

I Choose to Teach!



A PUBLICATION OF THE STUDENT CALIFORNIA TEACHERS ASSOCIATION
AUGUST 2007

TRAGIC SHOOTING RATTLES UNIVERSITY COMMUNITY

TITO GOMEZ, NORTHERN REGIONAL VICE PRESIDENT, HARTNELL COLLEGE

Ryan Clark, Reema Samaha, Professor Christopher James Bishop. These are just a couple of names that may not mean anything to you and me. They are all students that came to study, and they came to teach. They had plans. They had friends. They had families. They are the students and teachers of Virginia Tech.

On April 16, 2007, like many students across the county, they all walked into the classroom like any normal day. No one knew that by the end of that day things would take a tragic turn. By now we all know what had happened during those morning hours but we don't all know the stories of heroism that took place. Stories like that of Liviu

Librescu. Students of Liviu Librescu, an engineering science and mechanics lecturer, say he blocked the door of his classroom with his body to protect those inside. Librescu, 76, was a Holocaust survivor.



Virginia Tech students mourn the loss of their faculty members and fellow classmates.
Photo: Sam Dean/Roanoke Times/AP (www.theage.com.au)

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STUDENT CTA NEWSLETTER WINS AGAIN!

ANGELA DROPE, EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT, CSU SACRAMENTO

KEVIN WOLFE, SOUTHERN REGIONAL VICE PRESIDENT, CSU SAN BERNARDINO

Did you know that the newsletter you are reading at this very moment is an award-winning newsletter? It's true! The "I Choose to Teach!" newsletter has won the NEA Student Program's Outstanding State Newsletter award for the fifth year in a row! Your newsletter went up against five other states for this award; they include Kansas, Kentucky, Wisconsin, Indiana, and Washington. Not to toot our own horn, but they didn't have a chance!

Besides creativity and appearance, NEA looks at the substance and evaluates the extent to which the publication reflects the three NEA-SP foundations: promoting community partnerships, fostering leadership

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Attend a CTA Conference For Free!

CTA has minority incentive grants available for members that wish to attend one of the CTA conferences; Good Teaching, Equity & Human Rights, Urban Issues, or Rural Issues conference. Deadlines vary, but are fast approaching.

The deadline for the Equity & Human Rights conference will be in October. For more info, contact one of the Ethnic Minority Reps at ms.tharris@yahoo.com or ccaloca@hotmail.com.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

AUGUST 2007

24-26 SCTA EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING,
BURLINGAME

SEPTEMBER 2007

3 HOLIDAY (LABOR DAY)
8-9 SCTA EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING,
BURLINGAME
15 CSET
21 INTERNATIONAL DAY OF PEACE IN EDUCATION

OCTOBER 2007

5-7 CTA REGION 1 LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE,
ASILOMAR
5-7 CTA REGION 2 LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE,
RENO, NV
6 CBEST & RICA
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
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 (MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.)
25-27 STATE COUNCIL/SCTA BOARD MEETING,
LOS ANGELES

WE ARE YOUR ADVOCATES

SCOTT CHANCE CARRICO, STATE COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVE, CSU STANISLAUS

As a Student CTA member, you have access to many services and goods at the local, regional and state levels. These include newsletters, available scholarships (you have to submit an application), workshops, and conferences. Perhaps the most important of these are the services provided by Student CTA Board Members, in the form of advocacy at such places as the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CCTC) in Sacramento and the CTA State Council in Los Angeles. Both of these groups independently establish guidelines for becoming a teacher (through the CCTC) and institute processes to gain and ensure the human rights of educators in the workforce (through CTA guidelines) thus serving as a political voice.

Issues that come before the CTA State Council, a room with about 700+ K-12 teachers elected from all over the state, are indicative of the many passions educators and intellectuals have for all. Teacher evaluations and academic freedom, school safety/school management and early childhood education just touch the tip of the issues. If you have strong opinions on current positions held by CTA on any of the following areas: state legislation, professional rights & responsibilities, civil rights in education, communications, credentials & professional development, curriculum & instruction, retirement, alternative, career & technical education, financing public education, assessment & testing, student support services, negotiations, special education, language acquisition, and political involvement, let your State Council Representatives know. You can find e-mail addresses at this web link <http://www.cta.org/membership/SCTA/officersAndExecBrd.htm>. Some information may be found at this website <http://www.cta.org/issues/other/>. I encourage you to explore the CTA website for more information.

TEACHING THROUGH A DIFFERENT MEDIUM

JEREMY DE NIEVA, COMMUNICATIONS EDITOR, UC BERKELEY

Daphne Dixon of the Los Angeles County Education Association decided it was time to jazz up her association's newsletter. The sixth grade elementary school teacher hopes to produce a newsletter that brings up-to-date information to approximately 1,000 teachers who work in Los Angeles County.

She is one of many determined teachers from California attending the Newsletter track at the CTA Summer Institute held at the University of California, Los Angeles earlier this month. Participants learned tips on how to write better articles, present information in clean layouts, and incorporate pictures. They also gained a better understanding of the powerful force behind communicating information and educating the public via newsletters.

"It's important to keep the union voice accessible," says fellow participant Sylviana Salisbury of the Madera Unified Teachers Association. She plans to use her training to counter her administration's misinformation — as well as highlight some wonderful programs within her district.



Sylviana Salisbury from Madera Unified Teachers Association and Daphne Dixon from Los Angeles County Education Association both plan to make newsletters for their unions.
Photo: Jeremy De Nieva

PEDAGOGICAL PRESIDENTIAL PLATFORMS

CHRISTOPHER NGUYEN, SECRETARY-TREASURER, CSU FULLERTON

With the 2008 Presidential elections rapidly approaching, I cannot help but learn about each Primary candidate's platform. In the past, I have always taken note of every candidate's stance on social, domestic, and foreign issues. However, as I get closer to being a future educator, my perspective narrows closely on the candidate's views on education. Using the most recent opinion polls from www.usaelectionpolls.com (August 7, 2007), I picked the top Primary candidates with the highest percentages within their own political party to assess. Below you will find Democrat Hillary Clinton and Republican Rudy Giuliani in a bulleted list of what these two contenders believe in regards to education. The information collected was found at www.ontheissues.org, where you can also get additional and detailed data on their positions, as well as the perspectives of other Primary candidates concerning education. I know that all of us as potential teachers will take careful consideration as to who we vote for and how each particular candidate will shape our future classrooms.

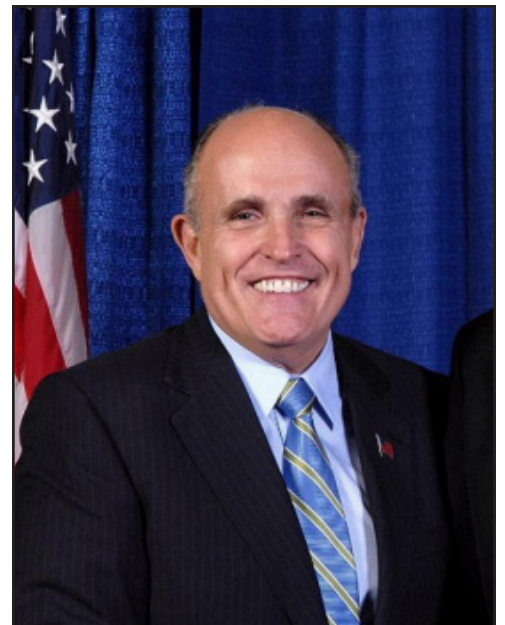


Hillary Clinton

- Establish right to education from pre-school thru college. (Jun 2007)
- Transfer tax cuts from rich & corporations to student aid. (Jun 2006)
- Teacher testing only for new teachers. (Oct 2000)
- Testing only new teachers respects professionalism. (Oct 2000)
- Reforms: teacher corps; more federal funding; modernize. (Sep 2000)
- Buffalo teacher's strike inappropriate; hope for negotiation. (Sep 2000)
- Opposes merit pay for individual teachers. (Apr 2000)
- Supports merit pay for entire schools. (Apr 2000)
- Scholarships for teachers who go to urban schools. (Mar 2000)
- Increase resources to meet increased standards. (Mar 2000)
- Hold kids to high standards, starting at home. (Jul 1999)
- Address teacher shortage with salary increases. (Jul 1999)
- Teachers need more peer consulting & more recognition. (Jul 1999)

Rudy Giuliani

- Attended Catholic high school in Brooklyn. (Jan 2007)
- Supports vouchers and supports using the word vouchers. (Oct 2002)
- Open schools on weekends for remedial catch-up. (Jan 2001)
- Sell Board of Ed HQ to shrink it. (Mar 2000)
- Improve schools by taking on the unions & special interests. (Jan 2000)
- Reading projects offer tutoring & improve test score. (Dec 1999)
- \$50M for more art teachers & art programs. (Dec 1999)
- Replace Board of Ed with appointed commissioner. (Apr 1999)
- Opposes prayer in school. (Apr 1989)
- Privatize failing schools. (Jan 2000)
- Charter schools create competition. (Jan 2000)
- Voucher program for New York City. (Jan 2000)
- Experiment in NYC with school vouchers. (Apr 1999)



SO MANY WOMEN, YET FEW AT THE TOP

CORINE CALOCA, ETHNIC MINORITY REPRESENTATIVE, SAN DIEGO STATE UNIVERSITY

Did you know that over 70% of teachers are female? So, you'd expect to see a high percentage of women in leadership roles within their Association and the educational system, right? Surprisingly, that's not the case. That's why CTA offers Women's Leadership Training Program (WLTP) and Campaigning to Win.

It is important to know that CTA provides many resources to help women become successful in life. Time management, controlling stress, improving self-esteem and decision-making skills are some of the topics that are addressed in the different trainings offered through WLTP. These workshops focus on helping women develop their leadership skills.

Campaigning to Win is also a component of WLTP which focuses on preparing women to run for elected leadership positions by addressing everything from appearance and speeches to budgets.

As your Ethnic Minority Chair Representative, I want to share with you that I am also your Women's Issues Contact person. If you have experienced or seen any issues affecting women on your school campus or in the field of education, please communicate, share, and address these issues with me, SCTA, and CTA. We are here to help you. As a woman, I would like to speak out to other women and ask that we help support each other. Lets become more educated and make use of these programs to achieve our goals and reach equality.

For more information, log-in to the members' only section of the CTA website at www.cta.org.

EQUITY: THE DUTIES OF HUMAN RIGHTS CONTACTS

TAMARA HARRIS, ETHNIC MINORITY REPRESENTATIVE, CSU FULLERTON

This year, I attended a training session to learn how to better assist SCTA to meet the needs of its ethnic, minority and underrepresented members. Every August the Ethnic Minority Affairs Committee (EMAC) of the California Teachers Association (CTA) has its annual training for the Human Rights Contacts (HRC) and Women's Issues Contacts (WIC) for each of the state's local service centers. The Ethnic Minority Representatives (EMR), who serve as the HRC and WIC for Student CTA, also attend the training.

While EMAC's job description for the HRC is two pages long, here are the modified duties, as they apply to SCTA's HRC:

- Participate on the SCTA Executive Board.
- Monitor implementation of human rights goals and objectives.
- Participate in CTA/SCTA training programs in human rights areas.
- Encourage members to participate in the CTA Scholarship Program, Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial Scholarship Fund and the César Chávez Memorial Education Awards Program.
- Raise the awareness of SCTA and its members to human and civil rights issues.
- Offer leadership in the development of human rights programs in SCTA and in the educational profession.
- Monitor the involvement and participation of a broad segment of the membership (including minorities) in the policy-making process and in all practical operations at all levels of SCTA.
- Identify and analyze human rights problem areas within our schools, membership and the community.
- Provide ongoing and continuous multicultural training for board members, chapter leaders, and members.
- Work to include language in organizational documents protecting civil and professional rights.

As the Ethnic Minority Representative and Human Rights Contact, I take these responsibilities very seriously. Following the training, we sat down to plan out our focus for Student EMAC (SEMAC) for the year. I can confidently say that our plans are closely aligned with the directives that we have been given and we look forward to an excellent year and by making use of these programs so we can achieve our goals and reach equity.

TRAGIC SHOOTING RATTLES UNIVERSITY COMMUNITY

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Alec Calhoun, a 20-year-old Junior who was in a solid mechanics class when the attack happened, was on the second floor of the Norris building. When students realized the sounds that they were hearing were gunshots, he started to flip over desks to make hiding places. Others dashed to the windows of the second-floor classroom, kicking out the screens, and jumping from the ledge of Room 204.

Calhoun said that the two students behind him were shot, but he believed that they had survived. Just before he climbed out the window, Calhoun said, he turned to look at his professor, who had stayed behind, holding the door to prevent the gunman from opening it.

Calhoun heard the shot as he jumped. The instructor never made it out. Professor Liviu Librescu and Kevin Granate were among the dead because they stayed behind to help students make their way out of the building.

Since the shooting, a lot of things have happened. There has been more information about the shooter. There is also a bill that is making its way through Congress to prohibit having guns in college dorm rooms. If you haven't already, you could share your thoughts and prayers for the students of Virginia Tech at: <http://www.ee.unirel.vt.edu/index/memorial>.



ONE PHONE CALL GOES A LONG WAY

CRISTAL PADILLA, NORTHERN REGIONAL VICE PRESIDENT, CSU MONTEREY BAY

It is my advice to all the new chapters to ask for help as soon as possible. There can be so many difficulties in starting a new chapter. Finding and retaining members seems to be a struggle. Finding a time and place to meet that would satisfy everyone's schedule seems impossible.

It was during math class when I heard a classmate announce a SCTA club meeting that was going to occur later in the week. I had never heard of SCTA, but she made it sound interesting. So, I decided to attend. It was during that meeting that I saw her enthusiasm, and decided to become the Chapter Vice President.

It turns out that my classmate was the Chapter President, and was determined to revive the chapter on campus with help from others. Later, I saw how important her determination was, and soon tried to obtain the same level of determination to build our new chapter into a strong one.

However, it wasn't until the end of the semester when we were finally able to find some guidance that would help us for the following semester. The longer the wait, the longer the frustrations will last. There is no need for unnecessary, long lasting stress. Feel free to call or email your Regional Vice Presidents, or the other Executive Board members in search for any answers. We are definitely willing to help and guide your chapter to success.



THE OUTREACH TO TEACH EXPERIENCE

ANGELA DROPE, EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT, CSU SACRAMENTO

KEVIN WOLFE, SOUTHERN REGIONAL VICE PRESIDENT, CSU SAN BERNARDINO

One of the most rewarding, though often thankless and tiring things one can ever do is to help someone. For both of us, this was the first time we had participated in such a large-scale community project—an entire school makeover, in just 1 day. We woke up at 5:00 a.m. for breakfast and began our journey. We were told beforehand that this would be no simple task. Over 2,200 sq. ft. of sod needed to be laid as there was absolutely no grass whatsoever for the students. Inside the school building, there was also much to do: painting decorative murals; walls that were once temporary would be made permanent; and the remodeling of the teachers lounge, were among the largest tasks. While some of us painted inside and out, others stayed inside to make bulletin boards or to clean and organize various rooms. Once we were done with the task we started, many moved on to help in other tasks still going on.

This was our experience when we joined over 300 other students, retired teachers and support staff in the make-over of Gotwals Elementary in Norristown, PA. The Outreach to Teach program is part of the NEA Student Leadership Conference held in June. The school has a current student population of 345 students with a poverty rate of approximately 90 percent and a largely minority student population: 46 percent Hispanic, 51 percent Black and 3 percent Caucasian.

In the end, we were dirty, tired, but most of all inspired by an event which we will not soon forget. To have taken part in such a massive project left us with a feeling of accomplishment, pride and most of all excitement. We were excited for the students to be able to come back to school in August to find that they now had playground equipment that was attractive and safe, fresh grass that was cool to sit on in the heat of Pennsylvania summers, and a school that was warm and welcoming to enter.

You too can experience the same sense of accomplishment and pride. Here are some tips for your own community outreach project:

- 1. Start small:** The ideas are limitless, but keep in mind you want to keep them grounded. Don't try to take on too much too fast. The first thing you must remember is the amount of work that needs to be done or is being proposed and the number of people available. This is especially important if you are planning your own event. By participating in many small events, you and your chapter can build your networking and resources within the community towards bigger and more exciting things.
- 2. Project ideas:** It can be as simple as collecting and donating toiletries to a local homeless shelter, or handing them out to the homeless on the city streets. You can also have a school supply drive and give them to a school in your area. Call your local Habit for Humanity office to see if there is a project underway where your chapter could go help hammer, paint or even put up a roof. Small steps truly make the biggest impression of all. If you're still having trouble thinking of something, ask your friends, ask a board member, or even go to other organizations. Whatever you do though, see that it is a cause that you feel strongly about!



Back to Front: Kevin Wolfe, CSU San Bernardino; Angie Drope, CSU Sacramento; Kyrian Smith, CSU Long Beach; Neil Oda, CSU Fullerton & Laughing Bear Torrez-Dulgeroff, CSU San Bernardino.

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OUTREACH TO TEACH EXPERIENCE

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3. **Don't do it alone:** Get together with other members, leaders and advisors to find events in your community. Many of your large organizations pride themselves in giving their time to others and are sure to be willing to donate a little of it to your event. And don't forget to thank them for their generosity.
4. **Resources, resources, and more resources:** There are numerous businesses, organizations, and individuals in nearly every community who would be more than happy to help towards a good cause by donating goods or funds. All it takes is a little eloquence; many phone calls and letters, and most of all, patience and perseverance. Again, don't forget to thank whoever they are for all their help. This will ensure that you have their support again when the time comes.
5. **Don't give up:** Just because something isn't going quite as planned, or an event didn't turn out like you wanted it to doesn't mean you should lose heart. Look back at what happened, work on a way to fix it, and try again.
6. **Have Fun!!!:** Despite the fact that we were there to help, we didn't forget to have fun while we were at it; in fact there were some interesting hi-jinks among all that work! In the end, we promise you will walk away with a sense of accomplishment, pride and maybe even that little bit of excitement; excitement that you did something life-changing for someone else, just as we did in Pennsylvania. Our only wish is that we could have seen the student's faces on that first day of school.

To see more photos of our amazing day, go to: <http://flickr.com/photos/9847384@N03/sets/72157601360096700/show/>.

STUDENT CTA NEWSLETTER WINS AGAIN!

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through pre-professional opportunities and peer mentoring, and promoting membership among diverse populations.

The December 2006 issue of the newsletter was submitted. On the cover was an article written by then member Jeremy De Nieva, whom ironically is now, as you will notice, our Communications Editor. It just happened that he submitted an article that month that made it on the front page. Now as our Communications Editor, his article adorns the wall alongside many other newsletter awards we have won in the past. Remember that you are always encouraged to submit articles, just like Jeremy did. Without you we would not have any reason to write an award-winning newsletter!

As Executive Vice President and an attendee to the NEA Student Leadership Conference, I felt honored to accept the award on behalf of SCTA. There were so many people taking pictures that Anthony Daniels, NEA Student Chairperson, asked me if I had brought the paparazzi with me? I told him we certainly did; after all, we are from California!

**If you would like to submit information or an article, please contact:
Jeremy De Nieva at jeremydenieva@gmail.com. Deadline: Sunday, September 16, 2007.**