



# Classified FOCUS

California School Employees Association

Santa Monica College Chapter 36

February 2007

## CSEA PRESIDENT ROB FECKNER: "Unity is the Key to Victory"



CSEA President  
Rob Fecker

SMC Chapter 36 welcomed CSEA President Rob Feckner and Second Vice President Michael Bilbrey to a special chapter

meeting on Wednesday, January 31, 2007. The occasion was the installation of the this year's Chapter 36 newly-elected officers. Also in attendance were Jennie Batiste, Area I director; Nancy Lopez, Regional Representative; and Labor Relations representative Connie Moreno.

Pizza and other refreshments were served.

It was a full house as members listened attentively to Mr. Feckner, who reported on the status of CSEA's efforts to realize comprehensive health care for everyone, the establishment of an emergency fund for members in need, the importance of unity among the union's membership, and other concerns that directly affect the well-being of employees.

There are currently several health care proposals in the California legislature that are being considered. In order for CSEA to back any of these proposals, some of the criteria are: including part-time employees; it must be voluntary; it must provide quality care; and it cannot override trust funds like PERS.

Mr. Feckner pointed out that although CalPERS has considerable clout because of the number of members in its organization, totaling about 1.4 million, it is still not sufficient to significantly change the health care system as it stands on the

state level only. This can only take place nationally.

Some politicians want to privatize the retirement system. Mr. Feckner, who is also the president of CalPERS and is associated with the State Federation of Labor, emphasized, however, that in the 75 years of its existence, the financial status of the CalPERS retirement system has never been stronger. Therefore, privatization is unwarranted. In fact, it has one of the two largest retirement funds in the world, currently \$227 billion strong. Its investments are chosen judiciously, and the organization has a responsible contractor policy regarding such investments.

Members in CalPERS stand to fare much better financially than with other retirement programs in which individuals must pick and choose investments on their own. Consequently, they may become exposed to greater financial risk.

**CalPERS . . . has one of the two largest retirement funds in the world, currently \$227 billion strong.**

There are changes being made about the way long-term retiree health care costs are being reported by the Governmental Accounting Standards Board (GASB). Rule 45 or GASB 45 requires that the retirement benefits be estimated for a 30-year period, including health care benefits. CSEA contends that this is part of a scare tactic to sell insurance pension funds and could be used by politicians as a reason to cut these costs. However, these benefits were earned by the retirees and should not be compromised in any way.

Mr. Feckner then stated that CSEA's Humanitarian Fund has been set up along with the Dorothy Bjork Disaster Fund to assist members with major disasters such as floods, fires, and earthquakes, in addition to personal emergencies and unforeseen hardships. In the interest of enabling CSEA to continue to take care of its own, he invited everyone, if they are able, to make donations to the Humanitarian Fund.

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During the question-and-answer portion of the meeting, Mr. Feckner talked about the value of attending the annual CSEA conference; the next one will be held in Las Vegas .

It was brought up by a member that another likely threat to our benefits is the proposal in Washington, D.C., to tax health insurance benefits. Mr. Feckner agreed, expressing his hope that there would be enough opposition to negate that possibility.

Another member acknowledged the efforts of the Chapter 36 leadership for its successful efforts to have two previously laid-off employees re-instated. The Santa Monica College Board of Trustees, the Personnel Commission, and SMC President Chui Tsang were also recognized for their decision to welcome these employees back into the fold.

Mr. Feckner congratulated everyone, reiterating that unity is the key to victory. He added that any indication of disunity conveys to the District that we are weak, enabling them to take any opportunity to undermine the united efforts of the membership. He also commented on how impressed he was by the number of members in attendance.



The CSEA president mentioned that the Union is moving ahead with legislation in Sacramento regarding the resolution concerning disaster-preparedness measures for community colleges. This resolution had been presented to delegates at annual CSEA Conferences by Chapter 36 representatives three times before it finally passed last summer. Again, this is thanks to the vision and concerted efforts of the chapter leadership.

Nancy Lopez announced that the next State Board meeting will be held in Rim of the World, near Lake Arrowhead, on March 17, 2007; anyone who is interested is welcome to attend.

Mr. Feckner led the installation of this year's newly-elected officers. It was conducted with decorum and a sense of appreciation for their willingness to make a commitment to the well-being of CSEA and its Chapter 36 members.

The meeting concluded, after which Mr. Fecker and the other state and area leaders stayed a while longer to meet and greet the members.

*[Contributors to this article: Bernie Rosenloecher, Phil Hendricks, Connie Lemke, and Nancy Donohue]*

## February is Have-a-Heart Month



When a disaster affects CSEA members, the union is quick to provide assistance through our Dorothy Bjork Disaster Relief Fund. February is CSEA's Have-a-Heart Month, a time dedicated to replenishing the balance in the disaster fund.

The fund subsists purely on donations, so every dollar counts. Your money will help CSEA members recover from natural disasters by providing financial assistance for damage not covered by insurance or other relief agencies.

There are many ways to give to the disaster fund, including chapter donations and memorial contributions. Please send checks payable to the CSEA Disaster Relief Fund, Attention Jim Pignone, 2045 Lundy Ave., San Jose, CA 95131.

## The current Chapter 36 Job Stewards are:

Tron Burdick - Chief Job Steward  
Madeline Brodie  
Tom Carter  
Carl Gettleman  
Cecil Godbold  
Connie Lemke  
Pam Nemeth  
Miguel Reyes  
Fred Zimmerman

*Important:* Only the union can authorize the grievance process and the District is not bound by any agreement made with an individual who is not empowered by the union to represent employees.

There is an extension number that employees can call if they feel there has been a violation or they have a complaint. This line will be checked every day and the member will get a response within 24 hours.

**Job Steward Hot Line—ext. 6700**



## Celebrate Contributions of African-Americans

February marks African-American History Month—a time to reflect on the contributions of African-Americans to society and the world beyond.

Recognized annually since 1926, African-American History Month was started by Dr. Carter G. Woodson, who established the Association for the Study of Afro-American Life and History in 1915. In 1926, he launched Negro History Week as an initiative to bring national attention to the contributions of black people throughout American history.



["I Have a Dream" image from [http://www.photosearch.com/clip-art/african-american\\_10.html](http://www.photosearch.com/clip-art/african-american_10.html)]

**DPAC HR Subcommittee  
Classified Staff Report 2006/2007**

*Submitted by Vivian Rankin-Scales*

The 2006 DPAC HR Subcommittee Classified Employees representatives were Trena Johnson, Vivian Rankin-Scales and Barbara Siegel.

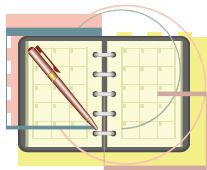


The major accomplishment of the 2006 DPAC HR Subcommittee Classified employees' delegation was to resurrect a recommen-

dation for the SMC District to provide funding and opportunities for Classified Employees training. The original discussion on the subject of District employee training with an emphasis on Classified staff took place in the November 3, 2005, DPAC HR Subcommittee meeting.

During the 11/3/05 meeting, Classified employees Linda Davis and Vivian Rankin-Scales brought up the importance of providing Classified employees with training in order to effectively perform their duties as District Employees and to allow staff the opportunity to continue their education thereby preparing Classified staff as SMC career ladder prospects.

As a direct result of Barbara Siegel bringing the need for Classified employees training/continuing education opportunities discussion back to the table, an Employees Training Resolution was penned, approved of in committee, then forwarded to DPAC for official approval.



**CALENDAR**

- 2/14/07 Valentine's Day
- 2/15/07 CSEA Chapter 36 meeting
- 2/19/07 President's Day - CSEA offices closed
- 2/22/07 George Washington's Birthday
- 3/11/07 Daylight Savings Time
- 3/15/07 CSEA Chapter 36 meeting
- 3/17/07 St. Patrick's Day
- 3/17/07 State Board Meeting, Rim of the World

The major task for the 2006 and 2007 DPAC HR Subcommittee is to create the language for the SMC Equal Employment Opportunity Model Plan mandated by the California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office.

During its first meeting of the year, January 9, 2007, members of the DPAC HR Subcommittee Committee discussed how they should begin chipping away at SMC's version of EEO Model Plan without the statistical information necessary to identify "underrepresented groups."

As of today, there are four representatives from the Classified staff serving on the DPAC HR Subcommittee for 2007: Vivian Rankin-Scales, Barbara Siegel, Nancy Donohue, and Debra Locke.

All community colleges under the leadership of the State Chancellor's Office need statistics in order to track and possibly correct hiring and promotion practices which could be considered discriminatory because they may not reflect the social and cultural diversity of its students and community. The recent separation of Director Jacqueline Nagatsuka, SMC Institutional Research, from the District impacts the success of the committee's ability to pull statistical data in order to assess the College's hiring practices. It was decided that since the use of the statistical information appears in the latter part of the model plan, the subcommittee would cross that bridge when it come to it.

There is also an ongoing debate in committee on the definition of "diversity" and how the DPAC HR Subcommittee will deal with the use of the term in the EEO Model Plan.

**CSEA CalPERS/Social Security Retirement Seminars**

On March 3rd, 2007, CSEA will be conducting retirement seminars regarding CalPERS and Social Security in two locations. Sign in time is at 8:30 AM. The seminar starts at 9:00 AM and ends at 1:00 PM. No reservations are necessary. Light refreshments will be served.

Addresses:

**Conejo Valley Unified District Office**  
1400 Janss Rd.

Thousand Oaks, CA 91362

**Saddleback Valley School District**

25631 Peter A. Hartman Way

Mission Viejo CA 92691

Please log on to Mapquest for directions.

**2007 Committee Members list**

**Chapter committees:**

*Election* – Connie Lemke, Fred Zimmerman

*Fundraising* – Debra Webster, Miguel Reyes

*Grievance job stewards* – Carl Gettleman, Miguel Reyes, Connie Lemke, Fred Zimmerman, Cecil Godbold, Pamela Nemeth, Madeline Brodie

*Hiring Watch* – Barbara Siegel, Marie C. Fisher

*Political Action* – Connie Lemke, Debra Webster

*Research and Negotiations* – Peggy Rhoads, Connie Lemke, Debra Webster, Debra Locke

*Resolutions* – Fred Zimmerman, Miguel Reyes, Connie Lemke

*Social / Hospitality* – Vinnessa Pierce-Cook, Amelia Trejo

*Technology Maintenance* – Miguel Reyes, Nancy Donohue

**Joint (with District) committees:**

*Benefits* – Anna Rojas, Lenore Banders, Jeanette Goolsby, Magaret Rhoads

*Disaster* – Fred Zimmerman, Tron Burdick

*Safety* – Tron Burdick, Fred Zimmerman, Willis Barton, Tiffany Devine

*Discipline Appeals* – Herb McNeely

**DPAC committees:**

*DPAC* – Bernie Rosenloecher, LeRoy Lauer

*Budget* – Bernie Rosenloecher, LeRoy Lauer, Miguel Reyes, Steve Levine

*Facilities* – Jim Galligan, Lee Peterson, Jonathan Cohanne, Marie C. Fisher

*Technology* – Waleed Nasr, Romano Vasquez

*Human Resources* – Barbara Siegel, Vivian Rankin-Scales, Debra Locke, Nancy Donohue

*Student Services* – Connie Lemke, Poonam Pant, Vinnessa Pierce-Cook, Steve Levine

**Other Committees:**

*Professional Development* – Trena Johnson, Cindy Kelly, Marcia Fierro

**Retirement Seminar at SMC**

Plans are in the works to have a CSEA specialist conduct a PERS retirement seminar at or near the SMC campus some time in May on a Saturday, possibly May 12th.

If you'd like to attend, please contact Fred Zimmerman at ext. 4833 or Vinnessa Cook-Pierce at ext. 4717. Remember: it's never too early to get the low-down and make plans for your retirement.

*Fred Zimmerman,  
Chapter Development Officer*

## **WELCOME TO CHAPTER 36!**

Congratulations to the following new Classified employees. Welcome and thank you for joining the CSEA Chapter 36 Santa Monica College family.

Colleen Haydl—Cosmetology Assistant  
—Cosmetology  
D. Brennan—Wheeler Lab. Tech.—  
Art Dept.  
La'Trice Harris—Payroll Specialist—  
Payroll

### *Recalled from layoff:*

Julian Martin—Groundskeeper  
Gardener—Grounds Dept.

If you are not a dues-paying member, please consider signing up today. For just \$1 more per month you will be entitled to all the benefits of full union membership, including the right to vote in all of our elections. Don't remain silent. This extra dollar is your voice. *Sign up today!*



## **Scholarship applications available now**

CSEA members believe in the value of education and support that belief by making scholarships available to 30 first-year college students, ten returning college students, four college/vocational students and two community college students.

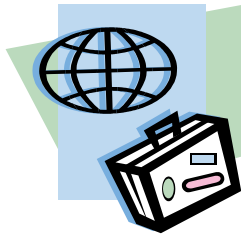
Criteria for awarding scholarships include scholastic achievement, financial need, leadership, goals and objectives, and citizenship. Scholarship applications are available now and the deadline to submit applications is March 31.

Applicants can call (866) ITS-CSEA (487-2732), go online at [csea.com](http://csea.com) or write to:

California School Employees  
Association  
Scholarship Awards  
2045 Lundy Ave.  
San Jose, CA 95131

## **Vacation leave determined by our CSEA contract**

If you're a permanent classified employee, you are guaranteed compensation for earned vacation time. That's the law. For many year-round employees, the question is whether they lose accrued vacation leave if they don't use it the same year as they earned it. They hear managers use terms like "use it or lose it."



### *There is no such thing as "Use it or lose it"!*

Vacation time is governed by the collective bargaining agreement. You're entitled to use your vacation time when you want, as long as you give notice within the provisions of the contract. Read your contract carefully to find out about any additional rights your chapter has worked to negotiate.

Contact your CSEA job steward or any other chapter leader for more information on these rights.

## **CSEA Days at Disneyland or Disney California Adventure**

Tickets entitle you to one day at Disneyland and one day at Disney California Adventure. Tickets are valid Jan. 3-April 27, 2007 and cost \$63 for adults, \$53 for children ages 3-9. Regular one-day one-park admission prices are \$63 for adults and \$53 for children. The second day must be used within 30 days of the first day the ticket is used. This is for members that live in zip codes 90000-93599.

CSEA also offers a one-day hopper for \$65 for adults and \$57 ages 3-9. This ticket entitles the member to go into Disneyland and Disney California Adventure the same day. The regular one-day park admission price for each park is \$63 adult and \$53 for children. This ticket is valid Jan. 3-Dec. 13, 2007.

Please be sure to check the Disney website before you purchase tickets from CSEA to be sure they aren't offering a specially-priced ticket for your area.



## **CSEA Member Benefits, Headquarters**

CSEA Member Benefits is open Monday through Friday, from 8:15 a.m. to 4:45 p.m. You may purchase tickets in person or by phone with your Visa or MasterCard at (866) ITS-CSEA (487-2732) or by mail (allow 10 days for delivery).

## **HOW TO GET CSEA DISCOUNTS**

Ticket sales are offered at the Fresno and Rancho Cucamonga field offices and through Member Benefits at CSEA Headquarters in San Jose. We accept CSEA members' personal checks up to \$150. We require a money order or cashier's check for orders exceeding \$150. Visa and MasterCard are accepted at all locations. No cash is accepted.

All transactions are subject to a \$1 handling fee. Unless otherwise noted, tickets must be purchased from a CSEA office. Tickets cannot be purchased at the parks for the advertised discount prices. To avoid an unnecessary trip, always call your field office to make sure it's open and has the tickets you want. Please note: Ticket prices are subject to change.

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Please submit all articles or story ideas for consideration to Nancy Donohue, Editor, in the Maintenance Dept.

**The Classified Focus newsletter is now online.** Please visit the CSEA website to view current and past issues at:  
[www.smc.edu/csea/newsletter.htm](http://www.smc.edu/csea/newsletter.htm)