

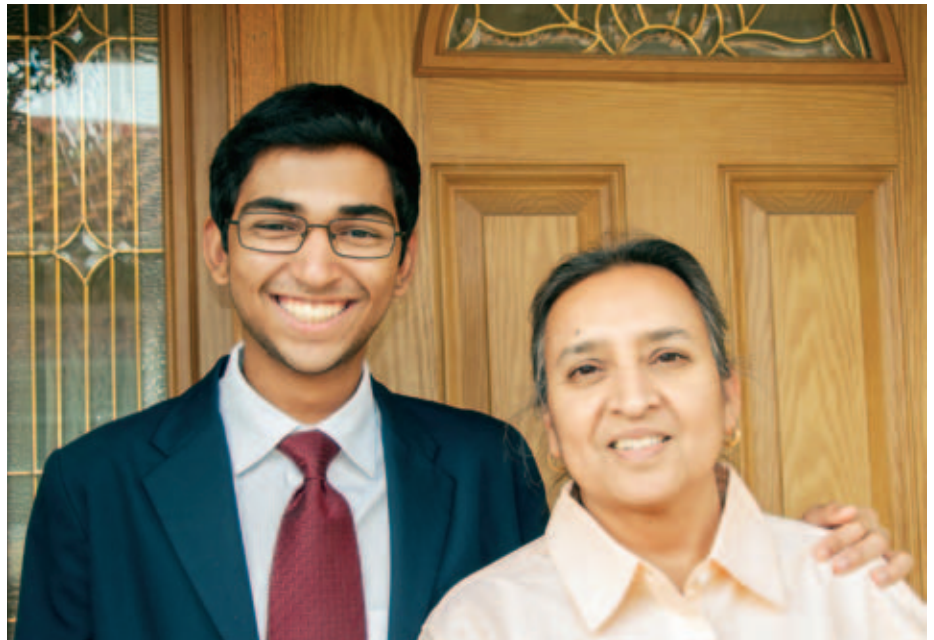
Presidential POV

WITH 34 NEW contract faculty members finishing their first year of tenure review—and a total of 41 heading toward permanent status—Peralta is at last starting to build a solid foundation of full-time faculty at the four colleges.

Still, the overall number of full-timers remains troublingly low. Even with the 41 tenure-trackers in the pipeline, the latest draft of Peralta's seniority list shows fewer than 300 regular contract faculty members district-wide. Time was, PCCD vets will remind you, there were more than 300 full-timers at Laney alone.

Emphasizing the basic necessity of having a robust full-time faculty shouldn't be taken as a slight to part-time faculty. Part-timers do more than their fair share at Peralta, and they do it for less money and with less security than their full-time colleagues. But it's tough to run four comprehensive colleges effectively when the majority of instructors, counselors, librarians, and nurses don't know if they'll have a job next semester.

So as we celebrate the recent wave of full-time faculty hires across the district, let's not allow ourselves to get complacent. The ratio of full-time faculty members to administrators, standing at around 4.25-1, is badly out of whack. And until the colleges see a dramatic increase in their full-time ranks, they will continue to find that committee work, accreditation, program review, and extra-classroom projects of all kinds will remain all but unmanageable.



BCC prof's son wins CFT Scholarship

Vikram Melkote, son of BCC part-time chemistry instructor Neeta Sharma, won the prestigious Raoul Teilhet Scholarship, a \$3,000 award given to children of members of affiliates of the California Federation of Teachers, PFT's state-level parent union. A senior at Campolindo High School in Moraga, Vikram, a computer enthusiast, will hear from his top-choice colleges in the next several weeks.

Legislative and legal action

Assemblymember Rob Bonta (AD 18, Alameda) introduced legislation to limit the authority of the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges (ACCJC) and make it more transparent. AB 1942 would remove the commission's special status as the sole accreditor of California's community colleges and open up the field to other agencies. Bonta, whose district includes three of the four Peralta colleges, is working closely with CFT and the Office of the City Attorney of San Francisco to effect significant change in the way accreditors operate in the Golden State.

Across the Bay, meanwhile, AB 1942 co-sponsor Tom Ammiano has submitted another bill that would protect districts from one of the most devastating consequences of accreditation trouble—namely, the undemocratic removal of elected boards by the state's Board of Governors.

Ammiano's bill (AB 2087) would alter existing law that allows the BoG to replace a locally elected board with a special trustee when a district, in the BoG's view, falls on hard times. The current system has an unsettling authoritarian logic that defies the most basic democratic principles.

(continues inside)

INSIDE

- ▶ Heartfelt Thanks
- ▶ Jerry Herman
- ▶ Leave Banking
- ▶ Part-time Retirement



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Peralta Federation of Teachers, AFT Local 1603 represents nearly 1,000 teachers, counselors, librarians, and nurses at the College of Alameda, Berkeley City College, Laney College, and Merritt College. PFT is an affiliate of the California Federation of Teachers and the American Federation of Teachers, AFL-CIO. AFT represents more than 1.5 million members nationwide.

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Presidential POV

(continued from page one)

While AB 1942 and AB 2087 both took shape in the aftermath of ACCJC's mishandling of City College of San Francisco's accreditation, the effects of the legislation, if passed, would improve the operations of community colleges statewide.

In Los Angeles, meanwhile, a K-12 court case with likely implications for tenured faculty at all levels rages on. A group backed by a Silicon Valley billionaire is pushing to end teacher protections—tenure and seniority above all—on the specious grounds that they harm students. *Vergara v. California*, likely to be tied up in court for years no matter what happens in LA, will almost certainly inspire other attempts to undo decades' worth of hard-won gains for public school teachers. At risk are core values such as academic freedom, job security, due process, and workplace safety.

Add to *Vergara* and ACCJC-related drama the threat posed to collective bargaining rights by *Harris v. Quinn*, now before the U.S. Supreme Court, and it becomes clear that the next few months are going to be interesting ones for PFT—and for public education and organized labor in general.

Bitter PIL

PFT has voiced concern about the district's relationship with Partners

In Leadership (PIL), a corporate consulting firm that preaches "culture change," since Chancellor José M. Ortiz first publicly raised the possibility of hiring the outfit.

The board unanimously approved a three-year contract with PIL, worth up to \$315,000, despite the misgivings I expressed at the Jan. 15 flex-day general session and at the Jan. 21 BoT meeting. I continued to press the issue in conversations with the chancellor and trustees.

In the wake of an early-March retreat—during which some 70 PCCD administrators left their desks for two days to participate in PIL training—many faculty contacted the union to question the use of district resources to pay for corporate-style management training. Faculty doubt the fitness of a top-down corporate organizational model for a democratic public institution such as ours. Also troubling to many is the use of our still-depleted general funds for services delivered so far outside the classroom. Nor does the fact that top PIL executives gave money to support Prop 8 sit well with faculty.

PFT will continue to monitor the district and board, and it will continue to anticipate and respond to faculty concerns.

In solidarity,

Matthew M. Goldstein

President, PFT, AFT Local 1603



It's a family affair: PFT rep/Laney counselor Miriam Zamora-Kantor (above right, flying PFT colors) brought her son, Adil, and her husband, Carlos (bearded gent, center), to San Francisco Superior Court late last year to support City College of San Francisco in its successful effort to win a preliminary injunction against the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges. Also pictured: CCSF dance teacher Kathe Burick (far left, texting), CCSF supporter Alison Lambert (front left), CCSF ESL teacher Rita Moran (far right), and CCSF/Laney part-timer Juan Calvo (behind Lambert).

Heartfelt Thanks

Chef Jay Miller says PFT Labor Rep Anna Roy takes the cake

Dear Union Colleagues,

AM A PART-TIME instructor in the Culinary Arts Department at Laney, and I want to share a very important experience I had last semester.

On Wed., Oct. 16, I suffered a heart attack. I was able to get to Kaiser Hospital, and the staff there saved my life that day. After five days in the hospital, I was released. I was scheduled to check back into Kaiser on Mon., Oct. 28, so that I could be observed as they took me off blood thinner medication to prepare me for triple-bypass surgery set for three days later.

I'm emphasizing the short window of time—just 12 days—that I had to guarantee that my three classes would be taken care of and to make sure I continued to be paid while recovering. I was also apprehensive about being able to communicate with Laney staff and with the people at the district I would need to speak to after I was admitted to the hospital.

I knew I had an accumulation of sick-day hours from my seven-plus years at Laney, and since I had not previously used any of these hours, I was fairly certain I could apply my sick leave towards the remaining work hours for the last six weeks of the semester. As noted, the timeframe in which I was trying to accomplish these things was very short. I had only from Tues., Oct. 22, to Fri., Oct. 25, to figure out how the sick-leave hours would work for me, and as you can imagine, I was not at full strength.

I felt that the more I could do to get my paperwork ducks in a row, the faster the process would go. As in most bureaucracies, the time factor can be a bit slow if everything's left to others to get things done. Considering how difficult it might be to get the correct administrators and district office staff on board with my situation, and really



Jay Miller and Anna Roy

not knowing whom to specifically contact, I decided on Mon., Oct. 21, to email our union president, Matthew Goldstein, who quickly put me in touch with Anna Roy, the PFT labor representative. Anna turned out to be just the person I needed.

Anna and I spent a great deal of time talking on the phone about my situation. She created a plan to move forward, and kept me informed by both phone and email, including me on emails to HR. I was constantly in the loop. The sick-leave hours were located, and there were indeed enough to cover my absence. The correct forms (LARs) were found, and Anna placed them in my office for me to retrieve, sign, and submit to my department chair, who passed them along to my dean for his signatures and subsequent submission. By the end of the week, everything was in place, and

by the time I entered the hospital on Mon., Oct. 28, the dean had confirmed that he had received the forms. In addition, Anna continued corresponding with HR and the dean into November to confirm all was going smoothly with my sick-leave/payroll situation.

The bottom line was that through the efforts of Anna Roy and her attentiveness, diligence, and persistence in working on my behalf, I did not need to deal with the pressure of an unanswered question pre- or post-surgery. I was paid correctly, and I'm still here to tell you about it. I believe my experience is a fine illustration of how the union in general, and Anna Roy in particular, works for our best interests.

Sincerely,

Jay Miller

Culinary Arts Instructor, Laney College

ANNA ROY joined the PFT office staff in 2009. Fresh from her work organizing casino workers in Southern California for UNITE HERE, Anna started her tenure with Local 1603 as the Database Coordinator/Communications Specialist, a formula-funded staff position. Anna's commitment to labor and to social justice has made her a valuable part of the PFT team, and her work as Labor Representative has given her an opportunity to use her considerable talents and energy to fight for Peralta faculty.

A PFT founding father

Jerry Herman

JERRY HERMAN was among the small group of Peralta faculty members who got together to form the Peralta Federation of Teachers half a century ago.

Here, in the second in a multipart series of interviews with key figures in the history of PFT, Herman—who retired from the Laney College English Department in 2002 after over 40 years of service—talks with the *Peralta Teacher* about the early days of PFT.

What years were you active in the leadership of PFT?

Shirley Nedham was the first president; I was treasurer. Next year, 1966, I was president, followed by Chuck Wollenberg. First year of PFT was probably '65. Years later I was on the exec for a couple of years, when Michael [Mills] first was president.

Why was the organization formed—what goals or guiding principles were important to the people working in the organization?

PFT was formed to have a voice in faculty salaries and working conditions. Of course, the legal implementation of those goals (collective bargaining) didn't come until years later. At first the PFT was more like a faculty pressure group representing a significant portion of the faculty. The base and strongest college for unionization was always Laney.

What made you get involved?

I became involved because it was the sixties and for wet-behind-the-ears, left-leaning idealist kids like me forming and joining a union were the least anyone could do to uphold peace, freedom, justice, fairness, civil rights, and the coming revolution.

Can you describe some of the important concerns of the faculty in Peralta at that time? Also, what specific issues around wages, benefits, and working conditions were the faculty facing?

These were the very early days of Peralta, and we were living through a honeymoon period which now looks like a golden age. (You never know you've lived through one till it's gone.) Everyone was pretty collegial. Hard lines were not drawn between faculty and administration. Informally, faculty had a lot of autonomy and decision-making power. When we met with them, colleagues from other districts were amazed at how much informal power Peralta faculty had. The newly formed Peralta board and district administration were pretty laid back (it was the sixties). One reason is that money, always the most important element in the equation, was relatively abundant. The district was fairly generous and Peralta had not yet, as it would a few years later, become one of the poorest paid districts in the Bay 10. So faculty did not see it as vital to fight for more because we were getting hospitalization and dental coverage at low costs. Merritt, at that point still down on Grove St., was the old guard college. Laney and Alameda would have young faculties who wouldn't use benefits the way older faculties and staffs would. But, more important, benefits were cheap in those days and would be thrown in to sweeten the pot when salaries would not be increased. That's why we have such great benefits today.

What kind of working relationship did the academic senate and PFT have during that time period?

Faculty senates were also new at the time. I can't remember if there even was a district academic senate when PFT was formed. At Laney the leadership between the faculty senate and the PFT was nearly interchangeable from year to year. The senate did not see itself getting involved with typical labor issues: salary, benefits, etc. The chief conflict for PFT was from the faculty faction that joined CTA. A bitter fight for jurisdiction developed a few years down the line when faculty organizations were given official




recognition to represent faculty. PFT won the battle, but the residual effects of the fight were among the reasons that Peralta fell behind in Bay 10 salaries and never could catch up. (Too long a story to go into here.)

You have had a variety of leadership roles in Peralta, and as a retired faculty member, you are now president of PRO (Peralta Retirees Organization). What links do you see between the work of PFT today and PRO?

As you know, we have a very good working relationship with PFT. We are mutually cooperative on many issues, the most recent being the reconciliation of current SPDs [summary plan documents, handbooks detailing employee and retiree health benefits] with their original language. Our vice president, Bruce Jacobs, conducts several workshops a year on Medicare for active employees. PRO brings an enormous amount of institutional memory to the table any time we deal with a mutual issue. We love our relationship with PFT and hope the feeling is mutual.

What do you feel are some of the most important issues facing faculty today?

Probably the same as always, but I am not as conversant with faculty issues as I used to be. 

Leave Banking

Frequently Asked Questions

By **Patricia Dudley**

Secretary/Grievance Officer

CONTRACT faculty are often asked to carry a full load of classes plus do additional work. In most industries, this is called “overtime.” Not in Peralta. Here it is called “extra service.” In industry, overtime is usually compensated at one and a half times regular pay; at Peralta, overtime is paid at a lower rate, and sometimes at a significantly lower rate, than straight time. This lower amount is called the “extra-service rate.”

However, there is a way to get paid at 100%—or more—for extra service. That way is to take all or part of your extra service as leave banking.

What is leave banking?

Leave banking means that you are putting your extra-service hours into a “bank.” As you put time into your bank, those hours add up. The college scheduler keeps track of your hours and has a running total of the time you have banked. Under the PFT contract, you are allowed to bank up to 30 equated hours, an entire year’s worth of time.

How can I get paid for extra service at 100% of my salary?

The best way to see that money at 100% of your salary is to use the time during the year. For example, instead of having five three-unit classes for a semester, you can choose to have only four classes, and use your banked hours to make up your required hours and keep your paycheck whole. If you have classes that sometimes get canceled at the last minute, you may want to bank hours when times are flush, to use when you are faced with a last-minute class cancellation (you will never be required to do this, however). Or you can choose to take an entire semester off, use 15 hours of banked leave, and keep getting your regular paycheck.

Can I get paid at more than my regular rate?

Yes. Let’s say you worked your extra service in fall 2011. At that time your salary was \$75,000 per year, and you banked an equivalent of one three-unit class. You choose to take your time from the bank in fall 2014, equal to one three-unit class, when you are making \$81,000 per year. In 2011, that class was worth \$7500; in 2014, the same number of hours is worth \$8100—an 8% increase.

Is there another downside to taking extra service instead of banking my hours?

Yes. When you are paid money at the extra-service rate, you are not maximizing your fundamental retirement benefits; when you use leave banking, you are. While a faculty member is on banked leave, he/she shall receive full salary payment, credit for anniversary salary-step increments, health and welfare benefits, sick leave and retirement in the same manner as if he/she were on a regular assignment.

Is there a benefit to taking the cash now and not banking my time?

Well, yes. This is really an individual choice. It could be that you are such a savvy investor that taking the cash now and investing it in the right place will earn you 150% on your money. Let me know how you did it. Another consideration: recent auditing


requirements have made it difficult to cash out banked leave except in the event of a fairly major personal emergency. That is, should you change your mind about saving your excess equated hours, it’s now harder to get banked time reconverted into extra-service pay.

What’s the downside to leave banking?

1) It is important that you communicate frequently and in writing with the college scheduler to make sure that the hours you put into the bank are on his/her records. Get it in writing. Keep records of the paperwork you submit, keep emails from administrators promising you a certain pay rate, and keep your schedules for the pertinent semesters.

2) Administrators, in some cases, have the right to grant you leave to take the banked hours or not. Let’s say you are the only person in your department this semester because your co-faculty are out for some reason. You may not be granted the right to take leave that particular semester. The PFT contract outlines the specifics under which you may be denied use of your leave.

How do I apply for my extra-service hours to be banked?

The discussion of leave banking is in the PFT contract under Article 26.T (see below). 

HOW TO BANK HOURS:

“The faculty member shall notify the Dean/Vice President that he/she wishes to accrue Leave Banking hours six (6) weeks before the start of the semester, summer session, or at the time of assignment, whichever is later. Such notification shall be in writing with the completion of applicable section(s) on *Leave Banking Program Form* (See PFT contract Appendix).”

HOW TO USE BANKED HOURS:

“To utilize banked time, the faculty member must submit a completed *Leave Banking Program Form* to the Dean/Vice President by September 1st for Winter and/or Spring usage and by February 1st for Fall usage.”

Part-time Retirement?

It's never too early to start planning

By Janell Hampton

Part-timer, Merritt & Laney

I'M TURNING 40 next month. I'm OK with it. After all, 50 is the new 40, so 40 must be the new 30. My twins will turn nine months old as I turn the big four-oh. I couldn't be more pleased.

But the new arrivals made me think hard about long-term family finances, and I realized that I knew very little about retirement. When I first started teaching 15 years ago, I joined CalSTRS. For the next eight years, I proceeded to misread my annual CalSTRS statements.

Later, when I was hired for a full-time tenure-track position in another district, I started a 403(b)—the educator's 401(k)—because I knew it was what big kids did. Even after I decided to leave the tenure-track position, a story I'll share in an upcoming *Peralta Teacher*, I basically ignored the 403(b) for the next seven years.

This year, though, I decided to get serious about my retirement plans,

and I hope sharing my thoughts will encourage part-time faculty to start doing the same about theirs. While my focus here is on CalSTRS, I encourage faculty to look into other retirement savings plans as well.

I started by going to CalSTRS.com. Registering to access my account was simple, and the site's pretty easy to use. Now I no longer wonder if CalSTRS is tracking my case properly because I can check my contributions year by year.

Next, I read my CalSTRS paper statement—every last word of it. That's when I realized I'd been misreading the statement for years. I discovered CalSTRS had been diverting a percentage of my contributions to a complementary account. It was a pleasant surprise, but I felt silly because that information had been in every statement for the previous seven years.


Wanting a still clearer picture of my post-work future, I attended a district-sponsored dinner during flex week to learn more about Peralta retirement options. The dinner led to a personal

meeting with a retirement counselor who works with the district, a session that turned out to be very helpful.

So here are a few things I learned along the way that encouraged or enlightened me:

- ▶ Look at your paycheck to see which form of CALSTRS retirement plan you are in.
- ▶ Avail yourself of the CalSTRS website and toll-free number: **CalSTRS.com 1(800) 228-5453**
- ▶ Don't wait to get started on retirement planning—begin the journey today!

Again, know that it's never too soon to take stock of your situation or make an appointment with a CalSTRS counselor. Every person has individual concerns that must be addressed by a knowledgeable CalSTRS counselor.

Please contact me anytime about part-time retirement or any other issues. Working together, we can move forward with strength. 

Peralta by the Numbers

13

◀ Number of permanent management positions advertised on the PCCD

Job Opportunities website on March 14, 2014.

0

◀ Number of permanent faculty positions advertised on the PCCD

Job Opportunities website on March 14, 2014.

\$315,000

▲ Amount the district agreed to pay *Partners In Leadership*, a corporate management consulting firm that promotes "culture change" and "accountability training."

60

◀ Approximate number of three-unit class sections \$315,000 would pay for.