CSU budget gets major boost from Assembly, Senate

Months of hard work by CFA activists and students is paying off again this week as the Senate and the Assembly agreed to increase CSU funding and reopen the doors to thousands of Californians who were eligible but denied access to the People’s University.

On Tuesday, members of the Assembly Budget Subcommittee 2 on Education Finance voted to increase funding for the CSU by an additional $307.8 million for the 2018-19 fiscal year.

There was more good news from the Senate Budget & Fiscal Review Subcommittee 1 on Education, which voted last week to approve increasing CSU funding by an additional $317.6 million.

Both budget proposals include $50 million in dedicated funds for tenure-track hiring, and a 3 percent enrollment growth, which would increase access to the CSU for 10,923 full-time-equivalent students.

“This is a great day for the CSU, and a testament to the power of our faculty and students, who have been fighting for this budget since January to improve the state’s reinvestment in our university system,” said CFA President Jennifer Eagan.

In January at the Capitol, CFA held a pop-up art installation of empty chairs signifying a need for enrollment growth. That event coincided with Gov. Jerry Brown’s release of his proposed budget, which called for just $92.1 million in additional funds for the CSU.

On April 4, more than 1,000 faculty, students, staff, and allies held a landmark event and rallied at the State Capitol, urging lawmakers and the governor to increase critical funding for the CSU.
And in recent weeks, activists have sent thousands of messages to lawmakers urging them to increase funding and end years of disinvestment by the state.

Lack of adequate funding has had dire impacts on the People’s University, including access for California’s qualified high school graduates and community college transfer students. Last year, more than 31,000 qualified students were denied a spot in the CSU. California’s Master Plan had promised them a place if they worked hard and got the grades, but still they were denied.

“The message they are receiving is that no matter how hard they work, they aren’t good enough. And for our students, who are increasingly students of color, low-income, and the first in their families to attend college, that is a devastating message. Our students and those seeking an education in the CSU deserve every opportunity that was given to those who came before them, when the majority of CSU students were white. Make no mistake—this is an issue of racial and social justice,” Eagan said.

“We are so appreciative of our champions in the Legislature, who understand the critical need to improve access to the CSU, and who believe in investing in the future leaders of our state.”

The CSU’s budget request asked for funds to increase enrollment by a meager 1%, but CFA has aggressively advocated for additional enrollment increases to meet the rising demand of California’s prospective students.

A recent California Budget & Policy Center analysis pointed out that between 7,000 and 8,000 of these qualified-but-denied student applicants were not found in any national college databases. The research also highlighted the state’s potential financial loss due to those students not getting degrees. California stands to lose $1.4 billion during those students’ working-lifetimes.

**Primary 2018: Thank you for your political action!**

To all our CFA colleagues who have been working hard on political action efforts to help Labor-friendly candidates succeed during the primary election on June 5, THANK YOU!

Faculty from Humboldt to San Diego have been volunteering to help our endorsed candidates succeed. They’ve walked precincts, sent texts, and phoned voters by the thousands, and we appreciate their efforts.

“Everyone who has volunteered has helped make a difference; we are helping to ensure that those elected value and will support a strong public higher education system in California,” said Lillian Taiz, chair of CFA’s Political Action and Legislation Committee.

If you or your colleagues want to get involved, there is still time. We need faculty to continue to contact voters in the days leading up to the primary election, and on election day. Click here to sign up today.

If you haven’t yet sent in your ballot or need help deciding, check out our endorsements. CFA
has endorsed candidates who have committed to helping protect public higher education, as well as those who uphold anti-racist and social justice values.

See you at the polls!

Counselors connecting with students, lawmakers over need for improved mental health support in CSU

A student at Cal State Long Beach struggled with depression and anxiety due to parents divorcing, and gave up finding a counselor on campus because it took too long.

Another, facing a three-month wait list to see a counselor, went without the mental health counseling he needed.

These stories are among hundreds that have been conveyed to lawmakers recently in an effort to urge their support for SB 968, a bill that would improve campus counselor-to-student ratios in the CSU. The bill, authored by Sen. Dr. Richard Pan and sponsored by CFA, would require that campuses have at least one counselor for every 1,500 students.

Counseling faculty took their “Tissues for Issues” art installation to several campuses to raise awareness for the need to improve counselor-to-student ratios in the CSU. The display includes a large chair surrounded by 1500 tissues, representing the struggles thousands of students are dealing with, including depression, suicidal thoughts, and anxiety. Demand for counseling services also has seen an increase due to uncertainties surrounding immigration and DACA, and incidences of racism on our campuses.

They’ve also created a Facebook page featuring photos of the displays, including visits to Chico, San Francisco, and East Bay.

The latest display was today at Cal Poly Pomona, where there currently is only one counselor for every 3,200 students.

During the event at Long Beach, Senior Vanessa Gonzales relayed why mental health counseling should be prioritized.

“My sister is a student here at Cal State Long Beach. She suffers from generalized anxiety disorder and had to take a leave of absence because of reoccurring panic attacks. She had a very difficult time making arrangements to see a counselor on campus when she needed to see someone immediately. School causes so much stress. Mental health should be a top priority.”

The bill has been passed by the Senate Education Committee, and is scheduled to be heard again by the Senate Appropriations Committee on Thursday, May 25.
Faculty Rights Tip of the Week: The 125% Rule

When faculty are hired, they are often told that there are opportunities for additional employment in the summer or other “special sessions.” For many faculty, this additional employment is a critical part of their income.

Article 36 of the Collective Bargaining Agreement covers the rules for additional work and places a limitation on that “overage” to 25% of a full-time position.

Any additional work in the CSU is limited to 25% of a full-time position, so it is often called the “125% rule.”

“Outside” employment is separate topic, covered in Article 35, and one we’ll address in another edition of Headlines.

If you have questions about faculty rights, contact your faculty rights representative.

If you have questions about a faculty rights tip or would like to suggest a tip, please write us with the subject line “Faculty Rights Tip.”

• Click here to browse the faculty contract.
• See an archive of Faculty Rights Tips.

In Other News…

LISTEN UP: Looking for a podcast to listen to while traveling or even just relaxing this summer? Check out “Radio Free CSU,” CFA’s podcast. Our inaugural series examines our union’s commitment to Anti-Racism and Social Justice Transformation work, and in each episode, host Audrena Redmond talks with a CFA leader about one of the guiding principles of that work.

Here are links to episodes available:
- Episode 1: Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere
- Episode 2: We intentionally center Anti-Racism as part of our mission
- Episode 3: We acknowledge that even we in CFA are part of the problem of racism
- Episode 4: We acknowledge that WE can be part of the solution by being intentionally committed to addressing it (racism).

All episodes also are available on iTunes.

SUMMER READING: With summer months upon us, it’s also a great time to catch up on reading. CFA has a compiled a list of online resources and books for those who want to delve more deeply into learning about anti-racism and social justice.

Click here to check out the Social Justice Study Hall.
HAT TIP TO NEW GRADS: Congratulations to all who have graduated from the CSU this month!

Commencement ceremonies have been held at Bakersfield, Channel Islands, Chico, Dominguez Hills, Fresno, Fullerton, Humboldt, Los Angeles, Maritime, Monterey Bay, Northridge, Sacramento, San Diego, San Marcos, and Sonoma. Ceremonies will be held later this week at Long Beach, San Francisco, San Jose, and Stanislaus.

Next month, East Bay, Pomona, San Bernardino, and San Luis Obispo grads will don their caps and gowns.

We know how hard you have worked throughout your time in the CSU, and we appreciate the opportunity to have taught you.

May your adventures be amazing, job searches successful, and your memories of the People’s University plentiful. Congrats and well done!

Links of the Week

Jerry Brown wants to save budget surplus, but we shouldn’t scrimp on these needs
Sacramento Bee
Gov. Jerry Brown, frugal to the end, wants to fill the state’s “rainy day” fund so California doesn’t get soaked in the next economic downturn.
But for too many Californians, hardship is pouring down right now.

Op-Ed: No, Mr. President, I am not obstructing justice
Washington Post – by Oakland Mayor Libby Schaaf
When President Trump was admonishing Attorney General Jeff Sessions to charge me with obstruction of justice Wednesday, I was at Harvard University sharing how we intend to give every child from Oakland, Calif., the opportunity to attend college. Like all cities, Oakland suffers from disparities. Our African American and Latino children finish college at vastly lower rates than whites. That achievement gap is a tragic legacy of our country’s racist history.

The higher education that nearly all Americans love
The Atlantic
Two surveys last year painted an unambiguous picture: Republicans had soured on higher education. They thought colleges had a negative impact on the country and the “way things were going.” But a new survey shows that Americans’ attitudes towards higher education—regardless of political affiliation—are a little more complex. Not only do Americans value education after high school, many of them—of both political stripes—are willing to have more of their tax dollars support it.

How new college funding plan benefits California students
San Diego Union Tribune
Across the San Diego region and up and down the state this month, tens of thousands of community college students will receive diplomas during heart-warming, selfie-crazed commencement ceremonies. This is the best time of year in the California Community Colleges because it acknowledges hard work and affirms the transformative power of education to improve social and economic mobility.

The Senate net neutrality vote is just Democratic campaign bluster. And that's OK
Los Angeles Times
The U.S. Senate’s vote Wednesday in favor of restoring the tough net neutrality regulations adopted in 2015 will almost certainly prove to be a mere blip on the political radar screen. There’s no sign the House
The university is not an aristocracy

Chronicle of Higher Ed

Recently I was awarded a new title — I am an assistant professor of media studies at the University of Colorado at Boulder. Day to day, nothing has changed; this semester I am teaching the same classes I taught a year ago, at the same institution, on the same schedule. But now I’m on the tenure track. The sequence of precarious work that has constituted my career and plagued my generation has shifted, for me, to at least the opportunity for stability.

'Roll up your sleeves': at a dark time for US unions, this woman sees hope

The Guardian

As many in the US labor movement wait nervously for the supreme court to deliver a judgment in a vital union case that some fear could deliver a body blow to American unions, one woman appears unfazed. Lily Eskelsen Garcia, the president of the 3 million strong National Education Association (NEA) and head of the biggest union in America, believes the threat posed by Janus vs AFSCME – which could strip unions of a major source of income – will not set back the labor movement long-term.

LA Times: New poll finds a volatile race for second place in California governor's contest

LA Times

The fight for second place in California's governor's race between Republican John Cox and Democrat Antonio Villaraigosa remains unpredictable and volatile as the June 5 primary approaches, according to a new USC Dornsife/Los Angeles Times poll.

Barriers to Higher Education Attainment: Students’ Unmet Basic Needs

Cal Budget & Policy Center

State and federal public supports have not kept pace with rising costs of living, leaving many students unable to meet their basic needs such as food and housing.

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