Faculty take political action to promote Labor-ally candidates

Throughout the state, CFA members are walking precincts, calling voters, and helping others register or re-register to vote in an effort to help elect political leaders who prioritize public higher education.

In Southern California, groups of CFA activists walked precincts for Mike Eng, a Cal State LA professor and former Assemblymember who is running for state Senate, talked to voters and participated in a rally to re-elect Al Muratsuchi to the state Assembly.

In Northern California, faculty and CFA staff precinct walked and talked to fellow union members about Tony Thurmond, who is running for State Superintendent of Public Instruction. Thurmond, is running against a long time Charter School administrator and strong advocate of public school privatization. Significantly for the CSU, if elected, the SPI would be an Ex Officio member of the CSU Board of Trustees.

There are less than two months until the Nov. 6 election, so it's important that faculty help get the word out about local and state candidates who value the CSU and the education it provides to generations of Californians. Click here to sign up to take political action with CFA.

“We all need to work on behalf of people who will uphold our values as educators, and as champions of racial and social justice,” said Nichelle Henderson, faculty advisor to Cal State
Teach. “By standing up for our future elected leaders, we are, by extension, standing up for ourselves, our students, and the CSU.”

If you are interested in electing legislators who support higher education, click here to sign up and get involved with your chapter.

CFA activists hold campus events, urge Gov. Brown to sign SB 968

While hundreds of faculty, students, and CSU advocates have written Gov. Brown, urging him to sign critical legislation improving access for students to mental health services, more messages still are needed.

CFA members at Sonoma and Sacramento held events recently to encourage colleagues and others to email the governor and sign SB 968 into law.

SB 968, authored by Sen. Richard Pan, is currently on the governor's desk and needs his signature. The bill would improve counselor-to-student ratios in the CSU, where currently, ratios are as high as one counselor per 3,000 students. The professional recommended ratio is one counselor per 1,500 students.

On Sept. 13, counselors and faculty teamed up at Sonoma State to hold a “Tissues for Issues” action in the Darwin Quad, where dozens of people sent emails through CFA’s online Take Action tool.

On Tuesday, counseling faculty and Capitol Chapter members gathered in the Library Quad to pass out information about the bill and the need to provide improved access to counseling in the CSU.

“Our students are at risk,” said Margarita Berta-Ávila, CFA Capitol Chapter President and a Professor at Sacramento State. “All of us teaching in the CSU have encountered students who need some help. And when they get that help promptly, they can succeed in our classrooms. The connection is very direct, all the way to getting more students to graduation.”

The “Tissues for Issues” actions also come on the heels of national Suicide Prevention Week. In addition to requiring more mental health counselors to serve students on the 23 campuses, SB 968 also calls for the CSU to collect data on suicides among our students. At the moment, the CSU like most public universities, do not track student suicides, at least not publicly, and accounts are mainly anecdotal. Nationally, there are reports of an increase in student suicides.
“When we think about suicide prevention, and the increase in suicides among young people, we feel the dire need to tell Governor Brown, ‘Don’t delay,’” Berta-Ávila said. “We want our students to make it, all the way from success in our classrooms, to successful lives after graduation.”

Click here to send a message to Gov. Brown today.

**It’s Open Enrollment time in the CSU!**

Open Enrollment time is here for CalPERS-covered employees, which includes faculty in the CSU.

Open Enrollment began September 10 and runs through October 5. Now is your opportunity to:
- Change health plans/providers
- Add or change dependents on your health plan
- Add or change beneficiaries on your pension
- Add VSP Premier to your subsidized optical insurance for only $4.33/month

“As educators in the CSU, we have access to great health benefits and a dignified retirement because of our faculty contract and the work CFA does at the bargaining table to protect those benefits,” said Jonathan Karpf, CFA’s Associate VP of Lecturers North.

Faculty: If you would like to make changes to your coverage or beneficiaries, contact your campus HR department. Retirees can access CalPERS via: mobile.mycalpers.ca.gov

For more information, read 10 Things You Need to Know About CalPERS Health Open Enrollment.

**Faculty Rights Tip of the Week: Family Medical Leave**

Articles 22 and 24 of our Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) cover Family Medical Leave and sick leave.

Sometimes, faculty members develop serious illnesses or need to care for family members with serious medical conditions and need to take time away from the University.

Article 22.9 states: “Family care and medical leave shall refer to a leave for reason of the birth of a child of the employee, the placement of a child with an employee in connection with the adoption or foster care of the child by the employee, to care for a child, parent, spouse or domestic partner of the employee who has a serious health condition, or for the employee’s own serious health condition.” Faculty members are eligible to take up to
12 weeks of family care or medical leave in a 12-month period as long as they have at least 12 months or two (2) semesters or three (3) quarters of service.

During any period of leave, the University shall continue to pay its share of medical benefits for the affected faculty member upon the request of the faculty member. Upon agreement with the University, faculty members may use sick leave to continue to receive pay during a family or medical leave, but if they don’t have enough sick leave, they may take any portion of it as unpaid leave.

Faculty members who have advanced knowledge of a need to use Family Leave should notify the University at least 14 days in advance of the leave, but in cases of emergency, family members only need to notify the University within the first five days of the required leave.

If 12 weeks of leave is not enough time to meet your needs, please work with the appropriate Human Resources personnel on your campus to extend the leave.

If 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.”

In Other News…

READ ALL ABOUT IT: A recent article by Meg K. Guliford in The Washington Post provides first-person perspective on how racism permeates academia and links to an article on cultural taxation by Cecil Canton, CFA’s Associate VP of Affirmative Action North.

The article, “Even progressive academics can be racist. I’ve experienced it firsthand,” walks readers through personal reflections and research showing the struggle women of color, particularly Black women, face in their careers within the academy.

Click here to read the Washington post article. And be sure to check out Dr. Canton’s 2013 article, “The ‘cultural taxation’ of faculty of color in the Academy.”

WATCH AND LEARN: Did you miss seeing CFA activists take on Chancellor White and the CSU Board of Trustees last week? We’ll help get you up to speed.

Last week, CFA leaders questioned Trustees on their budgetary priorities on Tuesday, and supported the mother of a slain Humboldt State student, and called on the CSU administration to better protect students during the Wednesday plenary session.

CFA also issued an open letter to White and Trustees, which can be read here.
The two-day meeting is available to watch via a recorded webcast.

- To view CFA members’ comments to the Board about budget priorities on Tuesday, click here.
  - The comments to the Education Policy Committee are made at 00:12:51.
  - Comments to the Finance Committee are made at 00:02:40.
- Click here to watch the plenary session.
  - CFA speakers begin addressing the Board at 00:12:50.

TUNE IN: It’s been nearly a year since CFA launched the podcast “Radio Free CSU,” and our inaugural series, “Stronger Together.” In that time, we’ve released six episodes focused on the Guiding Principles of our Anti-Racism and Social Justice Transformation. Have you taken a few minutes to listen?

In each episode, CFA leaders discuss one of the principles with host Audrena Redmond. And in a special episode of the podcast, Redmond has a conversation about a “Race-Class Narrative to Unite Working People” with experts Tinselyn Simms, of SEIU’s Racial Justice Center, and Anika Fassia, of Demos.

Click here to see a list of available podcasts on our website. Or to listen in iTunes, click here.

JOIN NOW: Since 1983, the California Faculty Association has been representing faculty in the California State University system. We bargain the contract that includes salary increases, provides health benefits, and protects working conditions and faculty rights. And together, we are stronger! If you have not yet become a proud CFA member, take a minute to watch this video on what union membership means, and join CFA today!

Links of the Week

Here’s how one Riverside County mom is trying to improve safety across the Cal State University system in the wake of her son’s murder

Long Beach Press-Telegram
Charmaine Lawson will never forget the late-night phone call that her son was dead. Her son, David Josiah Lawson, 19, was fatally stabbed at a party on April 15, 2017, in Arcata, a rural town near Humboldt State University, as he was wrapping up his sophomore year. Almost a year-and-a-half later, the murder is still unsolved.

Justice for Josiah takes to the Board of Trustees with a list of demands

Daily 49er
With only a minute-and-a-half to make her case to the Board of Trustees on the institutional racism she believes is present in the California State University system, Charmaine Lawson found herself speaking far past the allotted time.

Slain HSU student’s mom speaks to CSU trustees

Eureka Times Standard
A demonstration at Humboldt State University this afternoon coincided with the mother of slain student David Josiah Lawson speaking out at a CSU Board of Trustees meeting in Southern California.

Academe: Others on Campus

AAUP
This issue of Academe explores the theme of "otherness" in our college and university communities from
a variety of perspectives. Articles discuss topics such as fighting back against the marginalization of faculty, pursuing an academic career after serving time in prison, being a woman in a male-dominated field, navigating campuses with inadequate accommodations for disabilities, and supporting students affected by anti-immigrant policies.

**Black activists need not apply**

*Inside Higher Ed*

College admissions leaders say -- over and over again -- that they want to recruit minority students. But a new study suggests that when it comes to black students, admissions officers may be more likely to encourage those who aren't involved in black activism.

**Petition in support of UC Librarians and Academic Freedom**

*GoPetition*

At the April 24 bargaining meeting between UC-AFT Librarians and UC administration, UC-AFT presented a new article which guarantees Academic Freedom to all librarians, so that they may fulfill their responsibilities for teaching, scholarship, and research. UC negotiators responded with a flat NO to the proposal at the July 26 bargaining meeting, stating that “Academic Freedom is not a good fit for your unit.”

**Spending on California schools chief race expected to set records again**

*EdSource*

Wealthy donors pushing to expand charter schools in California have driven much of the spending to support Tuck so far by pouring large donations into the Sacramento political advocacy organization EdVoice For The Kids PAC, which runs the committee backing Tuck.

* * *

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