

Make your dream project a reality — Apply for a sabbatical / long term leave

by Katharine Harer,
AFT 1493 Co-President

You're driving that same old route to work. As you make those familiar turns and lane changes on the freeway, your mind begins to drift away from the phone calls and e-mails you have to return this morning, the committee meeting that awaits you this afternoon, the lesson you plan to teach to that squirrely class — to the language institute in Guanajuato you've always wanted to attend, the textbook that's been percolating in your mind for years and years, the research project, novel, internship, post-graduate program.... But there's never enough time, or money, to fulfill that dream project, so you pull into the parking lot, heave your brief case out of the car, and trudge on.

There *is* a solution. A number of your colleagues have taken advantage of the expanded options for professional development and have applied for, and been awarded, sabbatical/long term leaves over the past several years

since the AFT reinstated them after their 22 year hiatus. These forward-thinking faculty members tucked away their course outlines and packed their bags for distant ports, learned valuable skills, enhanced their teaching, and lived their dreams. Andres Gonzalez, CSM anthropology and ESL professor, put it this way: "If you take little risks and challenges in life, it's refreshing. I came back renewed and happy."

Ms. O'Connell goes to Washington

Kathryn O'Connell, Political Science Professor at CSM, received a sabbatical in 2001-02 that brought her to the nexus of power and decision-making in this country, serving as a Fellow with the International Relations Committee of the House of Representatives. Kathryn's goal was to acquire hands-on experience with foreign policy, congressional legislation processes and intergovernmental relations that she could bring back to her teaching at CSM. She complemented her internship

experience by taking three courses on legislative procedures which gave her additional background



Kathryn O'Connell

that she could use in her American Politics courses.

Kathryn's sabbatical contained a few surprises. On the second day of her internship, just as she walked into the door of the House of Representatives office building, the first plane hit the Twin Towers. It was September 11th, 2001. She stood in the lobby watching the devastation on T.V. as the second plane hit. Just then she heard a voice screaming: "Run as fast as

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District has been diverting funds for part-timers' office hours; part-time faculty deserve back pay

Our College District has been receiving hundreds of thousands of dollars each year from a special state fund to pay part-time instructors for holding office hours, but instead of paying part timers for their work, they have been putting these dollars into the District's general fund.

In 1997 the California Legislature passed a bill that provided that part-time faculty in the community college system should be compensated for holding office hours. This legislation is now part of the Cali-

fornia Education Code (Sections 87880-87885). Part of this language reads as follows: "The Legislature finds and declares that community college part-time faculty are required to fulfill the same teaching responsibilities as full-time faculty

although students have little or no access to part-time faculty members outside of the classroom. It is the intent of the Legislature that students have the same opportunity for academic assistance and guid-

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PRESIDENTS' PERSPECTIVES

**Negotiations progressing,
 but still a ways to go**

by Katharine Harer and Joaquin Rivera,
 AFT 1493 Co-Presidents



We hope that your semester is going smoothly, or should we say, as smoothly as possible! The election is looming and it is gratifying to see so much voter registration activity on our campuses. We want to remind you to vote YES on Proposition 72 which provides health care coverage to employees in medium and large businesses. It's a small step in addressing the issue of uninsured workers in California. We aren't going to tell you how to vote in the coming national election, but we do ask you to think very seriously about the state of our country — and of the rest of the world our government impacts so greatly with its foreign policies. The AFT at the national level has endorsed John Kerry for President. Union recommendations on other important statewide propositions are listed on page 4.

Negotiations continuing

Contract negotiations are not yet resolved. The District's initial proposal was a five-year compensation package of a pass-through COLA with a guaranteed minimum of 1% and a maximum of 3%. We countered with COLA plus 3% for three years with no ceiling. The District did not accept our proposal and proposed COLA plus .5% for the first year and COLA for the next four years with, again, a guaranteed minimum of 1% and a maximum of 3%. The AFT is not satisfied with that proposal and will continue to fight for a compensation package that will

bring our salaries to the top three in the Bay Area.

Another item that many faculty were not happy about may leave the table — the 37.5 hour work week the District wants to write into the contract has not fared well. We continue to stand firmly against it. The increased cost of benefits haunts the negotiating table like a dark cloud. As we reported in the last Advocate, we are working with the District and the other two unions, CSEA and AFSCME, in a benefits task force to explore other options for providing benefits to District employees. After the first meeting, the group decided to re-search the option of leaving PERS by asking groups that have left what they have replaced it with and how it is working. The District will also be compiling data on the needs of District employees to help the task force in their work. Unfortunately, we are stuck with huge increases from PERS for the coming year; however, if the task force comes up with a better plan, we hope to be able to lower costs for the following year. We will keep you posted about this hot topic.

Counselors present useful data

We were pleased to invite three representatives from Counseling to our last bargaining session on October 11th — Don Biederman from Skyline, Dean Chowenhill from CSM, and Pamela Ward-Smith from Cañada — in order to address some of the contract changes the District has proposed for counseling faculty. The counselors revealed serious problems with the data that the District is using to evaluate the effectiveness of counseling services. According to the research carried out by the counselors themselves, the numbers of students

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WHAT DO YOU THINK?**A QUESTION TO PART-TIME FACULTY:**

How many office hours do you put in per class each semester? Do you know that you are not being paid for working office hours?

We would like to hear from a large number of part-timers on this issue, so please respond and let us know what you think by either calling the AFT Office at: x6491 or by e-mailing us at: kaplan@smccd.net

LETTERS TO THE ADVOCATE*Bring Column 8 up to speed*

AFT leadership has given its constituents many contractual improvements over the years; I can't imagine where faculty would be without this group of dedicated workers.

That being said, I want to speak to the article, "Negotiations in full swing..." in the last *Advocate* issue. What seems very familiar is that little money is being offered by the district (and this is true in good as well as bad times). In the past, AFT has made good deals by concentrating on one area at a time that needs improvement which one must do when little money is offered. As-

Presidents' Perspectives

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seen by counselors were much higher than the District's data reported. At the same time, programs carried out by counseling departments to improve the management of student flow patterns and demand for services have been successful, a fact that the District does not acknowledge when it argues for a fiscal working year for counselors rather than the academic year currently in place. The counse-

YOUR RESPONSES**Readers' views on health benefits vs. salaries**

In the last Advocate, we asked readers for their views on whether health coverage and salaries be increased an equal amount or should there be more money put into one or the other. The following are two responses we received to our "What do you think?" question.

Approximately 60% of all faculty are currently affected by the medical cap and some are already paying hundreds of dollars each month to provide medical insurance for their families. In January, even those people on PERSCare 1-party will be affected.

While it is true that putting money into salaries will allow faculty to choose for themselves what to do with it, that choice will also mean that those employees will be taxed on the

suming the article named above is correct in stating that Column 8 ranks 7th or 8th in salary, I hope the AFT Executive Committee will now choose to bring Column 8 up to speed.

Good luck in the negotiations!

Linda Vogel
Skyline English

End the two-tiered system

The following is a response to a letter, published in the last Advocate, by Tom Hewitt and Jim Bowsher, titled: "End our

lors were in agreement that they have been working collaboratively with their managers to handle these and other issues. Why, then, is the District attempting to make substantive changes in working conditions for counselors? The AFT team felt that the presence of an informed and articulate team of counselors benefitted the discussion of these issues, just as the presentation earlier this year by librarians shed light on the issues that affect them.

money they receive. If the same funds were put on the medical cap, they would not be taxed and would be receiving a greater benefit. It doesn't address the fact that the single people will be docked, but since the majority of faculty have families, it seems to me to be the better way to go.

Name withheld upon request

In answer to the "What do you think....Are you paying too much" in the September 2004 *Advocate*, I would prefer that salaries be increased.

Thanks for your good work on this and many other issues.

Katharine Heyl
Skyline ESOL

two-tiered system for retiree medical benefits."

I was not aware of the two-tiered system until I read your letter in the *Advocate* today. The probability is almost zero that I would qualify for retiree medical benefits under the current contract.

Therefore, I support your proposal. If there is anything I can do to help, please let me know.

Judy Liteky,
Cañada Math /MESA Director

Finally, due to personal and professional matters in place before our bargaining schedule was determined, it looks like we won't be able to wrap up negotiations until December. We have been meeting at least once a week since the summer and intend to keep at it until we can bring about a good settlement. As soon as we have something solid to report, we will hold campus forums to let you know where we stand.

Remember to vote on November 2!

CFT/California Labor Federation recommendations on state propositions on the November 2nd ballot

The following are selected recommendations on state ballot propositions from the California Federation of Teachers and the California Labor Federation. Don't forget to vote on November 2nd!

Proposition 1A — NO

We should protect local taxpayers, not irresponsible spending by local governments. Proposition 1A gives local governments a spending guarantee without any fiscal accountability or oversight. It's a blank check for spending and turns a blind eye to waste.

Proposition 59 — YES

Provides that the people have the right of access to information concerning the conduct of the people's business. Provides that the meeting of public bodies and writings of public officials and agencies shall be open to public scrutiny.

Proposition 63 — YES

The "Mental Health Services Act" would provide funds to counties to expand services and develop programs for the mentally ill.

Proposition 64 — NO

This measure would take away the legal rights of individuals, communities and public interest groups to stop unfair business practices—such as false advertising, polluting, and deceptive labeling.

Proposition 66 — YES

Would amend the state's "Three Strikes" law to require stiffer sentences only when a third conviction is for a specified violent and/or serious felony.

Proposition 68 — NO

This initiative would give a sweetheart deal to a small group of 16 card club and racetrack owners to operate 30,000 slot machines in local city and suburban neighborhoods.

Proposition 69 — NO

Would require DNA collection from all convicted felons—adult and juvenile—to be submitted to a state DNA database.

Proposition 70 — NO

A Tribal Gaming initiative sponsored by the Agua Caliente tribe to require casinos to pay only the 9% corporate tax rate.

Proposition 72 — YES!!!

This initiative places Senate Bill 2, the Health Insurance Act, before voters to support or overturn. Senate Bill 2 was a California Federation of Labor-sponsored bill that will provide health insurance to over one million uninsured Californians. A Yes vote on Proposition 72 supports the Health Insurance Act. Requires that employers with over 50 employees pay at least 80% of employees' health coverage.

Sabbaticals

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you can. There's another plane heading for the Capitol." Kathryn didn't know her way around D.C., so she ran through the streets with the group of people who had gathered in the lobby of her building. "Cars weren't moving and everyone was just running. All the subways had been stopped. We ran by the FBI building and someone yelled to get away, that it would be bombed too. There were rumors that they'd bombed the State Department and there was smoke in the air from the attack on the Pentagon." They found shelter in the office of a lobbyist and spent the day huddled together around a T.V.

Kathryn's unique experience in Washington afforded her the opportunity to see Congress functioning in crisis mode. It wasn't exactly a *restful* sabbatical. "I worked hard, functioning as a staff member for the committee. Engrossed as I was by the subject matter, it was often difficult to leave at the end of the workday."

A global citizen

Jeff Acidera, Skyline Counselor, was awarded a sabbatical leave in 2002 that helped him to carry out "my lifelong dream of living in a foreign country." Jeff studied Spanish in Costa Rica along with language students from many different countries, and concurrently pursued an independent study class for a Doctoral Program at USF in Multicultural and



Jeff Acidera picking coffee in Costa Rica

International Education. "It was the best of both worlds," he said, because he got to live for a brief but intense time in another culture but still keep his job! Jeff has noticed that this experience has improved his ability to communicate with students in Spanish and to understand them more fully. As a result, he has built stronger relationships with his students. "We can definitely communicate now." At the same time, living in a different culture was a personally enriching experience: "I grew in so many ways. My world multiplied ten-fold. I have friends all over the world now. I've become a global citizen."

Black tea & croissants — Charles Dickens meets Michel Tournier

CSM English and French professor, Susan Petit, spent one month of her sabbatical leave in 2002 in England and France.



Michel Tournier & Susan Petit at Chateau de Breteuil, Choisel, France

In France, she worked on her language skills, gathered materials for her classes and for the French Club she sponsors, and, in her words, "caught up on the culture." She happened to be in France during the presidential elections, intensifying her experience. Susan was able to squeeze in a visit to the French novelist, Michel Tournier, the subject of her first book. In England, she saw nine plays and visited the house-turned-museum of Charles Dickens.

The second phase of her sabbatical was spent learning the Dream Weaver web program so that she could apply it to creating a web page for the French club and diving into the kind of reading, composition theory and literature, she doesn't have time to do during the school year. She came back more relaxed and also more understanding of the pressures on students, as she herself was a student of web design.

Teaching ESL in the land of the Aztecs

Andres Gonzales took his sabbatical in Oaxaca, Mexico in 2003 where he studied at the State University, taking classes in Architecture and Anthropology. He also taught an ESL class using content-based curriculum and improved his Spanish language skills. Additionally, Andres was able to take part in

an archeological excavation, collecting information and experience for his Anthropology courses at CSM.

Andres found that this "real life" experience benefitted his teaching when he returned. "When I taught just one ESL class at the University of Oaxaca, I was



Andres Gonzales

able to spend more time thinking and preparing. I realized that I am a better teacher when I have more time. It opened my eyes about what I could do when I'm not overloaded." After his hands-on excavation in Mexico, he came back with anecdotes and experiences that he had previously "only read about in books." It gave him a new "comfort level" with his anthro. classes and brought renewed excitement to his teaching.

Distance, stimulation, renewed energy...

The benefits of a long term leave are infinite. According to Susan Petit, "One of the advantages was having some distance from everything. When we teach the same courses year after year we can get stale. My sabbatical prepared me to teach new things." Kathryn O'Connell says, "Students are attracted to courses and instructors who are stimulated in their fields. The sabbatical gave me the opportunity to be re-energized and to get in touch with the real world, so to speak. Students like it when you can relate curriculum to the real world." When asked if he would recommend a sabbatical to colleagues, Jeff Acidera answered emphatically: "Yes — in a heartbeat!"

We've described just a few of the projects that our colleagues have embarked on with the support of sabbatical leaves. If you want to whet your appetite even more, ask Kate Motoyama, CSM speech professor, about the textbook she wrote on ethical public speaking which she uses with her classes with "great success." Or ask Skyline English professor, Linda Vogel, about her upcoming trip to Mexico to study Spanish followed by research in Costa Rica for a book about two Scandinavian environmentalists. When you have your dream project sketched out, talk to your dean and to the professional development chair at your college — Sandra Verhoogen at Skyline (x4243), Martha Tilmann at CSM (x6678) and Barbara McCarthy at Cañada (x3473). Technical questions can be directed to AFT Executive Secretary, Dan Kaplan (x6491). Deadlines for applications are in early February 2005 for 2005-2006, for one semester or a full year. Begin dreaming today!

PART-TIMERS' HEALTH BENEFITS**Attention part-time faculty: Medical reimbursement application deadline is February 2, 2005**

WEDNESDAY FEBRUARY 2nd is the **deadline** for eligible part time faculty to submit application PLUS proof of medical plan enrollment premium payments for partial premium reimbursement (up to 50%). The exact reimbursement shall be equal to the level of reimbursement received by the District from the State Chancellor's Office under Education Code sections 87860-87868.

The required form, including text from AFT Contract section 9.12, et seq., is available on the District Intranet under Human Resources. Paper copies of the required request form are also available for pick up in your College Payroll office as well as in the District Office of Human Resources.

The completed reimbursement request form must be submitted to your Division / department administrator for verification of load and administrator's signature.

ELIGIBILITY QUESTIONS:

- Are you employed in the District at 40% or more of a full-time load (6/15 FLC - 6 out of 15 units)?
- Did you complete a 40% load in Fall 2004 semester?
- Are you enrolled in an HMO, PPO, or indemnity health plan that is licensed and registered by either the California Department of Insurance or the California Department of Corporations?
- Do you have proof of enrollment and proof of your premium payments?

By the **FEBRUARY 2nd** deadline, you may submit proof of medical premium payments from last **July 1, 2004 through December 31st 2004**.

Download (or pick up) your reimbursement application form **TODAY!**

District diverting part-time faculty office hour funds

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ance without regard to whether a course at a community college is taught by a full-time or a part-time faculty member." The next section starts: "There is hereby established the Community College Part-Time Faculty Office Hours Program for the purpose of providing community college students equal access to academic advice and assistance and to encourage community college districts to provide opportunities by compensating part-time faculty who hold office hours related to their teaching load."

District claims that they are paying for hourly faculty's office hours

How has this Part-Time Faculty Office Hours Program been implemented in our District? When AFT first attempted to negotiate the implementation of this Program, the District's response was that there already was a part-time office hours program in place. They referred to a March 12, 1990 Side Letter Agreement between AFT Local 1493 and the District, that stated, among other things, that: "Effective March 1990, hourly faculty teaching six (6) or fewer hours per week shall be expected to keep one office hour per week for each three hours of instruction." It further stated that: "For the remainder of the Spring 1990 semester, hourly faculty teaching more than six (6) hours per week shall not be assigned to office hours." The Side Letter later stated that: "The hourly salary schedule lecture and

laboratory rates shall be increased by 3.2% effective March 1, 1990. (The hourly lecture and laboratory rates will, thus, be 7.5% + 3.2% = 10.7% higher beginning 3/1/90 than during the 1988-89 year.)" The Side Letter did not actually say that part-time faculty would be paid an additional 3.2% for office hours. In addition, the salary of part-time faculty was increased both for those who did and for those who did not hold office hours.

When the District explained that their implementation of the Part-Time Faculty Office Hours Program was being fulfilled by the 1990 Side Letter, AFT responded by saying that the Side Letter had expired, as Side Letters are good for the life of the contract that they are related to unless renewed. This Side Letter had never been renewed, and thus this Side Letter had expired at the time the next contract became effective on July 1, 1992.

Rather than return money to state, District puts office hour monies into General Fund

Nonetheless, the District actually began participating in the state program for part-time office hours. At one point in negotiations a couple of years ago, AFT asked what was being done with the part-time office hours money given that there was no mechanism in place to provide this money to part-time faculty in the District. We were then told that, in fact, the money had been returned to the state. This turned out not to be the case. Rather, the District has been depositing this money into the District's General Fund.

District may have received almost \$2 million from state fund since 1997

In the current round of negotiations, we have recently asked for a full accounting of how much money the District has received from the state since the Part-Time Office Hours Program began, but we have not yet received the data. We do have data, however, concerning the state Part-Time Faculty Office Hours Program for the 2003-04 Fiscal Year. In paperwork filed with the state program, the San Mateo District stated that there were 747 part-time faculty in the District program who held 11,954 office hours and

most part-time faculty here, as elsewhere, hold office hours simply because it is an important complement to what goes on in the classroom, and conscientious faculty know this. But these office hours are provided free by part-time faculty. The money that was intended by the California Legislature to go into the pockets of part-time faculty members in our District has gone into the General Fund.

State fund is intended to supplement part-timers' pay, not district savings

The administration has thus far rationalized this policy

by maintaining over the years that they already have in place their own part-time office hours program—the murky and unclear Side Letter Agreement of 1990. Of course, lawyers could argue for a long time about whether or not that Side Letter is dead, and what its precise meaning really is. But this issue is a legal distraction because the California Education Code sections that concern the Part-Time Office Hours Program clearly states (Section 87884.D) that: “Any changes made by this section to the Community College



Skyline hourly English instructor Lucia Lachmayr holds office hours in the Language Arts part-time faculty office

that the cost of holding these office hours came to \$832,682. According to the part-time office hours legislation, the state is supposed to reimburse participating districts up to 50% of the total cost of office hours, depending on available monies in the state fund each year. The San Mateo District filed a claim for \$416,341 to pay for its part-time office hours program and, because the state fund could only cover 68.4% of the claims last year, the District received \$284,743.32.

If the District has received approximately the same amount of money from the state each year since 1997 that it did in 2003-04, it appears that the District has received almost \$2,000,000 over the 1997-2004 period to fund a Part-Time Office Hours program that doesn't exist. Of course,

Part-Time Faculty Office Hours Program shall not affect any part-time faculty office hours program in effect on January 1, 2000.” In other words, even if you accept the District argument that they gave part-time faculty some extra pay to hold office hours in 1990 and that this is now on the part-time salary schedule, the money that the California Legislature voted to fund their Part-Time Office Hours program was intended to be in addition to—over and above—whatever monies community college districts were already spending on providing part-time faculty with paid office hours.

It is way past time to pay our part-time faculty the back pay that is owed to them. In the current round of negotiations, we need to figure out a way to do just this.

District budget looking healthy

by John Kirk, AFT 1493 Chief Grievance Officer & member of District Committee on Budget and Finance

The financial picture for the District this year is significantly improved compared to last year. At the first meeting of the District Committee on Budget and Finance this semester, the District reported the following favorable items:

State COLA: 2.41%

1. The final State budget for community colleges this year contains a 2.41% COLA (cost of living adjustment) on base revenue.

Equalization funds

2. Our district will receive approximately \$780,000 in equalization funds this year. (This money is to help Districts receiving less than the State average per FTES to catch up.)

Over-cap growth

3. Our district will receive an amount estimated to be \$275,000 for growth in FTES over cap.

Over \$1 Million in unrestrictive funds

4. The beginning balance for this year is \$9,947,690 which includes \$1,113,729 in unrestrictive funds. This money is not encumbered or designated for other purposes.

Higher lottery revenue

5. Lottery revenue appears to be higher than budgeted.

PFE funds folded into base

6. The legislature agreed to not fold PFE money (Partnership for Excellence) into our base revenue. This is important because it moves our district closer to becoming a "basic aid" district.

Essentially all of the above extra money can be used to improve faculty salaries with the exception of the lottery money (however, lottery money can for the first time be used for faculty computers and printer ink!)

On the downside, the Governor and legislature cut PFE money statewide, and our share of the cut is estimated at \$576,000. Some of the lost PFE money, however, was replaced with maintenance/equipment money.

"Basic aid": more revenue likely in near future

So on the whole, the District's financial situation is much improved over last year and we are much closer to becoming a basic aid district. (A basic aid district receives all of its revenue from student fees and local property taxes, no State funds. Since property taxes have been rising faster than state COLAs, our revenue would be higher and not dependent on enrollment.)

AFT 1493 EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE / MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS

Get involved in your union and find out the latest information on what is happening in our district.

AFT 1493 Executive Committee /

Membership Meetings are open to all faculty.

Upcoming meetings:

**Wednesday, October 27, 2:15 p.m.
Cañada, Building 3, Room 227**

**Wednesday, November 17, 2:15 p.m.
Skyline, Building 5, Room 5131**

(this is the 3rd Wednesday of the month because the 4th Wednesday is the day before Thanksgiving break)

Don't forget to vote on November 2nd!

See labor recommendations for state propositions on page 4

Yes on Proposition 72 to provide health benefits to over one million uninsured workers