-time instructors in Pool 2 have not been resolved, so only Pool 1 people are being evaluated now. Also, if you have problems with the person assigned to be your evaluator, you have the right to request another. Feel free to contact the PFA if you need assistance with this.

Unemployment: I am always very gratified when we are able to help one of our members get unemployment. Many of our members do not know they are entitled to it, or they are told by the EDD that they are not eligible when in fact they are. This particular member, after initially being denied, contacted us for assistance. We suggested he appeal the denial, and after a hearing last week before an administrative law judge, he received word on Monday of this week that his benefits have now been approved.

New Benefit: As we have been communicating recently, the AFT offers “Death and Dismemberment Insurance” to AFT members. Recently the Executive Board voted to increase our per capita (what we pay to the AFT every month) so as to increase the benefit our members would receive from \$5,000 to \$25,000. So far, we have received 120 of the pink beneficiary cards back.

Department Representatives: A few weeks back we sent out an email to the members, asking if anyone was interested in becoming a PFA representative to their respective departments. Many have responded. We are still working out the details of this process and we will be contacting everyone who has shown interest soon.

Other CFT Convention Awards

On the next page are five other awards won by Local 6185 at the 2016 CFT Convention.

