

# University Employee

## California State University Employees Union/SEIU 2579

The backbone of the CSU, representing Bargaining Units 2 (Health Care) • 5 (Operations) • 7 (Administrative) • 9 (Technical) 12 (SFSU Head Start) • 13 (CSULA English as a Second Language)

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## Progress Made In Contract Bargaining

Next sessions set for mid-January

By Ray Finnell, CSU Bakersfield



Ongoing negotiations for our next collective bargaining agreement with the CSU have been difficult, but December's bargaining sessions provided some significant breakthroughs. One important step forward was a tentative agreement on some aspects of layoff protection.

"We are certainly more hopeful than we were before these latest sessions," said VP for Representation Russell Kilday-Hicks. "There are still some significant roadblocks to an overall contract agreement, but, with the type of strong support that our members have shown around parking fees, we hope to reach an agreement in this new year."

This past summer and fall, talks appeared all but stalled. The petitions on parking fees—5,000 signatures presented to the CSU Board of Trustees on November 15—seem to have broken the logjam on that issue. However, that dispute isn't settled yet.

Management's standard goal of giving no more than is absolutely necessary is bolstered by the dire state budget situation.

Kilday-Hicks provides a counter-argument, though. "We consider what we currently have to be the bare minimum," he continued. "We need and deserve more, but 'more' isn't there in the eyes of management. We are trying to make progress in 'non-economic' areas that shouldn't be affected by budget problems. We have made some progress, but all of this is minor compared to the overall picture of an increasingly abused and exploited workforce."

See "Contract Bargaining" on page 6



## Deep Budget Cuts Likely to Go Even Deeper

By Debbie Blair, CSU San Marcos



In a budget year that started off with a \$650 million cut to the CSU, followed by an additional \$100 million cut in early December, insult may be added to injury when Gov. Brown proposes deep cuts to the CSU for the 2012-13 fiscal year, whose budget he will announce in mid-January.

Just short of last summer's deadline, Gov. Jerry Brown signed the 2011-12 budget, which brought more cuts to state agencies, including that \$650 million cut in general fund allocations to the CSU. Because state revenues fell short of projections for the year, trigger cuts to not only the CSU—in the form of a \$100 million budget cut—but also other vital state services were announced on December 13.

The likelihood of revenues rebounding to avert a 2012-13 cut seems almost nonexistent. Currently, CSU funding from the state general fund is more than 30 percent below last year's level. Fewer classes with larger enrollment, curtailed services, decreased staffing levels, higher tuition, extended enrollment times to graduation, and longer waits in line are already noticeable throughout the system. Further cuts would only make things worse.

At some point, the California Master Plan for High Education has to be a key topic. "Either we have one or we don't," said CSUEU President Gantt. "How

*Either we have a Master Plan or we don't. How much deeper can the CSU be cut?*

CSUEU President Pat Gantt

much deeper can the CSU be cut?"

After California's three strikes law went into effect in the mid-1990s, the state's prisons filled up, and the prison budget expanded. "Why can't that happen for the CSU?" Gantt added.

The immediate impact of these deep budget cuts to higher education is profound. It will take years for the CSU to recover from this year's cuts alone. Another year or two of cuts will ripple for perhaps decades through all sectors of the state, not just higher education.

How the CSU and we will fare remains to be seen.

## Connect with CSUEU on Facebook, YouTube and Twitter

By John Watson, Communications Officer CSUEU

It's easier than ever to connect with CSUEU, since the union has a presence on three of the most popular social networking sites—Facebook, YouTube and Twitter.

On Facebook, where we're listed as "CSU Employees Union," you can find photos, videos and links to relevant articles. More than 190 followers have "liked" us. Please join them!

On YouTube, uploaded and favorited videos and slide shows are available, covering rallies, protests and other actions over the last couple of years.

By following us on Twitter, you'll be the first to know whenever pertinent

items are posted to the web, since you'll receive a tweet as soon as new items are available. Over 185 people have subscribed so far, and the number keeps growing.

Links to all three sites can be found at the bottom of all pages at the CSUEU web site, [www.csueu.org](http://www.csueu.org). For more than two years, chapter stewards and other leaders have been able to discuss union issues via special forums on the Activist, a secure web site launched in the summer of 2009 as a resource for CSUEU activists. If you're a steward, log in and join the discussion! If you have questions about your password or other details, contact John Watson, [jwatson@calcsea.org](mailto:jwatson@calcsea.org), for assistance.



## President's Message

From the desk of Pat Gantt, CSUEU President

### What's next?

As I write this piece, there seems to be no shortage of issues facing CSUEU members in the workplace, at home, and in society. I wake every day as do the rest of you and see something in the news that could be a threat to our jobs, our pensions, our homes, and our families.

Sometimes it just seems overwhelming!

The bargaining team is still at the table trying to resolve the full contract with the CSU. The bargaining process is not time-driven but more about focus and endurance. The goal for the team is to get an agreement that the members can ratify. It is not an easy task at any time, and the current era of budget cuts and management demands makes this one of the more challenging contract cycles we have faced in the last 15 years.

Meanwhile, the media continues to harp on the public pension issue, and the governor and legislature also raise the issue and suggest reforms. Some of the proposed reforms will not affect current employees, while others suggest that current employees bear a greater burden of the cost or that changes be made in retirement age. The more insidious ideas may be those that create an alternative outside the pension system, which could do more harm by removing crucial investments over time and reducing the system's financial power.

Many ballot measures have been filed to address the pension issue in the November 2012 general election. You can find an overview of ballot petitions that have already been filed in the "Ballot Measures" section at [www.sos.ca.gov/elections](http://www.sos.ca.gov/elections).

Of those filed already, six pertain to public pensions, and there may be more filed. Other issues range from marijuana laws, abortion, and collective bargaining rights to political contributions and, of course, taxes.

In fact, taxes are a burning issue that have generated at least eight petitions so far. Some kind of tax or revenue solution is needed to help get the state budget balanced and to end the cuts-only approach that is eroding higher education and creating deep cuts to the CSU that harm us all.

What if the vehicle license fee that Governor Schwarzenegger repealed were still available? That lone source of revenue brought in \$6 billion per year to the state, and it disappeared in early 2004. Don't get me wrong—that single fix would not have prevented the budget crisis we are now in, but \$6 billion per year over the last eight years could have prevented some of the deep cuts we have all experienced.

Governor Jerry Brown has released his proposed state budget, and it is leveraged with a ballot measure for the November election that would raise about \$7 billion by increasing sales tax and income tax on those earning higher incomes. The governor's budget assumes that the measure will be on the ballot and will pass. If it does not pass, there will be another \$200 million cut to the CSU as a trigger cut late next fall.

You can read more on the governor's budget at <http://www.ebudget.ca.gov/>. You can also look at the California Budget Project's initial review of the governor's budget in the "What's New" section at [www.cbpr.org](http://www.cbpr.org).

The legislature will now pick up the budget process, and we will be monitoring the developments as it moves through the committees and to the governor's desk.

Please be aware of your interests, and think about the issues that will be on the ballot in the fall.

**Vote: Your future depends on it!**

In union,

*Pat Gantt*  
Pat Gantt



# On Union Activism and Police Presence



By Joseph Dobzynski, Jr., VP for Member Engagement

CSUEU continues to mobilize across the state to defend our members and their families during this economic crisis. Many are beginning to realize the good times are over. California will be recovering for quite some time. This means fewer tax revenues, and in turn, further strain on public services, including the CSU. Meanwhile, state politicians seem to be more worried about re-election than what is best for California. You know who you are. Our mobilization has raised some hackles on campuses and at the Office of the Chancellor. We have held rallies at the Los Angeles, Channel Islands, San Diego, San Jose and Long Beach campuses in support of contract and layoff bargaining. Faculty and students held a demonstration at CSU Board of Trustees meetings in July and November, which resulted in the Trustees closing the remainder of the November meeting. The participants were protesting the \$400,000 salary to the new SDSU president, and, to add insult to injury, the hiking of student fees to cover the CSU budget deficit. Protests and rallies often receive either no coverage or extremely negative coverage by the mainstream media. In February, CSUEU participated in a rally in Sacramento; the media used a single confrontation between a Tea Party activist and a Teamster there to paint all union folks as thugs. Public sector unions have become the latest scapegoat for strained government budgets, and we are under a microscope as we mobilize. It should also be noted a New York bridge takeover and more than two weeks were required before the mainstream media even noted the Occupy Wall Street movement. We have also seen an increased presence of campus and local police. Our mobilization has given the administration some concern, which is certainly a measure of the real power we have

*We cannot back down as a union.*

Joseph Dobzynski, Jr., VP for Member Engagement

as a union. We must use caution as we exercise this power. We gain nothing if we are painted as thugs. We also need to remember that the campus police are our sisters and brothers in SUPA. However, we cannot back down as a union. We are now facing threats that are too large to fight at the bargaining table or with the grievance process. Our members need to be educated about how state politics will affect the CSU budget, and by extension, their lives. We need to organize and mobilize to let the administration know it can't devastate us with layoffs. We will continue to educate, engage, organize and mobilize our members through this economic crisis. We need to confront the groups who want to tear us down, comparing our hard-fought wages and benefits against corporations that have outsourced their manufacturing overseas. We must stand in solidarity, despite what others may think of us. To quote an old labor tune, "Ain't done nothing, if you ain't been called a red."

## PAYCHECK "PROTECTION": Misnamed Ballot Initiative Threatens Unions

*Other initiatives anti-union, also*

When is a pig not a pig? The so-called "Paycheck Protection" ballot initiative goes by a misleading name. The measure's supposed intent, according to its supporters, is to guard union members' take-home wages against pilfering by their unions. In fact, though, the measure cripples unions' ability to collect or spend funds for political campaigns. Its name is a perfect example of spinning the language to mean whatever an advocacy group wants. Those who support the measure assume that unions are out to steal from members and that members must be wary of automatic deductions. The assumption is wrong on both counts: members already must sign up to make contributions; further, unions' only purpose in establishing political action committees (PACs) is to advocate for their represented employees' benefit. The name and rhetoric are scare tactics designed to put employees on the defensive against a threat that doesn't exist. No matter what they call it, proponents want to take away employees' right to sign up just once for ongoing automatic PAC contributions. Public and private-sector unions alike would be affected.

More accurate name options might be:

- the "Hog-tie members' freedom to contribute to their unions' PACs" initiative
- the "Limit unions' ability to be effective advocates for their members" initiative
- the "Make the contribution process so bothersome that no one will want to do it" initiative

Should the measure make it to the ballot and be approved, members would have to periodically renew their approval of paycheck deductions for the union PAC. Such an unreasonable restriction is predicted to result in drastic reductions to unions' PAC funds. Service Employees International Union, of which CSUEU is a local, stands solidly against the

measure, since its members include both public and private-sector locals. Many other California unions agree that this pig smells. Why is the issue so important? The majority of funding for the CSU is allocated by California's lawmakers and governor. If they aren't aware of the importance of higher education and the impact that funding has on the CSU's ability to fulfill its mission, the funding will likely be even more vulnerable than it is already. Through our annual Lobby Day, when representatives of every campus visit legislators in their Sacramento offices, we carry our message directly to those who fund us. If the funding base for this and our other efforts are cut severely, our visibility will be dimmed. The importance of connecting with legislators and the governor cannot be overstated: the relationship between PAC advocacy and funding allocation from the state is direct and simple. Finally, think of all the lobbying that is done against public sector unions and employees. If our funds don't come close to those expended against us, our losses will be incalculable. Opponents of public employee unions know this and have carefully planned how to undermine us. Andrew Coile, chair of CSUEU's Legislative Committee, warns that "Paycheck Protection" is only one of several initiatives leveled against public unions. At least one threatens the right of public employees even to engage in collective bargaining. "It's Wisconsin moved to the West Coast," said Coile. "The backlash there will continue for years, but it could last for decades in California." CSUEU members who have opted to contribute to CSEA's Member Action Committee now can move their contributions to CSUEU's PAC. The fund has been operational for some time, and CSUEU leaders urge represented employees to make the switch. The funds are used to advocate specifically for our interests. The form reproduced in this issue of *University Employee* can be used to switch contributions to the CSUEU PAC. This is a pig rolling in mud, no matter how much lipstick they put on it.

# LSS Agreement Finally Reached



*Years of Negotiations Bring Results*

By Debbie Blair, CSU San Marcos

After many years of negotiations, on May 6 the CSUEU LSS Bargaining Team signed an agreement with the CSU to recognize the technical requirements of Library Assistants' (LA) positions by moving them to Unit 9 and renaming their series Library Service Specialists (LSS). The series has four classification ranges. Although new hires after July 1, 2011 will come in as LSS's, it will not be an automatic move for current LA's. Originally, each staff member had until September 29 to update his or her position description (PD) to reflect current job duties, in accordance with the new LSS position standards, and submit the revised PD to management. That date was later extended. Through this process, if an LA is working out of class, he or she will have the opportunity to go to a higher position level. Two years ago, the LSS bargaining team estimated that approximately 20 percent of LA's were working out of class. In an effort to help LA's make the transition to the correct classification, the CSUEU Classification Committee and the LSS bargaining team sponsored a webinar in late July at Cal Poly San Luis Obispo. Co-hosted by Classification Committee Chair Nancy Kobata and LSS bargaining team member Joan Kennedy, the purpose was to review provisions of the agreement, including important deadlines. The webinar focused on how to revise PDs by describing duties and

responsibilities at the highest level. Looking back, Kobata said, "I think the webinar was a huge success, and we have received many thanks from all over the state." Kennedy estimated that over 200 LA's from 17 campuses, as well as campus stewards and HR staff, participated. Both presenters give high praise to the staff at Cal Poly SLO who made this webinar a reality. "There is absolutely no way we could have reached so many of our members in such a short period of time without their help," said Kobata. "They are true professionals." So what's next in the LSS implementation? LA's sent in questions to Kobata and Kennedy before, during, and after the webinar. All those questions have been posted to the FAQ on the LSS webpage. A listserve was suggested by several campuses and should soon be available for all LSS's to communicate statewide. The webinar brought up some problem areas that Kobata and Kennedy are hoping to address personally, and, as of press time, they have visits planned to multiple campuses. "It has taken many years to get to this point for the new LSS's, and we all support them in this last leg of a long journey," Kennedy added. For more information on the LSS implementation, go to CSUEU's web site at [www.csueu.org](http://www.csueu.org), hover over the Bargaining tab near the top of the page, and click on LSS News in the drop-down menu.

# Chapter, State Elections Around the Corner

*Members' opportunity to choose leadership begins in January.*

CSUEU has entered its internal elections cycle at both the chapter and statewide levels. Over the next six months, all offices will be up for election. Three-year election cycles are now mandated. Chapter elections are the first to take place. Chapter leaders, including president, vice-president, treasurer, secretary, and organizing chair, are elected by members in good standing. Bargaining unit representatives are elected by members of their respective units. General Council delegates and alternates are also elected by members. Finally, chief stewards are elected by the chapter stewards. Any member in good standing is eligible to run for these offices. Elections at this level are overseen by an elections committee. The committee must be comprised of members in good standing; they may not run for any chapter office and may not advocate for or against any candidate for office. Chapter elections must be completed by April 2; full details of each election cycle are available from chapter election committees.

VP for Member Engagement Joseph Dobzynski, Jr., who is responsible organizing all elections, says, "Participating in elections is important for members. It's one way they can do their part to lead their chapters and the union. Make your voice heard: if you aren't already a member, become a member, and cast your vote!" Chapter presidents automatically serve as CSEA General Council delegates. Each chapter is entitled to one delegate for every 100 members or major fraction thereof. CSUEU delegates will represent the union at the GC meeting in late summer 2012 and as needed for governing CSEA affairs. Voting for this election, also at the chapter level, ends on May 21. The winners of all elections are those who receive a simple majority (50 per cent plus one vote) of the votes cast. If two or more candidates tie, the winner is determined by drawing lots. All elected chapter officers and bargaining unit representatives become the electorate for our statewide offices. The election cycle for those positions begins April 30. More information will be available closer to that date. To reiterate, only members are entitled to vote. Fee payers may sign a membership card and submit it with their vote to be eligible, but the CSUEU Policy File allows only members to vote for officers or for contract ratifications.



# Lessons from the Cold War on Labor



By **Russell Kilday-Hicks**, Vice President for Representation

In the recent skirmish in the cold war against unionized public-sector workers in Wisconsin, the results are mixed. Despite the positive spin that the AFL-CIO and others applied to the two-out-of-five seat “victory” in the recall effort in Wisconsin, it is unclear at this point how big it really was. We need to figure out whether the effort to un-elect (in Republican-dominated, gerrymandered districts) some of the lawmakers who voted to strip union rights from state workers was worth the effort, or, as some say, just a wasteful redirection of the broad support labor had in the moment that would have been better spent on a general strike.

The real victory may be down the road—if the coalition can continue. From this extra-election venture we see not only the limits of putting all our union eggs in the Democratic Party basket but also the inherent problems to electoral activism (as it hits the fail-safe, two-party-system lock on power). With some luck and a continuation of the gargantuan effort, a replication of the broad coalition that formed (outside of normal two-party limits and with goals that include—but go beyond—electoral) may be our only hope for some lasting movement toward a better life for working people in America.

In Wisconsin, the Republican-leaning districts targeted for the recall effort were determined by how then-presidential candidate Senator Obama did in the 2008 national election. The reduced turnout during special elections tends to favor the more conservative vote. The challenge for the recall was matching the 2008 turnout to overcome the odds not only of a stacked deck of registered majority Republican voters but also the usual cynicism that keeps voters home: elections don’t really matter, so why should this one be any different? At 60 percent, turnout was better than a traditional special election and even better than most recall efforts, but was still lower than when the presidency was the prize. The broad, statewide support that unions had in the moment did not find expression in three

of these five districts. We have to ask both what was missing here and whether an electoral effort is what was needed.

Some key elements were missing. The partial victory was due to some extent to the Democratic Party’s control of the candidate selection and the message. Even though they had the most to gain by flipping the district to Democratic, the party distanced itself from the one hot issue of the day: whether state employees had the right to be unionized, apparently in an attempt to counter the perception that unions control the party. And despite the president’s campaign promise to “put on his sneakers and walk the picket lines” for labor, surprisingly, Obama sat this one out. Oh, and lest we forget, candidate Obama promised to sign the Employee Free Choice Act (EFCA) as well—if Congress sent it to his desk. Alas, that has yet to happen, although it did make it to G.W. Bush’s desk—twice—for his veto. Those vetoes were no surprise.

However, when Obama was sworn into office, Democrats held the majority in both houses. EFCA, an historic renewal of the 1935 Wagner Act, could have been completed in his first month in office. Unfortunately, and here is the lesson, with Obama in and the possibility of the bill passing Congress a reality, a few key Democrats switched their votes from yea to nay, among them California’s Senator Feinstein. Following this vote, the Obama administration asked labor to put EFCA on hold until after the health care reform legislation became law. Today, watered-down health care “reform” passed into law but the odds of passing EFCA are more remote than ever, as the window of opportunity seems to have closed (for another decade or so).

With all the effort unions put into electing Democrats across the country, some might think labor would have more to show for it. Where are labor’s supposed champions? Just as President Obama was missing in Wisconsin, so is Gov. Brown missing the opportunity to fully defend California’s public sector. The best we can say is that he isn’t outwardly attacking us. The reality is, despite Republican myth and Tea Party mouth-foaming, the Democratic Party is hardly the champion of labor or of working

See “Cold War on Labor” on page 6

# BU 12 Prepares for Contract Negotiations this Spring

*Contract for Head Start Employees Expires May 31*



By **Leeanne Bowes**, Sonoma State University

CSUEU’s Bargaining Unit 12 (BU12), which represents Head Start employees who receive funding through a federal grant administered through San Francisco State University, are preparing for their own contract negotiations this spring.

CSUEU originally had a service agreement with Local 790, which then represented BU12, dating back to 2008. Then, in 2009, the employees signed cards (formally known as a “showing of interest”), and, through a petition to the Public Employment Relations Board, CSUEU became their exclusive representative.

Approximately 80 represented employees comprise BU12. They do not have a classification system but rather fall into three groups of job titles:

### Educational Program

- Teacher Assistant
- Associate Teacher
- Teacher I and II

### Family Advocacy Early Education and Health Services

- Family Advocate and Education Coordinator

### Administrative/Fiscal Services

- Fiscal Services Assistant
- Receptionist
- Maintenance Worker
- Data Management Technician

Their current contract was ratified in mid-2009 and will expire May 31, 2012. Senior

Labor Relations Representative Lois Kugelmass was the chief negotiator, with the assistance of Labor Relations Representative Jerrie McIntyre and several represented employees.

Last April, CSUEU Chapter 305 hosted an evening meeting at the campus for the BU 12 employees. Refreshments and hard copies of the contract were well received by employees, whose facilities are located throughout San Francisco. Welcoming the teachers, family advocates, and their youngsters with lively discussions of common concerns and issues were Kugelmass, McIntyre, Loretta Seva’aetasi (statewide VP for Finance), Russell Kilday-Hicks (statewide VP for Representation), as well as Chapter 305 then-chapter President Natalia Bremer, then-chapter Treasurer Sandee Noda, and then-Unit 7 Representative Joseph Jelincic.

To prepare for upcoming negotiations in 2012, CSUEU Chapter 305 has sponsored steward training for BU12. Five new stewards have been certified so far, all passing their exams with flying colors. Kugelmass, McIntyre and Seva’aetasi instructed the stewards, with Noda assisting on behalf of Chapter 305.

Last September, the new stewards surveyed BU12 members on contract issues, and, in October, they met twice to analyze survey results and prepare for initial contract proposals. On October 21, the team met with BU 12 Chapter 305 members to present the survey results and discuss the upcoming bargaining process.

Kudos to Chief Steward Deborah Delligatti, who recently scored a victory: several Head Start teachers and she have now received long-overdue educational step increases.

Bargaining team member Ravelle Taylor attended the November Board of Directors meeting and proudly announced that BU 12 had achieved 96 percent membership.

The unit is now well poised to enter contract negotiations in the new year.

# 2, 5, 7, 9, 12, 13: Bargaining Unit News

## Items of statewide interest

### BU 2

Bargaining Unit 2 Council members have been dealing with the problem of excessive hours that are being assigned to athletic trainers, who are exempt employees. BUC Chair Tessy Reese and others are collecting data on excess hours, compensation, and other working conditions. Significant changes to any classification, bargaining unit or work unit, campus-wide or systemwide, would trigger a meet and confer prior to implementation. The BU2 Council wants employees to know about policies that directly affect them and to report violations of current policies and contract articles.

Workload issues and job merging need to be addressed on a statewide level. Unfilled staff vacancies have resulted in increased workloads and, in some cases, in merged jobs.

Concern over performance evaluations is also growing as budgets shrink. BU2 representatives report a significant decrease in evaluation ratings. Tessy and BU2 Council Vice Chair Pam Robertson are busy at the bargaining table, and they welcome comments and suggestions regarding bargaining.

### BU 5

Chair Sharon Cunningham and Unit 5 Council members have kept busy between contract bargaining and launching campaigns against contracting out at some campuses. Vice Chair Mike Chavez has returned from medical leave, and he thanks Jose Rico for filling the position in his absence.

Members of the Unit 5 Council want to stress the importance of having up-to-date job descriptions. Many chapters have successfully negotiated IRP’s, stipends, and reclassifications for our hardworking members.

The council reminds members to use vacation hours and avoid building up hours beyond the maximum. You will forfeit additional vacation starting January 1 if you have overshot your limit.

### BU 7

Chair Michael Brandt and council members are concerned about our work being given to student assistants. The bargaining team has proposed significant contract changes regarding this issue; none are resolved as of yet.

Bargaining over series changes is underway; the CSU presented a draft proposal in June regarding accounting classifications.

After nearly 13 years of investigation, negotiation, and numerous bargaining sessions, agreement on the Library Services Specialist (LSS) series was reached in May, and 450 library assistants are now in the process of moving to Unit 9. More information is available at the CSUEU web site at [www.csueu.org](http://www.csueu.org) (click on the Bargaining tab), including a webinar which is available for anyone who needs assistance in starting this move. See “LSS Agreement Finally Reached,” in this issue of *University Employee*.

### BU 9

The Bargaining Unit 9 Council welcomes Neil Jacklin (CSU Stanislaus) as its newest member. Full contract bargaining continues; our team is demanding movement through salary ranges.

Chair Rich McGee and Vice Chair Alisandra Brewer are working hard to save jobs at each campus where Unit 9 employees have received notice of layoff. One layoff is too many.

CSU has proposed deleting the firefighter classification, which has been unoccupied since 2003. Abolishment of empty classifications is common; they can easily be restored later. In addition to Library Assistants migrating from Unit 7 (Academic Professionals of California) to Unit 9 LSS classifications, Unit 4 Lead Library Assistants will be able to remain in BU 4 or transfer to Unit 9.

### BU 12

See “BU 12 Prepares for Contract Negotiations this Spring” in this issue of *University Employee* for Bargaining Unit 12 news.

### BU 13

Employees in BU 13, all ESL instructors at CSU Los Angeles, have noticed definite benefits of CSUEU protection. They now are entitled to paid bereavement leave, personal time off, and sick leave. Larger paychecks and up to six-hour workdays instead of their previous limit of four are also proving that union protection makes lives better.

According to Unit 13 member Denise Minin, English Language Program Director Aaron Ostrom has been very supportive and has worked to ensure that employees receive the rights to which they are entitled under the contract. The group is very appreciative of his support.

Minin says they look forward to more information, contact, and assistance from CSUEU in coming months.



# Contracting Out Is Risky Business



By *Debbie Blair, CSU San Marcos and Donna Melendez, CSU Los Angeles*

For decades, labor unions--both private and public--have fought to keep their jobs from being contracted to other, supposedly less expensive entities. Management always claims that contracting out is done in the name of saving the bottom line. Our union has long been in the fight to stop the outsourcing of services.

With our state's financial situation and university system funding cut at least 23 percent (\$650 million, below 1998-99 funding, even though we are serving a significantly increased student population), the CSU looks every day for ways to save money.

If that means getting a third party to carry out certain elements of CSU's operation, then why not, as long as standards and quality are maintained? The reasons for not using off-campus contractors are many, not just from a union standpoint, but from the perspective of the taxpayer as well.

Once services are contracted out, it is the responsibility of the private contractor to see that services are accomplished. Accountability becomes at least once removed from direct CSU supervision. Quality control typically steps down several notches. CSU employees often must correct mistakes or fill the gaps of missing service. CSU personnel frequently shoulder the blame for problems that contractors leave behind.

Contracting out represents a potent threat to us as CSU employees, contributing to job insecurity as well as other headaches.

For these reasons, CSUEU fights daily battles against outsourcing. Rich McGee, Unit 9 Council Chair and Unit 9 Representative for the San Bernardino campus, has a wealth of experience working against the procedure. When asked if contracting out contributes to job insecurity among IT employees, he stated, "It is a huge concern within Unit 9. It's a threat to the long-term employment of each and every Unit 9 employee, no matter if they've been on campus four months or 40 years."

One of the areas of biggest concern is the Common Management System, which involves high use of "special consultants" doing what would normally be Unit 9 work. These consulting companies can charge fees exceeding \$300 per hour. Their consultants often work side by side with campus employees, doing work that CSU employees could do for far less money.

Some campuses are going to Google for free e-mail, while others are spending hundreds of thousands to contract out to Microsoft for similar services. "My campus alone claims to be saving \$800,000 in equipment costs," said McGee.

These CSU decisions have led to devaluation of IT specialists throughout the state, along with job elimination through attrition when the Unit 9 employee decides to leave the campus.

When the CSU decides to outsource services, it is bound by policy to put those services out for bid so private companies have the opportunity to compete for the contract. In a competitive economic environment, companies that offer the lowest prices will usually get the consumer to buy their products and

services. This in turn is supposed to benefit the consumer with improved quality of service.

Such is not always the case, however. The San Marcos campus has contracted out a majority of its custodial services since day one. Over the years, there have been a growing number of complaints from employees regarding the quality of service delivered.

CSUEU Chapter 321 President Mike Geck believes that decreased cost through contracting out doesn't always result in a private company doing the job more efficiently. "It's a fact that contractors cut corners to maximize profit," Geck stated. "When they don't deliver, they aren't giving any money back to the campus, just promises to do better next time."

Whether you think contracting out is good or bad, we as California taxpayers and supporters of the academic mission deserve the services we are paying for. As Geck put it, "Management has an obligation to the taxpayers and the campus community to enforce the terms of their contracts or bring the services in-house and hold its employees accountable."

Outsourcing to private business is a risky way to address the many economic demands and financial challenges facing CSU. Management needs to recognize that we, their employees, are valuable resources to be developed rather than costs on a spreadsheet to be cut. Then perhaps future challenges can be met without introducing the risks of contracting out.



Board of Directors meeting



CSUEU President Pat Gantt presents the CSU Board of Trustees with a petition featuring more than 5,000 signatures against proposed parking fee hikes

## CSUEU Committee Reports

### Governance and operations at work

#### CLASSIFICATION

The Classification Committee is offering assistance and workshops on how to write position descriptions for all chapters that wish to assist Library Assistants in their transition to Unit 9, as well as other employees. The committee has reviewed the background, the agreement, the tech letter and the transition pathway to the new LSS classifications and has prepared information that has been distributed to all chapters. Chair Nancy Kobata and Cal Poly San Luis Obispo chapter President Joan Kennedy held a webinar on the subject last July, with some 200 participants from across the state.

Committee members have also examined the proposed Accounting Classification, Qualifications and Standards. The committee determined that input from stewards and members in the affected classifications is needed.

The committee has been looking at problems that foundation employees who transfer to state payroll and our bargaining units have encountered. Committee members have held discussions on how to transition these employees to the proper classifications, especially on those campuses undergoing layoffs. The committee determined that workshops on job merging are needed in addition to workshops on writing position descriptions.

#### COMMUNICATIONS

In recent months, Communications Committee members have worked on the 2012 calendar, fall labor poster, Activist terms of use, open and closed forums on the Activist, the Communications Handbook, web site redevelopment, web site endorsement, and *University Employee*. The committee is also working on a newsletter template for chapters and a bulletin board template for campuses, and it's developing ideas for engaging new activists.

Chair Ray Finnell and committee members would like to remind activists not to use their .edu accounts for confidential e-mails!

#### FINANCE

Chair Loretta Seva'aetasi reports that the Finance Committee continues to closely monitor expenditures and income as well as projections in both categories. Income is down noticeably, due to fewer employees being represented by CSUEU. Layoffs, lack of appointment renewals, and voluntary separations that haven't been filled all result in less dues and fees coming in.

While the situation is not currently critical, the rock of less income and the hard spot of greater-than-normal expenses demands close attention by the committee to ensure that the union doesn't open itself to financial risk. Contract and layoff bargaining means more expenditures, which in turn puts more strain on our ledgers. Seva'aetasi and the other committee members are being vigilant about paying all bills on time and maintaining reserves.

Seva'aetasi is pleased to report that we have signed a dues rebate agreement with SEIU, our parent organization. This and other positives help our situation.

#### LEGISLATIVE

Legislative Committee leaders Natalia Bremer and Andrew Coile have traded positions, with Coile now leading the group as chair and Bremer taking over the vice chair post. Coile, chapter president at CSU Monterey Bay, accepts the challenge, knowing that several attacks against us and other public and private-sector unions are underway. Currently on tap through the ballot initiative process are attacks on the ability of public and private-sector unions to automatically collect union dues for political purposes, plus attacks on public unions' retirement and benefits and on their ability to bargain collectively.

Committee members follow initiatives as well as potential legislation closely, finding out who supports and opposes the items and what their potential impact on us could be. Many of the

initiative projects have sprung up recently and may not obtain enough valid signatures by the deadline. CSUEU is recommending against signing initiative petitions unless you're certain that the initiative is friendly to us. At this point, none of the proposed initiatives that mention unions, retirement, benefits, or collective bargaining are friendly to us.

As candidates for legislative office emerge, the committee will be researching their records and affiliations to formulate recommendations. The new open primary system will drastically change the election process; committee members are keeping tabs on developments.

#### ORGANIZING

The Organizing Committee, chaired by VP for Representation Joseph Dobzynski, Jr., continues to lead the Defense Campaign, which provides bargaining support at contract bargaining sites and at campuses under layoff. Rallies and marches continue to be the most successful means to energize chapters and mobilize support for layoff negotiations. The committee also led the petition campaign against parking fee increases, which resulted in 5000 signatures being presented at the November Board of Trustees meeting.

Looking ahead, the committee is also working on campaigns for the June primary and November elections, plus planning the union's chapter and statewide officers elections.

The committee has also rolled out "Commitment Cards" which have been distributed to each chapter and are an easy way for CSUEU members to indicate their willingness to volunteer their time or services. Contact your chapter president if you would like to sign a commitment card.

#### POLICY FILE

Under Chair Steve Mottaz' leadership and as approved by the CSUEU Board of Directors, the Policy File Committee has added language to the Policy File requiring timelines for electing

chief stewards at the chapter level. New language specifying the line of succession to fill vacancies in the chapter leadership has also been adopted. Web sites that display the CSUEU name and/or logo now must be vetted by CSUEU and granted the right to such usage.

The Legislative Committee is now charged with monitoring CalPERS actions and reporting significant changes to the organization.

A flood of changes, both major and minor, is in the works for the Policy File, one of CSUEU's governing documents. As CSUEU's statewide elections approach (in June, 2012), the committee is considering possible changes to the process. Also in the pipeline are studies of chief stewards' role in chapter business, the statewide officer succession order, and eligibility for office at all levels.

#### REPRESENTATION

Committee Chair Russell Kilday-Hicks and the rest of the committee have turned their full attention to contract bargaining. As of early December, contract negotiations were still ongoing (see "Progress Made in Contract Bargaining," this issue).

In addition to this major responsibility, the committee has also been dealing with layoffs at several campuses and has been trying to mitigate the negative impacts. Depending on which bargaining unit members have been affected by layoff, various members of the bargaining team have been dispatched to the campuses that are under attack. Kilday-Hicks is involved in all negotiations, as are Rich McGee, BU 9 Chair, and Alessandra Brewer, BU 9 Vice Chair, since employees they represent have been targeted at the campuses that are in layoff.

An ongoing committee responsibility is day-to-day representation of employees who need CSUEU's protection. Committee members review cases, offer advice to stewards, and evaluate cases that chapters have forwarded to them for possible further action.



# Dolores Huerta: Labor Leader for All Ages



## CSUEU Fall labor poster honors UFW Co-founder, activist

By Jennifer Schweisinger, CSU Channel Islands

Long before then-presidential candidate Barack Obama co-opted “¡Si, se puede!/Yes, we can!”, it was the slogan of the United Farm Workers (UFW), coined by UFW co-founder Dolores Huerta. Best known for its boycott of the corporate grape industry, the UFW was founded by Cesar Chavez and Dolores Huerta in 1962 and was the first union to successfully organize farm workers.

Dolores Huerta grew up in California’s agricultural San Joaquin Valley, where her mother owned a restaurant and hotel that often allowed farm workers to stay rent free. Huerta received a provisional teaching credential from the University of the Pacific’s Delta Com-

boycott in 1975 resulted in passage of the U.S. Agricultural Labor Relations Act, giving farm workers the right to organize and bargain for better wages and working conditions.

Through boycotting, picketing, and collective bargaining agreements, the UFW was able to secure better working conditions, increased wages, and political power. This mobilization helped improve the quality of life for thousands of farm workers and their families. Prior to organizing, these workers had no substantial way to advocate against the poverty, occupational hazards, and other hardships they endured. Their collective voice and non-violent approach captured the hearts of consumers and attention of the growers to make significant changes in the agriculture industry.

“Registering people to vote is part of the foundation’s work,” she said. “You train organizers, and they go into the community where there’s need. We do a series of meetings in people’s homes. Then you set up an organization from all the people you’ve met with and explain why they need to get together and how they can solve their problems. Then you set up your separate committees: health, education, criminal justice, and, of course, voter registration.”

She continued, “Then you immediately start doing voter registration. You’re not only registering people, you’re explaining to them why it’s important to get involved in the political process, how to get involved in the political

tion of workers continues.

“Hopefully we’ll see the day when we don’t have discrimination against women, against minorities, against workers,” she says.

Huerta still works as an advocate for farm workers, whose pay and working conditions have worsened in recent years. She takes pride in her past political and social activism and in the lives of her 11 children, 14 grandchildren, and four great-grandchildren! This small woman

came from modest beginnings and suffered severe hardship in her struggles, yet maintains her dignity and has inspired thousands and thousands of people worldwide. Labor activists, workers, and sympathetic observers alike respect her work and achievements.

CSUEU honors Dolores Huerta with our fall 2011 poster and thanks her for an extraordinary life of service to unionized workers.

*If you don’t have a strong middle class, that means democracy itself is in danger.*

Dolores Huerta

munity College, and, after teaching elementary school for a short time, left to dedicate her life to helping farm workers. She pursued activism because, as she put it, she “couldn’t stand seeing kids come to class hungry and needing shoes.” Huerta thought she could do more by organizing California’s farm workers than by trying to teach their hungry children.

In 1955, Huerta was a founding member of the Stockton chapter of the Community Service Organization (CSO), which opposed segregation and lobbied for better conditions for farm workers. It was also in the mid-1950s that Huerta first worked with Cesar Chavez as a community organizer in predominately Mexican-American areas of southern California. She found her life’s calling in advocacy for her people, a cause she still works for at age 81.

In 1965, Huerta directed the UFW’s national grape boycott, which resulted in the California table grape industry signing a three-year collective bargaining agreement with the UFW. Another such

As an advocate for farm workers’ rights, Huerta has been arrested 22 times for participating in non-violent civil disobedience activities and strikes. At age 58, she suffered her most life-threatening assault while protesting against the policies of then-presidential candidate George H.W. Bush in San Francisco. A baton-wielding officer broke four ribs and shattered her spleen. Public outrage resulted in the San Francisco Police Department changing its policies regarding crowd control and police discipline. Huerta was awarded an out of court settlement.

On June 5, 1968, Huerta stood beside Robert F. Kennedy on the speaker’s platform as he delivered a victory statement to his supporters at the Ambassador Hotel in Los Angeles shortly after winning the California Democratic presidential primary. Moments later, Kennedy was shot and killed in the hotel’s kitchen.

In 2003 she left the UFW and started the Dolores Huerta Foundation to teach community organizing and encourage voter registration.

process. So, when election time comes around, you have enough committees out there so you can get the vote out. Then you’re looking at an 80 or 90 percent turnout, not at 50 percent, like you are now.”

Huerta also strongly advocates for the continued unionization off workers. “Unions create a middle class. If you don’t have a strong middle class, that means democracy itself is in danger. Many people in many countries, including the United States, say something is wrong. With the economic meltdown, we see people losing their homes, and yet all of these bankers and people from investment houses are giving themselves millions and millions of dollars. That is an obscenity.”

Huerta’s legacy is lasting, and her stance on non-violent change through the organiza-

# DOLORES HUERTA

Social activist and co-founder of United Farm Workers of America

*When the people come together, then they can make a lot of changes. And some of the changes are miraculous.*

*Cuando la gente se une, entonces pueden lograr muchos cambios. Y algunos de los cambios resultan milagrosos.*

**CSUEU**  
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# Technology Task Force Computes

CSUEU’s newest organizational group is its geekiest. The Technology Task Force (TTF) is charged with completing a thorough assessment of the union’s technology resources, followed by developing an improvement wish list and suggested paths to fulfilling that list.

“Some of the systems we rely on are more than 10 years old, older than my daughter,” observed VP for Member Engagement Joseph Dobzynski, Jr., the group’s leader. “The hardware is outdated, the software isn’t nimble, and it’s not very useful for what we need it to do. We’re working with CSEA IT to develop upgrade plans or to replace key aspects of data storage and manipulation, as well as communications.”

The process is already underway in some areas. For example, CSEA earlier this year implemented a new accounting system, which has been sorely needed and is welcome. “The new system is making our jobs much easier,” said VP for Finance Loretta Seva’aetasi. “It took some time to learn, and we’re still picking up things we hadn’t noticed before, but it’s much faster and more thorough for data extraction and manipulation.”

Another major project is a new member database. This system is being planned, with implementation still a way off. The project is so large and complex that every detail must be planned

to the tightest degree, with contingency plans in place for all foreseeable problems. Many other projects will depend on and interact with this one, so it must be more flexible than any other system and must be completely secure.

“The database will become a critical central resource for many of our operations,” said CSUEU President Pat Gantt. “From it, we will be able to extract more accurate mail lists, more complete classification data to see trends in reclassification requests, and a whole host of other slice-and-dice processes that are now painstakingly slow. The cost will easily be recouped because our efficiency will skyrocket.”

Maintaining the security of confidential information is of utmost importance. No unauthorized entries into current systems have occurred, and TTF members, many of whom are responsible for the security of systems at their campuses, are working closely with CSEA IT personnel to be sure it stays that way.

“A breach can cost hundreds of thousands of dollars, if not more,” said TTF member Andrew Coile, chair of the Legislative Committee and president of the Monterey Bay chapter. “We can’t afford intrusions.”

On the committee’s list are staff computing needs, secure pipelines for field staff communications, the most cost-effective

corporate cell phone plan, inexpensive videoconferencing, methods of handling requests for various types of information from members, web site design, even the phones at the Sacramento office. “If it uses electrons, it will come under our microscope,” quipped Coile.

“Many current practices and policies are the best for our needs and the most efficient,” added Dobzynski. “But we want to take a close look to be sure that we’re getting the most for our precious dollars.”

The projects are on separate timelines determined by how difficult, expensive, and interdependent they are, as well as their priority. Some phases have already been completed. Others, such as the new member database, will take months to implement.

“The scope of this group’s charge is unprecedented,” said Gantt. “The organization has never undertaken such a wide-ranging analysis of the systems that are so vital to us. It’s an important step forward.”

The ad-hoc group, appointed by Gantt and led by Dobzynski, is comprised (not surprisingly) of Bargaining Unit 9 members from several campuses. Completing the roster are BU9 Chair Rich McGee (San Bernardino), BU9 Vice Chair Alisandra Brewer (Sonoma), Policy File Committee Chair and Humboldt chapter President Steve Mottaz, Sonoma chapter President and Communications Committee Vice Chair LeeAnne Bowes, and Communications Committee Chair and Bakersfield chapter President Ray Finnell.

*We want to take a close look to be sure that we’re getting the most for our precious dollars.*

Joseph Dobzynski, Jr.



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## Cold War on Labor

*continued from page 3*

people in general. The party is firmly in the hands of corporate powers. These same powers lead the Republican Party (using divergent methods) and the so-called Tea Party Patriots by their invisible nose rings.

The cold war is getting hotter. As wealth disparity reaches new heights, the powerful few are attacking the last holdout of opposition that retains any semblance of power—public employee unions. In the last 30 years especially, private-sector unionism (now at around six percent) is falling to the corporate-led backlash that has been hard at work since FDR's New Deal. At 37 percent, the public sector is still unionized at post New-Deal-era levels. The larger agenda has been to attack and “shrink” the public sector, in order to “defund the left,” as if the public sector were “the left.” The real attack is on the base of the last vestiges of supports to the working class. With anti-tax rhetoric (the very underpinning of the public sector) now winning the day, it makes perfect sense to turn up the heat on public employee unions, the last defenders, it would seem, of the public services. It also forces the question of continuing to fight for “progressive” crumbs tossed by the Democratic Party to maintain its “base” (public unions, public sector) or create something new and more powerful.

Beware the coming ballot. And beware the approach we take in our defense. We must clarify our goals and the strategy and tactics needed to reach them. Elections are only one tool in our movement to make life better for working people and may not be the best investment of most of our energy. Did the decision to switch from sit-downs, marches, and occupation take away from the coalition-building and education “happening” that Wisconsin's state house had become? Did the flipping of two seats in Wisconsin and the effort to elect Gov. Brown move us forward or take us back? What will a two-thirds Democratic majority in California yield without a progressive movement pushing them away from corporate interests?

Questions about labor's future persist, and they all begin with “if.”

- **If the coalition that flipped two Republican seats in Wisconsin can continue and grow, and we can replicate this effort here and across the country;**
- **If we can bring together public education at all levels from K to higher ed, with all its constituents and beneficiaries, and combine them with health care and other social services, and then include the unemployed and underemployed, and connect with other movements like Occupy Wall Street and Refund California;**
- **If such a broad coalition, the politics of millions, can create a dialogue centered on turning around the existing economy that's structured to the needs of bankers that happened in the last 30 years into one that works for working people and re-create public spaces and raise voices that carry the message to protect and grow the public sector, using a real democratic model;**
- **Then working people will have a fighting chance.**

As “Solidarity Divided” co-author Bill Fletcher, Jr., said to the Progressive Caucus at the recent California Democratic Party convention, Democrats have to decide which it is: are they about merely gaining and exercising political power for its own sake, or are they really committed to making things better for working families in America? The party's mostly lip service “dedication” to working people is not reversing the latest trends.

Labor, it seems, has to figure out the very same thing—are we about power and growth at any cost with top-down schemes, or can we be about building a union movement that embraces and empowers all workers, no matter if they are unionized or how they feel about labor? We need to decide. And soon.

## Contract Bargaining

*continued from page 1*

In an unprecedented move, management denied CSUEU's request last summer to extend the former contract. This action breaks a practice with CSUEU reaching back at least 20 years. The CSU also denied contract extension requests from all the other unions.

Despite the tentative agreements, CSUEU President Pat Gantt reminds us of the final goal.

“Although we have moved further along in the process with more tentative agreements, the final desired outcome is an agreement that the members can vote on and ratify,” he said. CSUEU members will have the right to ratify or reject a whole-package tentative agreement. Likewise, the CSU Board of Trustees must ratify any agreement before it becomes our next collective bargaining agreement.

However, Gantt cautions, “A showdown looms over salary structure, parking fees, duration of the agreement and contracting out. It's not over until signed by both sides. A lot can happen between now and then,” he said.

Much has been done, but we are not there yet. Vice President for Member Engagement Joseph Dobzynski, Jr., and other members of the Organizing

Committee have worked intensely to help turn members out at the bargaining sessions over the past months. And it has made a difference, but the overall climate is a lot to overcome.

Kilday-Hicks saw early hints that the CSU was approaching contracting out and other key bargaining issues as if it were a private corporation. “Contracting out has long been a bone of contention, and it continues to grow,” he said. “This practice takes our jobs away in the name of economy and efficiency, when the real goal is privatization.”

Kilday-Hicks sees CSU labor unions as the last bastions of defense for an embattled public higher education system. “Privatizing from within can be a very effective strategy, and this is, unfortunately, what some of the trustees are attempting,” he said. “It is left to the workers and students to be the ultimate defenders of the CSU system. The bargaining table is one of our key battlegrounds in that struggle.”

The next bargaining sessions are scheduled for January 12–13 at the Office of the Chancellor. Watch for updates on the web site and in CSUEU E-News.



An estimated 300 members attended the CSULA Chapter 311 holiday meeting on December 8, just one of many holiday events held at chapters across the state last month.

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