

GC Times

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If you have General Council news call: 415.310.3823

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Governor signs one of 'our' bills

By Russell Kilday-Hicks

Well, the governor finally did it. He actually signed a CSEA-endorsed bill, AB 747. Previous to this signature, excluded (from collective bargaining) state employees could give rank-and-file employees catastrophic leave (annual leave, vacation, compensating time off or holiday leave credits but rank and file employees could not return the favor to the employees covered in CSEA's ACSS affiliate. But our buddy Arnold has fixed it, to the relief of ACSS

leadership.

"Whoo-hoo," ACSS President Tim Brehens said. "We're very happy this legislation passed. Now we have a level playing field with rank and file. But, that's the only legislation he signed. We will still be moving forward with Representative J. Horton on to create a line item for excused employees (AB 1186)," Brehens said.

AB 1186 would address the issue of supervisors making less than the people they manage.

Podcasting and photoblogging at CSEA's General Council

A podcast is a highly compressed audio file that can be downloaded from the Internet with a Web browser and listened to on a portable MP3 player or any PC computer with the appropriate technology (iTunes, etc.). We are using this cutting-edge technology to share GC happenings with interested state employees. All candidates and affiliate leaders are invited to interview. You may talk up to 30 minutes.

To be interviewed:

At your convenience, go to the CSUEU booth on the second floor.

To listen:

Go to the CSEA Web site: www.calcsea.org.

To see the photoblog:

Go to the CSEA Web site: www.calcsea.org/blog.

Cordova—looking at CSUEU's roots

Ready to retire: in on the foundation, and stuck around for a while

By Rich McGee, CSUEU

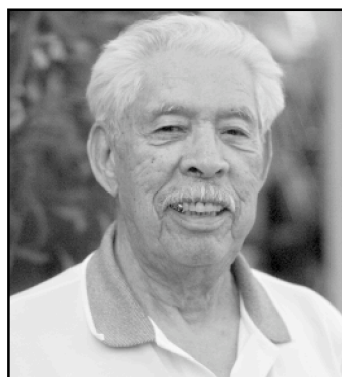
A dictionary defines the word activist as someone "advocating or engaged in activism, or a militant reformer." Many would argue that a more precise definition of the term would be to describe Fred Cordova, the man who brought collective bargaining into the CSU system.

After an 18-year career at Cal State University, San Bernardino, and spending 39 years working within CSEA, Cordova, 82, is officially retiring, again, at the conclusion of this year's General Council. He technically retired 25 years ago, but he has continued working as a volunteer for CSEA almost full-time since then.

"In 1965, I was the third employee hired at CSUSB (Cal State University, San Bernardino), which was a new campus. I went to work there six months before the campus opened."

Originally hired as a plumber, Fred Cordova eventually worked his way up to become supervisor of building and trades at that campus.

"There was no union within the CSU at that time, so a few of us on the campuses started 'staff councils.' There



Fred Cordova

Photo by Steve Sloan

were four of us at CSUSB who started one there. We held meetings, and as time went by we were finally able to establish a staff council at each campus, with a representative attending from each department.

We would meet once a month on each campus, and then again a day before the Chancellor's Office Board of Trustees meetings. We would make all make our recommendations to the chancellor then. They listened to us, really well, and we got additional benefits from them, things like an additional vacation day which civil service never

got. We also got 'comp time' instead of overtime.

"In 1967, a CSEA representative came to the campus, and we became members of Chapter 112, U.S. Forestry Division. We were assigned to that division because there was a state forestry office located just a few miles away. Twelve of us were members. Ken Willard was the CSEA representative. He encouraged me to get 50 people to join so we could start our own chapter, and he gave me 75 membership cards. I got 55 cards signed in four days. We were issued a charter for Badger Hill Chapter 184 (which later became Chapter 320)."

Cordova refers to the founding of Chapter 320 at CSUSB as his proudest moment. "We were finally able to represent each employee equally. Remember, back in those times we didn't have a contract, we didn't have collective bargaining, yet we would still manage to get 150 people to attend our chapter meetings."

But how did collective bargaining start within the CSU system?

"In 1976, three staff members from Long Beach took a resolution to General

Council to establish collective bargaining on the campuses. The first time it was read to the delegates, the proposal quickly was rejected.

Myself, Ted White, an attorney from CSU LA, and Bill Tidwell from San Jose State got together and rewrote the resolution that night. The next morning, I went up to the microphone and asked for reconsideration of the resolution. I read it to the membership, and it passed.

Staff from CSEA were then assigned to assist us. Pete McClory was one who worked with us. Dale Hankens and Carl Heppler were others. These became the people who represented CSEA at the Board of Directors.

Once we got the collective bargaining bill signed and passed into law by Governor Jerry Brown in 1979, the Civil Service Division decided they also wanted collective bargaining. Our bill was Senate Bill 1099, the Higher Education Act. The bill which gave collective bargaining to the Civil Service Division was SB-937.

When the bills became law in 1980, we felt that the University could operate
See "Cordova" on page 2

On the beat ...

By Joseph Corica and Angela Vilasana-Ortiz

There is a lot of activity in Anaheim this week and it's not at all at Disneyland.

The Anaheim Hilton is home to the 63rd General Council of the CSEA. Hundreds of delegates throughout the state have converged here to take care of business and to unite in the fight against public employee bashing.

On the lighter side, Angela and I took a stroll and checked out the various booths sponsored by the different affiliates and benefits programs of CSEA.

Jean Layton of the CSEA Foundation is holding a raffle. She said all of the money collected goes to the Scholarship fund. Scholarships are available for all CSEA members and their children.

Lee Murray-Smith, of the Retired Employees Division (RED), said that, "Retirement is not what I thought it would be." Lee, who keeps herself occupied by working for the retiree division 20 hours a week as the Membership Coordinator, told us that many state agencies contact her for the membership lists. "They're looking for retired annuitants to augment their staffing needs; retired annuitants can work up to 496 hours a year," Lee stated.

Caucus for a Democratic Union (CDU) was next. Hard to miss with all of the lime green shirts piled about. Staffer Janet Walters reminded us to, "Wear green and support the change in the face of the union."

SEIU Local 1000 folks were pushing the message to defeat 75 and 76. Their table festooned with numerous purple goodies, is staffed by Jean



Photo by Rich McGee

Bob Tiberi, Chapter 320 models in front of the CSUEU booth.

Troutman-Poole and Glenn Abrantes. Stop by and pick up a "No on 75 and 76" bumper sticker.

The CSU division table was the most impressive by far. Their booth, consisting of a high tech display featuring photos, t-shirts and other multi-media visual aides including its own lighting system, was jointly purchased by HQ and the San Bernardino chapter.

The Membership Benefits booth, staffed by Anita Muntz, Employee Benefits Representative, shared information with us regarding the various theme park discounts available to members. "There will be a Family Fun Day at Six Flags parks in northern and southern California this fall," chimed Muntz.

The CSEA Insurance products table had a plethora of insurance products for its members.

So during this hectic weekend be sure to take sometime and stop by these booths yourself.

affiliation agreement. We should have gotten the hell out!

The problems soon started. Civil Service would get things from SEIU, but would leave the campuses out. They brought in an agreement to have us affiliate with SEIU, including the supervisors and retirees. SEIU could do nothing for them either. From there, the battle has been going continuously.

Since I was involved with both collective bargaining and staff council, I attended every single one of the SEIU meetings. I would read all of the items, and they would always leave the university system out, always. I'd beg and plead until they let us in. I was known back then as "Microphone Fred." Even

First Person Commentary

My view, 10.6.05

I am sad as CSEA's GC begins. We should celebrate freedom from years of rule by gangsters; instead we are fighting among ourselves. What do the four, SEIU 1000 (Civil Service active employees), SEIU 2579 (CSU active employees), Re-

retired State Employees, ACSS (supervisors and confidentials), have in common?

- We have to battle the jerk in the governor's office, who fails to bargain in good faith, attacks education, and who has stated he wants

to "starve the beast" (the public sector), and "reform" us out of retirement, disability, and death benefits. We must vote against him and his horrible propositions (numbers 73-78). We must protest him at every opportunity with other unions and community groups.

- We know California needs public services like health care, emergency services, employment services, fire protection, law enforcement, child abuse prevention, etc., etc. We must contact everyone with this message.

- We must fight for a sensible state budget that makes those who make over \$100,000 per year pay their way as they did until the tax cut gift that they received under Pete Wilson.

I am disappointed in the CSEA statewide candidates from whom I have heard from so far. I don't agree that we need to save Central Support. This money pit can be cut practically to nothing. We, retirees, for instance, don't

need a large legal staff. I don't support the current officers in the retiree affiliate. There is no democracy, no leadership, vast misuse of funds, and little member lobbying, which should be our major job. I am also very critical in the lack of democracy and representation in SEIU 1000, my former division,

however, I helped count ballots in one election and didn't see any improper behavior. Many of us support SEIU's efforts to create large locals, not because we are "bought off" but because we believe in industrial unionism, everyone in an industry

in one union.

I do not agree that the affiliates should be separate, as we have common interests as public employees and retirees. While it is proper and legal that supervisors and retirees should not dominate the rank-and-file divisions (and spend their funds as has happened for years), we should stay under one umbrella for extra power on common issues. I don't agree with breaking into smaller bargaining units. Bargaining is about power and one has little power in a small unit strike. When I was a bargainer in the private sector, our first level supervisors were in our local and our second level supervisors were in a different local. This is common and proper.

Where is the statewide CSEA leadership with a clear vision of a joint, democratic, and powerful union?

—Linda Roberts, SEIU 1000 retiree, Chapter 2 member; former SEIU 22.

Cordova ...

Continued from page 1

all on its own. Civil Service did not, they wanted an affiliation with an international union, so a nationwide search was done. The AFL-CIO, UAW, and SEIU were examined, and eventually SEIU was selected.

SEIU came in and promised the world. The director of Civil Service back then was Don Anderson, and he thought it was the best deal at the time. I opposed it bitterly, since the CSU division didn't get a vote. It has been my contention for years that since we didn't get a vote, we then shouldn't have been considered to be part of the

at GC, I had to argue to make sure that all resolutions included the CSU. I had to fight tooth and nail to get us included."

When Cordova retired from CSUSB in 1980, he helped to establish CSEA Retiree Chapter 6 for the Inland Empire, and became its first president. He eventually was elected to the Retired Employees Division Council, and has served there both as deputy director and director.

Cordova currently serves as the Director of Region XIV, the largest geographical district in the state, a post he has held for the past 16 years.

As for the future of CSEA, Codova is ambivalent. "It all depends upon the

delegates, and how they vote. If Civil Service wins with all the measures they want, there will be no more CSEA, except perhaps just an office."

On advice for GC delegates, Codova says: "Don't let your leadership tell you how to vote, make up your own mind. Don't just do what the guy at your table with the voting paddles tells you."

Some folks within CSEA might refer to Fred Codova as outspoken, while others may even go so far as to call him stubborn. Cordova disputes these. "I'm just an activist trying to do the right thing and not afraid to speak up. It was the way I was raised. I'm not afraid to talk to people, and I always try to help."