

ADVOCATE



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CCA Fall Conference

Fosters Leadership and Encourages Relationship Building

By **Gabriella Landeros**



“I appreciate being able to collaborate and hear from others to collect information, so that we can look at some of the examples and possibly incorporate that into our agreement at our campus. We know that we work with a very diverse population. When we talk about diversity, it's not just race and ethnicity. We're also talking about ability levels and gender identities.”

—**Veronica Njoku-Carter**
LBCCFCA Negotiations

The CCA Fall Conference focused on all matters pertaining to bargaining, including an overview and bargaining implications around Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Accessibility.

Calbright Faculty Association President Cindy Carney attended “Changes to Title V to Include DEIA Standards in Faculty Evaluation: Overview and Bargaining Implications,” led by CTA Staff Tom Pinkava. “I learned about the changes for DEIA when it comes to our evaluations and how we need to bargain it into our evaluation process. We just want to make sure that our students are treated respectfully in our content, whether it's their pronouns, having accessibility to content or just recognizing that everybody learns differently. We want to make sure we are meeting the students where they are at with the types of resources,” said Carney.

“It helped to be able to hear what other colleges are doing as far as how they are implementing DEIA,” said Veronica Njoku-Carter, who is on the negotiations team at the Long Beach City College Faculty Association. “Some colleges haven't started, and some have already completed the

process. I appreciate being able to collaborate and hear from others to collect information, so that we can look at some of the examples and possibly incorporate that into our agreement at our campus.

We know that we work with a very diverse population. When we talk about diversity, it's not just race and ethnicity. We're also talking about ability levels and gender identities. There are so many different parts of our identities that make up our student population as well as our staff and employee population. I think DEIA is something we should all be committed to, and I feel like our faculty are committed.”

The conference included the graduation of members who participated in the **Building Strong Locals Academy (BSL)**, which is a program focused on strengthening local chapters, with the primary goal of educating members to serve effectively at the local chapter level with confidence and a working knowledge of their rights and responsibilities. Approximately 20 faculty members from local CCA chapters are chosen annually to participate in the Academy. The graduates began their exclusive training at the CCA Winter Conference

and then participated in training sessions parallel to the CCA Spring and Fall conferences. The Academy was initially funded by a grant from NEA but is currently funded solely by CCA. Congratulations to the BSL Class of 2023!

- Sam Abbas, South Orange County Community College District Faculty Association
- Wonderful Nancy Allah, South Orange County Community College District Faculty Association
- Karen Beck, Rio Hondo College Faculty Association
- Dean Caivano, Merced College Faculty Association
- Suzanne Engelhardt, Long Beach City College Faculty Association
- Adam Fong, Merced College Faculty Association
- Megan Igo, Merced College Faculty Association
- Kelvin Leeds, Faculty Association of Rancho Santiago Community College District
- Timothy Linehan, College of the Sequoias Teachers Association

Continues on PAGE 3 ►



A NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTION

By CCA President **Eric Kaljumägi**

I WAS RECENTLY on an airplane after getting my third COVID booster shot. The seats were filled and only a few people were wearing masks. According to **OAG Aviation**, airline travel has fully recovered from 2020 when it plunged by nearly 70% and then stayed down by over 40% for an additional year. Air travel today now looks a lot like air travel in early 2019. Unfortunately, that recovery is not true of our community colleges.

First, enrollment at our colleges is still well below 2019 levels. The LA Times **reported** on November 18, 2022, that Fall 2021 headcount in our system had dropped 20% as compared to Fall 2019. While the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office doesn't have Fall 2023 data yet, a review of 2022 and Spring 2023 data on the **CCCCO Datamart** shows that we're not yet seeing a great improvement off of these pandemic lows. We've lost a lot of students.

Second, the financial support given to our colleges per Full-Time Equivalent Student (FTES) has barely kept up with inflation. Between June 2019 (the start of the fiscal year that had the pandemic) and June 2023, the California **Consumer Price Index** went up 18.2%. Our state-funded COLA's during that time were 3.26%, 2.70%, 2.31% and 6.56% for a compounded total of 15.6%. With this year's inflation somewhere between 3 and 4 percent and this year's COLA 8.22%, by the end of this year we'll be just about even - for the budget areas that received a COLA increase. Not every account in each district's budget gets COLA.

Third, the rumored California recession has arrived and it looks to drench us like a winter storm. On December 7, the state Legislative Analyst's Office (LAO) issued a **prediction** that California will have a massive \$68 billion deficit next year. This dwarfs the \$24 billion the state has put aside in its reserves. The LAO's report suggests that nearly \$21 billion can be saved by reducing expenses under Proposition 98, but funding from this law provides most of our districts' support.

Fourth, colleges are still adjusting to a series of laws this past few years that collectively reduce the funding our colleges receive. The Student-Centered Funding Formula of 2018 linked 30% of our funding to a series of metrics not aligned with a district's expenses. AB 928 (2021) created a singular GE pattern that reduces the number of units required to graduate and consequently the average number of FTES generated by each actual student. Also, AB 1705 (2022) essentially outlawed remediation in Math and English, which has led both to a rise in dropouts who no longer attend college as well as a rise in the number of students who need fewer math and English classes. This shrinks the FTES values even more.

Although many of us are quite attached to our college and go well beyond our job descriptions out of a sense of professionalism and pride in our work, we are still employees. When you return to work in 2024, be aware that your district will be looking to save money. They might attempt to contract out some of your dual enrollment work to high school teachers. They may be wary of providing pay raises, even if the legislature funds a new COLA, and they may press for permanent takebacks or new unpaid duties.

As one of your New Year's resolutions, I hope you will consider reaching out to your local president and increase your involvement in your local. While California's storms, both fiscal and climatic, won't last forever, there are definitely clouds overhead. Support your union! ■

Eric Kaljumägi
CCA President
president@cca4us.org

ADVOCATE

The Community College Association, with CTA and NEA as our partners, advocates for California's public community college faculty, staff and students; empowers locals; builds strong and effective coalitions; promotes equity, inclusion, anti-racism, social justice and part-time faculty equality; and strives to preserve universal access to quality public education.

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CCA WINTER CONFERENCE

► SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA

FEB. 2-4, 2024



► CCA FALL CONFERENCE



▲ BSL Class of 2023



▲ CCA Southern Part-Time Faculty At-large Director Geoffrey Johnson and CCA Northern Part-Time Faculty At-large Director Justin Bell

- Marina McLaughlin, Mt. San Antonio College Faculty Association
- Sierra Moussatche, Coast Community College Association
- Kim-Leiloni Nguyen, Mt. San Antonio College Faculty Association
- David Rentz, Chaffey College Faculty Association
- Dennis Sandoval, San Bernardino Community College District Teachers Association
- Kirk Thomsen, College of the Siskiyous CHEA CHPT
- Amber Wallick, San Bernardino Community College District Teachers Association

“I always like coming to [CCA conferences] because there are things that I don't know about that come to light or what's going on with advocacy or legislation that I don't have access to or wouldn't know where to look,” said Connie Isais, who is the Communications Chair for the Rio Hondo College Faculty Association.

Isais attended “Digital Tools and Social Media to Support Local Bargaining Campaigns,” led by CTA Staff Gabriella Landeros.

CCA Northern Part-Time Faculty At-large Director Justin Bell and CCA Southern Part-Time Faculty At-large Director Geoffrey Johnson gave an overview of issues impacting part-time faculty. They support chapters as they are navigating these issues at their bargaining tables. “The big thing we are trying to talk about now is getting equal pay for equal job responsibilities. We're trying to get equal inclusion of adjunct contingent faculty and trying to secure their job security, simply because of the record \$200 million ongoing funding for part-time health care. What we need to do now is negotiate so that all adjuncts statewide, particularly for CCA, are getting the same medical coverage as their full-time colleagues with the same premiums. For chapters who have achieved this, my hope is that we can take what we've learned from looking

at the tentative agreements that were later signed and the language put together there and use that to move this forward,” said Johnson. Both Johnson (directorspt@cca4us.org) and Bell (directorntp@cca4us.org) are available for any chapters looking for support on this.

The CCA Fall Conference ended with Council, where the new mission statement was approved. ■

MISSION STATEMENT

The Community College Association, with CTA and NEA as our partners, advocates for California's public community college faculty, staff and students; empowers locals; builds strong and effective coalitions; promotes equity, inclusion, anti-racism, social justice and part-time faculty equality; and strives to preserve universal access to quality public education.

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BRINGING DIVERSITY, EQUITY, INCLUSION AND ACCESSIBILITY TO CA COMMUNITY COLLEGES

By **Gabriella Landeros**

▼ Photo by Hannah Busing on Unsplash



CCA CHAPTERS across the state are examining ways to implement equity policies or Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Accessibility (DEIA) in their contracts. In an interview, Mt. San Antonio College Faculty Association (Mt. SAC FA) President Emily Woolery shares how Mt. SAC FA is working to do this.

WHY IS DEIA IMPORTANT FOR LOCALS TO IMPLEMENT?

Mt. SAC faculty had been working on issues related to diversity, equity and inclusion before the Chancellor's Office mandated the inclusion of DEIA competencies

Equity and Inclusion in the California Community Colleges). We agreed to draft language that included diversity, equity, inclusion and anti-racism and to conduct an evaluation pilot study. We agreed to do a pilot study where the first year we would develop language together in draft format, we would do a study using that draft language, and if successful, we would forward recommendations to the negotiations team. This agreement resulted in forming a workgroup, which included five-six faculty members of the Mt. SAC FA. The district also appointed managers to be in the workgroup and together we looked through

into evaluation processes. To include DEIA competencies into our local's work further strengthened our faculty's commitment to improving the learning environment for many of our students. While much of the work focuses on student learning and support, this work will also deepen our understanding of the faculty's experiences and should strengthen our ability to represent our faculty.

HOW DID YOU IMPLEMENT DEIA AT MT. SAC?

In our contract article on professor expectancies and evaluation procedures, we committed to guiding principles based on Title 5 section 51201 (Statement on Diversity,

the evaluation language in the contract. We have completed the draft language but have not completed the pilot study. Last we discussed, we will test it out in the spring semester. At Mt. SAC we use DEISA+ to represent diversity, equity, inclusion, social justice, accessibility, anti-racism and others.

WHAT ADVICE DO YOU HAVE FOR LOCALS TRYING TO IMPLEMENT THIS IN THEIR CONTRACTS?

I believe it's important for locals to take the lead, if possible, within their district and it's been helpful at Mt. SAC to include full-time and part-time faculty from across the campus in reviewing our expectancies and evaluation processes. There was much faculty interest when we put out a call to join the joint workgroup of faculty and district administrators. This was an added benefit in that we now have faculty who have greater familiarity with the contract and our local's work, and they have experience and feel comfortable working with the district.

If you have any interest in joining CCA's DEIA Task Force to help guide CCA's DEIA work, please email CCA Vice President Randa Wahbe at vp@cca4us.org. The task force will guide CCA's DEIA work by connecting with other statewide groups to create sample DEIA language for contracts and make recommendations for local CCA chapters regarding DEIA policy. ■

HEALTH CARE FOR PART-TIME FACULTY BUDGET

Health care for part-time faculty has been rare and something CCA has long advocated for. It was recently on the table at Hartnell College, and they won. Neighboring Gavilan College Faculty Association also negotiated health care for part-time faculty with an "AB 190-compliant agreement."

AB 190 expands current part-time faculty health insurance programs and incentivizes districts by providing up to 100% reimbursement for health care costs. This empowers CCA local unions to bargain expanded access to health care benefits for part-time faculty.

How does it work? It varies somewhat by district, but upon receiving an assignment of 40% or more, unit members and their dependents are eligible to

select health care plans paid by the district, which is reimbursed by the state. Among the CCA locals that have utilized AB 190 for the benefit of part-time faculty: College of Desert Adjunct Association, Faculty Association of Rancho Santiago Community College District, MiraCosta College Academic Association Faculty, Southwestern College Education Association and Riverside Community College District Faculty Association.

Negotiating health care is doable, said CCA Secretary John Sullivan, a former executive board member at the RCCDFA. "My recommendation to all chapters struggling with this is to work with your CTA primary contact staff to review your options and push forward, knowing that you are not alone in the process."

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AI IN THE CLASSROOM

By **Gabriella Landeros**

➔ *With AI rapidly growing and instrumental to **Vision 2030**, members across the state are looking for suggestions on how to implement this in their classrooms.*

IN AN INTERVIEW, Faculty Association for California Community Colleges (FACCC) President Wendy Brill-Wynkoop shares how AI is evolving in the future of education.

HOW DO YOU USE AI IN YOUR CLASSROOM?

ChatGPT has yet to have its first birthday. As I'm serving as president of FACCC, I haven't had a chance to apply generative AI in my classroom. But there are many exciting ways teachers could use it.

I could ask it to summarize readings or lectures to help students review key points. It could help develop lesson plans, suggest a flipped classroom approach, or generate practice questions and sample responses. AI could also assist with producing lecture materials, translating course content into other languages to increase accessibility, and even creating assessments.

The key is the iterative process - like having a dialogue with a thought partner. Through a series of back-and-forth prompts, I could refine my goals and get materials tailored to my needs. While there's still much to explore with this emerging technology, it holds much potential to augment teaching in a student-centered way.

WHAT RECOMMENDATION DO YOU HAVE FOR FACULTY?

When it comes to AI, I recommend faculty approach it with cautious optimism. Experiment to understand the potential, but don't immediately give it to students without guidance.

First, become fluent with the tech yourself. Then, you can set student expectations on proper use and limitations. For instance, vet any AI-generated content to avoid misinformation.

Advocate for professional development around AI on your campus. Faculty insight will be key for establishing ethical policies on its use.

AI holds promise to enhance teaching but can't replicate human understanding and connection. Find ways it can inspire "aha moments," not replace them.

This technology is still so new. If implemented carefully and creatively, AI could meaningfully augment our classrooms. But the human element remains irreplaceable. Let's shape how this unfolds to empower students thoughtfully. That's the challenge and opportunity ahead.

WHAT TOOLS ARE OUT THERE?

When it comes to AI tools for education, the options are exploding. ChatGPT has made a huge splash for its vast knowledge drawn from a massive data set. But it doesn't discern between sources, so the output can be unpredictable.

Some AI tools limit their data sources or focus specifically on scholarly research for more controlled use. These could provide higher quality output, though with less breadth.

I advise digging in and experimenting with ChatGPT since it's accessible and powerful. But approach the information critically. And complement it with more specialized AI tools as they emerge to take advantage of curated data sources.

We're still in the early days for educational AI. New offerings will come rapidly, so stay curious. Try different options to see what best supports your teaching aims without going too far down the AI rabbit hole. As with any tech, balance automation with the human touch.

WHAT IS VISION 2030?

Vision 2030 is an exciting roadmap guiding the future of the California Community Colleges system. It outlines goals and strategies, with AI as one key priority among many.

Specifically for AI, Vision 2030 explores how to leverage these tools to enhance teaching and learning. Upcoming webinars will dig deeper into thoughtful implementation.

But AI is just one component of this broader vision to transform the community college experience by 2030. The core focuses are eliminating equity gaps, strengthening pathways to jobs and more.

As Vision 2030 rolls out, faculty have an opportunity to help shape how AI thoughtfully supports larger student success and workforce goals. By engaging with

the process, we can advocate for ethical, empowering uses of AI that uplift our institutions.

The California Community Colleges, FACCC and Academic Senate for California Community Colleges (ASCCC) will host two more webinars on generative AI in February and April. ■

VISION 2030

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► **APRIL 30, 2024 | 12PM-1PM**
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COST-OF-LIVING ADJUSTMENT IN NEGOTIATIONS

By CCA Secretary **John Sullivan**, in collaboration with CTA PCS **Robin Devitt**

Over the years, I have heard varying opinions about the cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) in negotiations: from never negotiate COLA, to only use COLA as a baseline, to always start with COLA, and many of these interpretations have been adversarial to the other opinions.

UNDERSTANDING COLA

WHAT IS COLA?

This seems obvious, but it underscores the rhetoric we hear, particularly from districts, when COLA is announced in January, adjusted in May, and finally negotiated sometime during the summer. That then creates misunderstanding about COLA and what it is and who should get it and how much should be gotten — all to the benefit of the district.

COLA is based on a formula that is calculated by the state **Department of Finance**, which determines the percentage amount of COLA funding that will be passed on to districts, as a means of keeping salaries comparable and maintaining the ability to keep up with the rising costs of living. While districts and the the Community College League of California want to always keep ownership of the full COLA increases, COLA is specifically defined as a cost-of-living adjustment to be utilized by the district to keep its salaries and rates on par with inflation and maintain buying power for utilities and other consumables that have risen over the year. It is essential for districts to distribute the COLA percentage to its employees. It is not, in fact, stated anywhere that the district can or should keep the full COLA funding; the percentage *should* be “passed through.”

To get this “pass through” requires an agreement in negotiations and recognition by the employer that the state, through tax revenue, is supporting the ongoing cost of living increases with funding. Some districts are hesitant to commit to the funding as language we refer to as “pass through” but others commit to it as an ethical principle. COLA funds are an “adjustment” to current salaries, not a raise. It often is played out as something the district will be reluctant to do, but we need to hold firm. When bargaining COLA, be it for the year, the duration of the contract, or permanently, provide the basic definitions even though it may feel a bit elementary to explain what a

cost of living adjustment means (in other words, get them in your bargaining notes and specifically say “the intent means...” because I’ll bet you will have to go back to it).

While negotiations need to include COLA, the best approach is to establish the foundational principle with the district that COLA is the starting point, not the end point. All wage increases need to be on top of COLA, but also keep in mind that this is just the beginning of discussing COLA.

COLA has been interpreted by districts in different ways, and you will hear different definitions of COLA discussed. *Statutory COLA (SC)* is the amount determined by the state under the statute with the COLA formula. *Effective COLA (EC)* or Net COLA is the district attempt to reduce statutory COLA by claiming deductions or offsets they claim need to be

factored into SC before EC is determined. Beware of these attempts to increase the district coffers while shrinking faculty wages’ buying power.

FINDING THE MONEY

A multitude of districts now sit on large growing reserves that in some cases are well above the 50% mark. Incidentally, the 2008 required reserve was moved from 3% to 5%, and more recently, the state Chancellor’s Office has *only* recommended 15-17%. That most districts are well above those percentages testifies to the fact that they don’t really need to keep all or a major portion of the COLA but should pass on the funded percentage equally to the cost of salaries. Bald-faced greed or prioritizing administration and managers above those groups that engage the most with students and facilities should be confronted and fought; hence, we must maintain the principle that the A in COLA is an adjustment, not a raise.

One of the tools that districts will use comes from School Services of California (SSC; a private company) — accessible from CTA’s Center for Organizing and Bargaining through your chapter’s Primary Contact Staff person. SSC’s Dartboard gives projected statutory COLA for the next five years, and while it is not always accurate, districts use this to plan and project their budgets, so chapters should use it to prepare for bargaining over wages and benefits.

PCS can train their chapters’ bargaining teams to read and interpret the Dartboard, and CCA offers negotiations academies at our Fall Conference each year. The CTA Summer Institute is also a good place to send your bargaining team for this training, and holding a chapter workshop for all your members on this topic will help prepare your members to support the bargain.

The bottom line is this: COLA is not a raise. Treat it as a part of the salary schedule, and negotiate increasing salaries based on current salary, adjusted for COLA, plus a

raise. (*Qualifier:* never negotiate to lower salaries when COLA is a negative — that’s what those high reserves are for — the “rainy day when COLA isn’t funded”).

Chapters will be in stronger bargaining positions if they are 1) knowledgeable and tracking the district’s finances, especially reserves; 2) clear about the district’s budget and priorities; 3) firm in establishing the guiding principles — including that COLA is an adjustment, not a raise; 4) have access to and work with PCSs to understand the Dartboard and organizing for bargaining; and 5) knowledgeable about your comparison districts.

All of this typically means that chapter negotiations teams are the most informed in the room during bargaining. Having served on negotiations and sat on several of my chapters’ executive boards (I teach at multiple colleges) during at least a dozen

negotiation periods, I can definitely say that entering negotiations with the data and laying it out before the district representatives will put us in a much stronger position. Whether we are successful will depend on how detailed our information is, how much we can leverage faculty in supporting the organizing around bargaining, and our relationships with the trustees — to see how negotiations proceed.

ORGANIZING

The final spoke in the wheel of successful bargaining is organizing your faculty. To do this requires creating a unified atmosphere, and that starts with — SURPRISE — educating!

Set up an **ORGANIZING COMMITTEE** — call it a Social Committee if that makes it less intimidating — and gather your faculty to get to know each other, gather non-school emails, and set up ye ol’ phone/text trees. Publish a newsletter and share those with the trustees at each board of trustees meeting. Educate the membership and the trustees; rarely have I seen a trustee who is knowledgeable about faculty issues - they only know what the district chancellor or president tells them, which isn’t much. Invite them to events, ask them to come watch student presentations, or interesting lectures - perhaps they can provide one as a guest speaker.

COMMUNICATION is essential. If you are bargaining next year, now is the time to get started with organizing: Plan negotiations from the desired end date backward, schedule member luncheons; pass out chapter-branded items (like mugs, t-shirts, pencils and pens); keep building connections with California School Employees Association, surrounding K-12 unions, labor councils, etc.; keep posting events and messaging on social media (does your chapter have a Facebook page? Instagram? X?); hold workshops and webinars for your faculty on bargaining and on the topics that you expect to conform to Sunshine policies; invite individual trustees to lunch or coffee to talk about their priorities and ours, and try to find common ground and build ongoing relationships.

GET SUPPORT. Remember too that CCA has Membership Development Grants and Innovative Grants that are intended to help chapters pay for these events and swag. CTA also offers many grant funding opportunities for organizing and special projects; your PCS can explain these options. As the old saying goes, “it’s your money; put it to work for you.” Grant details and application processes are all on cca4us.org. ■

“Preach this to your members, the trustees and the administration: Raises increase wages above the current level adjusted for inflation with COLA. A raise is meant to increase our buying power, not to keep up with inflation — the latter is the purpose of COLA.”

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LOOKING AHEAD WITH GREAT HOPE

By Cynthia Menzel, Josh Kob and Gabriella Landeros

This is an update to **"2006 Strike Remembered as Hartnell College Faculty Fight for Professional Contract"** appearing in the **December 2023/January 2024 California Educator**.

AFTER A MARATHON 16-hour negotiating session, Hartnell College Faculty Association (HCFA) and Hartnell College Trustees agreed to a contract that attracts and retains valued teachers. There are many wins in the tentative agreement, which resolves or improves many issues of concern for all faculty and includes no "takebacks." The voting window has been shared with HCFA members to ratify the agreement.

"We are pleased Hartnell College accepted our

challenge to get this deal done," said Nancy Schur-Beymer, HCFA president. "Student and community support were invaluable to our team to get us over the finish line. The negotiations team led by Ashley Gabriel were tireless and determined to get something for everyone."

HCFA won health care for part-time faculty that's compliant with the AB 190 100% reimbursement program. HCFA also has one of the best health benefit packages around with fully paid health care.

"This is huge, as faculty unions throughout the state are still struggling to win this. We believe ours is perhaps the 15th agreement out of the 72 community college districts in the state that utilizes the AB 190 reimbursement program. We're proud part-time faculty will have the opportunity to take advantage of our excellent, employer-paid health care," said Schur-Beymer.

"While increases will vary, everyone will see healthy increases during this three-year contract" said Schur-Beymer. "This agreement moves Hartnell College from last place to first in the region and significantly increases the college's salary rankings statewide."

The agreement leapfrogs the faculty salaries over the closest neighboring colleges: Monterey, Gavilan and Cabrillo. The salary schedule was compressed to increase the career earnings of faculty and make the salary schedule more cost-effective. The compressed salary schedule eliminated "dead zones" where teachers' pay was frozen.

"WE ARE PLEASED HARTNELL COLLEGE ACCEPTED OUR CHALLENGE TO GET THIS DEAL DONE. STUDENT AND COMMUNITY SUPPORT WERE INVALUABLE TO OUR TEAM TO GET US OVER THE FINISH LINE. THE NEGOTIATIONS TEAM LED BY ASHLEY GABRIEL WERE TIRELESS AND DETERMINED TO GET SOMETHING FOR EVERYONE."

—Nancy Schur-Beymer, HCFA President

Other wins include improvements in salary for coaches and those who teach lab classes, part-time re-employment preferences and working remotely for non-instructional faculty, including counselors, librarians and instructional specialists. Contract language improvements included expanding bereavement leaves, association rights and release time and grievance procedures.

This win is proof that when teachers work together, students win! ■



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