

## From the President

# POV

WE EXPECTED contract talks to be contentious, and we knew healthcare changes were on the way. Still, the PFT negotiating team had to deploy its coolest brinkmanship and fiercest determination as it fought to make a decent deal with the district.

And, happily, a decent deal got done. On March 15, PFT and the district inked a tentative agreement, setting the stage for an April 18-19 ratification vote. If the membership approves the terms of the TA, the PCCD Board of Trustees will vote on the proposed contract at its April 24 meeting.

PFT has been clear-eyed about the district's fiscal situation, and it went to the table prepared to make a fair bargain. While the givebacks offered by the union are hardly painless—members will now have to make a monthly contribution for PPO medical coverage—PFT knew it had to do its part to keep the district solvent. (For details on the agreement, see *Contract News*.)

The timing of the TA was crucial. With ACCJC visits scheduled for April 17, a parcel tax on the June ballot, and a new chancellor set to take over in July, it's clearly in everyone's interest to settle the contract and get folks working on the major challenges Peralta now faces. Perhaps naively, I remain hopeful that we'll find a way to get things squared away.

Beyond negotiations, PFT has played a major part in the spring actions in support of public education. On March 1, PFT members—many



PHOTO: MARK RAUZION

PFT members sporting the new PFT t-shirts at the state capitol on March 5.

sporting their new orange-and-blue Local 1603 tees—linked arms with hundreds of students, teachers, and community members as they paraded through downtown Oakland.

Among the stops on the parade route were the East Bay offices of Morgan Stanley, the Wall Street behemoth that has Peralta locked into an onerous interest-rate swap. The complicated

derivative deal, which Peralta entered into shortly before Morgan Stanley took \$10 billion in taxpayer bailout money, costs the district about \$1.6 million a year, enough to restore more than 300 cut classes.

Four days later, PFT paid for a bus to help send Peralta folks to Sacramento for the annual March in March.

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# PFT COPE

## Committee on Political Education preps for fall election

**T**HE COPE has replaced the union's PAC, (Political Action Committee) as PFT's vehicle for disseminating political information and financial resources. For better or for worse, education is political right now.

Faculty must raise their voices to protect not only state and district monies, but to guard our own rights, benefits, and working conditions as a labor force. Part-timers in particular have to fight for their piece of the ever-shrinking pie due to cutbacks and budget shortfalls in education.

The trend of keeping educators on the defensive and constantly railing in a place that support our values. This

isn't going to be easy or come at a modest price.

So PFT is launching an offensive, starting with the COPE membership drive that gets underway this month. As a COPE member, you determine where we put our political power and resources.

By building our COPE, we increase our power in our district and parent union, as well as in state and national political campaigns. It is only through a deeper engagement in the political arena that we have a chance to effect policy according to the standards of qualified, experienced educators. Our standards.

*By building COPE, we increase our power in our district and parent union, as well as in state and national political campaigns.*

Join the COPE today. For \$10, \$15, or \$20 a month, you can help make Peralta faculty interests the interests of policy makers and elected officials. Be on the lookout for a mailer and expect a phone call from us this month as well. Don't hesitate to contact Janell Hampton, with any questions at: [janell@pft1603.org](mailto:janell@pft1603.org)



# Education is political!

**If we don't get involved, someone else will. Help make us a stronger political force!**  
PFT COPE is now a *Partners in Political Education* member.

To join COPE please fill out this application and return it to PFT via mail, fax, or in person!

mail to:  
**Peralta Federation of Teachers  
Local 1603  
500 E. 8th Street, Suite B  
Oakland, CA 94606-2825**

or fax to:  
**510-763-1140**

Make checks payable to:  
**PFT COPE**

For more information  
contact PLUCC Organizer  
Janell Hampton: 510-798-1508  
[janell@pft1603.org](mailto:janell@pft1603.org).

### YES! I'll join the other 55-plus colleagues on the PFT Committee on Political Education.

- ☐ I want to join PFT COPE so I can be an active participant in choosing a better future for me, my colleagues, and my students.
- ☐ I will make a ONE-TIME political season contribution to the COPE PAC of  
☐ \$20    ☐ Other: \$ \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ I hereby authorize the Peralta Community College District to deduct from my salary the sum of  
☐ \$10    ☐ \$20    ☐ \$30    ☐ Other: \$ \_\_\_\_\_, per pay period and forward that amount to the Peralta Federation of Teachers Committee of Political Education (PFT COPE.)  
(This authorization is signed freely and voluntarily and not out of any fear of reprisal, and I will not be favored nor disadvantaged because I exercise this right. I understand this money will be used to make political contributions by AFT/COPE. AFT/COPE may engage in joint fundraising efforts with the AFL-CIO. This voluntary authorization may be revoked at any time by notifying the PFT COPE in writing of the desire to do so.)

NAME:	SS#:	<input type="checkbox"/> ON FILE
HOME ADDRESS:		
CITY/STATE/ZIP	HOME EMAIL:	
HOME PHONE:	WORK PHONE:	
SIGNATURE:	DATE:	





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Patricia Dudley, *Secretary*  
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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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PHOTO: GERALD CHARLES

*Peralta faculty and students deliver petitions to Morgan Stanley.*

### *From the President*

*continued from page one*

PFT members joined thousands on the capitol mall in reminding legislators of the state's broken promise to educate its citizens. Peralta students, staff, administrators, and faculty were well represented at the rally, banging drums, singing songs, and, as the chant goes, showing Sacramento what democracy looks like. Proudly flying his PFT colors, CoA history prof/ union rep Mustafa Popal helped close down the capitol and was among the 68 activists arrested for refusing a dispersal order. PFT salutes Professor Popal for his profound commitment to public education.

PFT has been doing its bit for education in the realm of electoral politics, too. Members have been collecting signatures to put two initiatives, a new CFT/ Jerry Brown-sponsored plan and the Tax Oil to Fund Education proposal, on the November ballot. Together, the two progressive initiatives would bring in well over \$10 billion a year—as much as Morgan Stanley got from the feds, you'll recall—to help California fund education and other vital public services.

So even as PFT went to the mat with the district, it continued grappling with larger statewide issues. The union knows that Peralta could do a better job of marshaling its resources; at the same time, PFT's keenly aware that even the best-run district can't survive if the state continues to defund public education.

At the union offices, meanwhile, we've been updating PFT's look. In addition to the revised newsletter layout, we've

made up new t-shirts, banners, and table skirts, in an effort to bring Local 1603's aesthetic into the twenty-first century. Social media users will notice a fresh PFT logo on Facebook and Twitter, too. Look for our new gear on campus and at rallies, and be sure to ask your college rep for an orange-and-blue PFT tee.

Nor is the makeover strictly about appearance. PFT hopes to call more attention to itself as it continues to fight for faculty in the days ahead. It also hopes to foster more participation from newer members—as retirements continue to mount, and as Peralta continues to leave contract faculty positions unfilled, it becomes increasingly crucial that more of our folks get involved.

So attend general membership and Executive Council meetings. Join PFT in walking precincts and making calls for Abel Guillén as he vies for a seat in the state assembly. Help turn out the vote for Measure B, the PCCD parcel tax. Collect signatures for fall's revenue-raising tax initiatives.

We encourage you to introduce yourself to your campus representatives. Their names are listed in the masthead in the left column of this page.

PFT needs all Peralta teachers, counselors, librarians, and nurses—full- and part-time alike—to work together to strengthen faculty and to continue to make gains on behalf of those of us whose working conditions are our students' learning conditions.

In solidarity,  
**Matthew M. Goldstein**  
*President, PFT, AFT Local 1603*

# Contract News

## *Tentative agreement signed*

**D**UE TO THE soaring price of medical coverage, negotiations focused chiefly on cost-saving changes to faculty healthcare benefits.

Other items—e.g., management retreat rights, department chair election procedures, and fee-based classes—will be addressed in ongoing talks between PFT and the district.

What follows is an outline of changes to healthcare under the new deal, as well as a few of the non-healthcare issues settled during the most recent round of negotiations. PFT will continue to update faculty on new contract developments as talks resume in the coming months

The district will now provide three healthcare options to faculty: Kaiser, a midrange PPO, and a full-service PPO. Kaiser will continue to be offered with no premium costs to employees. The PPO plans will work as follows:

**Midrange PPO:** The plan will offer 100% coverage for use of in-network providers (Anthem Blue Cross in California), no reimbursement for out-of-network providers. Other features of the midrange plan:

- A. Monthly premiums starting July 2012: \$15 for a single member, \$30 for an employee plus one dependent, and \$45 for a family
- B. Pre-2004 hires cease to pay premiums for midrange PPO upon retirement
- C. Post-2004 hires who retire before Medicare eligibility cease to pay premiums on their district-paid bridge to Medicare
- D. Both pre-2004 hires and post-2004 hires who retire before Medicare eligibility and elect to move out of state upon retirement will continue to receive PPO services at current (traditional PPO) coverage rates until the district and PFT negotiate something different

**Traditional PPO:** All aspects of the PPO that CoreSource members currently have will continue, with employees paying the difference between the costs of the midrange and full-service plans. Monthly premiums for 2012-13 will be approximately \$65/month for singles, \$142/month for an employee plus one dependent, and \$228/month for families (rates should be finalized by May). Other details of the Traditional PPO:

- A. 100% coverage for use of in-network providers, Anthem Blue Cross in California
- B. 80% coverage by district of usual and customary, 20% payment by employee for out-of-network provider services
- C. Employees will have to pay the difference between midrange and traditional plans (but not the \$15, \$30, \$45 required for the mid-range plan).

The agreement with the district does not increase co-pays or deductibles for either Kaiser or the PPOs for 2012-13, and it calls for the district to examine the feasibility of allowing post-2004 hires to buy into district group healthcare plans after retirement. The deal also makes the part-time 50/50 medical coverage program a permanent part of the contract, and keeps Delta Dental at no cost to faculty for the first year of the contract (2012-13).

Premium-free dental coverage did come at a cost. PFT agreed to give back another year of sabbaticals (\$135,000), staff development money (\$120,000), tenure review facilitator release time (\$9,000), and staff development officer release time (\$27,000). If needed, negotiations will continue between the district and PFT about how to cover cost increases to healthcare benefits over the following two years of the contract, 2013-15.

### **The district will now offer 3 medical plans:**

- ▶ Kaiser
- ▶ PPO Midrange
- ▶ PPO Traditional

Mandatory re-enrollment for contract faculty begins April 25, 2012

All contract faculty must re-enroll by May 31, 2012

Further, the district has agreed to increase medical and dental cash-in-lieu for faculty with verified coverage from another source to \$250 a month. Under the new arrangement, faculty can opt out of medical coverage for \$225 a month, dental for \$25 a month, or both for \$250.

Other gains under the proposed contract include boons to part-time faculty, such as making paid office hours for part-timers teaching a .4 load permanently a part of the contract, and placing all part-time faculty at their actual step and column on a “no-cost” 25-step/5-column salary schedule during 2012-13. Hourly rates will be identical for steps 7 up to 25 (during 2012-13); when funds become available, part-time faculty at higher steps will get larger increases in hourly pay.

And, happily, the new contract secures the return of the full complement of department chair release time (15.3 FTEF) for 2012-13.

The rest of our contract remains intact for now. Any changes over the next three years would have to be negotiated and agreed upon by both parties and, of course, ratified by the membership.



# Faculty as Activists

*Laney teacher charts her path to union engagement*

By Janell Hampton

**M**Y FIRST few years teaching English at Laney College (as a part time faculty member), I felt welcome in my department and in my classes, but not much a part of the larger community. However, the struggles both students and faculty have faced recently with disappearing resources, class sections, and services, have -out of necessity- thrust me into a more connected relationship with my colleagues and administrators throughout the district.

I felt crushed when I saw my class sections disappearing, my part-time colleagues suffering, and everyone pointing at an amorphous “budget” issue or “decisions made by the previous district administrators” as the culprits. Then I realized I needed to step up and do something myself to change the direction my professional life was headed, so I reached out to engage in activism, and I wasn’t



Joe Doyle cradles his broken heart.



Chris Weidenbach, Janell Hampton, Crystal Zermeno and Sonja Franeta fighting back at the swap action.

disappointed. I found students on the move to recruit Board of Trustee candidates. I connected with students, staff, faculty, and community groups wanting to bind together to fight Morgan Stanley for money it unfairly takes from the district, and joined my union brothers and sisters already working together to make the changes they want to see, too. It felt good to do something besides be scared and angry about what’s happening to education. As a part-timer, it felt like there wasn’t much I could do, but that couldn’t have been more untrue.

I recently took a grant-funded position organizing for PFT and the California Federation of Teachers (CFT). The program is Political Leadership Uniting To Create Change (PLUCC). This position is meant to build power in PFT1603 and to increase the impact of our local’s priorities on local and state labor issues. Connection, collaboration, and activism are key to increasing this impact. This position also calls for nourishing relationships with community advocacy groups like Alliance of Californians for Community Empowerment, which along with

a broader Anti-Swap Coalition has aggressively acted to end a budget-draining interest-rate swap Peralta district has with Morgan Stanley.

Yet there is still much work to be done. All hands are needed on deck during this time of struggle and change. If you’ve asked yourself, “What can I do?” you are in the same position of many faculty right now—and it’s a good place.

Here’s an answer: Connect with a group that forwards your priorities. And I recommend that you make that group PFT. Get involved with the COPE committee. Join the Anti-Swap Coalition. Sign up to campaign for Abel Guillen’s run for Assembly Seat 18. Link arms with folks fighting against the Paycheck Deception legislation or for the new tax initiative. Gather signatures, phone bank, volunteer for teach-ins, and turn out for actions.

Be inspired and encouraged to commit even a modest amount of energy to the fight for your rights, your students, and public education as a whole. I know there is a place for you. If not now, when? If not you, then who?

# CFT Convention

## *PFT turns out in San Jose*

**T**HE PERALTA Federation of Teachers sent a dozen delegates to the 70th annual convention of the California Federation of Teachers, held April 13-15 in San Jose. With the 2012 elections looming, much of this year's statewide get-together focused on endorsements.

And unsurprisingly, CFT endorsed Barack Obama at the top of the ticket, following the lead of its national parent union, the American Federation of Teachers. While some members voiced concern about Arne Duncan, President Obama's business-minded Secretary of Education, the 400-plus assembled delegates voted overwhelmingly to get behind the incumbent. Senator Diane Feinstein and Congresswoman Nancy Pelosi also got the nod from CFT.

Trustee Abel Guillén, the PCCD board member running for the new 18th State Assembly district, stopped by on the convention's opening night to thank the CFT brass for its support. Guillén is one of three assembly hopefuls across the state whose campaigns have been identified by CFT as high-priority races.

The new CFT/Jerry Brown joint tax initiative, the Schools and Local Public Safety Protection Act of 2012, also got lots of attention. If passed in the fall, the revenue-raising hybrid of CFT's popular Millionaires Tax and an earlier Jerry Brown proposal would put an estimated \$9 billion into state coffers. Fans of the late Millionaires Tax voiced some reservations about CFT's compromise with the governor, but the new initiative's bright prospects for passage and CFT President Josh Pechthalt's strong pitch made believers of many.

Friday night featured a three-hour Community College Council meeting at which union leaders reported on the state of their districts. Local after local lamented the difficulties colleges face from the Accrediting Commission

for Colleges and Junior Colleges, the Novato-based outfit that continues to issue sanctions—and to force colleges into nonstop accreditation-management mode—at a dizzying clip. Reps also shared familiar-sounding accounts of part-time layoffs, class cuts, and reductions to healthcare coverage.

The CCC meeting had a valedictory quality for PFT, as it likely marked the last time Debby Weintraub, past PFT president and current PFT communications director, will attend as a delegate. Debby will retire in June, and PFT, CFT, and AFT salute her for her service and her longstanding commitment to faculty, community, and students.

At the Community College Council's closing-day award breakfast, Merritt PFT chair Christine Olsen and Laney PFT co-chair Miriam Zamora-Kantor won recognition—and nifty AFT t-shirts—for their outstanding work on behalf of faculty. Diversity Chair/PLUCC Organizer Janell Hampton, a Laney part-timer, captured honors for her tireless efforts to grow and diversify PFT.

The day before, Janell addressed the general assembly from the main stage, offering a passionate appeal to delegates to defeat the antiunion "paycheck deception" initiative in November. Janell and PFT vocational rep Peter Brown also did their union proud by conducting well-received workshops as part of the official convention program.

"I should probably have been home correcting papers," said Laney PFT rep and conference delegate Marie Wilson. "But I am glad I came because I got to see the big picture and why we have to struggle at a state and national level. All the issues addressed at the convention directly affect my workload: how many papers I have to read, how many students I have, how few colleagues I have, and how much harder that makes everything."

PFT thanks this year's delegates for their participation: Peter Brown,

L. Jay Citron, Patricia Dudley, Matthew Goldstein, Bob Grill, Janell Hampton, Christine Olsen, Tae-Soon Park, Susan Schacher, Debby Weintraub, Marie Wilson, and Miriam Zamora-Kantor. CFT has called next year's convention for Sacramento—PFT looks forward to sending another big group of delegates to the state capital!

### ▶ **PFT/PRO Retirement Workshop**

Wednesday, May 2  
12 - 1:30 pm  
Laney College,  
Room E200

### ▶ **Last Day of the Semester**

Friday, May 25

### ▶ **Current PFT Contract Expires**

Saturday, June 30, 2012

### ▶ **New PFT Contract and Healthcare Changes Take Effect**

Sunday, July 1, 2012

### ▶ **New PCCD Chancellor Takes Office**

Sunday, July 1

### ▶ **Raoul Teilhet Scholarship Application Deadline**

Sunday, July 1

### ▶ **AFT Convention**

July 27 - 30  
Detroit, MI