

From the President (cont.)

well, and they have been extraordinary advocates for the faculty. Special thanks, too, to Matt Goldstein, Communications Officer, whose wit and journalistic talents have made our e-communications fun to read. All Executive Council members deserve kudos.

Finally, thanks to the women who work in the PFT office. You rock! Anna Roy, our primary administrative assistant, is a treasure and does so much to keep PFT together that no words can do justice to her talents and kindness. Ann Whitehead archives everything the union does, an invaluable service. Janell Hampton took over for Sara Connors, who will be returning this summer, but as hard an act as Sara was to follow, Janell continually impresses with her own style of fierce advocacy for the faculty.

It is with a touch of sadness, a small (well, maybe big) sigh of relief, and great hope for the future that I step down as PFT president. As some of you may remember, my father was a community college teacher and union activist who helped to bring collective bargaining to California community colleges. My mother was also a social justice advocate. So as I return to my home college, I am particularly touched that I was given this opportunity to represent you, to follow my parents' teachings and actions, and to honor them with my service as PFT president.

—Debby Weintraub
President
pftpresident1603@yahoo.com
510.763.8820

Staff Development at Peralta

Get Involved in Staff Development—Today

The recent budget cuts have had a damaging effect on Staff Development in the district and at each college. Because of the loss of funding and release time to do the work for Staff Development, there has been a real falling off of projects and efforts to come together as a community and continue our professional development.

What can you do? Are you willing to devote a small portion of your time to enrich the professional opportunities for your college community?

You could:

- Sign up for your College Staff Development Committee: this is a time for creative thinkers to develop offerings and encourage colleagues to give of their expertise to enrich the our community.
- Attend the Staff Development events that are scheduled: because of the lack of funding, there are some very creative ideas being discussed at Peralta! This is an era like no other for ideas such as Open Educational Resources. Do you know how to access these resources for your students? Come to a flex day to find out new ideas and projects.
- Give a workshop or talk: Your participation in flex days and the contribution of your ideas are an antidote to these times of strangled budgets.

Remember, *you* are a valuable resource, for your students and for the Peralta community, and your participation is vital to our success.

—Alexis Alexander
District Staff Development Officer/Merritt PFT Rep
aalexander@peralta.edu
510.434.3850

PT Faculty Update (cont.)

and reduce K-12 class sizes.”

Wouldn't it be nice if this initiative gets on the November ballot, passes, and ends our extreme funding drought in education?

Finally, as the spring semester slithers to a close, summer school work awaits for the lucky ones before an ever-so-brief respite

in August. Me? I'll be searching for the magic wand I need for materializing a few miracles—like that oil extraction fee—for the PT faculty next school year! A pleasant summer to you all!

—Cynthia Mahabir
Part-time Rep
cmlaney2003@yahoo.com
510.464.3185

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From the President

Negotiations Update

I find myself in the curious position of having to look backward in order to go forward. Five years ago at this time, I was asking you to vote for me for PFT president and to believe and hope with me that the union would be well served through my presidency.



When I was elected, PFT was in the process of completing negotiations for the 25-step salary schedule for fulltime faculty. In my second year, the 25 steps were completely funded, though we had initially thought it would take up to three years. At the same time, we were able to obtain another two steps for part timers, also in the second year of my presidency.

Another victory in my presidency was the increase in department chair release time. It was important not just because the release time was needed, but also because our contract now provided equity among our colleges.

Other significant gains made for faculty during my tenure include better family leave, a shift from maternity leave to parental leave, online evaluations, a streamlined evaluation process for all faculty (except faculty under tenure review), SDI for part-time faculty, and the creation of the rehire pool to protect longtime part-timers.

There have been other improvements and protections for faculty over the last five years, but most important to me have been the two contract extensions that PFT worked to secure. I am very proud that we successfully fought to maintain our salaries and benefits during each extension, particularly when other community college faculty were forced to give up pay and/or benefits.

The most significant contribution I feel I personally made was to improve contact with membership by introducing the idea of a communications officer for the union. I have worked with Matt Goldstein to publish the award-winning *e-Communiqué* and *PCCD Board Watch*, electronic updates that have allowed us to inform, opine, and call people to action.

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One-Year Contract Extension, District Seeks Concessions on Healthcare in IBB

In the last month, PFT was successful in negotiating a one-year contract extension, to June 30, 2012, as well as a faculty retirement incentive (of \$400 per year). Both of these agreements were approved and supported overwhelmingly by our Executive Council and our membership. So faculty who retire this spring will get an incentive and—for those of us who remain—wages and benefits will stay at current levels.

In addition, the extension calls for a PFT “contribution” of over \$700,000 to the district’s financial health during 2011-12, including “givebacks” of staff development funds, TRC stipends, and 50% of department chair release time. All givebacks disappear (or “sunset”) when the contract extension expires in June 2012.

For at least the next 14 months, we will be working with a California State “interest-based bargaining” mediator, Annie Song-Hill, to complete our bargaining with the district on a large number of contract articles and issues. While some of these issues are fairly minor (such as cleaning up contract language describing the department chair election process), other issues, such as health benefits, will be very complex.

While no agreements have been reached

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Fulltime-PT Solidarity!

As our students agonize about the declining availability of classes to complete their transfer or certificate requirements, many of us are worried about the debilitating losses in class assignments and our ability to eke out livelihoods and maintain medical insurance coverage. In an exceptional expression of solidarity, fulltime and part-time faculty members in some departments—such as ESL at Laney—have collegially made sacrifices on class assignments to minimize anticipated losses to PT colleagues. This has been so gratifying to witness that I feel like taking Ben & Jerry's Chubby Hubby or Chunky Monkey ice cream to everyone in ESL! In other news, as you most likely know, with the one-year extension (2011-2012) of the PFT-PCCD contract, we have the continuation of the 50/50 medical insurance program and office-hour compensation. Also, we are entitled to parity pay should the state allocate parity moneys this year.

Further, over the past few months, a number of PT faculty members made inquiries about the absence of sick leave accrual totals on our paystubs. We discussed this in late March with the district Chief Financial Officer Ron Gerhard. He informed us that the sick-leave accrual problem would be fixed around mid-July.

PFT members (dues-payers) should have received a PFT Executive Council Election ballot at their home addresses during spring break. If you received a ballot, please complete and return it to PFT right away. If you are a fee-payer, you would not have received a ballot. (See "After-Tax Deductions" on your paystub. "Peralta Fed Dues" indicates registered PFT membership; "fee" doesn't.). To become a registered member and get a ballot to vote in future PFT elections, you'll need to complete a registration form (www.pft1603.org). Call Anna Roy at the PFT office at 763-8820 if you are a dues-payer and have not received a ballot or if you are a fee-payer and would like to register as a dues-payer PFT member. There is no difference in the amounts for dues and fee.

On the legislative front, FACCC reports that a proposal was recently submitted to the Attorney General for a Statutory Initiative entitled **OIL EXTRACTION FEE TO RESCUE EDUCATION**. The proposal states: "This initiative requires that California apply a 15% oil extraction fee on the value of each barrel of oil, California's common resource, extracted onshore and offshore. Following Texas' example of devoting this oil revenue to its Educational System, the revenue generated by this fee shall be appropriated for non-capital purposes in the following amounts: K-12 shall receive 30% (approximately \$1.08 billion). *The California Community College System (approximately 3,000,000 students) shall receive 48% (approximately \$1.72 billion).* The California State University System (approximately 412,000 students) shall receive 11 % (approximately \$400 million). The University of California System (approximately 200,000 students) shall receive 11 % (approximately \$400 million). This will reduce college and university tuition fees, and restore cut class sections. The funding increases will pay to rehire professors, laid-off teachers,

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JOIN THE WEEK OF ACTION!

The California Teachers Association—in conjunction with CFT, OEA, and other unions—has called for a week of action, May 9-13, to protest the state of emergency in California education.

The Global Studies Club and Againstcuts, both BCC organizations, are holding a budget update meeting, Tues., May 10, at noon at BCC in Room 52. Students and teachers will later join the Berkeley Federation of Teachers to distribute fliers on the budget crisis, 4-5:30 p.m., at the three Berkeley BART stations.



To cap the week of action, a rally to protest education budget cuts will be held Fri., March 13, 4-6 p.m., in Civic Center in San Francisco. Make your voice heard!

For more information, contact Joan Berezin at jberezin@peralta.edu or visit castateofemergency.com.

Negotiations Update (cont.)

yet, we have begun gathering shared information that we hope will help us achieve agreements in the more contentious areas. In addition, we are planning several negotiation sessions this summer, to help move the process along. As we have said, benefits top the district's list of items to negotiate—given the unpromising outlook for both PCCD and state finances, the district hopes to save money by getting employees to help foot the bill for healthcare.

The union shares the district's interest in insuring the sustainability of a comprehensive benefits program. But if benefits must be cut, PFT will press for improvements in other areas, such as compensation and working conditions. PFT continues to look forward to working with the district to reach mutually satisfying resolutions to Peralta's many difficult problems. Negotiating is hard work, and the PFT negotiating team—Debby Weintraub, Tae-Soon Park, Mark Greenside, Matt Goldstein, Cynthia Mahabir, Ann McMurdo, Joe Doyle, Janell Hampton, Francine West, and yours truly—has been doing an outstanding job this spring.

No one knows how the political dynamics in Sacramento will affect contract negotiations between now and August—or, for that matter, in the fall. We think that our contract extension to June 2012 puts us in as good a position as possible to weather the statewide budgetary storm. And whatever happens this summer, we will certainly be back in contact with you in the fall to get your input and your opinions—through the *e-Communiqué*, the *Peralta Teacher*, college meetings, Executive Council meetings, and general membership meetings.

—Rick Greenspan
PFT Chief Negotiator
rickfromalameda@sbcglobal.net
510.748.2309

From the President (cont.)

Other efforts to make people feel more connected to PFT have also been successful: we've held more regular college chapter meetings and started throwing annual holiday wine and cheese parties, nice affairs that have developed an enthusiastic faculty following.

It is the job of the leadership of the union to build the organization, to motivate the faculty to become active, and to fiercely advocate for the rights of the entire membership. It is also leadership's job to keep a strong bond between the local union, our parent organizations, and other labor and social justice activists in our community. This is certainly an area I wish I had done more to develop, but as I turn now to look forward, I think it will be a place to grow. As we face the ongoing economic crisis in our state, we will need to reach out and work with others more than ever, particularly now as attacks on public-sector workers escalate across the nation. Our benefits and pensions are at risk. We need to stand strong with our fellow employees in Peralta, our brothers and sisters in SEIU and Local 39. We should march shoulder to shoulder with faculty up and down the state and answer calls to action from our students and other advocates for social justice. The task of our new leadership will be to build an active group, to train new warriors, and to look out for the best interest of all faculty, contract and part-time. We must advocate for keeping public education affordable and accessible, resist attempts to privatize our institutions, and demand that teaching be a fulltime career, not a temporary, at-will, low-paying job.

These responsibilities belong to all of us, but particularly to the union leadership. The PFT Executive Council represents the diverse needs and interests of the membership, and each Exec member gives a great deal of her time, most with no form of compensation at all. Because Mark Greenside is retiring this year and stepping down from his positions as PFT Secretary and Chief Grievance Officer, I want to give a very special thank you to him. His work on faculty's behalf has been extraordinary, and his grievance victories for individual faculty members protect all of us. Thank you, Mark. My other fellow officers, Treasurer (and Chief Negotiator) Rick Greenspan and VP Tae-Soon Park, do some very heavy lifting as

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SHARED SACRIFICE