



# I Choose to Teach!



A PUBLICATION OF THE STUDENT CALIFORNIA TEACHERS ASSOCIATION  
OCTOBER 2007

Inside  
This  
Issue

*"Teachers Paint  
the Canvas of the  
Future"* 3

*Can We Afford  
Higher  
Education?* 4

*Ethnic  
Conference  
Opportunities* 4

*Taking the Extra  
Step* 5

*Immigration:  
Another Obstacle  
to Cross* 5

*It's Never Too  
Late to Go Back  
to School!* 6

## IMMIGRATION: ANOTHER OBSTACLE TO CROSS

SAIRA FLORES, STATE COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVE, UC LOS ANGELES

The obstacles that minority students have and continue to face are limiting their academic achievement. Throughout the United States, minority students in the public education system have suffered the consequences of problems ranging from teen pregnancy and gangs to drug abuse.

However, many first-generation minority students across the country are experiencing a far more menacing obstacle that threatens to eliminate their chances of academic success in the United States. The parents of many first-generation minority students are being chased down and deported by immigration authorities that rally at distinct states and cities.



High school students protest at Pasadena Unified School District.  
Photo: Walt Mancini/ Staff  
Photo (www.freerepublic.com)

CONTINUED ON PAGE 5

## CAN WE AFFORD HIGHER EDUCATION?

VIELKA ELVEBAK, PRESIDENT, UC BERKELEY

Is college affordable for everyone? Recently Congress passed the College Reduction and Access Act, a bill that promises to increase the amount of Pell Grant awards to help students with financial need. It will also help low income graduates pay back their loans in a manageable, timely manner while reducing the interest rates on student loans for more than five million people including subsidized Stafford loans for middle-income students as well. The vote on this bill was 292-97 in the House and 72-12 in the Senate. It's on its way to President Bush for his signature.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 4



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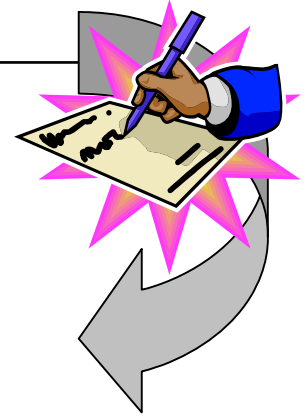
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The SCTA *I Choose to Teach!* is a publication by the Student California Teachers Association an affiliate of the California Teachers Association and the National Education Association. To submit information or articles, please contact:

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**Deadline for submissions**  
**Tuesday, October 30th**

## MARK YOUR CALENDARS

### OCTOBER 2007

- 5-7 REGION 1 LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE, ASILOMAR
- 5-7 REGION 2 LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE RENO, NV
- 6 CBEST & RICA EXAMS
- 12-14 **STATE COUNCIL/SCTA BOARD MEETING, LOS ANGELES**

### NOVEMBER 2007

- 3-4 **SCTA FALL LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE, NEWPORT BEACH**
- 3 CSET
- 9-11 NEA STUDENT CONNECTIONS CONFERENCE, LOUISVILLE, KY
- 12 HOLIDAY (VETERAN'S DAY)
- 22-23 HOLIDAY (THANKSGIVING RECESS)

### DECEMBER 2007

- 1 CBEST & RICA EXAMS
- 7-8 **SCTA EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING, BURLINGAME**
- 21-JAN. 2 HOLIDAY (HOLIDAY & NEW YEAR'S RECESS)

### JANUARY 2008

- 11-13 GOOD TEACHING CONFERENCE, BURLINGAME
- 12 CSET
- 18-20 RURAL ISSUES CONFERENCE, LAS VEGAS, NV
- 21 HOLIDAY (DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.)
- 25-27 **STATE COUNCIL/SCTA BOARD MEETING, LOS ANGELES**

### FEBRUARY 2008

- 1-3 REGION 3 LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE, LOS ANGELES
- 9 CBEST & RICA EXAMS
- 16 **SCTA SOUTHERN REGIONAL CONFERENCE**
- 18 HOLIDAY (PRESIDENT'S DAY)
- 29-MAR. 2 URBAN ISSUES CONFERENCE, SANTA CLARA

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## FALL LEADERSHIP 2007: "TEACHERS PAINT THE CANVAS OF THE FUTURE"

VIELKA ELVEBAK, PRESIDENT, UC BERKELEY

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You're invited to the SCTA Fall Leadership Conference, "Teachers Paint the Canvas of the Future". Come and join us for a weekend of exciting workshops and events that you'll never forget! It will be held November 3-4<sup>th</sup>, 2007, at the Hyatt Regency Newport Beach Hotel. Reg Weaver (National Education Association, President), David Sanchez (California Teachers Association President), and Anthony Daniels Jr. (NEA Student Chairperson) are scheduled as our keynote speakers. Workshops will include leadership training, credentialing and testing updates, No Child Left Behind (NCLB/ESEA) update, classroom management, teachers portfolio, multiculturalism in the classroom, building SCTA chapters, and much more. The flyer and registration forms are accessible online at [www.cta.org/membership/scta/SCTA/Events](http://www.cta.org/membership/scta/SCTA/Events). Registration is only \$25.00 for members, and SCTA will cover your transportation, hotel accommodations (double occupancy), and meals. This is an opportunity you don't want to miss. If you miss the October 15 deadline, be sure to check out upcoming events @ [www.cta.org/membership/scta/SCTA/Events](http://www.cta.org/membership/scta/SCTA/Events). If financial constraints affect your ability to attend SCTA events, contact me directly at [vielkaen@yahoo.com](mailto:vielkaen@yahoo.com). SCTA will accommodate students with additional funds to cover expenses when feasible. The Community College Association (CCA) has also allocated \$3,000.00 to help support student participation in conferences and memberships.

Our Executive Board members are eager to meet with you and answer any questions that you might have about your organization and SCTA in general. Representing you in the South, you have:

- Kevin Wolfe (Southern Regional VP)
- Theresa Pekarcik (Southern Regional VP)
- Corine Caloca (Ethnic Minority Representative)
- Tammy Harris (Ethnic Minority Representative),
- Mitzy Diaz (CCTC Liaison)
- Saira Flores (State Council Representative)
- Shelley Smith (State Council Representative)
- Laughing Bear Torrez-Dulgeroff (State Council Representative)
- Chris Sumner (Past Officer)
- Christopher Nguyen (Secretary-Treasurer)

In the Northern area, you have:

- Angie Drope (Executive Vice-President)
- Cristal Padilla (Northern Regional Vice-President)
- Tito Gomez, (Northern Regional Vice-President)
- Jeremy De Nieva (Communications Editor)
- Chance Carrico (State Council Representative)
- and myself, Vielka Elvebak (President).

Please feel free to contact any of us to visit your campus and assist you with leadership training, goal setting or officer roles plus all the great updates from SCTA. We are here to serve you!



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## CAN WE AFFORD HIGHER EDUCATION?

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NEA Student Chairperson, Anthony Daniels, Jr. joins a discussion panel at Mt. San Antonio College to address the issue of college affordability.  
Photo: Jeremy De Nieva

Last year, students from all over the nation joined with several organizations across the country to lobby for the reduction of student fees and high interest loans. The Associated Students of the University of California joined hundreds of students that participated in a Lobby day in Sacramento. The National Education Association Student Program made it a priority to make college affordability their number one issue for the year. Anthony Daniels, Jr., NEA Student Chairperson joined statewide student leaders in this fight. They lobbied and spoke to several congressmen about their concern that higher education was becoming less affordable. Our fight is not over, and we need to continue to write to our congressmen while participating in lobby days and campaigns. Your voice will be heard if you act now and do something about the future of your education as well as your children's. **ACT TODAY!**

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## ETHNIC CONFERENCE OPPORTUNITIES

CHRISTOPHER NGUYEN, SECRETARY-TREASURER, CSU FULLERTON

It is extremely valuable for us, as future teachers, to learn about ethnicities and cultures other than our own. This is an opportunity to learn about issues people are facing, as well as points of interests and values. Not only take the time to learn about others, but we should also get in touch with our own culture as well! Ethnic caucuses within CTA are hosting the following conferences:

- Native American Issues Conference
  - » November 9<sup>th</sup>-11<sup>th</sup>, 2007
- African-American Issues Conference
  - » February 8<sup>th</sup>-10<sup>th</sup>, 2008
- Asian-American Issues Conference
  - » May 23<sup>rd</sup>-25<sup>th</sup>, 2008



Once we hear about other conferences, we will be sure to keep you posted. If you are interested or would like to find out more information about each conference, please be sure to contact your Ethnic Minority Representatives (Tammy Harris and Corine Caloca).

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## TAKING THE EXTRA STEP

CRISTAL PADILLA, NORTHERN REGIONAL VICE PRESIDENT, CSU MONTEREY BAY

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Santiago Community College's SCTA chapter have already taken the extra step by planning to volunteer for the Leukemia and Lymphoma Society and the Chalk Hospital as well as establishing an after school program with Chapman University.

As a student, I didn't really think too much about professional development. I figured that I would worry about it once I entered the educational field. I honestly didn't see the importance. Being a student kept me busy anyway, but as time passed by, things changed. The more I learned about various educational issues, the more I became interested in professional development. I became curious as to what I could do to prepare myself to confront these issues.

Being involved in SCTA, I found professional development opportunities.

I attended conferences, and met with my chapter's local Service Center Council. It wasn't until I went to my Multicultural Literature class this semester where things became clear. My instructor, Mr. Lopez, told us that as teachers, it is our responsibility to model for our students. Modeling word problems and how to seek professional development opportunities is important and will help our students succeed. It is up to us as future teachers to seek out professional development opportunities, so that our students will also have the desire and willingness to seek out opportunities to help themselves with their education.

It is up to us to seek out professional development, not just for our own betterment, but for our future students as well. It is through our example that will influence our students' future.



Denise Kelly, Brianna Fetters, Maria Whitby, and Christen Carter of the Mount San Antonio College SCTA chapter seek professional development not only by tutoring at local elementary schools through the AmeriCorps National Service but also by meeting with SCTA consultant, Gail Watts, for leadership training.

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## IMMIGRATION: ANOTHER OBSTACLE TO CROSS

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Illegal immigration is an issue that needs to be resolved soon, if not for political reasons, then for the future of the public education system. Educators realize that parents are needed to support their children so they can achieve academically. Knowing this, as the future educators of this country, we cannot sit back and allow the government to leave our students without parents. It is up to you to decide whether education will survive without parents and what you can do to save education.

Involvement between minority students, parents, and educators has developed many minority leaders in this country. It takes passionate educators and parents to develop these students into the leaders of tomorrow.

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## IT'S NEVER TOO LATE TO GO BACK TO SCHOOL!

SHELLEY SMITH, STATE COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVE, CALIFORNIA BAPTIST UNIVERSITY

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Another school year begins. We buy clothes, school supplies, and all the goodies our children need to be accomplished students within the traditional kindergarten through twelfth grade classrooms. But what happens when mom decides to go back to school? Should she have feelings of guilt for thinking of all the sacrifices she might have to make while competing for the quality time she will need to study, and write papers, as well? Finding the balance between motherhood and student life can be a great burden, but these days, many colleges and universities have adult evening programs.

These programs allow adults to attend school while staying in the middle of their own children's world. Many of the programs allow for one night a week classes and shortened class schedules, thus making it easier to complete the goal at a much faster pace. Other options are accessible through the internet and video streaming classrooms where you don't even have to leave home at all.

Four years ago, when I chose to change careers and to pursue my own desire to become an educator, I felt that I was on my own personal mission: to obtain a bachelor's degree. It may sound funny, but I was actually the one giving my colleagues who were in my present position a hard time for going back to school. But now I was the one making the calls to my own future.

Attending California Baptist University in Riverside, I chose to also attend Riverside Community College, both online and on multiple campuses. I also attended classes online through Coastline Community College. I found that by doing so I was able to finish my four year degree in two years. It may sound crazy, and yes it may have been a little extreme, but I decided that through the help of family members, I was able to keep a somewhat, stable life for my last child still at home. I hope to one day provide a better future for all those who helped me with this endeavor.

I found that sacrificing my time was a very difficult thing to do the past few years. Late nights typing papers in order to watch a baseball game, reading that never seems to end and watching movies at home instead of actually going to a movie theater during family time were just a few compromises we encountered. Yet in the end, it will all pay off. I believe most of all my children now realize the importance of going to college. For those of you pondering whether you should go back to college to pursue your dreams, **don't wait**. You are never too old to go back to school.