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## Progress Through Unity

### In This Issue

**President's Message** ..... 1

- *The Voice Wins CFT Award*
- **CFT State Convention**

**Focus On: Valerie Kline** ..... 2

**Julia Raybould-Rodgers Accepts.. 2 Full-Time Position**

**“No Two Days Are The Same” ..... 3 Meet Lisa Hughes**

**In Defense of Unions** ..... 4

**Raoul Teilhet Scholarships**..... 5

**Do You Know?** ..... 7

**Office Gossip**..... 7

**Welcome New Members** ..... 7

**FACE Recast as ACR 91** ..... 8

# President's Message



**Mark James Miller**  
**President**  
**AFT Local 6185**

## The Voice Wins CFT Communications Award!

Our very own newsletter, *The Voice of the Part-Time Faculty Association of Allan Hancock College*, has been awarded an Honorable Mention in the yearly California Federation of Teachers Communications Awards. Each year at the annual state convention the CFT Communications Awards are given out "to recognize the people who do important communications work" for their local union. This year *The Voice* was recognized in the category of six page or longer newsletter. When you consider the tough competition we were up against and the number of locals who enter their newsletters each year, you can appreciate what an honor this is. It is our goal to make our newsletter even better in the months and years to come!

## CFT State Convention Held in Oakland April 11-13

Each year the California Federation of Teachers holds its annual convention. The event lasts three days and is attended by delegates from CFT lo-

icals statewide. This year over 500 delegates from more than 60 locals came to the Oakland Convention Center to take part. This year our local was able to send four delegates (our largest ever): President Mark James Miller, Secretary-Treasurer Gary Aston, and Executive Board members Joan Mahony and Dorran Nadeau (his first time attending).

The convention consists of general sessions, workshops, and committee meetings. (This year I volunteered to serve on the Higher Education Professional Issues Committee, which is chaired, incidentally, by Marilyn Rossa, President of the CFT local that represents Cuesta College's faculty). At the general sessions speakers address the convention on issues important to education, resolutions are debated and awards are given out. At the workshops delegates have an opportunity to learn skills and received valuable information on topics ranging from politics to finances. This year we attended workshops on Academic Freedom, Parity for Part-Time Instructors, Legal Issues, Taxes and Fiscal Responsibility for union locals. We benefited from the experiences of other teachers and union members, reminding us once again that one of the advantages of belonging to member-driven union like CFT is being able to utilize the expertise that it has to offer.

## Focus On

Starting with this issue, *The Voice* will begin profiling members of the part-time faculty at Allan Hancock College. If you know of a part-time instructor, librarian, or counselor who would make an interesting subject for this series, please send their name and contact information to: [acpfa@verizon.net](mailto:acpfa@verizon.net) or [markjamesmiller@charter.net](mailto:markjamesmiller@charter.net).

### Valerie Kline, Dance Instructor

Valerie Kline demonstrates the dance moves to her class with the sort of graceful, practiced ease that comes from many years of diligent effort. She seems able to defy gravity at times. (See photo at right) The students, doing their best to imitate her, twist, turn and jump as the music of Jimi Hendrix plays. Getting this right takes time, time and hard work. This could be a cardio-fitness class. The students, perspiring but enthusiastic, watch and listen carefully as Valerie goes over the movements again.

She has been teaching dance at Allan Hancock College for more than twenty years—since 1987, and enjoys it as much now as she did when she began. A longtime Central Coast resident, she was born in Santa Maria. After attending both the University of California at Irvine and Santa Barbara, she received her B.A. from Cal State Fullerton, then moved on to Colorado State for her graduate work. She remained in Colorado and taught there for five years before returning to California.

Valerie's love for teaching shows in



seeing the students learn and develop under her instruction. She likes to use a wide variety of music in her classes, and spends a great deal of time selecting the music she will use. She also teaches at Cal Poly in San Luis Obispo. When not teaching, this Arroyo Grande resident enjoys reading (her favorite book is *Middlesex*, by Jeffrey Eugenides) and graphic arts.

### Julia Raybould-Rodgers Accepts Full-Time Position

After years of part-time teaching for Allan Hancock College, Julia Raybould-Rodgers has accepted a full-time position in the college's English Department.

Originally from London, Julia came to the U.S. in 1994. She taught ESL in Turkey for fifteen years prior to that. She has also traveled in Russia, and returns regularly to the U. K. to visit her family there.

Julia got her first assignment teaching ESL at Hancock in 2000 and has taught many ESL and English classes since then. She has also taught ESL at Cuesta College since 2003. Her devotion to teaching is revealed in her comment, "My students have taught me everything I know." Despite her soon-to-be-full-time status, she intends to continue to be involved in part-time issues and wants her fellow part-time instructors to know that now that she has an office, her door will always be open to them. She also plans to continue working in the college's writing center and will maintain an interest in serving on the Student Learning Outcomes Task Force.

Julia lives in Oceano with her husband Gerald, a teacher at Santa Maria High School, and their four children. She long been a member of the Executive Board of the Part-Time Faculty Association and her presence will be sorely missed by us all. Julia, we wish you the best, and thanks for all your hard work and dedication!

## "No Two Days Are The Same"

By Mark James Miller

### Meet Lisa Hughes, Allan Hancock College's New Director of Human Resources

The person in charge of personnel is important in any organization. He or she has the awesome responsibility of trying to deal with the infinite varieties and nuances of human behaviors and attempting to keep everyone happy and productive at the same time. Because of the role personal relationships play in an institution of higher learning, the challenge of directing a human resources department is even more daunting. But Lisa Hughes, who became Allan Hancock College's Director of Human Resources in November 2007, enjoys the challenge precisely because of its many facets. "No two days are the same," she says, and that is what she likes best about the job.

Prior to coming to Hancock Lisa worked as the Director of Human Resources for the Chumash Casino. She held a Human Resources management position for Starbucks Coffee in the Inland Empire. She received her B.A. in Management from Cal Poly Pomona, and her Master's from Kelly Graduate School. Currently, she is working on her doctorate at the University of Phoenix, and also teaches there.

When not working, teaching or studying, Lisa finds time to play golf (a hobby she picked up while living in Myrtle Beach, South Carolina). She also enjoys spending time with



Lisa Hughes, Director of Human Resources.

Paulie, her pet Weimaraner. On weekends she drives south to visit her family. As a relatively new resident of the Central Coast, she also enjoys sightseeing and getting better acquainted with our beautiful section of California.

## The Learning Assistance Program (LAP)

By Noel Warffuel  
Learning Disability Specialist  
Lompoc Valley Center

The Learning Assistance Program (LAP), provided at both campuses, is available to assist students that are

documented with a disability. Learning Disabled students are students that may have no difficulties in most academic areas, but do experience problems in areas such as reading rate, reading comprehension, writing fluency, or mathematical computation. We are not Special Education classes. There are three classifications of disabilities: physical, psychological, & learning. At college level, students have the choice to accept our offer of assistance or to go it alone—to see how well they'll do without our services. Many older students never had the opportunity to be tested for Learning Disabilities when they were in high school. Academic counselors as well as counselors from other college programs (EOPS, CARE, FINANCIAL AID) can and do direct their counselees to LAP offices for information. We are a support service and function to bring successful completion of college work to students. As a department, we do make classroom visitations upon instructor request to describe our assistance to your students (X3274 Santa Maria, X5274 Lompoc Valley Center).



Valerie Kline, dance instructor, with student.

# In Defense of Unions

(First In A Series)

By Mark James Miller

The hangdog looks on their faces said it all.

A dean stood delivering a tongue-lashing to a group of part-time instructors, three or four people who had evidently committed some offense that caused her to come storming out of her office, her face red with rage, her demeanor boding ill for whoever happened to be the target of her wrath. She had a reputation as a bully and tyrant, and her fits of temper were well-known and feared; secretaries and student workers ran for cover when she approached. Bursting into the workroom where these teachers were preparing their classes (naturally, as part-timers, they had no offices to do this in) she proceeded to give them a fearful dressing-down.

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**“Don’t waste time mourning. Organize.”**  
Joe Hill

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She shouted and gesticulated in a disrespectful, threatening manner that would have been thought abusive had it been meted out to a class of third graders. As this tirade went on I wondered why none of these people spoke up in their own defense. Why didn't one of them tell this woman that her behavior was unacceptable? But no one said anything. The instructors on the receiving end of this

harangue simply hung their heads and took it, the way chastened children will.

I never learned what their crime was, but for me this day in 1999 was a revelatory moment, eureka! A light came on, an epiphany was reached. The need for a union of the part-time instructors at Allan Hancock College was driven home to me. These people didn't say anything because their jobs were forfeit if they did. They were contingent workers without rights. Their employment was at the mercy of this dean, who held their jobs in her hand and knew she could mistreat them with impunity. They had the choice of taking this or quitting. And it goes without saying that the culture then existing at the college enabled her to perpetrate her abuse; she did it, in other words, because she *could*. No one in a position to challenge her authority had ever said, or would ever say, that what she did was unacceptable.

A few months after this incident took place an election was held, under the supervision of the Public Employee Relations Board. Part-time instructors at Allan Hancock College voted on whether or not they wanted to unionize. The vote was a staggering 87% "yes." Why such an overwhelming repudiation of the status quo? The part-time faculty at Hancock College was one of the lowest paid in California, eighth from the bottom. They could be hired and fired at the whim of whoever was doing the scheduling, be it a department chair or a dean, and had no recourse if treated unfairly, arbitrarily, or abusively. If a dean decided his/her nephew should

have your job, the nephew had your job, and that was the end of the story. There were no office hours; instructors were expected to meet with students on their own time, and, in some departments, coerced into attending meetings and taking part in activities such as holistic grading of tests without pay. Yet they were expected, (as they still are today), to provide the same quality education as that provided by their much-better paid and recognized full-time brethren. They had no input in how the college is operated, despite teaching at least half of the units offered. Only a union representing their interests could start to make effective changes and challenge the culture that regarded part-time instructors as second-class citizens.

## “Not A Union Person”

The rest, as they say, is history, when you consider all the improvements the union has made and continues to make, but not everyone was happy. “I want you to know that I am *not* a union person,” were the words of a part-time instructor who called our office to object after we negotiated the agency fee in 2003.

*Continued on Page 6*

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## Part-Time Faculty Association

AFT Local 6185

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**FOR HIGH SCHOOL  
STUDENTS and  
CONTINUING  
COLLEGE STUDENTS**

#### About the scholarship program

The scholarships were established in honor of former CFT President Raoul Teilhet, the charismatic leader of the union during the 1970s when California education employees won collective bargaining.

#### About the scholarship awards

Scholarships of \$3000 are awarded to students entering or attending a four-year university; \$1000 scholarships are awarded to students entering or attending a two-year school. The awards are based on academic achievement, financial need, special talents and skills, participation in extra-curricular activities, and a 500-word essay on a social issue about which the applicant feels strongly.

#### Who is eligible to apply

Scholarships are available to graduating high school seniors and continuing college students who are children or dependents of CFT members in good standing, or children of deceased CFT members. High school seniors who received a Raoul Teilhet Scholarship are not eligible to apply for a continuing college scholarship.

#### How to obtain an application

To download a scholarship application, go to **www.cft.org**. To obtain a photocopy of the application, contact your local union, or to have an application mailed to you, phone the CFT Administrative Office.

**California Federation  
of Teachers**   
AFT, AFL-CIO  
*A Union of Professionals*

**Administrative Office**  
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Burbank, CA 95105  
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[www.cft.org](http://www.cft.org)



FRU.jh

**HIGH SCHOOL APPLICATIONS MUST BE POSTMARKED BY  
JANUARY 10, 2008**

**COLLEGE APPLICATIONS MUST BE POSTMARKED BY  
JULY 1, 2008**

## In Defense of Unions

*Continued from Page 4*

She was opposed to unions philosophically, she said, and she resented having to be associated with one. She saw no need for a union of the part-time instructors at Allan Hancock College, and said that as far as she was concerned it would have been better if the union had never been formed at all.

I told her that if you truly detest unions there is a way you can prove it. Start by giving back the raises we have negotiated for you. (In our first contract alone we were able to wring a 14% pay increase for the part-time faculty out of the administration). Refuse to accept any increases in pay we get for you in the future. Return the state parity money, (the distribution of which the union negotiated on your behalf). Refuse to avail yourself of any of the rights we have won for part-time instructors, such as office hours, rehire rights, and the right to file a grievance. Do all this, and you will prove that your anti-unionism is genuine. If you don't, I'll know you are just looking for a free ride.

The conversation came to an abrupt denouement, although before she hung up she did say something to the effect that the administration would have given all this to the part-time faculty *without* a union being involved. Exactly how that feat would have been accomplished she did not try to elucidate, and when I repeated that idea to a room full of administrators during a negotiating session their

laughter literally shook the building. We have not heard from her since. Nor has she returned any of her pay or refused to accept any of the increases we have negotiated over the years. But her comments were typical of what is said by those who are opposed to organized labor. Some believe unions are unnecessary, others take exception at being "forced" to belong to one, still others just don't like unions and want no part of them.

Do we honestly need a union of the part-time instructors at Allan Hancock College? Are unions still relevant in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century? Why not let your employer determine your rate of pay and what rights you as an employee should have? They know what they can afford to pay and are much better acquainted with the intricacies of their budget than anyone else. They understand their institutional and corporate needs to a greater degree than any employee can. Wouldn't we, as community college teachers, counselors and librarians, be wiser to let the administration decide if we need rehire rights or office hours? Can't we rely on administrators and department chairs to always treat people fairly? If you do your job the way you should, the administration will appreciate your efforts and keep you employed here, so job security and rehire rights are irrelevancies. Who needs a union?

In a perfect world, nobody would. In a perfect world unions would not be necessary. Neither would police, the military, the Securities and Exchange Commission, elected government in general or the President of the United States in particular. (That this would

put the current occupant of 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue out of work is a subject best left to another discussion). In a perfect world, employers, both public and private, would pay their workers exactly what they deserved, and would always treat them fairly, justly, and with appreciation for their hard work and loyalty. Workers would never be exploited or abused, corporate profits and CEO pay would never be excessive, wages and salaries would always keep up with inflation, and life would be the proverbial bowl of cherries.

Most people reading this know the millennium hasn't arrived yet, and we don't live in Utopia. We live in a world of global warming, \$100-a-barrel oil, wars, famine, poverty, corporate scandals, downsizing and outsourcing. In short, we live in a world of imperfect human beings who do not always follow the better angels of their nature. Until that day arrives, workers are going to need unions to represent their interests to those that employ them.

But the past 30 years have not been the best of times for the American labor movement. Unions, and unionism, have been in decline. A changing economy, a relentless onslaught of anti-union propaganda from the right, a great deal of anti-union legislation, and a complacency in the mindset of traditional union leaders have all combined to bring about a drastic devolution to what was once an important factor in the American social, economic and political landscape. Organized labor can, and by rights ought to be, a powerful and positive force in American life. At

their best, unions function as a counterweight to otherwise unchecked corporate and managerial power, and are a standard bearer for social and economic justice. That unions have often fallen short of these ideals is undeniable, and that they are at least partially to blame for their own demise is equally true. Nor can it be gainsaid that the labor movement can—in fact, it must, and soon—rise up out of the ashes, reinvent and reassert itself, and be an effective advocate for working families in the United States.

Unions are necessary. Unions are relevant. Without unions acting as a counterbalance, managerial and corporate power runs amok, as is shown in skyrocketing executive pay and scandals such as Enron and Tyco. The decline of the unions has run parallel to a decline in middle-class living standards, with more and more Americans falling into poverty, more and more Americans going without medical care, and the wealthiest becoming even wealthier. If these trends are to be reversed, unions are going to have to step up and play a major role.

## Do You Know?

By **Dorran Nadeau**

I wonder how many people know about this? A 36 year old female had an accident several weeks ago and totaled her car. A resident of Kilgore, Texas, she was traveling between Gladewater & Kilgore. It was raining, though not excessively, when her car suddenly began to hydroplane and literally flew through the air. She was not seriously injured but very stunned at the sudden occurrence!

When she explained to the highway patrolman what had happened he told her something that every driver should know: *Never drive in the rain with your cruise control on.* She thought she was being cautious by setting the cruise control and maintaining a safe consistent speed in the rain. But the highway patrolman told her that if the cruise control is on when your car begins to hydroplane and your tires lose contact with the pavement, your car will accelerate to a higher rate of speed making you take off like an airplane. She told the patrolman that was exactly what had occurred.

The patrolman said this warning should be listed on the driver's seat sun-visor: *Never use the cruise control when the pavement is wet or icy,* along with the airbag warning. "We tell our teenagers to set the cruise control and drive a safe speed - but we don't tell them to use the cruise control only when the pavement is dry."

The only person the accident victim found who knew this (besides the patrolman), was a man who had had a similar accident, totaled his car and sustained severe injuries. Please pass this on.

## Office Gossip

By **Gary Aston and Dorran Nadeau**

Another new feature we are introducing in this issue is *Office Gossip*, written by Secretary-Treasurer Gary Aston and Member-At-Large/Computer Whiz Dorran Nadeau. Since joining us in 2002, Gary has turned our office into a professional

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## Welcome New Members

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Vanessa Ballam

Craig Hendricks

James West

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and efficient operation. Dorran, who joined us as a board member last year, has contributed his technical skills in upgrading our computers and making our office much more technologically sound, as well as the Publications Director of *The Voice*. As president, I can't thank either of them enough for their efforts. We would like our members to have a better idea of what is going on in our office, and with that in mind, we are starting this new column as a regular feature in our newsletter—Mark James Miller.

- The Part-Time Faculty Association Bylaws and the negotiated contract with Allan Hancock College is now available at [www.ahcpfa.org](http://www.ahcpfa.org).
- In the near future *The Voice* will include a new feature, *Sound Off*, that will be a forum available to anyone wishing to express an opinion, or address other items of interest regarding academic issues. Guidelines for article content and length will be forthcoming. Any suggestions for other features that might be included in *The Voice* are welcome.
- The hierarchy of your union begins at the national level with the American Federation of Teachers (AFT), followed by our state affiliation, the California Federation of Teachers (CFT), and ends with your Local 6185. All told, there are 1.4 million members in the AFT.

## Faculty and College Excellence Act recast as legislative resolution ACR 91

*From the CFT Part-Timer, Spring 2008*

Assemblyman Tony Mendoza, D-Artesia, has recast the CFT-sponsored Faculty and College Excellence Act into a legislative resolution. Assembly Concurrent Resolution 91 is an “intent” bill designed to keep AB 1343, California's FACE bill, alive until funding is legislatively clarified.

The PACE legislation calls for 75 percent of the classes at community colleges to be taught by full-time faculty and for part-time faculty to be paid at the same rate as full-time faculty for comparable work.

ACR 91 cleared its first legislative hurdle of the year, passing out of the Assembly Higher Education Committee March 4 on a 5-1 vote. The reso-

lution now moves to the Assembly Appropriations Committee. Palomar Faculty Federation Co-President Julie Ivey joined CFT leaders in Sacramento to testify in favor of the bill. “Testifying before the subcommittee was a bit scary, but productive,” Ivey explains. “Almost all of the bills modeled on FACE in other states have died in committee, so this was a key chance for ours to move out of committee onto the floor.”

Ivey's testimony came from a perspective that legislators need to hear. “I told them about being an instructor so underpaid I was forced into being a freeway flyer, with commutes that make it almost impossible for me to consult with my students even if I wanted to do so for free.”

“A new point that I was glad to enter into the record was how dangerous it is for the state to gamble that the nurturing instinct that accompanies teaching will keep egregiously underpaid instructors doing all they can to fully serve students for negligible compensation.”

Ivey said she left the hearing “with a sense that an important foundation had been set for the real work—the lobbying of legislators and multifaceted organizing—needed if we're going to have a chance of getting a FACE bill passed.”

The next step presents more challenging, but not impossible, hurdles, according to CFT Legislative Director Judith Michaels. Since California is the only state that limits the number of classroom hours a part-timer can teach, and how many part-timers a community college can hire, getting ACR 91 approved before the funding is fully defined may not be as insurmountable as it has been in states without such limits.

The CFT-sponsored resolution is part of a national AFT campaign to establish pro rata pay and benefits for part-time faculty, and create more full-time, tenure-track lines.

► To learn more or to voice your opinion on the blog *FACE Talk*, go to <http://face.aft.org>.

Part-Time Faculty Association  
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Place  
Stamp  
Here