

CAMPAIGN FOR A FAIR CONTRACT

Virtual May Day rally reignites contract campaign

by Evan Kaiser, CSM, English as a Second Language

Over 120 SMCCCD faculty, staff, and students joined a Virtual May Day rally on Zoom video conferencing platform to discuss the impact of the COVID crisis on teaching and learning conditions and the need for fair compensation and pay parity for part-time faculty.

Attendees wore AFT "Red for Ed" T-shirts, sported a custom AFT backdrop, and flashed signs reading, "fair contract now!" or "part-time parity now!" Trustees Richard Holober, Karen Schwarz and Dave Mandelkern, newly appointed CSM Chancellor Mike Claire, Pacifica Mayor Dierdre Martin, and Assemblymember Mark Berman were also present.



25 of the more than 120 attendees at AFT 1493's May Day rally

Brief history of May Day

[Skyline Professor of History Rosemary Bell framed the discussion](#) with a look back to 1894, the year of the first federal Labor Day holiday that grew out of International Workers Day movements. Today, after fifty years of disinvestment and neglect, labor protections in the U.S. are at their weakest precisely when they are the most needed. Due to COVID-19, [over 30 million Americans have lost their jobs](#). With [47% of Americans unable to afford a \\$400 out-of-pocket expense](#), workers woke up to May 1 unable to pay rent and other crucial bills. Suddenly, America's best-kept secret was laid bare, again - that prosperity for some depends on an underclass of workers weeks away from bankruptcy. In the California Community College system, those are our part-time instructors, [who comprise 69% of all faculty system-wide](#).

The COVID-19 pandemic is dramatically impacting teaching in both the short term and the long term. [Skyline Professor of Economics Masao Suzuki said that the transition to online instruction was the hardest six days of his career](#). As such, he argued for an extension of the AFT MOU on Emergency Action due to Coronavirus Pandemic as long as "forced distance education" is our reality. Faculty need support for their extra labor and a measure of academic freedom

to conduct effective online instruction appropriate to their strengths, disciplines, and students.

Faculty recognition & compensation are key

The core issue of the rally, however, was not the Coronavirus pandemic, but the long-standing failure on behalf of the District to recognize and fairly compensate faculty work. For adjuncts, this has meant any-

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Negotiations Report

By Paul Bissember, AFT 1493 Executive Secretary and Negotiations Team Member

The AFT and District bargaining teams met on Friday, May 1, for the first contract negotiations session following the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic. We had negotiated a successful MOU in two sessions, and now our bargaining teams are back at the table to focus on the contract negotiations, which have been going on now for 15 months. At Friday's session, the district prepared counter-proposals on informal complaints and formal Investigations.

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Negotiations Report

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Overall, our AFT bargaining team found that the district's counter-proposals covered our main priorities that we outlined in our previous proposals: it provides for notice to the union around investigations, rights to union representation in investigatory meetings, union rights to investigatory information, and it includes links to current and appropriate district policies. The new district negotiator, Laura Schulkind, indicated that the investigations language she created comes from another district, where she had negotiated the same language.

Schulkind explained that, *"We considered [this contract language] positive for both the union and the district... Faculty have concerns that informal complaints, become invisible until it comes to discipline and that's not fair. So, the union should receive notifications so they happen in a fair way. Once things rise to the level of formal investigation, I think faculty protections should be higher."*

Furthermore, Schulkind argued that with more formalized notification that is provided to faculty, there tends to be less grievances and disputes. "I see this as a useful tool for both sides, to have heightened notice to faculty. I do not see it interfering with investigations."

In past negotiations sessions, the AFT argued that faculty should have their rights protected, treated with dignity, and that there should be mutual respect for a fair process. Schulkind agreed, stating that the District needs to *"remind administrators that when we investigate faculty, they are presumed innocent."*

Finally, the district's counter-proposal includes additional language around investigations of allegations posted to social media. This language also came from a case in another district, which Schulkind argued allows districts to outline policy and provide protections for faculty.

At our next session on May 13, we plan to discuss workload and compensation, including part-time pay parity. We were not yet able to have a discussion on a new COVID-19 MOU, but we will bring this up at the next session. At our May 20 session we will focus on the Counselor Workload issue.

Our upcoming bargaining dates are:

- **Wednesday May 13, 2020 9-11am,**
- **Wednesday May 20, 2020 12-2pm and**
- **Friday, May 29, 2020 2-4pm.**

The Advocate

The Advocate provides a forum for faculty to express their views, opinions and analyses on topics and issues related to faculty rights and working conditions, as well as education theory and practice, and the impact of contemporary political and social issues on higher education.

Some entries are written and submitted individually, while others are collaborative efforts. All faculty are encouraged to contribute.

The Advocate's editorial staff, along with the entire AFT 1493 Executive Committee, works to ensure that statements of fact are accurate. We recognize, respect, and support the right of faculty to freely and openly share their views without the threat of censorship.

AFT 1493 discourages full-timers from taking on excessive overload

The following resolution was passed at the December 6, 2017 AFT 1493 Executive Committee meeting:

Whereas economic instability affects the employment status and livelihoods of part-time faculty in the SMCCCD,

Be it resolved, that the AFT 1493 Executive Committee recommends that full-time faculty members **seriously consider refraining from taking on excessive overload in situations where part-time faculty will be displaced from courses to which they would have otherwise been assigned.**

AFT survey looks at adjunct faculty issues; finds low pay, poor benefits, varied job satisfaction

[The American Academic survey](#) released March 22 by the American Federation of Teachers (AFT) is one of the first national surveys of part-time and adjunct higher education faculty and aims to address three fundamental questions: Who are part-time and adjunct faculty members? Under what conditions do they work? And, how do they view their work and the challenges they face on campus? The survey is a national sample of 500 part-time and adjunct faculty employed at two- and four-year public and private nonprofit higher education institutions.

Highlights of the survey include:

- [Many adjuncts make less than \\$3500 per course and \\$25,000 per year](#)
- Most of those surveyed—57 percent—said they are in their jobs primarily because they like teaching and not primarily for the money. Still, most are not satisfied with their working conditions, which they believe are inadequate.

- About 50 percent of part-time and adjunct faculty prefer part-time teaching, while 47 percent would like to have full-time teaching jobs. Differences in survey responses surfaced repeatedly between these two groups.
- Job satisfaction is fairly high (about 60 percent overall), although satisfaction varies considerably between those who would prefer full-time employment (49 percent are very or mainly satisfied) and those who prefer to work part time (75 percent).
- Bread-and-butter issues are a major concern—about 57 percent of those surveyed said their salaries fall short, 28 percent said they receive health insurance on the job, and only 39 percent said they have retirement benefits through their employment.
- Job security is a major concern, with 41 percent saying their job security falls short of expectations.

*To address the low pay of part-time faculty in our own district (**part-timers currently earn only 60-70% of a full-timer's salary**), our union is asking our District to establish “**pay parity**” to bring the pay of our part-time faculty up to 85% of what a full-time faculty member earns.*

Most districts have already established a parity goal, but our District has refused to define one. It's time to make it happen, and we can do that with your help.

[Please sign our PETITION FOR PART-TIME PAY PARITY now!](#)

AFT is making recommendations for how to safely re-open schools & communities: Faculty input needed

The AFT has published a [set of recommendations on how to move forward to safely re-open our schools and communities](#). Following up on the AFT statement, the California Federation of Teachers (CFT) has asked its local unions for feedback on this proposal. The CFT Higher Education Committee would like to hear from higher ed. faculty. Members who have thoughts or suggestions regarding the following questions, should email AFT 1493 negotiating team member Monica Malamud at malamud@aft1493.org. Monica is also Co-Chair of the CFT Higher Education Committee.

- What should the best practices be for distance learning?
- Are there any specific platforms, professional development training, methods or practices that should be recommended?

- How should we approach the start of school in the Fall if we are still using any combination of distance learning, social distancing, and/or cohort rotation?
- Does addressing these require changes to our collective bargaining agreements, and what changes would be recommended?
- Is there a differential impact on full-time, part-time, and classified employees?

Answers to these questions are also likely to be considered as AFT 1493's negotiating team discusses the possibility of a second MOU (memorandum of understanding) with the District regarding the impact of COVID 19 going into the Fall 2020 semester.

Resisting the push to make distance ed. the new normal

Now that the worldwide pandemic has forced virtually all education to become “online education” or “distance learning,” there are suggestions—especially from administrators, consultants, government officials, and tech entrepreneurs* --that these new “modalities” will become the standard form of instruction going forward. There certainly can be positive aspects of online courses—well-planned online classes can allow students to learn at their own pace and schedules, some online learning materials can adjust to a wide range of learners’ different skill levels; in some cases, creative online instructional tools can provide more innovative, active learning experiences for students, and, of course, distance learning allows faculty and students to avoid health risks during the pandemic. There are, however, many very concerning factors that raise serious questions about the rush to the new world of online ed., especially for community college students. (See readings on next page.)

With so many new and long-time online instructors now teaching from home, AFT 1493 is very interested in hearing faculty opinions on teaching using remote technologies. The article below by Rika Yonemura-Fabian presents one viewpoint. We hope to have an extended discussion of the use of online instruction in our colleges in the first issue of the Advocate in the Fall 2020 semester.

Please send us your thoughts on and experiences with teaching online courses in SMCCCD, whether you are doing it for the first time or you have been teaching online for a while. Email Eric Brenner, Advocate Editor, at: brenner@aft1493.org

* One example of the push towards more widespread online ed.: Tom Epstein. “[California must seize the opportunity to become a pioneer in online higher education](#).” *Cal Matters* March 30, 2020.

Face-to-face teaching must remain the core of higher ed.

by Rika Yonemura-Fabian, Skyline AFT Chapter Co-Chair

The sudden switch we all made in March to remote education has turned the entire District inside out. Just a few months ago, about 80% of our classes were taught face to face. In this new-to-most-of-us online environment, we’ve been focusing on the question in front of us: “Are students learning?” Yet we also need to consider how this might forever alter the teacher-learner relationship that is the bleeding heart of education. How will this emphasis on online education erode faculty autonomy and discipline expertise, both of which are necessary to ensure we don’t become degree mills?

One Skyline faculty member recently articulated his concerns in an email correspondence:

One of the concerns is faculty will face additional pressure to convert more of our face-to-face courses to fully online. First, the fact that all courses at all campuses are now being taught online might be taken as “proof” of effectiveness even if faculty doubt that online courses can ever match classroom experience, no matter how “good” the technology is. Second, face-to-face sections will not be able to compete with online sections offered by other campuses if these now become widespread. Third, if they do become widespread, the College itself will lose enrollments and courses unless it adapts to the trend.

Faculty have repeatedly observed that Deans suggest converting a course online when the enrollment is low. A recent strong push for fully online degrees at Skyline College (“Skyline NOW”) seems to show that this is part of a greater theme: Online classes increase “efficiency.” We don’t accept the premise, but even if it is true, we reject the notion that efficiency is the goal of education. We respectfully submit that learning is our purpose.

The Skyline faculty member’s analysis of the current crisis extends to an examination of the identity of higher education and educators. He has experience with Canvas and is comfortable using it for his classes. He finds it to be a well-designed and useful tool, and definitely a big improvement from WebAccess. But that’s all it is, he emphasizes: A tool. The technical and design aspects of migrating course materials onto a learning management system is not the same as teaching the materials-- a distinction that administrators, who are not working directly with students, seem oblivious to. Knowing how to utilize a tool is only one of many elements that makes good craftsmanship. However, what provides her/his expertise is not the tool itself, but the human being. All the training on how to use an LMS has been helpful to manage the emergencies, but we need to talk about how to better apply our accumulated expertise in teaching, classroom facilitation and all the emotional work we do with students to the technological tools.

What we hear in the concerned faculty member’s email is a manifestation of what some of us believe should be our unified message to the administration and those who are running the system. Face-to-face teaching by a subject expert should remain the irreplaceable core of higher education. Watching videos, going to chat rooms, listening to recorded audio, etc. can be useful supplements, but are not a substitute. And students have the right to quality, human interactions as the medium of learning. This is what contextualizes knowledge for students: meaningful relationships with the teacher and with their peers. Distance Education has its place—but as a supporting role.

Concerns about proprietary online education tools are raised as Instructure (owner of Canvas) is sold for \$2 billion

It is important to be aware that most educational tools we use in our online courses (e.g. Canvas, Zoom) are proprietary products from profit-making corporations and this can impact our colleges in ways that are not always very obvious. Instructure, the corporation that created and runs Canvas, our District's online learning management platform, was just [sold in March to a private equity firm for about \\$2 billion](#). The valuation and sale of the company have led some [concerned Canvas users](#) to question how Instructure's data collection practices may use students' (and faculty's)



personal data for commercial purposes without consent and have sent an [open letter to Instructure](#) asking many questions about this issue. A recent research article in the journal *Teaching in Higher Education* found that, ["Institutions of higher education are currently ill-equipped to protect students and faculty required to use the Canvas Instructure LMS from data harvesting or exploitation."](#) Colleges' contracts with for-profit online ed. companies also raise questions about shared governance, academic freedom, educational quality, and, ultimately, the privatization of U.S. higher education.

Students' perspectives on taking online courses

One Skyline College faculty member recently asked her students how they were feeling about their experiences with the move to online learning. Below are a few of the students' comments:

"The motivation for a lot of students to go to learn is the social aspect, which is effectively gone as online classes are on the rise. A lot of students also don't have a very safe space outside of school. Many kids will not be able to focus at home or anywhere else."

"The quality of online education cannot compare to an in-person lecture, as you are able to focus more, without all the distrac-



tions at home. Many professors are also continuing to assign the same amount of workload, which just adds to the pressure and stress of online education at home."

"To me, I lose motivation when I'm not in the class room setting, so obviously it doesn't help me at all in any way. Before entering college, people that I've known that were going to college advised me not to take online classes as they were boring and that you didn't learn much because how lazy one can get. However, I am interested to see how schools will adapt to this on-going pandemic, not only in the classroom setting, but also curriculum."

Selected readings on the impact of online education

Hans Johnson, Marisol Cuellar Mejia and Kevin Cook. ["COVID-19 Shutdown Forces Colleges to Ramp up Online Learning."](#) Public Policy Institute of California March 30, 2020.

"Students with limited technology ... may not be able to access online courses. In community colleges, Latinos are less likely to enroll in online courses than other groups, which may reflect the digital divide ... equity gaps remain large."

Sandy Baum and Michael S. McPherson. ["The Human Factor: The Promise & Limits of Online Education."](#) Daedalus (American Academy of Arts and Sciences) Fall 2019.

"Strong evidence indicates that students with weak academic backgrounds and other risk factors struggle most in fully online courses, creating larger socioeconomic gaps in outcomes."

Jill Barshay. ["Five studies find online courses are not working well at community colleges."](#) Hechinger Report April 27, 2015.

"Online coursework disproportionately harms lower-income students and community colleges."

Lis Kenneth Regula. ["The online courses we're creating right now are ways to survive in uncertain times, not to thrive in online education."](#) Hechinger Report March 16, 2020.

"Contracts with for-profit [online ed.] companies raise concerns about the privatization of U.S. higher education ... shared governance, academic freedom, educational quality, student privacy..."

Susan M. Dynarski. ["Online schooling: Who is harmed and who is helped?"](#) Brookings Institute October 26, 2017.

"While online courses are certainly convenient for such non-traditional students, the existing evidence suggests they are a poor fit for those who are academically behind their peers."

Spiros Protopsaltis and Sandy Baum. ["Does online education live up to its promise? A look at the evidence and implications for federal policy."](#) George Mason University Jan. 2019.

"On average, fully online coursework has contributed to increasing gaps in educational success across socioeconomic groups while failing to improve affordability."

Tightrope Walkers:

Faculty parents share their stories of teaching from home during shelter-in-place

By Katharine Harer, VP, AFT 1493 & Outreach Organizer;
Mom of a 35-year-old son, Leo

You're teaching all your classes online, providing support to freaked-out students and dealing with a flood of emails every day, while at the same time, and often in the same room, hour after hour, your children need you to be present and available. You can't send them to school or childcare or to the grandparents or to play at their friends' houses. You can't send them anywhere. Will lack of sleep, personal space and time make you trip and fall, and if so, who will catch you?

I asked a group of faculty parents across the district to open the doors of their homes, virtually of course, to share some of their experiences of parenting in this new and demanding time. It's a private world, usually unseen, but one that I felt we need to hear about in order to understand and support one another. We'll start with some of the challenges and move to some of the benefits, the unexpected positive outcomes of working and parenting while sheltered-in-place.

Work space, family space, same space

Faculty homes have become our offices, our virtual classrooms and our meeting spaces. The separation of work and home is a blur – untenable, impossible to achieve -- especially when our children are locked-down in the house with us twenty-four hours a day.

My husband works at the kitchen island, next to the rice cooker. I work at the kitchen table, usually next to Play Doh, watercolors, Legos, and we might get a solid 10 minutes of work before our 5 and 2 year olds need us for something. One of the hardest things is just never ever getting a break, help, or down time. My son has actually gotten really mad at me when I am working and cannot engage in an activity with him. (Salumeh Eslamieh, Cañada)

One day my husband was working from home and he had to help our daughter in the bathroom. He'd left lunch cooking on the stove, and our fire alarm went off and smoke filled our dining room/home office while I was in the middle of teaching a zoom class. (Soledad McCarthy, Skyline)

The house is at times like a call center with everyone, instead of processing refunds for Amazon, is off being a student or teaching a class. Oliver will be discussing declensions in Latin in one room; Baxter offering interpretations of Othello in another; McKenna will be shut away in her room solving issues in programming; Heather, my wife, a librarian at Trinity School, will be reading books aloud to

third-graders; and I'll be trying to orchestrate discussions with my 105 students on how the pandemic is affecting those of us who are the most at risk during this time. (Tim Maxwell, CSM)

Work time, family time, same time

Balancing work and personal/family time was a challenge for most of us before shelter-in-place turned our lives upside down -- taking student work home most nights, grading papers, quizzes, tests and homework -- planning and prepping for classes, responding to our students' emails, department emails, college emails and district emails. We were operating on all burners at the end of a long teaching day. It's never been easy. Now the time-conundrum is magnified.

As a father of a beautiful, creative, active, and very social four-year old; as husband to a high achieving and higher-earning partner in a job that has little flexibility; and a son to an aging father who lives alone but not by choice, I've had to find ways to get work done in fits and spurts, around their schedules. I always feel behind. There simply aren't enough hours in the day to meet the needs of students and family while still attending to my own health. (Jesse Raskin, Skyline)

Unfortunately the pandemic has left many of us working much later than when we were not working from home. It has been difficult to communicate with people, who email us and expect responses, that we need a break from being available. (Soledad McCarthy, Skyline)



Soledad McCarthy with her daughter

We are cut off from the community of adults who normally help to raise our children. We don't get a break and this makes it very difficult for us to be productive in our jobs. This makes me understand how valuable childcare is to productivity in general, but also that I have to learn to balance being the sole educator of my children, in addition to being the parent every moment of the day. All of this puts a strain on my relationship with my partner because each of us has to negotiate getting any time to ourselves: either to work or to just do self-care. (Michael Hoffman, Cañada)

I'm constantly negotiating with my essential worker partner about who can work when. There are almost no spare minutes. I feel the magnification of the pre-existing feeling that, as a working mother, I'm never able to put enough time into any one aspect of my multiple roles. (Julie Carey, Cañada)

It's challenging for me to find the time to do my work. Between zoom meetings and my children's needs, I am left with early morning and late at night to plan, grade, reply to lengthier emails, and correspond with my students. It is also difficult to attend meetings with two small children at home; I can't be fully present for the meeting or for my kids and have often had to sacrifice my work for my children's needs and vice versa. My husband is also zooming, teaching, and grading all day, and we often run into scheduling conflicts, causing one or both of us to give up on our professional responsibilities or our parental duties. (Salumeh Eslamieh, Cañada)



Salumeh Eslamieh's children

“Screen time is like a giant frenemy”

We're on our screens for more hours in the day than ever before, and our children are watching us. They want to do what we do -- they want that screen too! They see how engrossed we are, our eyes riveted on our screens. And who hasn't put their child in front of an educational TV show – for me it was Sesame Street and Mr. Rogers – or a fun computer game or YouTube? However, as educators we know how harmful it is to over-expose our kids to screens. I'd pry my son, Leo, off the screen and send him outdoors to ride his bike to his grandparents' house or shoot hoops at the schoolyard. But we don't have those options now, and the screen's seductive powers are like quicksand.

Screen-time is a huge challenge. When both of us parents try to work, our children usually end up watching television. Unfortunately, my five-year-old acts like a crazed demon when we turn it off so it makes for lots of deregulated, difficult behavior. My two-year old isn't really supposed to be looking at screens, but we made the mistake of letting him play a word/letter game on one of our phones. That provided us with some moments of relief, but now whenever either of us has our phone out, he begs to see it, even moving chairs across the house just to reach the phone on a shelf. (Michael Hoffman, Cañada)

Screen time is like a giant frenemy! It's so convenient but does so much harm. (Salumeh Eslamieh, Cañada)

Mourning the losses in our lives

As parents, we try to maintain some control over our emotions, but children test that resolve, and they do it over and over. It's hard, maybe impossible, to be the model parent we imagine in our minds, especially now. And the losses for our children, and for ourselves, are real.

I am so tired of hearing myself say the same things over and over again. Sounds of my voice are coming out that I have never heard before! (Salumeh Eslamieh, Cañada)

I find myself mourning the loss of so many end-of-year experiences: celebrating students' accomplishments in the same room with them, taking my children to the playground, listening to them giggle with friends on the schoolyard as the year draws to a close; sleepovers, dinners out, cousin parties..." (Julie Carey, Cañada)

A month into the shelter-in-place, my role is to provide structure, encourage my children to stay engaged with school, and to make sure that individually they are doing well. Like most of our students, they too have had to make many adjustments; their daily routines have been up-rooted. At-Home-Learning is primarily asynchronous, with no peer-to-peer classroom interaction, and assignments posted on Google Classroom. They are missing their friends and being able to participate in school activities. They miss being able to go to the movies or the mall or going hiking in the park. They will miss out on summer opportunities, like getting their first job or driver's license. (Jacquie Escobar, Skyline)

Family discoveries, joys of togetherness

Faculty parents responded with an outpouring of positives about the new discoveries they've made during the past six weeks spent hanging out with their children: introducing new skills, like potty training, helping their kids with their schoolwork, and the unexpected pleasure of longer periods of less splintered time.

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Every morning I have to come up with creative ways to do art, music, and athletic activities. It's me v. YouTube when it comes to Hannah's day, and I'm determined to win. Yesterday, I taught her to climb trees. Three branches up, she turned to me and said, "Papa, I'm so proud! I didn't know I could do this! Four branches up, we found a bird's nest and had a lengthy discussion about the best materials to use to make our own nest. Three branches down, she decided she wanted to jump off, which she did, with grace, agility and the knees of youth. Then we ate cheddar bunnies. (Jesse Raskin, Skyline)

There's more sibling closeness. My son told his sister today, "I feel so safe when I'm with you. Like nothing bad can happen." And being so intimately involved in the education of my children (such a luxury!) We built a cardboard city as a set for a book series about "John the Rock Scientist" that my 7-year old is working on. And even though I'm still up at 5:30 am, I'm not running out on my children at 7:00 am, and I'm not also gone two evenings. (Julie Carey, Cañada)

We work hard on making the most of the time we have together. In fact, I would even say this past month of lockdown has been, in some ways, a lovely opportunity for us all to reconnect in ways we wouldn't have were we following our pre-pandemic patterns in our various remote locations. I am so grateful to Heather, my creative and energetic wife. Each morning, she poses a Barbie doll dubbed «Corona Barbie» on the kitchen counter with an index card announcing an activity for the day. These activities have included three Bingo nights, several scavenger hunts, movie nights, Yahtzee nights, video game dance parties and family cleaning days. (Tim Maxwell, CSM)



Michael Hoffman with his kids



Julie Carey's kids



Corona Barbie

I am realizing how little attention I had to pay to my children during a normal workweek. We have done some really great projects together and, in the process, I have learned a lot about who my children are. We are now able to potty-train the 2-year-old because

we can actually watch him all day. Overall, there's some relief in the sense that there's nowhere to get to. I enjoy the aspect that makes us slow down and forces us to just focus on home and family. I've also realized how important childcare workers and teachers are – we take for granted the people who allow us to do our jobs during the day while we entrust our children to others. It also highlights to me how we are normally racing around, and our hectic pace of life is driven by a stressful and irrational capitalism. (Michael Hoffman, Cañada)

We have almost every meal together, and we have been playing with our kids, teaching them academic and life skills, doing crafts, and engaging in their curriculum development. My husband taught our 5-year old son how to ride a two-wheeler, and we have the time to let our kids help cook many of our meals and participate in doing more chores. We put on 80s music and clean up at "ninja-speed!" A kind friend is a music teacher, and we started zoom piano lessons for our son to help her out and give him something new to learn, but thanks to that I am learning to read notes and play the piano as well! My son and daughter are becoming better playmates, and we are letting our kids get bored (they become monsters) and then get creative! We see and talk to our neighbors more, and our little yard is getting a lot of love. I also finally have time to potty train my 2-year old. (Salumeh Eslamieh, Cañada)

Towards an environmental awakening

Finally, faculty parents shared their thoughts about some of the benefits of living in a quieter, less polluted, less frenetic environment.

I've been given the opportunity to reconsider what my priorities are and how I want to live my life.... I've spent hours at night day dreaming of what a world could be like if we all decided not to drive everyday, to let the office buildings go to dust and replace them with parks and cafes. (Jesse Raskin, Skyline)

Once we resume our "normal" lives, what will we carry with us from this period? Can we achieve more balance in our typical work/family schedules? Will we remember what it felt like to spend so much time during the day with our children? Will we return to driving

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Bay Area higher education union activists collaborating to build solidarity

Higher Educators United Northern-California is a network of higher education workers union activists and organizers who came together inspired by the 2018 RedForEd strike wave and the need to network and build solidarity between local unions. We are committed to actively support each other's contract campaigns and struggles because we are divided across higher education systems and forced to compete for funding. We are also divided by the two-tier neoliberal system that positions full-time and part-time faculty in a hierarchical relationship, which we strongly object to and want to abolish. We are finally divided across gender, sexuality, nationality and race lines of oppression. We believe that the only way to build unity among education workers is through active solidarity and an explicit commitment to fight for educational equity and social justice. The RedforEd strike wave showed the power of collective action, and especially of strike action when it is organized from the bottom up. This is why activists in HEU believe in rank and file organizing and building our collective power for action.

HEU originated through planning the "[Common Ground](#)" conference last fall sponsored by several locals of the CFT and CFA. We began as a planning group for a spring continuations conference, which we were going to rename "Free Quality Education For All—A Union Conference." In the midst of the Covid-19 Pandemic crisis and cutbacks that

are hitting the faculty, other workers and students of our higher educational institutions, and the general community of the Bay Area, there is a need for affordable, accessible, high quality college classes more than ever as well as secure living wage jobs and meaningful safety net. HEU invites higher educators to contextualize the fight of each local union for their faculty rights in relation to the struggles of the communities our students are coming from. We need more solidarity to achieve that.

HEU has been meeting regularly via zoom and have found this continuing exchange and collaboration vital in order to continue building our solidarity as higher educators. Besides information exchange and conference planning, we are beginning to actively organize around solidarity actions. We have also begun a collaborative relationship with a similar network in K-12 called [California Educators United \(CEU\)](#), which was inspired by the statewide teacher and school-worker strikes and the joint strike recently in Chicago. We do not see this effort as replacing the various local and statewide union formations, but rather supplementing them across organizational lines throughout the Bay Area and NorCal.

If you are interested in learning more about what HEU has been doing, check out our [statement on the COVID crisis](#) and connect with us on [Facebook](#).

Faculty parenting during the Pandemic

continued from previous page

too much, running from place to place, over-scheduled, over-worked, reaching out with octopus arms to be there for everyone who needs us? Will we take the time to give our little ones tree-climbing lessons or sit at the piano learning songs together or building a make-believe universe out of cardboard?

For each of the past five weeks, I've spent one morning at the beach with Hannah, my daughter. Together, we laugh, dance in the sand, play in the waves, eat carrots and apples, watch birds, collect shells, and luxuriate in the open expanse of dune and time. No experience I have ever had at work is as meaningful, free, or transcendent. (Jesse Raskin, Skyline)

Thank you to the brave and extraordinary parents who contributed their experiences to this article, who opened the doors of their homes and allowed us inside.

[Coronavirus & Distance Learning Resources](#)



Undocumented Students More Vulnerable than Ever. Faculty Can Make a Difference

By Jessica Silver-Sharp, AFT 1493 Secretary

When I first wrote about our undocumented students for *The Advocate* in October 2017, I couldn't have foreseen how things could change so much in less than three years. Two out of three of our campus Dream Centers were established during this time when young "Dreamers" were forming a national youth movement and "coming out" across the country. Then, the majority of SMCCCD's hundreds of undocumented students enjoyed legal protections under DACA. Now, *the majority are not eligible for DACA and the significant legal protections, work opportunities and unemployment benefits that status affords.* For these reasons, more than ever before, they form our most vulnerable student population.

For this article, I spoke with many folks, including our three campus Dream Center program service coordinators, who with major support from faculty allies and administrators, *have transitioned to serve our undocumented students remotely.* I wanted to get a better sense of how things had shifted for undocumented students following our campus closures. What are the challenges Dream Center staff and their students are facing? But I also wanted to bring attention to the availability of recent programs and events that continue to make an impact. Lastly, I wanted to learn *how faculty members might increase our awareness, support and understanding in this new landscape.*

COVID has accentuated undocumented students' focus on supporting their families

In our conversations, Center staff reported that the pandemic has truly revealed the priorities of these students in ways many of us don't realize. More likely to live in multi-generational households, our undocumented students report they are working more to support themselves and immigrant parents who lack unemployment benefits. Some have taken new jobs doing essential services. Many have also found themselves responsible for the care and homeschooling of younger siblings, as *parents lack the benefit of an education or language to support their children with academic tasks.* Some have withdrawn from classes.

Food and housing insecurity and a political climate that continues to actively inspire fear of deportation for students and their family members have been exacerbated by COVID. Even before COVID, students reported widespread anxiety resulting from misinformation about the Public Charge Rule policy and the Supreme Court's looming decision on DACA. Now students report a host of new and significant challenges, including staying healthy but also around household competition for internet service, the difficulty of finding a quiet space to study, anxiety about the transfer process in progress, and the knowledge that money saved for transfer to university is now being rerouted to basic necessities. From a cultural standpoint, many students are also unaccustomed or uncomfortable negotiating with faculty--for assignment



Cañada College Undocu Club members with allies

changes, for example--no matter how valid the reasons. Staff report that when taken together, these factors have produced anxiety levels among undocumented students that are unprecedentedly high.

Dream Centers work to maintain student support

For the Dream Centers, among the biggest challenges are in finding ways to continue, or rather *recreate, a sense of community* for students accustomed to having a physical space on campus that feels safe. For Cañada students, Undocu Club meetings are on hiatus but students keep in touch.

The other two campuses are currently without student clubs, most members having graduated. At CSM's Multicultural and Dream Center (MCDC), community building continues at student-led weekly Zoom Hangouts where the focus is on social justice and related issues.

A parallel challenge has been *continued referrals to basic but essential services and resources.* The MCDC uses a robust



- **Faculty who are aware of federal and state laws and resources.** Some students have been misinformed by us about their options, especially regarding DACA and state/federal benefits.
- **Guidance that can increase their confidence and help them build resilience.** Not sympathy.
- **Assignments that don't exclude or harm.** We can't assume our students can vote to make political change, or

case management approach that helps connect students with academic counselors, retention specialists and other campus resources. Meanwhile, triage between Center staff and student services specialists and referrals to free campus legal clinics and local organizations takes place across the district. Staff proactively check in with students to make sure they are safe, and reach out to matriculating students as well. Each Dream Center does things a little differently, but for all, *core program services remain in place*. What's changed is outreach.

At Skyline, Pam Ortiz Cerda makes and takes personal calls from students at all times of the day and evening, including weekends when students return home from work. Pam is trained and experienced with DACA renewal applications -- she assists students and their family members from all three campuses through a complex process that includes several long forms and an additional application to non-profit funders to cover DACA renewal fees of almost \$500. She also encourages her students to participate in mental health and wellness virtual sessions offered by the non-profit organization, [Immigrants Rising](#), twice weekly. In their work "to get resources out there," the Centers publish frequent Dream Center email newsletters with resources for food and other aid, fact checked by student assistants for currency and accuracy. All three Centers also reach students through Dream Center Instagram accounts.

Many faculty AFT members have become more aware of the needs of our undocumented students by actively participating in this year's Undocumented Student Week of Action events, which included an astounding breadth of programs (deserving of their own article). Nationally, AFT's platform of support for these students stems partly from an understanding that our current students are our nation's future teachers. So how can faculty members help?

What do undocumented students need?

- **A safe space to share experiences and ideas in a two-way dialog with faculty** who are sensitive not to "out" them to their classmates.

want to debate (or be debated) when immigration is the research assignment topic.

What can faculty do?

- **Contact your campus Dream Centers about any student you think needs support.** Dream Center staff will reach out to our students in person by phone. (If you're unsure of their status, it's okay; immigrant or low-income students who are not undocumented are also served).
- **Stay informed about campus/community resources** by subscribing to each campus's Dream Center newsletter by emailing: Cañada, Saúl Miranda mirandas@smccd.edu Skyline, Pamela Ortiz Cerda ortizcerdap@smccd.edu and CSM, Jackie Santizo santizo@smccd.edu
- **Join your campus Dream Center Task Force.** Task Forces of staff and faculty members continue regular virtual meetings during this crisis by Zoom. Email the same contacts above.
- **Show solidarity by donating a part of your federal stimulus check.** Undocumented students did not receive these and are not eligible for CARES Act funds. A Skyline work group is on this: Contact Counselor Mandy Lucas Lucasm@smccd.edu for more information now.
- **Attend the Cañada College Undocumented Student Success Town Hall on Friday, May 8, from 2:30-4 p.m.** which will provide resources to support our undocumented student community. Register in advance for this webinar: https://smccd.zoom.us/join/register/WN_CfLEuUmPSu6T-aaVdwEidw

Post script: Special thanks to faculty counselor Sylvia Aguirre-Alberto whom I spoke with for this article. Sylvia retires this month following decades of service to our undocumented student community. A student herself in CSM's College Readiness Program during the 1970s, Sylvia's counseling work for CSM has continued the spirit of her college's early efforts to create a welcoming community and safe zone for our neediest students. She quotes her mentor, Adrian Orozco, when she reminds us, the first step to wisdom is kindness.

50 years ago a different crisis canceled classes

By Jessica Silver-Sharp, AFT 1493 Secretary

As Cañada and Skyline Colleges marked their 50th anniversaries this year and last with celebrations of history, defining actions by students and faculty that shaped these college's first years were largely omitted from the narrative. Drawing from archival materials in Cañada College Library, this article in two parts looks back to May of 1970, days after President Nixon authorized the US invasion of Cambodia, when a very different type of crisis kept our students out of class.

Following the tragic shooting of unarmed college students at Kent State's anti-Vietnam war protest (May 4, 1970), hundreds of universities, colleges, and high schools closed throughout the US, as approximately 4 million students went on strike. If you're not familiar, Kent State had a major impact on public opinion on the role of the US in the Vietnam War. In California, then Governor Reagan ordered California State and UC campuses to *conclude classes May 6 and remain closed through May 10* ([New York Times](#)). For California's community and private colleges, this was an "ask," not an order.

Part I: Cañada College

On May 7 and 8, Cañada was winding down its second year as a college. With classes canceled by the Chancellor, Cañada students gathered and voted to keep the campus open and go on strike for the rest of the semester. CSM, Skyline, Foothill and De Anza also voted to stay open, however CSM and Skyline did not hold campus-wide strikes. [A student antiwar protest online map by the U. of Washington shows details of student strikes nationwide, including Cañada (["on strike"](#))].

For the next two and a half weeks, Cañada students and faculty jumped into high gear, forming ad hoc committees and rapidly organizing a two-day campus symposium for May 7 and 8. (["The Junior College Scene: Anti-War Activity on the Peninsula"](#), S.F. Chronicle). The Cañada faculty AFT chapter was involved with organizing speakers for the symposium workshops.

On May 9, student representatives from all three colleges traveled to San Jose State where students from all over the Bay formed a broader coalition called the California Student Offensive. Cañada classes resumed May 12 and 13 only, "to allow students and instructors to work out the means for making up class time and work...during the recent crisis or in coming weeks," however, *the workshops did not stop* (see schedule at right.)

Also on May 12, the District's "Chancellor-Superintendent" Clifford Erickson informed the SMCCCD Board of Trustees of the "consequences" for faculty and students on strike:

"The college presidents have declared the right of teachers and students to follow their individual conscience with respect to class teaching and class attendance, with the understanding that teachers will not be paid for sessions they do not conduct and students will be graded in accord with normal academic standards..."

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At Canada College in Redwood City, students met and voted 132-96 to support striking for the rest of the semester.

San Bruno's Skyline College invited its students to discuss the issues and several hundred did. Nearby San Mateo City College hosted 200 students who worked most of the day organizing a 9 a.m. march today from the

campus to the San Mateo City Hall.

The 20 colleges remaining open were Cabrillo College in Aptos; Columbia Junior College; Feather River College in Quincy; Fresno City College; Gavilan College in Gilroy; Hartnell College in Salinas; Napa College; Ohlone College in Fremont and Porterville College.

Also Merced College; Modesto Junior College; Reedley College; College of the Redwoods in Eureka; San Joaquin Delta College in Stockton; College of the Sequoias in Visalia; Shasta College in Redding; College of the Siskiyous in Weed; Solano College in Vallejo; West Hills College in Coalinga; and Yuba College in Marysville.

STUDENT WORKSHOP SCHEDULE

TUESDAY MAY 12

17 - 109	Community Action
17 - 205	Southeast Asian Studies & Information
17 - 207	Racism
17 - 209	Publicity and Art
3 - 148	Campus Action
17 - 203	Military Resistance (Armed Forces Day, Draft Resistance)

All Workshops have been scheduled for "College Hour" so there will be no class conflicts (and no excuse for not going).

The colleges of this District are...allowing each according to his conscience to withdraw, if he must, from the classroom, with the usual consequences for those who do not meet academic and institutional standards. [Message from Chancellor to Faculty and Staff](#) (24779, pp. 35-36)

Cañada's strike symposium resumed May 14 - May 20 with an ambitiously packed schedule (at right) featuring multiple student and faculty-led workshops taking place hourly.

On May 21 and May 22, scheduled symposium activities were suspended at the request of the "Cañada Minorities against Racism" in favor of workshops on that topic (see below right.)

A May 22 Memorial March by Cañada students and faculty to the Redwood City Courthouse was held in memory of the six black students killed at Jackson State on May 12.

Also beginning May 21, Cañada's Drama department staged Heinrich Ibsen's *An Enemy of the People* (in reference to Nixon), with tickets starting at .50c. The strike symposium resumed May 25 with its end date unconfirmed by my sources.

The dramatic events of May during Cañada's second year reflected unprecedented community building, political activism and collaboration among faculty and students that coalesced quickly and successfully. The strike symposium both mirrored and shaped the emerging culture of the new college. We're fortunate to have a small collection of archival

sources in the Cañada College Library that document this. The 1970 student strike deserves a prominent place in Cañada's historical narrative. Can we know who we are as a college *without knowing who we were*?

Please look for Part 2 of this article -- featuring actions by CSM & Skyline -- in the Advocate's September 2020 issue. Hopefully by then, the college archives will reopen. I welcome your corrections, comments and additional sources!

- Jessica Silver-Sharp <silver-sharp@aft1493.org>

CANADA COLLEGE			
SYMPOSIUM SCHEDULE			
Monday, May 18, 1970			
<u>TITLE</u>	<u>Chairman</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Room</u>
Legal Action Proposals for Jr. Colleges	Mark Landes	8:00	3-117
Background Of Indochina Politics & U.S. Policy	Mark Hein	8:00	17-109
(Topic to be Announced)	Ken Kennedy	8:00	18-317
Reactions of Oppressed Cultures	Eldon Earnhardt	9:00	17-107
Revolution, Third World Liberation, the University, and the Indochina War	Jim Upton	9:00	18-205
Nixon's Grand Strategy	Bob Fryckman	9:00	13-216
Demobilizing Selective Service, Dave Acuff	Mark Hein	10:00	17-105
Contemporary Foreign Governments	Ted Reller	10:00	18-317
Poetry of Resistance	Dale Polisar	10:00	Lawn north of Bldg. #3
Poetry of Resistance	Dale Polisar	11:00	" #3
Economics of S.E. Asia	Pat Manning	11:00	13-117
Racism and Imperialism in S.E. Asia	Frank Young	11:00	18-318
California's Proposed Anti-War Law	Mark Landes	12:00	13-214
How Militaristic Is Our Society?	Gil Workman	12:00	13-216
Racism and the Media	Bob Glessing	12:00	13-115
The Rhetoric of the Rightwing, and Songs the Nazis Sing	Bob Curtis	1:00	13-214
Community Workshop	Jack Swenson		
	Payne, Stringari	1:30	18-205
	Juhasz		

TO: All Members of the College Community

FROM: Faculty Symposium Committee

In accord with the request of the "Canada Minorities Against Racism," we have agreed to suspend all regularly scheduled Symposium activities for the next two days -- Thursday, May 21, and Friday, May 22. Symposia for these two days will center on racism.

Further, we intend to direct our efforts toward helping the campus and community become aware of the Memorial March -- in recognition of the deaths of Black people at Jackson State College and Augusta -- which will begin from the steps of the Redwood City Courthouse at 1:00 p.m. on Friday, May 22.

We urge our fellow faculty members to convene their Friday afternoon classes at the Redwood City Courthouse at 1:00.

We urge all students and faculty to participate boldly and constructively in the Symposium and Memorial activities of the next two days.

Virtual May Day Rally

continued from page 1

thing from deferred plans to financial ruin. [CSM Adjunct Assistant Professor of Economics Ali Shokouhbash](#) shared his [experience](#) struggling to buy a condo in the South Bay Area for the last 8 years. With adjunct wages set at 60-70% of full-time faculty, little to no job security semester to semester, and banks “know[ing] what ‘adjunct’ means,” he found himself chasing skyrocketing prices. One quarter, the price jumped from \$200K to \$250K. Today, the same property would cost over \$600K. He and other adjuncts often struggle to pay rent, let alone buy a condo. The urgent need for part-time parity is compounded by the extreme cost of living in the Bay Area.

Strong support for improving part-timer pay and benefits

Following Shokouhbash's comments was an outpouring of support for giving part-timers more job security and health benefits (as by some estimates [Covered California premiums are set to rise by over 40%!.](#)) As one of the richest districts in the state, SMCCCD should have one of the highest part-time compensation packages in the Community College system, but instead, it is [ranked 22nd](#). As [CSM Professor of Economics Steven Lehigh pointed out, on average over the last five years, the District paid \\$0 to address pay parity or workload recommendations despite an average annual surplus of \\$15 million, \\$7 million of which had already been allocated to academic salaries.](#)

The rising numbers of attendees at AFT events suggests that the burden on faculty is acutely growing, not shrinking. Some will rightly blame the state's 2008 austerity measures for the expansion of part-time positions and decimation of the higher education budget, but this does not mean the District's hands are tied. It is past time for the District to come to the table and negotiate in good faith. As CSM English Professors Teeka James and Anne Stafford mentioned, good faith negotiations do not begin with balance sheets, but rather with the recognition of faculty labor -- the recognition that instructional continuity during a pandemic requires even more

labor as faculty give 110% to not only develop quality online materials but also support individual student needs, which are now greater than ever before.

The final union speaker, [AFT President and Chief Negotiator Joaquin Rivera](#), thanked faculty for their support and pledged to “continue our fight for a fair contract, particularly in areas around workload, part-time parity and fair compensation.”

Chancellor supports settling contract on-time

At the end of the rally, [Chancellor Claire said of the administration's negotiators](#), “It seems like we're late every time, and that has got to stop.” Faculty agree. Why should adjuncts not be paid a living wage – at least 85% of full-time wages, as AFT has proposed? Why shouldn't non-teaching responsibilities be quantified, evenly distributed, and compensated accordingly? Why have our institutions become so top-heavy, with administrators sometimes making three times what faculty make?

The point bears repeating: faculty working conditions are student learning conditions. Cassidy Wilkins, a student at Skyline college, attended the rally after learning that her Oceanography teacher got paid less for a lab than for a lecture, despite having spent at least three times as long developing an online lab experience. Wilkins said “The dedication from Skyline professors is amazing” compared to the previous community college she attended and that she wouldn't have been able to transfer to a UC without the guidance and support of caring professors. She said that faculty “deserve far more than they are asking – they are just asking for basic rights.”

It is said that the true test of leadership is how one responds during a crisis. In this crucial time, will the District invest in its most valuable resource – its people?

To show the District you support fair compensation for adjunct faculty, please sign and circulate the [SMCCCD Part-Time Faculty Pay Parity Petition](#). AFT's goal is to collect 500 signatures by May 13.

AFT 1493 CALENDAR

AFT Membership Meeting:

Wednesday, May 13, 2:30 - 5 p.m., Zoom link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89435095853>

SMCCCD Board of Trustees Meeting:

Wednesday, May 13, 6 p.m., Zoom link: TBA

Contract Bargaining Sessions:

Wednesday May 13, 9-11 am; Wednesday May 20, 12-2pm; Friday, May 29, 2-4pm