


*PFT Office Closed Indefinitely*

# After the Deluge

**A** BROKEN PIPE in the fire-sprinkler system above the PFT offices caused tens of thousands of dollars in damage last month. Casualties of the flood included several computers, office furniture, and most of the equipment in the space. Fortunately,

most of the union's files escaped serious harm. PFT staff will be working out of the regional offices of its parent union, the California Federation of Teachers, until renovations—likely to take 4-6 weeks—are complete. PFT has occupied Suite B at 500 E. 8th Street for over a decade. 



## Bill Love

**By Jennifer Shanoski,**  
*PFT Grievance Officer/Merritt Representative*

*In the latest in a series of articles about the women and men who built and shaped the PFT, The Peralta Teacher talks to Merritt instructor Bill Love, Ph.D. During his four decades at Peralta, Bill has held an impressive variety of positions—part-time faculty member, district-level administrator, and, for a short hitch, PFT president.*

**B**ILL LOVE is an icon at Merritt College and, at 35 years and counting, one of the longest-serving members of the faculty in the Peralta Community College District. During his long and distinguished career, he has worked as a part-time faculty member, full-time faculty member, administrator, faculty

*(continues inside)*



## Peralta Federation of Teachers

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Peralta Federation of Teachers, AFT Local 1603 represents over 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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## Bill Love

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senate president, union president, and as a member of countless committees. His booming voice is as unmistakable as his big smile and easy laugh.

Bill earned B.A. and M.A. degrees in psychology from Humboldt State University and started as a part-time instructor at Merritt College's Grove Street Campus shortly after. A year after starting his teaching career, Bill was offered full-time positions at Chabot College and College of Alameda. He chose to stay at Peralta because he "wanted to teach black kids."

He became the first faculty senate president at CoA, and moved on to become the coordinator of the college's ethnic studies program and its athletic director. In 1980, Bill became the district's first Equal Opportunity Officer. He left the district office to become the Vice President of Student Services at CoA in 1986, and the following year, Bill returned to faculty, where he remains today.

Bill became active in the union after he left management, when a faculty member convinced him to get involved. At that time, there had been no pay raises for many years, and he was concerned about "never being able to retire." Wages and the succession of BCC from the district—the internecine de-annexation fight of the nineties—were the primary concerns at the time. The two issues were linked, Bill says, because the financial implications of the split were so unclear. Bill was the vice president of the PFT in 1992 and served briefly

as president during a transitional period in 1994-1995.


Bill recalls that the relationships between various district groups were very different when he was in the PFT leadership from how they are now. As so many PFT representatives at the time also served on the college academic senates, the union and senate had a close relationship that allowed for the two groups to work together for common causes.

In Bill's opinion, the PFT-district relationship has always been more tenuous, depending on the chancellor's view of the union and the relationships that develop between the union leadership and chancellor's office. "Elihu Harris was easygoing so the relationship was simple," Bill says. "Ron Temple tried to avoid conflict, and his goal was to be emperor."

When Bill was a PFT leader, the Board of Trustees was much more activist than it is now, and "they basically ran the district."

Talking about his willingness to stay involved even after his retirement, Bill simply says, "Some people golf and do other things—this is mine."

His involvement gives him something to do and allows him to help shape the future of the colleges, especially at a time when he finds a lot to be concerned with regarding the executive leadership. "This is my home and I want to be sure that they don't screw things up too bad," he says with characteristic candor.

Bill says that he'll stick around for as long as he's able to because he wants to ensure that no one is able to "treat people that look like me badly" and, well, "because it's fun." 

The graphic features a blue background with white water droplets. The text "Annual Holiday Party" is written in a white, cursive font. Below it, the word "CANCELED" is written in large, bold, yellow capital letters with a white outline. To the right of the text, there is a white text box with a blue border containing the following text: "The catastrophic plumbing failure at the PFT offices has forced the cancellation of the union's 2014 holiday party. The popular annual event, which for years has brought together folks from the entire Peralta community, will be rescheduled as a post-revamp office-warming celebration. Look for announcements in early 2015."

# Julina Bonilla

## *Area 7 Trustee Takes Over for Abel Guillén*


**J**ULINA BONILLA, the newly elected member of the Peralta Board of Trustees, arrives with a wealth of experience working within the neighborhoods where our colleges are located and has devoted much of her career to improving the lives of people living in those communities.

She began her career as a teacher for the Oakland Unified School District and eventually moved into workforce development serving young adults in Oakland. She has over ten years of workforce development experience and most recently operated the Department of Labor – Job Corps Outreach and Admissions contract for Job Corps, where she provided recruitment, enrollment, and job placement for young adults in low-income communities.

Trustee Bonilla has also served as a member of the Oakland Workforce Investment Board and co-chair of the Oakland Youth Council. Today, Julina is the Program Director of the West Oakland Job Resource Center with a mission to transform lives of low-income, underserved residents of Oakland through family-sustaining careers in the construction, building trades, and transportation, distribution, and logistics sectors.

Julina is a mother of four adult children and has a beautiful grandson. She is a community college graduate and is passionate about the power of education to transform lives. When



Julina came to the PFT COPE meeting to seek the COPE endorsement, she spoke movingly about the important opportunities her community college education provided her and ultimately her children. As a working mom attending classes, and the first person in her family to obtain a college education, she understands the challenges many of our students face. 

PFT congratulates **ABEL GUILLÉN** on his successful bid for Oakland's District 2 City Council seat. We also wholeheartedly thank him for his years of service as a trustee and his support for labor and our faculty as well as our students.

# Kayla Lewis

## *PFT's Newest Advocate*


**K**AYLA LEWIS joined the PFT staff this fall as the Database Coordinator/Communications Specialist. She brings to the team a background in administration, social media, and nonprofit organizations, and a strong desire to learn about PFT and the role it plays as an advocate for workers.

Kayla is originally from Sacramento, and she is an alumna of CSU Sacramento, where she earned a B.A. in sociology with a minor in communications.

She comes to PFT most recently from Girls Inc. of Alameda, where she taught

sports and STEM education to middle school girls in East Oakland. Prior to that, she worked as an administrative assistant at UC Davis Medical Center and the State of California.

“I am most interested in empowering groups and helping them empower themselves in any way I can,” says Kayla. “So working with a union is exciting for me because we create a body that gives workers a real voice with real results.”

Outside of the office, she enjoys reading and trying new things to eat. She lives for live music. 



# Negotiations Update

By Rick Greenspan

PFT Treasurer/Chief Negotiator

**W**E ARE NOW in the third year of a three-year agreement, so the main issues we are discussing at the table are wages and benefits. To say that the discussion has been progressing very slowly is an understatement. Back before Peralta had PeopleSoft, the Peralta finance department “closed the books” by mid-July every year; nowadays, with an ever-increasing number of PeopleSoft programmers and “modules,” the District was unable to even discuss salary until mid-October, when the books finally “closed.”


We are still trying to get clarification as to the district’s initial offer, but it seems remarkably close to the 1% that was subtracted from our paychecks starting in August. It’s a paltry offer from a

district with an ending fund balance last year over \$14 million, and with plenty of money to create brand new district office positions—e.g., Deputy Chancellor and a Dean of Student Success—with combined salaries, including staff and benefits, of nearly \$500,000 per year. Those new administrative positions come at the same time that the district is funding exactly zero new faculty positions for 2014-15.

PFT has yet to formulate its salary demands, but the bottom line is that merely replacing the 1% taken off earlier this year won’t be enough. And while the district says that PPO costs have risen, PFT hasn’t received enough detail about the price hikes to be able to make an informed judgment about what the increases mean for faculty.


We are trying to resolve salary and benefits by year’s end, so that we can start talking about a new three-year agreement in January. To that

end, both PFT and PCCD will be “sunshining” proposals for the new three-year contract late this year at a board meeting. Before any proposal is sunshined by the PFT, it needs to be discussed at one or more membership meetings and approved by the Executive Council. But among the issues PFT has heard from members about so far are differential compensation for larger lecture courses, filling out the steps on the 25-step part-time salary schedule, increasing the load factor for lab courses, and tightening the language of the rehire pool.

For that reason, it’s important that everyone attend upcoming college and district-wide membership meetings. We want to get everyone’s input on positive, progressive changes in the contract that we can propose for our next three-year agreement. We are looking forward to seeing you at an upcoming membership meeting. 



## Faculty Celebrate PCCD's Golden Anniversary

College of Alameda Automotive Technology instructors Ed Jaramillo (left) and Rufino Ramos joined a small coterie of Peralta faculty at PCCD’s 50th Anniversary Gala, held at Merritt College on October 30. Jaramillo, who with Bob Grill makes up the CoA team of PFT campus representatives, has served on the union’s Executive Council for two decades, including many years as the district-wide Career and Technical Education representative. Ramos serves as faculty advisor to CoA’s Latinos Unidos Club. 

# Grievance Update

By Jennifer Shanoski,  
PFT Grievance Officer/Merritt  
Representative


**T**HE UNION has been working on a number of faculty grievances. When an issue cannot be resolved informally with the college or district administration, PFT can file a formal grievance. Article 19 outlines the grievance process. Briefly, it consists of four steps: 1) the grievance (a written statement of the violation) is sent to the college president, and if it is not resolved, it moves to the next step; 2) review by the Vice Chancellor of Human Resources; 3) next, the grievance is sent to the Chancellor; 4) finally, the grievance is sent to arbitration. When resolution does not occur at Step 1, the grievance moves on to Step 2, and so forth. We currently have four formal grievances (maybe a PFT record!); these are discussed briefly below. More information is sure to come in future editions of *The Peralta Teacher*.

**1. Preferred Hiring Pool:** This is the largest case PFT is working on right now. Two longtime Laney part-time faculty members, Cynthia Mahabir and Matthew Hubbard, were sent letters informing them that after 10-plus years of service, they were not being rehired because they were not the “best fit” for Laney College. Article 30, Section H, Paragraph 3 states that an exception may be made to assign a class to a member of the non-preferred pool over someone in the preferred pool and that the reason for such an exception to the standard hiring practice must be explained in a letter. Mahabir and Hubbard received identical letters that failed to explain why a member of the non-preferred pool would be assigned over them; more concerning, it appears that both faculty members were simply not assigned classes and it was not an

exception to the policy but a method for discipline. Further details around this important case can be found on the PFT website at [pft1603.org](http://pft1603.org). This grievance has gone from multiple attempts at informal resolution to finally accepting that PFT and the district will have to move to a *Step 4 Grievance—arbitration*, which involves a third party hearing the evidence and rendering a decision in the case. PFT and our legal counsel are confident of a favorable decision at arbitration. Still, it’s unfortunate that the district refuses to back off its wrongheaded decision and is determined to spend more taxpayer dollars on legal fees.

**2. Department Chair Elections at Laney College:** In spring 2014, department chair elections were conducted and certified. The Laney College PFT representatives were present when ballots were counted and signed off on the results. During the summer, President Elnora Webb changed the vote count and determined a different winner in two cases. In the fall, in a third department, President Webb appointed a newly hired full-time faculty member to replace the elected chairs. Article 14 of the contract assures faculty the right to select their department chair. This grievance is with President Webb, and the PFT is awaiting a response. (*Step 1 in the grievance process*)

**3. Professional Development Requests at Laney College:** In spring 2014, a faculty member submitted a request for professional development funds. The dean of her division refused to sign the travel form, effectively removing the ability of the Professional Development Committee to determine whether or not funds would be allocated. President Webb then confirmed, via email, her assertion that the dean had the right to refuse to sign the form. Article 25 of the contract states that the dean “shall refer” requests to the Professional Development Committee, and so, a grievance has been filed and is awaiting a response from President Webb. (*Step 1 in the grievance process*)

**4. Flu Shots:** A PFT member unable to go to his primary care doctor to receive his flu shot was repeatedly told by his local in-network pharmacy flu shots were not covered by our district’s policy. After much back-and-forth with the district, a grievance was filed to ensure that this type of preventative medicine was available to all beneficiaries. CoreSource members will now be able to get free flu shots at their local CVS pharmacies as a result of the quick settlement of a grievance. More information will be available soon from the benefits office. (**RESOLVED**) 

## Are you retiring this year?



**Peralta Retirees Organization**

is open to membership to all district retirees!

Learn more at the PRO website:

[www.PeraltaRetirees.org](http://www.PeraltaRetirees.org)

# SCI-Org Report

## *PFT and CFT Join Forces to Protect Part-time Rights*

**By Janell Hampton**

*Laney Representative*


*Janell Hampton, a part-time English instructor at Laney and Merritt, currently serves as PFT's Strategic Campaign Initiative Organizer, a position co-sponsored by PFT and its parent union, the California Federation of Teachers. As "SCI-Org," Janell hustles to boost membership in both the union and its Committee on Political Education, and helps organize faculty to give them a louder, clearer voice in the district and beyond.*

**F**ACULTY returned from summer break to learn that two veteran part-timers, both in the rehire pool, had been denied their fall assignments. Cynthia Mahabir and Matthew Hubbard, with a combined 28 years of service to Laney and its students, received identical letters in June that notified them that they would not be getting their fall classes.

A grievance has been filed in the matter, and the case is currently proceeding through the formal contractual channels. Meanwhile, legions of part- and full-time members have circulated and delivered petitions against the administrative action, staged a protest at the Laney College president's flex-day presentation, met with the president and chancellor formally, and organized into an exciting and effective new alliance, Part-timers Organizing for Change (PTOC). All part-time faculty and their full-time allies are encouraged to join the PTOC. If you are interested in receiving PTOC updates and finding out how you can become part of the team, send your non-Peralta email address to me at: [janell@pft1603.org](mailto:janell@pft1603.org)

PTOC has organized around the recent rehire-pool issues and has started figuring out ways to improve the structure of the committee itself. After orchestrating a demonstration at the Sept. 9 meeting of Peralta's Board of Trustees, an action that drew

over 70 faculty members in support of Matthew and Cynthia, the PTOC began setting goals that focus on improving the work lives of part-timers at Peralta generally. The PTOC is taking up issues such as part-time parity, rehire rights, and job security. The more folks who get active with the committee, the more effective PTOC advocacy will be. Please consider attending meetings and receiving updates.

Another exciting project your SCI Organizer worked on this term was the Berkeley City College membership drive. PFT has been striving to raise its profile by increasing its membership rolls and getting more faculty active with the Committee on Political Education. And just as we roamed the halls of BCC with membership forms, COPE forms, and materials to help faculty know their rights—using a model developed during the wildly successful Laney drive last spring—so will we take to the CoA and Merritt campuses early next year. 

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# EDD Benefits for Part-time Faculty

**S**INCE MOST PART-TIME faculty have several weeks of "vacation" at the end of each semester, it is very important that everyone take advantage of the unemployment benefits offered by the Employment Development Department of the State of California (EDD), which provide you a percentage of your income each week you are between assignments.

PFT reminds all part-time faculty members that you are eligible for unemployment insurance benefits during the period between semesters when you are unemployed or underemployed. *Cervisi vs. Unemployment Insurance Appeals Board* (208 Cal. App. 3d 635), decided in February 1989 by the Court of Appeals, held that a "contingent assignment is not a 'reasonable

assurance' of continued employment" within the meaning of the Unemployment Insurance Act, and does not disqualify the employee from the receipt of benefits.

For more information and details on how to apply for unemployment, go to the PFT website: [www.pft1603.org](http://www.pft1603.org). Click on *Part Time Corner* and scroll down to find the article entitled *EDD Benefits for Part-time Faculty*. 