

# The Voice

Part-Time Faculty Association of Allan Hancock College • Parity & Fairness Through Advocacy



## SEASON'S GREETINGS!



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# Looking backward, looking forward

MARK JAMES MILLER, PFA President

## Year in review for Local 6185

2008 began with a bang (and certainly not a whimper): In January we signed a new three year collective bargaining agreement that not only gave our members a 4.53% increase in pay, retroactive to July 2007, we also improved and strengthened our contract in numerous areas. It was an auspicious beginning to the new year, with many more good things to come. Some of the highlights of the year are listed below:

- April: Local 6185 sent 4 delegates to the annual California Federation of Teachers Convention in Oakland. At the convention our publication, *The Voice*, received a CFT Communications Award.
- May: We awarded the first-ever PFA Scholarship to Zaneta Delgadillo; a long-standing dues shortfall was resolved; the PFA held a retirement dinner for outgoing Dean Ray Hobson.

Leader of the Year Awards Dinner in Oxnard; bargaining for reopeners continued.

- November: Yet another first for the local: Lynn Torbert, daughter of PFA member George Torbert, won a CFT Raoul Teihlet Scholarship; Mark Miller attended the AFT's Special Leadership Conference in Washington, DC; bargaining continued.
- December: Executive Board re-elected to another three year term; bargaining continues.

## AFT's Special Leadership Conference

The AFT's Higher Education Special Leadership Conference took place at the stately Washington Court Hotel in downtown Washington, DC, from November 21-23, 2008. 45 selected leaders from AFT locals all over the country came to the three day event, hosted by the AFT's Higher Education Department. I was privileged to be one of those invited to attend.

## Only 27% of higher education instructors in the United States are full-time, tenure track, and the number is dwindling every year.

- July: Settlement of a paycheck issue; 67% law passed in Sacramento, to take effect in January 2009, giving part-timers the ability to work 67% of a full-time load.
- August: For the first time the PFA takes part in the part-time faculty orientation; PFA sent 4 delegates to the CFT's Leadership Institute at UCLA.
- September: PFA President Mark Miller elected to the American Federation of Teachers Higher Education Program and Policy Council; reopeners for 2008-2009 began.
- October: Another first: Local 6185 sent a delegate to the CFT's State Executive Council meeting and the Community College Council meeting; Secretary-Treasurer Gary Aston and President Mark Miller attended the Central Labor Council's Labor

This was my first-ever trip to Washington, DC, and after the flight that began nearly seven hours earlier in San Luis Obispo I was glad to get off the plane, collect my luggage and hail a taxi to take me to the hotel. I thought I might have traveled farther than anyone else to attend this conference, but that turned out not to be the case: There were representatives from Alaska, Washington state, and Oregon, all of whom had come farther than I had to be there.

The purpose of the conference was to train present and future AFT leaders in higher education. The need for leadership, and union activism, from the local to the national level, is striking nowadays. Higher Education is one of the fastest growing constituencies in the AFT, and while at this conference I learned some sobering statistics: Only

27% of higher education instructors in the United States are full-time, tenure track, and the number is dwindling every year. That means that each year more and more students are taught by what is referred to in the AFT as "contingent faculty": non-tenure track instructors (15%); part-time instructors (37%); and graduate students (21%). (This includes both two-year and four-year colleges and universities, public as well as private.) Among the many topics of discussion at the conference was how best to increase public awareness of this little-known trend in America's higher educational system. Tuition and other

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## The Voice

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### Executive Board Members

**President** Mark Miller

**Secretary-Treasurer** Gary Aston

**Vice President** Noel Warffuel

### Members-At-Large

Roberto Armstrong

Vivian Bryan

Susan Case

Matt Hidingier

Joan Mahony

Dorran Nadeau

### Negotiating Team

Gary Aston

Susan Case

Mark Miller

Dorran Nadeau

Mike Terman, CFT Representative

### Publications Director/Editor-in-Chief

Dorran Nadeau

### Direct correspondence to:

*The Voice*

910 E. Stowell, Suite 112

P.O. Box 1257

Santa Maria, CA 93456

Telephone 805 352-0145

Fax 805 352-1318

E-mail [ahcpfa@verizon.net](mailto:ahcpfa@verizon.net)

Web [www.ahcpfa.org](http://www.ahcpfa.org)

## AFT Conference

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costs go up each year, but the number of full-time, tenured instructors goes down while the number of part-time instructors increases. The public is generally unaware of these startling facts, and along with organizing, bargaining, and bettering the position of contingent faculty, we also have the task of informing the American public of the over-reliance on part-time instructors in higher education.

I attended workshops on collective bargaining and organizing, presented by AFT professionals, each with years of experience in organizing and negotiating behind them. While there was much of value to learn in these workshops (there always is), perhaps the most important aspect of this and the other conferences I have attended is meeting and getting acquainted with people from other AFT locals. If anything comes through loud and clear it is that the same problems exist everywhere. From Alaska to Vermont, from Michigan to Florida, the story is the same: Lack of job security for part-time instructors, low pay, well-educated people with advanced degrees going from college to college just to eke out a marginal living, and administrators and boards who are less than eager to do anything about these issues.

The issues we are facing and have faced at Allan Hancock College in Santa Maria are issues shared by people just like us from one end of the country to the other, and there is an increasing sense of awareness that if we have problems in common we can also find solutions in common.

### Executive Board Re-Elected

The members have spoken, and in a loud voice: By a 98.6% majority vote, the people of Local 6185 have expressed their desire to have the incumbent Executive Board serve another three year term. President Mark James Miller, Vice President Noel Warffuel, Secretary-Treasurer Gary Aston, and Members-at-Large Roberto Armstrong, Vivian Bryan, Susan Case, Matt Hidingier, Joan Mahony and Dorran Nadeau will all be staying on and continuing to represent the members for the next three years.



**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  
2550 N. Hollywood Way, Suite 400  
Burbank, CA 95105  
T: 818/843-8226  
F: 818/843-4662  
[www.cft.org](http://www.cft.org)



HIGH SCHOOL APPLICATIONS MUST BE POSTMARKED BY  
**JANUARY 10, 2009**

COLLEGE APPLICATIONS MUST BE POSTMARKED BY  
**JULY 1, 2009**

### Chicago Workers Win Demands

On December 6, 2008, in a scene reminiscent of the 1930s, approximately 250 workers at a Chicago window manufacturing plant occupied the factory to protest the sudden termination of their jobs and to demand the severance and vacation pay they claimed was due them. On December 9 the news reached them that both their former employer and Bank of America, whose denial of credit to the company had brought about the plant's closure, had agreed to their demands.

(Source: [www.msnbc.msn.com/id/28144080/](http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/28144080/))

### "Know Your Rights"

All bargaining unit members need to be aware that they have the right to have a union representative present when they meet with their supervisor. While we at the Association are very pleased to note that most problems have been solved at a low level and few have gone to the grievance process, issues do arise that require our intervention. If you find yourself in a position of having to meet with your supervisor, remember you have the right to have a representative from the Part-Time Faculty Association there.



# Focus On: June Grimm—Dedicated Professional

BY ROBERTO ARMSTRONG

June Grimm has retired. She came to AHC in 1987 after a 24 year career as a high school teacher and counselor at Ridgecrest High School in China Lake. The non-credit ESL program at Hancock was in its infancy. June was one of the first to sign on. It was a new teaching ex-

perience for her, challenging and full of interest. There was no established curriculum, there was often only minimal support from the Administration, there were inadequate materials and classroom facilities, but there was a fundamental community need for an English as a Second Language program that reached out to those who had previously been neglected. June has dedicated her professional life since then to fulfilling that need. She has given countless hours of unpaid effort to helping students, to building curriculum, to improving programs and testing. She has seen five coordinators and at least eight deans come and go over

**"I want to thank you for everything you taught me this semester. I think your profession is the biggest and best in the world. God bless you!"**

the years. As lead teacher, she has helped dozens of other teachers with materials and sage advice. She has been impressed by the high quality of the great majority of teachers she has worked with, by their resourcefulness and dedication. She is grateful to the classified staff, "a wonder-

ful group of people to work with."

If you know June you would also know that she would find what I have just written a bit over the top. She'd be more likely to tell you a story about a student in one of her classes who was worried when she told them that her dogs slept with her. "You need a man!" was his advice. Or about a barefooted teacher she evaluated once: "My feet hurt!"

June is the mother of two children, has two grandchildren, and two great grandchildren. She is an avid reader and gardener and, obviously, a dog lover. She also raises rare breeds of chickens whose eggs she has generously shared with staff



members over the years.

But the last and most moving words come from a student in her class who presented her with a plaque. "I want to thank you for everything you taught me this semester. I think your profession is the biggest and best in the world. God bless you!"

## Santa Maria Coalition

The Executive Board of the Part-Time Faculty Association has voted member-at-large Roberto Armstrong to be its representative with the Santa Maria Coalition.

This is a first step in the Association's plan to reach out into the local community and play a more active role in community affairs.

### New Members

- Roberta Bos
- Elliot Dreger
- Julie Vasques

Part-Time Faculty Association  
P.O. Box 1257  
Santa Maria, CA 93456

