



CONNECT 7

Covering Bargaining Unit 7 • Special to University Employee

The exciting challenges ahead, the traditions that inspire us, and the lights that guide us

A message from the incoming BUC 7 Chair

Hylah Jacques

About me

I am an ASC-II in the College of Liberal Arts Dean's Office at Cal Poly San Luis Obispo.

Before coming to Cal Poly I made my living as a paralegal, specializing in class action litigation. When I worked for a law firm representing fishermen after the Exxon Valdes oil spill in Alaska, I negotiated directly with insurance adjusters to get fishermen all they were owed for their first year losses, according to the procedures that the fishermen's union and Exxon had hammered out. I found out early that knowing the rules better than your opponent is an instant advantage, not to mention that I was fighting the good fight on behalf of each fisherman client, who ranged from small family operations to successful skippers with large crews.

Later, I managed the discovery/investigation phase of a complex Washington state radiation litigation case. I coordinated and trained a team of paralegals and lawyers in reviewing documents, and negotiated with DOE [Department of Energy] officials to get documents declassified. I also performed a delicate balancing act of protecting my attorney's position as the top class action attorney among many on the case while cooperating with them as allies to obtain the information needed to serve our respective client bases. In that case, I learned how to *not* be intimidated!

I am also a writer. I have served as Vice-Chair of the CSEA/CSU Division Communications Committee, co-editor of the *Connect 7*, and contributing editor of my chapter newsletter. Communicating with our rank and file is a top priority for me, and a pure pleasure. It is the cornerstone of a successful, democratic grassroots organization. I encourage anyone who likes to write or would like to try, to step forward!

This issue of the *Connect 7* will come out in a new, electronic, format. This is a way of saving both money and time, and its success will hinge on our campus unit reps developing or updating email distribution lists of members and non-members, as well as making hard copies to distribute to those unit 7 employees not as closely in touch electronically as most of us are. As BUC7 Chair, I encourage you to contact me if you need any assistance in this regard. For example, developing a good distribution list may require filing an information request. BUC7 can help. This electronic communication system will, I believe, become an invaluable asset.



Unit 7 Solidarity! Council members and Unit 7 campus representatives gather for the July 2003 elections in Millbrae, California. From top left: Ardis Oliver (Northridge), Nancy Kobata (Fresno), Rita Glynn (Stanislaus), Rosa Natividad (Los Angeles), Mary Greta (Humboldt), Hylah Jacques (San Luis Obispo), George Ball (Monterey Bay), Vera Acevedo (San Jose), Marcia Pullen (San Diego), Joe Small (Sacramento), Hannah Ocampo (Channel Islands), Annel Martin (San Bernardino), Alice Gold (San Luis Obispo), Kathryn Plunkett (outgoing Chair BUC7, Bakersfield).

From BU7 At Large Members

Elvira (Vera) Acevedo

Hello, I am the Unit 7 representative for San Jose State University. This is my second term as an At Large Member of the Bargaining Unit 7 Council. I have worked closely with the At Large members as well as the former chair, Kathryn Plunkett, and the vice chair, Rita Long. I am happy for the opportunity to continue serving Unit 7 in this capacity.

George Ball

I am a Property Coordinator at the CSU-Monterey Bay campus. I am one of the founding staff members here on campus and have worked here for eight years, since the year the campus opened. I am a 21-year veteran of the United States Army and was stationed at Ford Ord. The union issues that interest me the most are: marketing the CSEA to fair-share employees, educating members about their rights, and better communication between CSEA Division Headquarters and the Chapters.

Annel Martin

I am from Cal State San Bernardino. I am an Administrative Support Coordinator I. The reason I chose to participate in CSEA is to raise awareness for support of all Unit 7 employees on our campus, and to be an instrumental voice division-wide in an effort to address issues related to Worker's Compensation and equitable pay. I look forward to serving your needs.

At Large...

Rosa S. Natividad

I am from Cal State, Los Angeles. I work in the Records Office as an ASA II, and my work title is University Recorder. I started working in this office October 1983. I joined the union in 1991, when I was affected by layoffs that year. I had been and still am a very, very active member. I am the Chapter 311 Secretary. This is my second term serving as a Bargaining Unit 7 Council Member At Large.

Serving as an at large member of the Bargaining Unit 7 Council for the past two years has strengthened my belief in our UNION, CSEA. I was able to talk to more members, listen to their concerns, and was successful in changing their beliefs about the union: we are not the trouble-makers, but rather the peace-makers. I became more involved in assisting my co-officers in our chapter, helping our members understand their role and their importance to the association.

With the help of the Chair, the Vice-Chair and the other members of this council, I have gained knowledge and experience serving our union members in general, and members in my chapter in particular.

Pauline Robinson, Cal State Dominguez Hills.

Pauline has served as a CSEA/CSU Division officer for many years, first as Deputy Division Director—Organizing and as Division Director. We are very proud to welcome Pauline, a role model for many of us, to the BUC 7 ranks as a Member At Large. Please see Pauline's article, *Together We Can Move Mountains*.

Joseph Small

I have been employed at CSU Sacramento Reprographics Department since 1987. My supervisor at that time expressed to me that it wasn't necessary to join CSEA. He stated, "the union does the same for non-members as well as members and it would be a waste of money." Unfortunately, this was not true. CSEA would not represent non-members and I needed their help. Consequently, I became a member in 1997. It was not a waste of my money. In the last six years I have received representation and counsel from CSEA. As a result, I have become more involved, at first using personal time to go to chapter meetings, keeping staff members informed of their rights and recruiting new members. Last summer I took a steward training course to help me understand the collective bargaining agreement between the Board of Trustees of CSU and the CSEA. I am looking forward to serving as a Unit 7 Bargaining Council Member At-Large. I will be able to better represent staff members and keep them informed of CSEA negotiations.

Don Nahhas, who works for the Center for California Studies at CSU-Sacramento, expresses what is on the minds of many.

So, do you think that we will ever move up the ladder of the salary range or am I going to be stuck on the bottom rung? I have been a CSU employee (ASA II) for three years. I have been, and remain, a CSEA member since I became an employee.

Providing Leadership and Continuity During Bargaining Team Transition

Rita Long Glynn, Vice Chair, BUC 7

Hello Everyone! I have been re-elected Vice Chair to the BUC 7 Bargaining Team. It has been a pleasure and an honor to represent all of the Unit 7 CSEA employees to date, and I will continue to represent you to the best of my ability over the next two years.

I am an ASC II, Administrative Assistant, in the Office of Mathematics Grants at CSU, Stanislaus. I have been employed at CSU, Stanislaus for 20 years. I received both my B.A. in Psychology and M.S. in Psychology with a Counseling concentration from CSU, Stanislaus.

I have had an opportunity to observe both CFA and CSEA unions in action—CFA as a Lecturer in Psychology and CSEA as a Unit 7 employee. My experience in both has allowed me to expand my knowledge about the unions and given me the wisdom to form applicable decisions on behalf of all represented employees at the bargaining table.

As you know, bargaining is a "team effort." We have elected many new members to the bargaining team. I know I can speak on behalf of the "old" and "new" bargaining team members when I say that we are ready to continue to represent you at the bargaining table. Please feel free to contact me any time with union related questions. rglynn@csustan.edu



The new BUC7 Council. From left: Vice Chair Rita Glynn, At Large members Rosa Natividad and Joe Small, Chair Hylah Jacques, and At Large Members Annel Martin, Vera Acevedo and George Ball. (Not in photo: At Large Member Pauline Robinson.)

I started at the bottom of the pay scale and have received a couple of general salary increases since. After I started, the merit pay increase was taken out of our contract and there are no step increases.

Continued on page 5



At Hayward chapter's Unit 7 Luncheon, during July 2003 bargaining. From Left: Hayward's new Unit 7 Representative, Joseph Corica; new Chair BUC 7, Hylah Jacques; and the new Deputy Division Director—Finance, Kathryn Plunkett (former BUC 7 Chair).

A Farewell and a Hello

From Kathryn Plunkett

I am so grateful to have been in the company of some pretty impressive "Unit 7 Women" over the last ten years, many who have been on the Bargaining Unit Council, on our numerous subcommittees, and on the bargaining team. These women, a diverse group coming from all corners of the state, were the energy behind projects such as revising the classification standards for the clerical/secretarial and public safety employees! They were the driving force behind surveys that were used in bargaining; they researched and then communicated the results to their colleagues – and continue to do so! They did these things unselfishly and I have learned so much from them because of their generosity in sharing their knowledge and spirit – and even their hospitality! I've had the opportunity to work with the likes of Alice Gold, Rita Glynn, Pauline Robinson, Peggy O'Neil-Rosales, Rhonda Brady (former CSEA "staff assigned"), Rosa Natividad, Vonda Epperson, Sherry Velthuysen, Stella Washington, Vera Acevedo, Mary Greta, Kris Thomas, Joan Kennedy and our ex-officio editor of *Connect 7*, Hylah Jacques!

As I move on to a new duty, I am confident that Hylah, as your new chair, brings the same devotion to you as I know her council brings to her. I look forward to your continued success!

I am so proud to have been a part of our movement to be proactive and I will bring to the Deputy Division Director/Finance all of the things I've learned: listen, analyze, research and prepare, present, explain, and listen again!

My main duties as the new chief financial officer of the CSU Division of CSEA include monitoring the budgets and developing options to present to the General Council and Division Council.

Thank you all, those named and unnamed; the Union Sisters and Brothers are second only to my family in my heart.

Immediate Past Division Director, and new At Large Member of BUC7

Pauline Robinson:

"Together we can move mountains."

I truly feel proud of the last seven years of statewide service to our union, two years as Deputy Division Director-Organizing and five as Division Director. The committed support from our Division Council and members at large was my driving force. The evolution of the CSU Division has been awe-inspiring and I'm proud to have been a part of that. We accomplished a lot over the last three years since implementation of fair share fees.

Our successes of the past—and continuing successes—all rest on our being a diverse, dedicated, independent-thinking group of individuals working unselfishly in concert to make a difference for working people.

My involvement in CSEA is a long and satisfying journey. I'm especially proud of the opportunity given me to serve as your director for the past five years, and my quest was to represent the CSEA/CSU Division with dignity, heighten our visibility, and move our Division into the position of a force to be reckoned with and, most importantly, preserve the integrity of unionism. I thank all of you for allowing me that opportunity.

I am now pledging my total support to our new leaders to maintain the resolve of the CSU Division. As part of my commitment and dedication to my union, I am proud that I was selected as an At-Large member of the Bargaining Unit 7 Council. I will continue my involvement in this capacity with the same level of passion and dedication as always.

Our Division is a focused group, and our growth will continue. Our trademark is that we are committed to maintaining a union run by its members, and that should be an everlasting goal of the CSU Division.

Together we can move mountains.

Thinking of Retiring?

In the latest round of bargaining, CSEA and the CSU began tentative discussions on providing a golden handshake around the end of 2003. The matter will be developed further at bargaining in mid-August, and there are two bills pending in the state legislature, AB457 and AB1253. Wondering whether retirement might be an option for you? If you are at least 50 years old and have five years of service credit in the retirement system, then you would qualify. (You cannot use age or service credits given through a golden handshake to attain the minimum age or service credit.) Check out the CalPERS Retirement Calculator at:

<https://www.calpers.ca.gov/personal-access/>

Hylah...

Union Family

When I started working at Cal Poly as a permanent employee in 2000, I was thrilled to be able to join the union. Although comparatively new to the organization, I have had invaluable mentors along the way, some of whom have become close friends, and all of whom I continue to look to for insight and inspiration. They include:

- former BUC7 Vice Chair Alice Gold, who first brought me into the union, nourished and encouraged my activism, and continues to keep me on track,
- immediate past DDD-Organizing Marsha Epstein, whose keen vision puts her several steps ahead of everyone else and has so often guided our organization around pitfalls, blind alleys and ignoble mistakes,
- immediate past BUC7 Chair Kathryn Plunkett, whose grace and maturity under the most withering fire is truly inspirational and who, like Alice, helps keep my compass on true north,
- immediate past Division Director Pauline Robinson, who always puts democracy first and respects and protects every single member's right to voice an opinion, thus living, encouraging and nourishing the democratic ideals that are the foundation of a member run union,
- Communications Committee Chair Russell Kilday-Hicks, who typically gets more done in a single day than any of us can manage in a week, and does so with careful and loving dedication to the ultimate goal of building community and solidarity,
- our new Division Director Pat Gantt, whose wealth of knowledge built up over many years of activism is matched only by his keen foresight, leadership, and unflagging tenacity,
- Gil Rojo, our SLO and Monterey Bay campuses' LRR, whose fighting spirit inspires us daily, in large and small ways, to keep at it till we win, and
- the CSEA/CSU Administrative Technician Dayna Ramos at headquarters in Sacramento, our honorary Unit 7 diva, whose high standards and professional demeanor reflect so well on our organization, and who knows how to keep the whole operation hummin' without breaking a sweat!

The challenges ahead: Identifying our issues

I am dedicated to representing the interests of my fellow workers throughout the CSU in all the various Unit 7 classifications—administrative support, public safety, accounting, reprographics, library, and many others. We play a vital role in the university infrastructure. I like to say that we are the backbone of university operations. Our unit is the largest of the four. But the issues that most concern us are common to all the CSEA/CSU Division units and affect workers in all sectors of the university system, from health care to operations and administrative to technical support.

- *Compensation.* A vast majority of us are stuck in our salary ranges. Left to management discretion, IRPs don't work. The answer? Bargain the steps back!

- *Benefits.* We need to protect what we have from erosion due to outside market forces and fight to keep CSU's hands out of our paychecks. The system should pay for any increases that come down from CalPERS, not us.

- *Contract.* We need to strengthen and consolidate our language.

- *Representation.* Facing potential layoffs, this means being an informed, committed advocate on every campus that receives layoff notices. It also means being there for our members when they most need us. One of my jobs as BUC7 Chair is to serve on the Division Representation Committee.

Our Core Issue: Restoring the Steps

Don really struck a chord with many of us with his email (see page 2). Lots of us, myself included, are struggling to keep up with the rising cost of living, worried about having to dip into our little accumulation of savings more often than we would like, and not seeing any relief on the horizon. I know some have taken second jobs in order to make ends meet. The problems with compensation was a big reason I joined the union four years ago, and it is one thing I want to be part of changing for ALL of us stuck in this leaky boat!

We got a raw deal from the CSU several years ago, and it's time to get that straightened out. There are lots of issues out there—better health benefits, stronger contract language, workload, CMS/PeopleSoft, to name just a few—but to my mind our core issue is compensation: we need to get back to a fair, equitable system of compensation. We need to restore the steps.

The current bargaining team has opened the steps issue with the CSU, and I can assure you that the bargaining team coming on line will carry on this fight until we win. I believe there is widespread agreement among CSU employees, and some measure of solidarity from our constituents and allies (like students and faculty, for example) on this issue. We will avail ourselves of their good will as we go forward and make the case for restoring what is rightfully ours.

Stay in Touch With Us!

My job as Chair of BUC7 is to represent the interests of our unit and work with the other unit leadership to further our common goals. I hope you will help by communicating your views to us on the BUC7 who represent you at bargaining and in the division.

One of the greatest pleasures is having a strong BUC7 Council of seasoned veterans and new recruits willing and able to rise to the challenges that face us. I am especially pleased and gratified that BUC7 Vice Chair Rita Long Glynn, my friend, ally and union sister, is with me at the helm, providing continuity and expertise in this time of transition. Our contact information is provided so that you have ready access to any and all of us.

Please feel free to send me, Rita, or any of the at-large members, an email, anytime about anything, whether it is a question, comment, suggestion or criticism.

As we all go forward together, the BUC7 values your support!

Reclassification in a time of layoffs

BEWARE

Alice Gold

So you are finally getting around to applying for that classification review (aka “reclass”). That’s great! Be ambitious, go for it, and never refuse more money or a promotion.

But Beware!

If you are reclassified in your current position, and your new classification is targeted for layoffs on your campus, you become low person on the totem pole in your new classification and become vulnerable to layoff. Of course, you probably have permanency in your original classification, so you can retreat to that classification. BUT, you will end up in another position by bumping someone else who has less seniority than you. And, you may not be happy in that new position.

Also, if there were only a few people on your campus in your original classification, or maybe only you, there may be no position to retreat to. The same may be true if you take a new position on campus; however, in that case you do have another option: take the new position, but ask for a leave of absence from your old position. Then, if you get bumped out of the new one you CAN retreat to your original position.

In both these cases, you do not want to be on probation. Probationary employees are regarded as temporary and, therefore, are laid off before permanent employees.

So, before you make any moves out of your current classification, consult with your campus steward.

How does the layoff process work? A campus targets one or more classifications for layoff. If it becomes necessary to lay off employees, the persons in those classifications/skill levels with the least seniority are the first to go. The union is notified of such a move before anyone else and actually steps in and negotiates with the campus on behalf of those employees. If you want to know more about your rights, check Article 24 in the Contract. You can also go to the CSEA/CSU Division website to pick up a fact sheet about layoffs: <http://www.calcsea.org/csu/> and click on the link *New “Know Your Rights” flyers available.*

Nahas...

I am a hard worker willing to take on new projects, learn new things and go beyond the call of duty.

This leads me to my question: where is the incentive to work hard, to stay in a position for a period of time, when anyone that starts off tomorrow as an ASA II is making the same pay as someone in the position for more than two years?

I did not take this position just for the money, but also for the experience and opportunities. I do realize that I have several

A Message to Unit 7 from Pat Gantt CSEA/CSU Division Director

Dear Unit 7 Employees:

As the newly-elected Director of the CSU Division, I would like to convey to you that CSEA is moving quickly on various fronts to protect your interests and deal with the many issues that impact our work lives. The State budget situation is bleak, and how it will ultimately affect the campuses is as yet unknown. Right now, we are working hard to mitigate announced layoff impacts on the campuses of Cal State Los Angeles and Humboldt State. We have already had some successes in layoff meet-and-conferences at Fresno State and Cal State Hayward.

It is still too early to predict the final outcome of the current re-opener bargaining on wages and benefits. The Chancellor’s Office has had CSEA’s sunshine proposal since February and has only just now formally responded. We will keep you posted through Bargaining Updates published regularly.

There will be no shortage of challenges ahead, and we will face them together. Please let us know your concerns. You can reach the CSU Division Headquarters at the toll free number: (866) 763-1452. You can contact me by email: Pgantt@csuchico.edu, and our new Unit 7 Chair, Hylah Jacques, at [hj Jacques@calpoly.edu](mailto:hjacques@calpoly.edu).

Reprographics—An Update


Those of us in classifications that have not been updated since the 1960’s or thereabouts, know how little relevance they have to the work we do today. Nowhere is that more true than in Reprographics where the technology is the job. How can one determine if they are working in or out of class, for example, if the standards no longer accurately describe what employees do? Last winter Reprographics employees along with their CSEA representatives met with the Chancellor’s Office to discuss the revision of their classifications. A second meeting was to follow in February or March, but that did not happen. The latest news out of the Chancellor’s Office is that a draft of the standards is being prepared, and when it is completed they will meet with us again, sometime at the end of the year.

Our new Unit 7 Bargaining Council includes Joseph Small who works in Reprographics at Sacramento State.

other benefits/perks that go along with my job and as for the money factor it rates about 10% in my overall happiness.

I have been blessed with a great department that encourages further learning and gives me opportunities to explore new projects. But the fact that I am still at the bottom of the pay scale is a real disappointment. What can be done?

Who can I turn to, to voice my opinions, concerns and disappointments?

California State Employees Association/CSU Division
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