



I Choose to Teach!



A PUBLICATION OF THE STUDENT CALIFORNIA TEACHERS ASSOCIATION
OCTOBER 2004

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THE IMPORTANCE OF VOTING

SCTA STUDENT POLITICAL ACTION COMMITTEE



Young adults between the ages of 18-24 need to vote in November's Presidential election. From MTV's "Rock the Vote" to Sean "P. Diddy" Combs' "Vote or Die!" campaign, candidates, politicians, and entertainers are aware of the impact young adults have on every election. Yet, by any measure, this age group has the least say in government because of their failure to vote.

Regardless of your political affiliation, your vote is important. Sure, you have heard the old expression that every vote makes a difference. But it really does! Most importantly, it makes a difference in your life. Be proactive and find accurate sources of information, and make a sound decision by exercising your voting rights. If nothing else when going to the polls, consider this:

1. Were you one of the 382,000 eligible college students who did not receive their Pell Grants due to the \$9.4 billion short fall in the Federal budget?
2. Diversity is pronounced in California's classrooms. How does your vote affect equality in the classroom?
3. Has academic accountability (i.e. AYP) improved overall education for all students?
4. Why was it necessary for our state and federal governments to balance the budget on the backs of teachers by revoking the tax deduction for classroom supplies?
5. What jobs await you after graduation?

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CTA SUMMER INSTITUTE: SCTA REPRESENTS!

CHRISTINE TRAN, SCTA COMMUNICATIONS EDITOR

On July 25-30, 2004 SCTA was represented at the annual CTA Summer Institute at the UC Los Angeles campus. The following SCTA members actively participating in the week long event: Lisa Diggs, Monica Masino, Jane Rodgers, and Christine Tran.



Each attended a development strand such as "Negotiations and Finance", Communications Strand, "Instruction & Professional Development". As the SCTA members participated in the weeklong conference, they worked cooperatively with new and veteran teachers. This enabled great relationships to develop between future educators and experienced educators. From learning how to communicate with the media to curriculum development to the current state of the state budget, each participating SCTA member gained immense knowledge of how the institution of education works. In all, the participating SCTA members felt that this experience has bettered themselves as leaders and will take this knowledge to inform and instruct the SCTA membership.



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CONTACT THE EDITOR! SUBMIT AN ARTICLE!



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MARK YOUR CALENDARS

OCTOBER 2004

- 1-3 REGION 2 LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE
RENO, NV
- 1-3 REGION 3 LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE
LONG BEACH
- 9 CBEST & RICA EXAMS
- 22-24 STATE COUNCIL/SCTA BOARD MEETING
LOS ANGELES

NOVEMBER 2004

- 6 CSET EXAM
- 6-7 SCTA FALL LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE,
SAN FRANCISCO
- 11 VETERANS DAY HOLIDAY
- 12-14 NEA STUDENT CONNECTIONS
CONFERENCE, MIAMI
- 13 CSET & RICA EXAMS
- 25-26 THANKSGIVING RECESS

DECEMBER 2004

- 4 CBEST & RICA EXAMS
- 11-12 SCTA EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING,
BURLINGAME
- 22-JAN. 3 CHRISTMAS RECESS

JANUARY 2005

- 14-16 RURAL ISSUES CONFERENCE
LAS VEGAS, NV
- 17 MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. HOLIDAY
- 21-23 GOOD TEACHING CONFERENCE,
BURLINGAME
- 22 CSET EXAM
- 28-30 STATE COUNCIL/SCTA BOARD MEETING,
LOS ANGELES

FEBRUARY 2005

- 12 CBEST & RICA EXAMS
- 19 SCTA SOUTHERN REGIONAL CONFERENCE
- 21 PRESIDENTS DAY HOLIDAY
- 25-27 URBAN ISSUES CONFERENCE, SAN DIEGO

THE IMPORTANCE OF VOTING

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

If you want to be taken seriously, you have to take your vote seriously! Go to the polls to make a difference for yourself and your future. Spread the word and encourage others to exercise their right to vote.

IMPORTANT REMINDER!!

The last day to register to vote is **October 18, 2004**. For more information about voting and the elections, go to www.ss.ca.gov/elections/elections.

Postage free registration forms can also be found on your campus, or at your local library, post office, or through the League of Women Voters.

MONEY FOR CHAPTERS AVAILABLE!

There are a variety of sources for grants to support your chapter's activities and events. The National Education Association's Student Program (NEA-SP) has two grants that are available to student chapters across the country. For more information, contact the SCTA Office or visit the NEA-SP website at www.nea.org/student-program.

1. CLASS Grant – Community Learning Through Americas Schools. Provides grants of up to \$1000 to any student local chapter that is involved in a project to better the community.
2. SOAR Grant – Student Organizing Assistance Resources. Provides grant money to assist state affiliates and local chapters in the recruitment of student members.

Also, check with community organizations and business that provide grants in your area.

HOMework: HOW MUCH IS TOO MUCH?

DEANNA ARELLANO, SCTA NORTHERN REGIONAL VICE PRESIDENT, SANTA CLARA UNIVERSITY



It's 5:45 p.m. on a Thursday evening. Michelle, a 29 year-old single mother, stands in her kitchen preparing dinner and listening to her first grader, Michael, read aloud from his favorite book. After dinner, they'll practice his weekly vocabulary words for tomorrow's spelling test. They've already invested a half-hour completing the math worksheet he didn't finish in class. Sounds like a lot of work for a six-year-old? It is.

According to Harris Cooper, Chair of the Psychological Sciences Department at the University of Missouri-Columbia, this experience is not unique. What should be the simple task of doing homework often becomes a chore for both students and their parents. "Michael has [on more than one occasion] dragged out a ten-minute assignment to two hours," Michelle says. When asked why homework takes so long, she theorizes, "He still lacks confidence. [While he's reading] he'll try sounding out a word for a few seconds, and then says he can't do it and gives up. He doesn't realize that [homework] is the practice that will help him get better." Still, she sees value in spending this time with him. "Other parents I know won't help their children with their homework. I know if I didn't, though, it wouldn't get done."

With school districts across the country writing homework policies about how much homework teachers can assign, how can we as future teachers be prepared to form our own opinions about the use and effectiveness of homework?

Cooper advocates that a teacher's best asset is a well-conceived plan for maximizing homework's benefits, which include the development of self-discipline and critical thinking skills, while minimizing its negative effects like encouraging cheating as well as increasing differences between the academic success of low-income and affluent students. In addition to the duration of homework assignments, educators must think about the purpose homework serves, and the kinds of assignments that best foster student's independent thinking.

In his article "Homework for All – In Moderation" (2001), Cooper suggests a simple formula can help educators determine how much homework will scaffold student learning while not turning them off to the educational process. The "ten-minute rule" recommends taking the student's grade level and multiplying that number by ten. Thus, a second grader should receive no more than 20 minutes of homework per night. Cooper suggests this rule works for secondary classrooms as well as in the primary grades. He also reveals that students in the elementary grades seem to benefit more from in-class work, while students at the secondary level receive the greatest benefits from homework. This is what he calls the "grade-level effect."

With much of today's focus on standardized testing and classroom management, few future teachers are concerned with the effect homework will have on the success of their students. On the path to becoming effective educators we will all need to reflect upon our own attitudes about how best to utilize homework. Beginning to think about this is-

THE ARTS MATTER TOO!

CHRIS SUMNER, STATE COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVE, COLLEGE OF THE CANYONS



Is arts education being cut in your community? With the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) in effect, many school districts are cutting funding or completely eliminating the arts from their curriculum.

Many studies over a number of years have shown that when a child is involved in some form of arts program, they are more likely to succeed in their other classes. For a student to be involved in an arts program, they are required to maintain a minimum grade point average. In order to stay involved in the program, the student will try harder in their other classes. Without the arts in the curriculum, students may lack motivation to do well in their core academic classes.

The ESEA (also known as No Child Left Behind) puts a high emphasis on core academic subjects such as math, reading and writing. As a result, many school districts are minimizing the importance of the arts such as music, art, theater, dance and creative writing. On the contrary, the arts are a very important part of our student's education.

With all of the recent budget cuts, the already hurting arts are being cut even more. It is important for our future students that the arts do not disappear. While core classes are meant to teach the academic basics, the arts are a way for students to express themselves as individuals. For some students, they might feel that in a core class, they have to sit and do their work for a grade. However, in an art or music class they do their homework because they want to.

No matter the academic level, a student can find an arts program to be helpful in some way. ESEA does not take the arts seriously enough. Its focus is on reading, writing and math. The arts and core academic class have always worked hand-in-hand to help students with their academic pursuits. It is imperative that the arts stay a strong part of the curriculum in our schools.



**What's ESEA (No Child Left Behind)? Go to :
<http://www.cta.org/PoliticsandLegislation/ESEA/ESEA.htm>**

NORTHERN & SOUTHERN REGIONAL CONFERENCES



Confused about your pathway towards a career in education?
What to know more pre-professional information?
Ever feel alone in your pursuit of a career in education? YOU'RE NOT!
Come to a Regional Conference near your area!



Northern Regional Conference

When? Saturday, March 19, 2005
Where? CTA Headquarters, Burlingame
Who? Northern regional SCTA members
Details? Northern Regional Vice Presidents:

Deanna Arellano

Southern Regional Conference

When? Saturday, February 19, 2005
Where? South (TBD)
Who? Southern regional SCTA members
Details? Southern Regional Vice Presidents:
Dianna McSherry
dianna20717@sbcglobal.net
Rosario Quinonez
rozqp@yahoo.com

ADVENTURES OF A FIRST YEAR TEACHER

RHONDA LEWIS, SCTA PAST OFFICER



As prepared as your education classes may make you feel, nothing can truly equip you for the first month of being a teacher. First, there's getting your classroom ready. This was perhaps the biggest struggle for me. From having to find just the right way to arrange the students' desks to decorating bulletin boards - classroom organization is a huge challenge. To start, you simply don't get enough time to get everything ready. Before the first day of school, I had to attend a staff meeting. While there, all I could think of was how will I get my room ready for tomorrow?

As a new teacher, I felt the need to have my room absolutely perfect for my students on the first day of school. I soon realized that it was not going to be perfect. A veteran teacher once told me that my students would not see the imperfections of my room. Students will be just as nervous as the teacher because students will be meeting their new teacher for the first time as well. She told me that everyday I could do just a little to eventually get my room as I envisioned. Taking this advice to heart, I thought of my students and how our first meeting would go. Exhausted from preparing everything, I was actually able to get a good night's rest.

On the morning of the first day of school, I stood outside my classroom waiting for my students. I could hardly believe that I was actually a teacher with my very own class! I stood at the door and greeted each of my 29 students with a high-five and "Good-morning". I could tell they were nervous. I was too. I wondered, "Could they see the anxiety I felt?" After introducing myself, conducting a few ice-breaker activities, and reviewing the rules, the morning was over. Soon we were out to lunch, and thanks to our minimum-day Thursdays, the first day of school was over. At the end of the day, I couldn't believe that I had stressed about this day. Not only did my students not notice the imperfections of the classroom, but over the next month, they took pleasure in decorating the room themselves. Their artwork and coursework covers the walls. The room belongs to all of us - teacher, students, and all.

Teaching has proven to be quite a challenge. The first month has been filled with its ups and downs, but now I feel more confident and ready. Nothing is ever quite perfect. Yesterday, I rearranged my room again. Tomorrow, I will move students around. To them, it's exciting and fun. To me, I am still working on getting things just perfect!

The adventure continues...

SCHOLARSHIPS AVAILABLE!



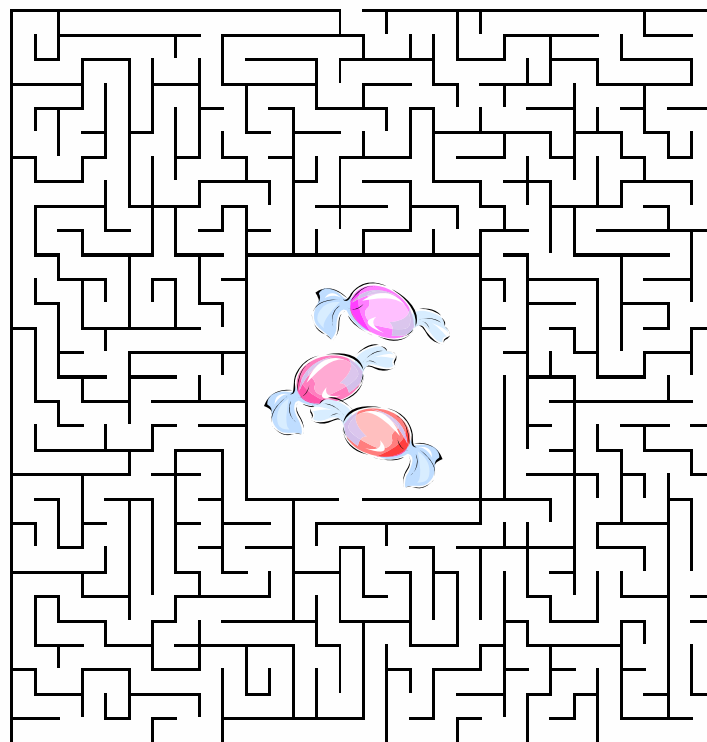
**Having a hard time
funding your
education?
Apply for these
scholarships!!**

Application forms for the SCTA Herb Foreman and Ed Romeo Scholarships are included in this mailing.

In addition, the CTA L. Gordon Bittle Memorial Scholarship for SCTA is also available. Three (3) \$2,000 scholarships are awarded. Applications may be printed from the CTA website at www.cta.org (click the "Resources" icon and then the "Scholarships & Workshops" icon). Or call (650) 552-5446 for an application.

Halloween Fun:

Help out these
Trick-or-Treat Kids!



ISSUES OF DIVERSITY FORUM

CHANTAINE FAUNTLEROY, SCTA ETHNIC MINORITY REPRESENTATIVE, CSU HAYWARD
CHIE NUDELL, SCTA ETHNIC MINORITY REPRESENTATIVE, CSU NORTHRIDGE



In the August Issue of *I Choose to Teach!*, the following question was posed: "If Green Card holders have rights to work, go to school and live just like citizens, then do you think permanent residents (non-citizens) should be able to register to vote along with the citizens of this country?" Here is one great response received towards the question:

Hello,

I am grateful for the opportunity to address the question you posted in the August 2004 issue of "I Choose to Teach." First, I would like to give you a big thumbs up! for taking an interest in voting and in politics generally. This is not a common interest among the students in my classes. Many, if not most, seem to be so discouraged with politics and politicians that they view voting as a way of rewarding politicians for their arrogant, self-serving and often criminal behavior; and so withhold their vote as a statement of contempt for the political process. This is, of course a self-defeating attitude since a failure to participate in the process ensures that the process will not improve.

I find that in general, students that come from countries with oppressive governments are much more likely to participate in American government because they did not have the opportunity to participate in their home countries and they appreciate the opportunity to make a difference here. Conversely, I am sad to say, students born in the U.S. have not had such experiences in comparing governments and therefore have not developed an appreciation for the opportunities we have in the U.S. to influence the direction our government takes. This background will, hopefully clarify my answer to your question.

The short answer is, of course "no." Voting in this country is a right and responsibility reserved for citizens of the United States. The short answer, though, is very misleading. Voting is only one part, perhaps the smallest part of active participation in the political process. Everyone in this country can and should participate to the fullest extent their time and energy allow. Recently, a young girl of about 8 years made national news by openly criticizing Vice President Cheney's foul language and arrogant refusal to apologize for using it in a public setting. This girl may or may not be a citizen but it doesn't matter. She had a valid point to make. She is obviously too young to vote, but it doesn't matter. She had the energy and courage to question the moral integrity of the second most powerful politician in this country, and in so doing encouraged many voters to re-examine their ideas about who Mr. Cheney is and what he stands for.

You will not be granted citizenship for another 18 months, but it doesn't matter. You have ideas to share which will influence the votes of others. You have the energy to encourage others to vote who might not have voted without your encouragement. In short, your inability to vote in the coming election is a very small handicap and may, in fact be just the motivation you need to make a real difference in the direction this country is moving.

-Mahlon R.G. Smith, Mission College, Santa Clara

Reading this response inspired and encouraged me to keep taking action and fighting for what I believe in, even if I may not be a citizen and have the right to vote. It is dangerous to underestimate our powers as members of this society regardless of class, status, ethnicity, sexual orientation, gender, etc. The big struggle is keeping your confidence up, believing and remembering that you have very high potential, and always looking to the positive. If you can acquire that, your fight towards what you desire will be much easier. I believe that this goes with teaching too. I know that the education field is so difficult and tiring. Sometimes we just breakdown and lose hope in our workplace or kids. But no matter what year of teaching you are in, subject you teach, district/school you're in, or have the worst administrators, if you continue moving towards and fight for what you believe in with the most positive attitude, no matter what, you will achieve it.

-Chie Nudell, SCTA Ethnic Minority Representative

NEW QUESTION!!

"As we strive to become educators, we are taught that ALL children can learn. But how does ethnic profiling (categorizing individuals by ethnicity, culture, language, traditions, etc.) of our students influence how educators view and teach students?"

To respond to this question, email your SCTA Ethnic Minority Representatives:
Chantaine Fautleroy at tinachrissy@msn.com or Chie Nudell at chirako@aol.com

SCTA EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING MINUTES

NAM NGUYEN, SCTA SECRETARY-TREASURER, CSU SACRAMENTO

September 11-12, 2004 – Burlingame, CA

Present: Monica Masino (President), Leo Solis (Executive Vice President), Nam Nguyen (Secretary-Treasurer), Deanna Arellano (Northern Regional Vice President), Toni Bice (Northern Regional Vice President), Dianna McSherry (Southern Regional Vice President), Rosario Quinonez (Southern Regional Vice President), Chie Nudell (Ethnic Minority Representative), Lisa Diggs (State Council Representative), Peggy Guernsey (State Council Representative), Chris Sumner (State Council Representative), and Jane Rodgers (CCTC Liaison), Rhonda Lewis (Past Officer)

Advisory/Staff: Gail Watts (Staff Organizer) and Ann Shadwick (NEA Board Liaison)

Late: Kryztofer D. Garcia (State Council Representative)

Absent: Chantaine Fauntleroy (Ethnic Minority Representative), Christine Tran (Communications Editor)

I. Called to Order

Meeting called to order by Monica Masino at 10:45 am on September 11, 2004 in Burlingame, CA.

II. Reports (2 main points)

President

- Attended NEA-SP Leadership Conference in Washington and Presidents Conference in Asilomar. Followed up with Kentucky students regarding diversity survey.

CCTC Liaison

- Attended CCTC meeting on August 12, 2004.

Staff Organizer

- CTA Board of Directors approved reorganization of CTA structure including development of a Conference Dept. The Human Rights Dept. has lost a support staff position. The L. Gordon Biddle Scholarship for SCTA is going to the Accounting Department. New scholarship is being created regarding GLBT issues.

Executive Board

- Leo Solis, working on SCTA RA.

- Rosario Quinonez, working on list of chapter officers, emailing and contacting people.

- Dianna McSherry, working with Rosario on letter to send to members and setting up CPR training at CSU Fullerton.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 8

SCTA BENEFITS



**Own a car? Own or rent a home?
Get exclusive discounted insurance!**

For SCTA member discounts on auto and homeowner/renter insurance, contact A+ Auto & Home Insurance Plus at 800/800-9410.

For services such as free checking, online banking, bill payment, auto loans, money market accounts, new teacher loans and other financial services, contact First Financial Credit Union at 800/537-8491, www.fffcu.org or Provident Credit Union at 800/632-4600, www.providentcu.org.

CHAPTER UPDATES

Cal Poly Pomona - Like anything, good things take time, and my experience with Student CTA has been a lesson in patience. The charter for the California Polytechnic University, Pomona was drafted in December of 2003. The club was not officially recognized until July of 2004. Our faculty advisor, Dr. Dorothy MacNevin, is a published author on Diversity and Pedagogical foundations. Our club is open to anyone pursuing a career in the field of teaching. In addition to fostering a mutually beneficial relationship with faculty and staff, our goals for the year include attracting 5% of the 1,000 students enrolled in the College of Education and Integrative Studies and increasing our membership from 8 to 45 students. This is the same number of students who have requested to subscribe to our e-Newsletter. Our chapter officers consists of:

Farhod Azarbaydjani, President
Kryztofer D. Garcia, Vice-President
Genice Hefflin, Secretary
Choahui "Joseph" Xiao, Treasurer
Arnold Castellanos, Ethnic Minority Rep.
Lisa Diggs, Public Relations Consultant

Stay tuned for great things from the Cal Poly Pomona SCTA chapter!

-Farhod Azarbaydjani, President
SCTA Cal Poly Pomona

CSU Sacramento - The SCTA chapter at CSU Sacramento started the year off with a BBQ. This was a great way to catch up with old friends and meet new ones. This is just one of the many things that Sacramento State has planned for the year. So far Sacramento SCTA plans to adopt two classrooms, attend the Fall Leadership conference in San Francisco, and do a new voter drive. If you would like information on any of the local events planned at Sacramento State please contact us at sctasac@yahoo.com.

-Melissa Martin,
CSU Sacramento



SCTA EXECUTIVE BOARD MEETING MINUTES

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 7

- Chie Nudell, replying to emails regarding newsletter articles. Working on restarting a chapter at CSU Northridge.
- Peggy Guernsey, worked with CSU Hayward with family orientation. Appointed to Cal State Committee of Academic Review.
- Jane Rodgers, CSU Stanislaus took a trip to Angel Island. Working on a presentation for California Commission of Social Studies regarding a study on Angel Island.
- Lisa Diggs, chapter is considering events such as a peace walk and applying for a SOAR grant.
- Chris Sumner, answering emails and working to revive chapter at College of the Canyons.
- Toni Bice, attended the Chico Service Center meeting. Working with new president at Butte College to apply for SOAR grant.
- Deanna Arellano, worked on introduction letters to be sent out to service centers, chapter advisers and members. Recently went to Chabot College's first meeting.
- Rhonda Lewis, moved to southern California and started teaching. Wrote an article for NEA Today.
- Nam Nguyen, presented SCTA to 2 classes. We are under budget, because the bill for the SCTA RA, NEA-SP Leadership Conference and Board Orientation are not reflected on the recent budget sheet.

Resignation/Appointment

- Discussion regarding resignation of Joshua Hardwick.

III. Old Business

- Kentucky-California Joint Diversity Survey Project. Reviewed responses. Deadline is October 29, 2004. State survey winner to be announced at NEA-SP Connections Conference.

VI. New Business

Committee Reports and Recommendations

- Special Services Committee, [Motion] The graduate scholarship question be: "Competition is something that is taught at an early age. How would your classroom be with the absence of competition? Explain." [Motion Passed]. [Motion] The undergraduate scholarship question be: "Bullying is viewed as a major problem in many schools. How could you promote a peaceful community and minimize passive and physical violence?" [Motion Passed].
- Conference Committee, discussed Fall Leadership Conference. Flyer went out with the August newsletter. The only change that will occur is the registration form. For those who have sent in the registration form already, they will be contacted for their choice of workshop track. Committees are established and responsibilities will be discussed at the October State Council meeting. Political Academy, Chapter Building and Leadership Skills are the workshop tracks. [Motion] The title for the Fall Leadership Conference be "Empowering Tomorrow's Educators". [Motion Passed]. Northern Regional Conference possibly will be at CTA Headquarters. Reviewed SCTA RA evaluations and possible

themes. Will send letter to possible keynote speakers for SCTA RA. Date for SCTA RA has not been decided, depends on hotel. Community Outreach Committee discussed a possible outreach day to clean up a local school.

- SPAC, putting together an article for the October newsletter with informational set of questions to get the readers thinking. Get people out to vote, no matter who they are or what they believe.

- Membership, reviewed New Member Handbook. To promote Kentucky-California Diversity Survey, the committee decided to have NEA send out a mass email this month. Regional VPs will discuss with their members about the survey. Test prep workshops discussed. Officer training for chapter members by SCTA Board discussed. Placing ads in college newspapers - \$200 spending limit. Publicize key dates and conferences on a quarter sheet and attach to membership brochure. Discussed writing a letter to members of the East Bay, basically an apology regarding the past events. Deanna and Toni will visit the Alcosta Service Center. [Motion] SCTA to pay for Monica Masino and Leo Solis to attend the Kentucky Fall Leadership. [Motion Passed]

- Community Outreach, agreed that collecting toilettries for shelters is something that we want to continue. Discussed strategies to improve awareness of program. Add collecting school supplies for schools in need. Suggested to conference committee the idea of an Outreach to Teach for SCTA RA. Since our State council is open to all members, our members can come and volunteer, help us collect, networking, etc.

- SEMAC, discussed a resource CD that is being created. Something that the past EMRs started working on or starting from scratch. Recruiting ethnic minorities and underrepresented minorities by visiting cultural clubs and international centers. Continue to promote SOAR grant in newsletters. Bring in past SOAR grants as an example. Possible grant writing workshop at FLC. Fundraiser for MLK scholarship and Cesar Chavez Scholarship.

NEA-SP Connections Conference

- Drawing held to determine participants. Rosie, Chie and Jane will be attending. Toni, Chris and Deanna are alternates.

Constitution and Bylaw Committee Appointments

- Under revision. Next meeting is at State Council, October 22, 2004. People appointed are Monica as Chair and Leo as Vice Chair, Rhonda Lewis, Nam Nguyen, Deanna Arellano, and Rosario Quinonez are committee members.

Informational Items

- Women's Issues Contact is Chantaine Fauntleroy and Human Rights Contact is Chie Nudell.

Protocol and Procedure

- Rhonda Lewis reminded us of SCTA protocols and procedures.

V. Adjournment

- Meeting adjourned at 2:48 pm.