

california
THE
educator 

DECEMBER 2015/JANUARY 2016 VOLUME 20 ISSUE 5

**INNOVATION
ISSUE**

**INSPIRED
DREAMERS**

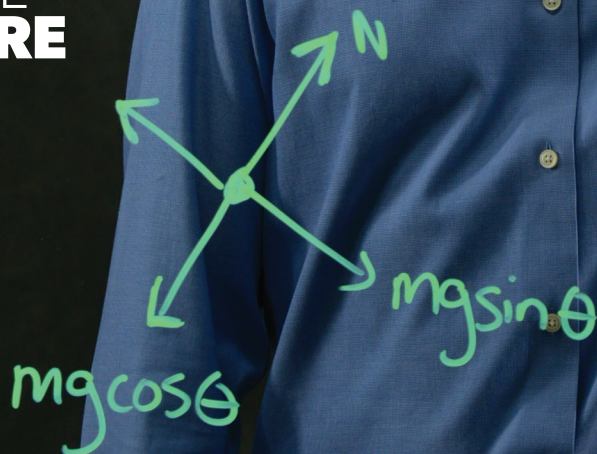
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**BUILDING
*Beauty***

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SCHOOL
OF THE
FUTURE

PAGE 31



Newton's 2nd

$$\sum F_x = ma_x$$

⇓

$$mg \sin \theta - f_k = m$$

$$\sum F_y = ma_y$$

⇓

$$N - mg \cos \theta = 0$$

Combining:

$$a_x = g \sin \theta - \frac{1}{m} f_k$$

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THE

INNOVATION

ISSUE

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Building Beauty

Architecturally stunning schools spark student and educator creativity.

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School of the Future

From 21st century curriculum and instruction to green practices and systems, a cutting-edge high school shows how it's done.

20 **Inspired Dreamers**

These outstanding educators are also passionate, driven innovators who not only see what can be, but blaze a path to make it real.





What you need to know about the case and its potential impact on students, schools and our communities

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YOUR OPINIONS AND LETTERS ARE WELCOME! There is a 250-word limit, and all letters will be edited. If you send photos or other materials, identifications and permissions are required. Letters must include your name along with your address, daytime telephone number or email address. Email editor@cta.org.

Dizzying Turnover Rate

You are so right to point out what can and does happen during and after a “Superintendent Shuffle” (November issue).

In addition to the 13-year longevity of Chris Steinhauer (Long Beach Unified School District superintendent), his predecessor, Carl Cohn, was LBUSD superintendent for a decade. The stellar leadership of these two has provided nearly a quarter of a century of practically unheard-of stability for a large urban school district.

That said, during my teaching years in a half dozen Long Beach schools, I experienced “principal rotations” due to then district policy approximately every five years. I well remember each new principal excitedly announcing a grand and viable master plan for accelerating student achievement, only to inform the faculty eventually that it was time for him or her to go back to a board office job — or else be moved to yet another campus. What might have been was then usually lost for good.

BILL YOUNGLOVE

California Faculty Association, CSU Long Beach

Shot in the Arm

I just retired after 39 years as a school nurse and pediatric nurse practitioner. Thank you for reminding staff of the need for their vaccines (in October’s “Your Whole Life” section).

Anyone can get shingles after they have had chicken pox (varicella). I got shingles at age 59. The pain is excruciating and far worse than childbirth or kidney stones as it lasts over a week. However, it is the postherpetic neuralgia (PHN) that is totally debilitating.

CDC recommends the shingles vaccine for those 60 and older. While it only prevents 51 percent of shingles and 67 percent of PHN, I would have gladly paid \$300 to have a 67 percent chance of not experiencing PHN.

A healthy diet and regular exercise are proven immunity boosters. Due to current performance demands, the majority of teachers I know do not take time to exercise or eat healthy on a regular basis. Teachers past the age of 50 should consult their doctors and be proactive in getting vaccinated.

SHARON JACQUES

San Diego County School Nurse of the Year 1998-99

Our November story “Priced Out,” which looked at how teachers’ salaries are not keeping pace with the cost of living — especially in several high-priced California cities — spurred a number of you to tell us your story.

Can’t Afford to Move

My husband and I have taught elementary school for 18 years in the Bay Area. Since 2004, we have lived in a one-bedroom, one-bathroom apartment for \$14,000 a year. If we changed apartments or moved, we would pay at least \$2,100 a month for the same thing — almost double what we are paying now. We can’t even consider paying a mortgage as we would never be able to buy a place here.

It really is a shame. Our district even recently gave us a raise to compete with neighboring districts, but it is still not enough to afford to live!

KIM LOISEL

Fremont Unified District Teachers Association

I Made My Own Luck

I am a 31-year teacher — the last 20 at Ramona High School in San Diego County as an AP government, civics and economics teacher. The common theme for many of the educators in the “Priced Out” article was that they are “open to moving on.”

Teachers are not going to be paid well until the demand exceeds the supply by a large margin. I grew up in the San Francisco Bay Area and in 1987 left my community of 27 years and took a job three hours away in the Central Valley town of Coalinga. I got paid \$12,000 and bought a custom-built home for \$92,000.

I stayed seven years, saved money and eventually moved with my wife to North San Diego County. We bought a house on acreage during the recession in one of the highest cost-of-living areas in the country. Now the house is paid off and worth three and a half times what we paid for it.

It was not my dream to live in a small town in Fresno County, but I decided to be proactive and make my own luck in the profession I have loved for over 30 years.

GREG FERNANDES

Ramona Teachers Association





Protect what matters to you.

When you're out of commission, you aren't just out of the classroom. You're missing out on what makes you, you. That's why it pays to protect your way of life with CTA-endorsed Disability Insurance from The Standard. It replaces part of your income to pay for the things medical insurance won't cover — like groceries, the mortgage, utility bills and more. Get the confidence that comes with knowing you've protected your future so you can focus on making the most of today. Learn more at CTAMemberBenefits.org/TheStandard.



For costs and further details of the coverage, including exclusions, any reductions or limitations and the terms under which the policy may be continued in force, please contact Standard Insurance Company at 800-522-0406 (TTY).
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Stand and Be Counted



From the November news conference in Los Angeles protesting billionaire Eli Broad's plan to enroll half of LAUSD students in charter schools. **#OurVoiceOurUnion**

I'm on the road a lot these days, meeting and speaking with as many of you as I can. As I travel up and down the state, I'm continually amazed by you, our members, and the incredible commitment you bring to your work every day in our schools and classrooms.

I'm particularly inspired by your inventiveness and creativity in helping students learn real-world skills that will take them far in life.

We shine a spotlight on a few of you in this special Innovation Issue, but I know there are countless more innovators in education. I see innovation happening all around me, and I couldn't be more proud.

It's all part of how we lead the way in California to make educational change. Other examples include the Instructional Leadership Corps, a partnership with the Stanford Center for Opportunity Policy in Education (SCOPE) and the National Board Resource Center at Stanford University, which is building a network of educator-leaders who provide training in implementing California's Common Core and Next Generation Science standards. And CTA's Institute for Teaching funds innovative, teacher-driven projects and brings educators together to give voice to good ideas and best practices.

The truth is, we're always on the cutting edge in California. Even before the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) became law in December, replacing No Child Left Behind, California educators helped eliminate outdated tests and change school

funding to ensure it reaches students who need it most. We are now working on a broader accountability system using multiple measures of student success instead of just test scores. CTA members have played a vital role in mobilizing parent and community support for these actions, and in urging Congress to pass ESSA.

We must now mobilize and lead again against those who threaten our ability to advocate for what's best for our students, profession and communities. An adverse U.S. Supreme Court ruling in *Friedrichs v.*

CTA (see our special report on page 36) would weaken our collective voice and jeopardize a quality education for our students. Among other things, we risk losing the right to come together and speak out for:

- A well-rounded education for our students, with arts, music and PE.
- Class sizes that allow for one-on-one instruction.
- More learning time, and a decrease in high-stakes testing.
- Safe and healthy learning environments.
- Fair salaries and benefits, and retirement with dignity.

Our opponents have tried multiple times and in multiple ways (at the ballot box, in the Legislature, in the courts) to take away students' and educators' rights. It's urgent that we come together and speak up.

Add your voice to the chorus of other members who are sharing why they choose to be educators, and what their unions do to support their work. (Visit cta.org/ourvoiceourunion; see members' stories on page 18.)

Regardless of the outcome, know that CTA is here for you and for all our students. For more than 150 years, we have stood strong for public education and giving students the quality public education they deserve. We always will.

Eric C. Heins
 CTA PRESIDENT
[@ericheins](https://twitter.com/ericheins)

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CTA/NEA membership dues for the fiscal year (Sept. 1, 2015, to Aug. 31, 2016) are \$829, including a \$20 refundable contribution (see cta.org/contribution for details). Up to \$18.40 of CTA annual dues is designated for CTA/ABC political activities to support state and local candidates and/or initiatives and is not deductible for income tax purposes.

Subscription to the *California Educator* is \$10 per year, available to persons or institutions not eligible for CTA/NEA membership.

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The California Teachers Association exists to protect and promote the well-being of its members; to improve the conditions of teaching and learning; to advance the cause of free, universal, and quality public education; to ensure that the human dignity and civil rights of all children and youth are protected; and to secure a more just, equitable, and democratic society.

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Our Innovation Issue: Dream Big

NOT YOUR FATHER'S math class: Fifth-grade math teachers Jesse Barber and Jeff Ramirez have students design packages for items that can be safely air-dropped by parachute. They also ask students to use real-world costs, budgets and dimensions to design a city park.

Brad Collins uses kids' fascination with animals to sneak science, math and English lessons into his second-grade classroom, which contains a veritable zoo (see photo at right). Liz Miller and Nicole Robinson engage their communities as well as students and other educators in their wildly successful passion projects. With tech wizardry, Matt Anderson keeps college kids captivated and looking at him instead of their phones.

What these innovators have in common (“Inspired Dreamers,” page 20) is the ability to both see possibilities and forge the path to make them real. They infuse their students, colleagues and communities with this same “dream it, do it” mindset.

Students, says Amy Conley, whose initiative for high school seniors is aptly named Change the World, “don’t believe in their own power at first. Then they start to dream big. It puts a fire in their bones.”

Getting students fired up and dreaming big is certainly a goal in creating the best learning environments. Where “old school” — literally — is a building with classrooms, an administrative area, and a cafeteria that might do double or triple duty as a gym and auditorium, the architecturally stunning, thoughtfully designed campuses highlighted in “Building Beauty” (page 26) are tailored to 21st century skills such as critical thinking and collaboration.

Their interconnected, flexible spaces accommodate project-based learning, easy access to technology, and personalized learning communities, while their structural beauty sparks imagination and creativity.

It all comes together, in fact, at American Canyon High School (“School of the Future,” page 31), where leading-edge curriculum and learning environment ensure students are well-equipped to take on the world.

Dreaming, too, as Lorie Honda shows us (“The Power of Dreams,” page 46), can take us to worlds where we not only envision what can be, but find strength and empowerment. In her book about a cat living with his Japanese American family in a World War II internment camp, Honda emphasizes that dreams help move us beyond anger and trauma, and toward healing and hope.

It’s a beautiful message that underscores how those who think and dream differently can create a better world. The *Educator* salutes innovators and dreamers everywhere. Happy New Year!

Katharine Fong
EDITOR IN CHIEF
editor@cta.org



Friedrichs Poster

Our special report **Friedrichs v. CTA and the Case for Fair Share** (pages 36-41) is also online as an interactive PDF, with links to source documents, other articles, videos and resource materials. It can be printed out for easy reference (optimally on three 11x17-inch pages; you can tape the pages together into a poster). See cta.org/friedrichs.



HAPPY NEW YEAR!

As we welcome 2016, we toast educators and their families everywhere and wish them a fabulous new year. May it be filled with wondrous discoveries, rich and varied experiences, and much laughter and joy — inside and outside the classroom.

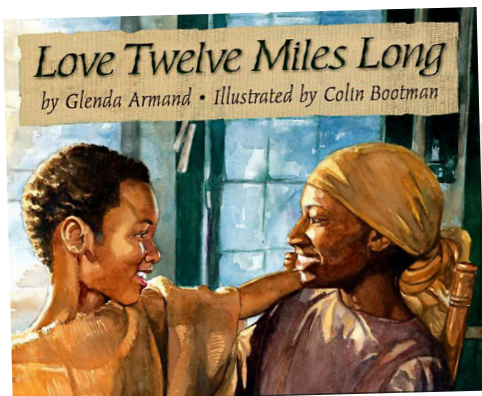


Martin Luther King Jr. Day is January 18

"History is a great teacher. Now everyone knows that the labor movement did not diminish the strength of the nation but enlarged it. By raising the living standards of millions, labor miraculously created a market for industry and lifted the whole nation to undreamed of levels of production. Those who attack labor forget these simple truths, but history remembers them."

—Martin Luther King Jr.

Help students put in perspective the historic leader's life, his impact on the civil rights movement, and his significance to American culture and history. Check out classroom resources at nea.org/tools/lessons/mlk-day.html.



A Mother's Love

Love Twelve Miles Long by Glenda Armand tells the tale of a young Frederick Douglass and the mother who walks a great distance to see him. The faith she has in her son puts him on a path to escape enslavement and become a champion of human rights, an influential writer and speaker, and an unforgettable leader. The book is a California Reads recommendation for grades 3-5. cta.org/californiareads



All Eyes on the Supremes

JAN. 11, 2016, is the day that the Supreme Court will hear oral arguments in *Friedrichs v. CTA*.

The case has far-reaching implications for working men and women throughout the country.

Learn more in our special report starting on page 36. cta.org/friedrichs #worktogether

JANUARY 15 ENTRY DEADLINE

César E. Chávez Awards

The César E. Chávez Memorial Education Awards provide recognition for students who submit visual arts projects or written essays (no biographies) that show understanding of César Chávez's vision and guiding principles. Winners will receive recognition and up to \$550 for both students and sponsoring CTA members. Submitters of a group entry (up to three students) will share the prize. ► cta.org/scholarships

JANUARY 15-17 CONFERENCE

Issues Conference

Rio Hotel, Las Vegas, Nevada

"We Are CTA — Strengthening Our Voices Through Advocacy, Organizing and Inspiration." Offers urban, rural and ESP educators the opportunity to learn about current education issues, collaborate, invest in lasting relationships, and acquire skill sets. ► cta.org/conferences

JANUARY 29 FILING DEADLINE

Candidacy for NEA State Delegate

Candidates for state delegate to the Representative Assembly at the 2016 NEA convention in Washington, D.C., must submit a declaration of candidacy. See pages 58-59.

► www.cta.org/racandidacy

FEBRUARY 1 APPLICATION DEADLINE

NEA Foundation grants

The NEA Foundation awards grants to educators. Student Achievement Grants support improving academic achievement; Learning and Leadership Grants support high-quality professional development activities. Applications are reviewed three times a year. ► neafoundation.org

FEBRUARY 1-5

National School Counseling Week

Celebrate your counselor! School counselors make unique contributions to education and can have tremendous impact on students' academic success and career plans.

► schoolcounselor.org

FEBRUARY 5 APPLICATION DEADLINE

CTA Scholarships

The 2015-16 CTA Scholarship Program offers up to 34 scholarships of \$5,000 for dependent children of CTA members, plus one \$5,000 scholarship for a dependent child attending a continuation high school or alternative education program. There are up to five scholarships of \$3,000 for CTA members completing college coursework, and up to three scholarships of \$5,000 for Student CTA members. Applications must be submitted online by Feb. 5.

► cta.org/scholarships

FEBRUARY 19 APPLICATION DEADLINE

Martin Luther King Jr. Scholarships

Aimed at helping members of ethnic minorities in preparing for teaching-related careers in public education, the Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial Scholarship Fund is supported by voluntary contributions from CTA members and the CTA Foundation for Teaching and Learning. An applicant must be an active CTA or Student CTA member, or a dependent child of a CTA member. Past recipients have received up to \$6,000.

► cta.org/mlkscholarships

FEBRUARY 19-21 CONFERENCE

CCA Winter Conference

Manhattan Beach Marriott

The Community College Association's winter conference is dedicated to enhance bargaining skills and coordinate bargaining strategies with other locals throughout the state. Bargaining teams are encouraged to attend. ► cca4me.org

FEBRUARY 26-28 CONFERENCE

Good Teaching Conference South

Hyatt Regency Orange County

The Good Teaching Conferences support excellent teaching and learning practices for K-12 teachers. They offer a variety of workshops in curriculum content areas, provide opportunities for professional development, and allow time to network with colleagues and experts.

► cta.org/conferences

COMING UP

MARCH 2

Read Across America

MARCH 4-6

Equity and Human Rights Conference

Torrance

MARCH 11-13

Region III Leadership Conference

Woodland Hills

MARCH 18-20

Region IV Leadership Conference

San Diego

APRIL 15-17

Good Teaching Conference North

San Jose

APRIL 15-17

CCA Spring Conference

Costa Mesa

MAY 11

California Day of the Teacher

MAY 17

CTA Education Support Professional Day

JULY 21-24

Presidents Conference

San Jose

JULY 31-AUG. 4

Summer Institute

Los Angeles



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Facebook.com/californiateachersassociation

For the latest news and stories, see cta.org/blog.

Video



My Story, My Union. Steve Comstock, Bakersfield Elementary Teachers Association, was inspired by organizer Marshall Ganz's workshop at October State Council to tell his story. See how Steve found his purpose as a teacher — and his voice as a union member. #OurVoiceOurUnion

▶ youtube.com (search for "Comstock Bakersfield")

Social Buzz

Our recent Facebook posting about Grossmont Union High School District, which in November became the first district in California to approve six weeks of paid maternity leave, provoked lively comments (below). "Grossmont educators are proud to be on the cutting edge of educational change by honoring the family and setting a new standard for other institutions to do so as well," says Frances Zumwalt, president of Grossmont Education Association. "We're pleased that negotiators on both sides agreed that valuing teachers and their families would result in attracting and retaining the next generation of educators for the district." At right: Several of the Grossmont educators affected by the new policy.



WHAT'S NEW AT CTA.ORG

cta.org/mission

WHAT CTA IS ALL ABOUT

As CTA moves full speed ahead with the strategic plan to ensure we're best positioned to help all students and educators succeed, we're focused on what CTA stands for.

cta.org/scta

SCTA STANDS UP FOR COLLEAGUES

When California Faculty Association members demonstrated recently for higher wages, Student CTA members were there, standing in solidarity with their higher education colleagues.

cta.org/retired

WE HONOR RETIRED MEMBERS

Nominate a CTA/NEA-Retired member who continues to serve the association, education and the community for an Ellen Logue WHO (We Honor Ours) Award! Deadline Feb. 1.

cta.org/winterholidays

SAY HELLO TO THE HOLIDAYS!

As we celebrate a host of family traditions such as Christmas, Hanukkah and Kwanzaa, CTA wishes everyone happy holidays and a happy new year!

Debbi Binger-Smith

Education ought to be the leader in pro-family employment policies. Way to go, Grossmont!

Rosa Lara Fernandez

It's a step beyond, but less than 2 months is still ridiculous. Many Occidental countries have 4 months and some, like Sweden, have a year and a half.

Victoria Marie Salas Salcedo

I didn't get pregnant this summer, and now we have to wait until next summer because of my district's lack of paid leave. I can only afford to have a baby at the end of a school year or during the beginning of summer. So frustrating that leave is what dictates our family structure.

Tonja Byrom

In the Kern High School District, teachers are required to first use their sick days and are then docked the substitute pay out of their own paycheck.

Ruth Luevanos

There is NO paid maternity leave in my school district (the largest in the state). Every mother I know, including myself, lost money and was penalized financially for going on maternity leave!

Angela Biletnikoff

What about those who choose not to have children? How about paid medical leave — I had foot surgery and had to use sick leave. I didn't choose to break my foot, but one can argue the women may have chosen to have children.

Angela Badami-Knight

Oakland Unified lets you take accrued sick leave. You can use private disability insurance after you run out of days. I think we should bargain for paid leave next go-round!

Sarah Kirby-Gonzalez

People outside education are always shocked when I tell them I had to come back to teaching in the fall, as a mom to a newborn, with ZERO of the sick leave days I had earned over my eight years of teaching. A day off for a doctor's appointment went unpaid and was a hit to my retirement years of service.

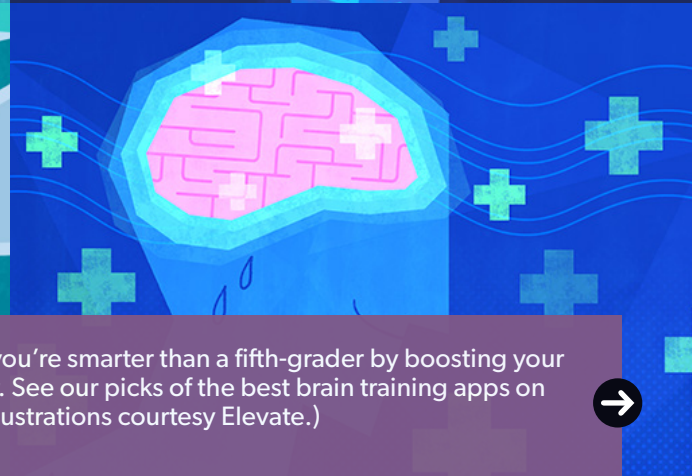
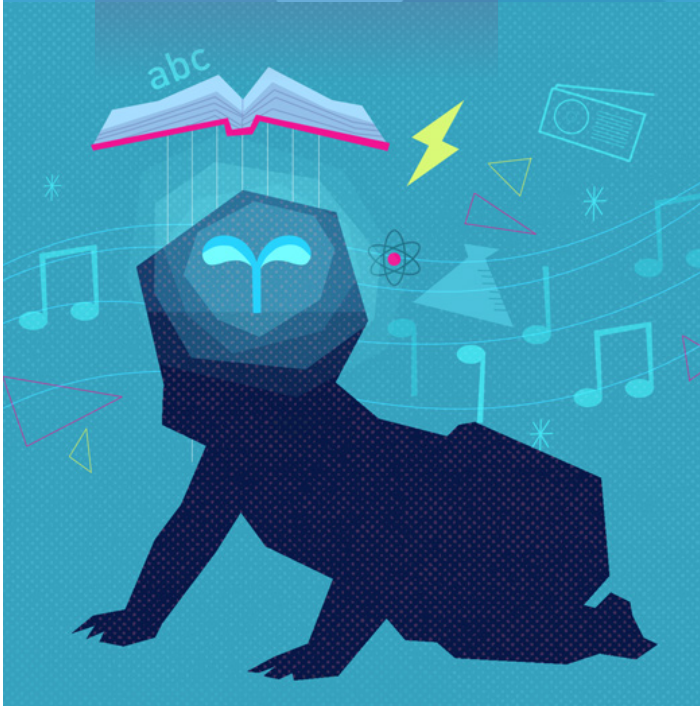
Tiffany Matto

I actually just researched this as I'm due March 8. I have 75 sick days accrued (used 48 with my first kiddo) and will be allowed to take 12 weeks (59 days) without putting my job in jeopardy. I have to use my sick leave and FMLA concurrently. If I take more than 12 weeks, I could be moved involuntarily to another site.

Know&Tell

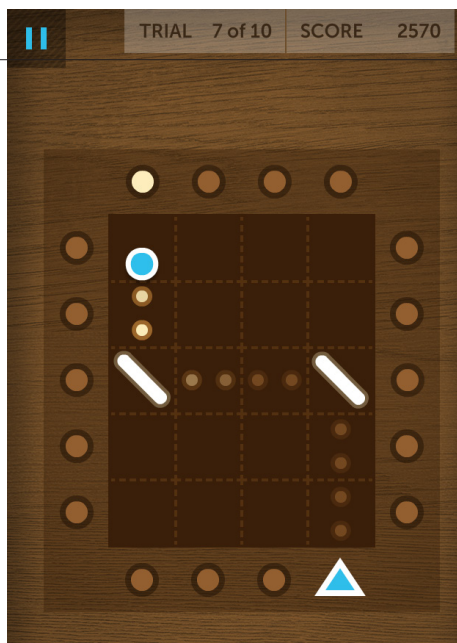
INSIDE:

- 12 Apps to keep your gray matter in shape
- 13 Quotes & Numbers: The Fair Share edition
- 14 Be your best self in the new year



Make sure you're smarter than a fifth-grader by boosting your brainpower. See our picks of the best brain training apps on page 12. (Illustrations courtesy Elevate.)





BOOST YOUR BRAINPOWER

Ready to hit the gym for your brain? To keep a sharp and healthy mind, you need to flex your mental muscles and give them regular, challenging workouts. As the saying goes, “Use it or lose it” — and you don’t want to lose your mind!

Here are five brain-training apps designed to improve memory, thinking skills and psychological well-being. They’re sure to keep you smarter than a fifth-grader.



LUMOSITY

Sharpen your memory, attention span and more. Used by over 70 million people worldwide, Lumosity combines 25-plus cognitive games into a daily training program. Games adapt to your unique performance, helping you stay challenged in a wide variety of cognitive tasks.

5 free apps to keep gray matter in good shape

By TERRY NG



ELEVATE

Elevate is a brain-training program designed to improve focus, speaking ability, processing speed, memory, math skills, etc. You receive a new set of challenges each day to build the skills you need most. The more you train, the better your program becomes.



FIT BRAINS TRAINER

The only brain trainer that can improve your IQ and EQ (cognitive and emotional intelligence), Fit Brains targets all six major areas of the brain: memory, speed of thinking, concentration, problem solving, language and visual-spatial recognition.



HAPPIFY

Happify has turned over a decade’s worth of research on the science of happiness into an every-day app that literally retrains your brain to banish negative thoughts and create a richer, more fulfilling life. What’s not to like?



EIDETIC

Eidetic uses a technique called spaced repetition to help you memorize anything from important phone numbers to interesting words or facts. It works differently from typical brain-training apps by using items that have meaning and context.

The
Numbers

23

Number of remaining states, including California, that allow public-sector unions to collect Fair Share fees, which the *Friedrichs* lawsuit would ban. These laws do not force someone to join a union, but do require a worker who does not join to pay their fair share of the costs of collective bargaining that they benefit from.

\$5,971

Amount the average worker in non-Fair Share states is shortchanged per year compared with a worker's earnings in states with Fair Share fees, according to the AFL-CIO.

1977

The year the U.S. Supreme Court issued its *Abood v. Detroit Board of Education* ruling allowing government worker unions to collect Fair Share fees from nonmembers to cover the costs of collective bargaining. The *Friedrichs* lawsuit seeks to overturn that unanimous decision.

\$88 BILLION

Combined estimated worth, according to *Forbes* magazine, of conservative brothers Charles and David Koch, backers of the plaintiffs in the *Friedrichs* lawsuit.

373:1

The CEO-to-worker pay ratio in the U.S. in 2014. In that year, the AFL-CIO says, the average S&P 500 Index CEO received \$13.5 million in total compensation.

Quotes & Numbers

Special *Friedrichs v. CTA* Edition

Compiled by MIKE MYSLINSKI

The *Friedrichs* lawsuit, which challenges the authority of CTA and other public-sector unions to collect Fair Share fees, goes before the U.S. Supreme Court in January. It threatens to make it even more difficult for workers to collectively advocate for students and fight for better wages and benefits that can sustain their families. (See story, pages 36-41.)

"Every working person should care about this case, even if it doesn't personally affect you. This legal battle is just the latest in a series of attempts by wealthy conservative groups to dismantle every program, service, or law that benefits working people. A win for the Koch brothers here will make it that much harder to fight the next battle."

—**J. DAVID COX SR.**,

national president of the American Federation of Government Employees, which represents more than 670,000 federal and D.C. government employees nationwide. From his Nov. 20 *Huffington Post* column.

"Let us be clear: *Friedrichs* isn't about the First Amendment; it is about undermining this country's labor unions because we are the last great defenders of working people and the middle class. The far-right forces behind the lawsuit despise unions because it is our collective voice and collective action that prevent them from further enriching themselves at ordinary Americans' expense."

—United Federation of Teachers President **MICHAEL MULGREW**, in his Dec. 3 column on the website of the 200,000-member UFT in New York.

"If the labor relations system that has served well for so long is in need of revision, that task should be left to Congress and the state legislatures. The Supreme Court should not dismantle it piece by piece in the name of free speech."

—**ANN C. HODGES**, a law professor at the University of Richmond School of Law, in an Aug. 25 column about the *Friedrichs* lawsuit published in SCOTUSblog.com.

"In some states, public employees have succeeded in preserving their organizations, but a network of billionaires [is] funding a pending Supreme Court case that will likely soon make it more difficult for teachers, firefighters and other public employees to maintain strong unions."

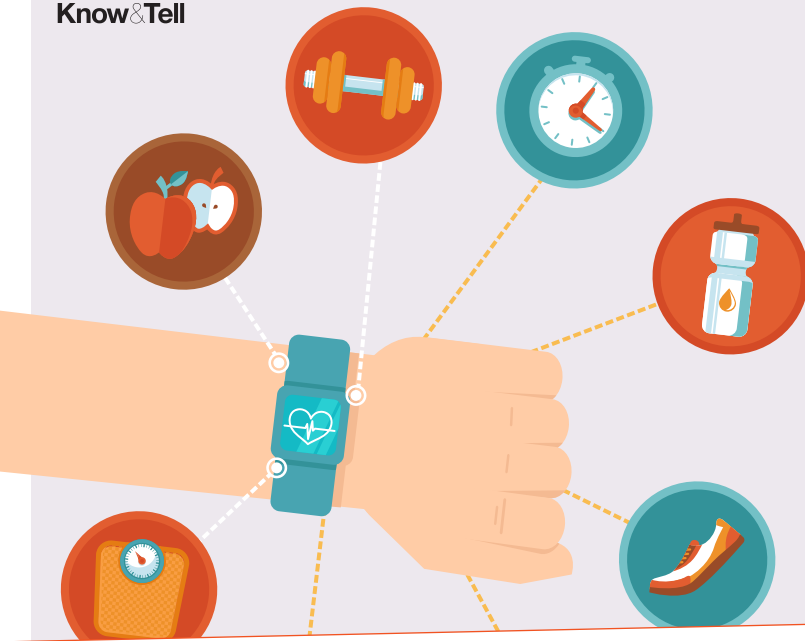
—**DORIAN T. WARREN**,

a fellow at the Roosevelt Institute and Chair of the Board at the Center for Community Change, in a Nov. 27 *Newsweek* commentary titled "Stronger Unions Are the Way to Rebalance Our Economy."

"The Supreme Court should reject this attack on public employees and allow Fair Share to continue to work fairly and equitably, as it has for decades. Then we can continue to build an economy for teachers, nurses, firefighters and other workers, an economy that works for everyone, not just the wealthy few."

—**JENNIFER MUIR**,

general manager of the Orange County Employees Association, in a Nov. 13 column in the *Orange County Register*.



YOUR WHOLE LIFE

Tips and trends for a smarter, healthier you

Get on Track

Be your best self in the new year

Fitness trackers — wristbands and other wearables that monitor daily activity — are all the rage. Tech advances and design improvements mean they're becoming easier to use, and the increasing selection will let you find one at your price point.

WHY YOU NEED ONE

Trackers can motivate you to meet your daily and overall goals — whether it be to lose weight, sleep better or get fit.

WHAT TO LOOK FOR

Figure out what you want the tracker to do. Most monitor the number of steps taken, calories burnt and sleep patterns, and can be used as a watch. Additional features can include:

- **Stair-counting, heart rate, perspiration levels,** GPS capabilities, vibration after periods of inactivity, and active guidance and encouragement to help you maximize your workout.
- **Extended battery life, water resistance,** attractiveness (some can be worn as jewelry).
- **Phone and social media** notifications.
- **Companion app** — usually on your smartphone — that is easy to use and clearly displays your collected data.

BEST WAYS TO USE IT

- **Set realistic goals.** Most trackers are preset with a goal of 10,000 steps per day. Use yours for a few days to calculate your average before setting your own goal. Do the same thing with sleep and calorie-burning goals.
- **Calibrate your stride.** Fitbit suggests counting your steps as you walk for at least 20 paces along a track or spot where you know the exact distance; divide total distance in feet by the number of steps for your stride length. Do the same for your running pace. Set both numbers in your tracker.
- **Sync it with other apps,** such as the food/activity tracking app MyFitnessPal.



Save Big on Groceries and Gas

Make your dollars go further:

- **THINK STRATEGICALLY.** Take stock of what you have, and what you intend to cook and eat that week. Make a shopping list. Go online to check grocers' weekly sales. Google the store name with "coupon" and download coupons you can use.
- **GO MOBILE.** Many stores have mobile apps that provide instant access to the store's weekly ad and in-store coupons. Some let you create a shopping list, search for sale items, and comparison-shop.
- **JOIN THE CLUB.** When you're a member, grocers such as Safeway and Vons can track your shopping history and offer you special savings on products you buy.
- **GET GAS REWARDS.** Some grocers such as Safeway and Vons offer gas rewards that make filling up much less expensive. See bit.ly/1Rd5seW for more tips.

Quick & Painless Checkup

You may have just started your career, or are planning to retire soon. Whatever your situation, you'll want to take NEA Member Benefits' **5 Minute Retirement Checkup**, an online calculator based on answers to a few questions that tells you where you stand right now — and if applicable, what you need to do to achieve a comfortable retirement. It's a great way to get a handle on your personal finances. Go to bit.ly/1NhchMR.

Perspectives

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to their lives and work

**“These children
can teach us
about empathy,
compassion and
meeting our
potential.”**

— CECILIA TIMEK

Cecilia Timek, who works with students with special needs at Murray Elementary School in Dublin, focuses on abilities rather than disabilities. “Everyone is good at something,” she says. See story on page 17.



Should parents be expected to help students with homework?

YES **HOMework IS A WAY** to extend learning beyond the classroom. Much of my English homework is reading, and I also assign practice writing at home (low stakes) so kids can take risks, experiment and have fun.

I suggest that parents read the assigned novel at home with their kids; I even offer copies of the books that parents can borrow. Then they can talk with their kids about what's happening in the novel, and indirectly help them stay on track with the reading assignments rather than nag them.

I also suggest that parents provide feedback on their kids' writing — not editing it, but just honest responses — such as "This part is a little confusing," or "Can you add some detail here? I want to know more."

By being involved, parents can demonstrate to their kids that school is important, that they want their kids to achieve, that they recognize learning is difficult, and that sometimes they can help. Kids need to know that parents are there supporting them to do their very best.

If a student needs help, parents should definitely encourage them to seek help from their teacher first. But there are many things that parents can do to assist with homework.

Of course, sometimes students don't want their parents to help. When my son was in grade school, I was helping him with some English homework, and he didn't believe me when I told him that a particular sentence was a run-on. I explained to him why it was indeed a run-on, but he wasn't buying it.

So I asked him to ask his teacher to look at the sentence and let her settle the dispute. She told him, "If your mom says it's a run-on, it's a run-on."

After that, whenever a grammar question came up in his class, he was sent home with a request to get my input. And now he listens to my advice.

Students should take responsibility for doing their own homework. But that doesn't mean that parents can't support kids if they need help.



Therese Sorey, Irvine Teachers Association president, teaches English at University High School.



"Did you do your homework today?"

In some households, the question isn't just for kids. That's because parents are often part of the homework equation these days. Some educators think parents should pitch in, while others think parents should skip their kids' homework assignments.

NO **FOR EVERY TEACHER**, homework plays a different role. The role homework plays in my classroom is to provide an informal assessment of what students learned from my teaching that day, and what students can do independently. If parents help them do their homework, it is difficult for me to assess their skill level or know whether my teaching was effective.

Also, with all the changes from the Common Core, I don't expect parents to solve problems the way my students are now being taught.

When parents get involved with homework, there is often frustration. Kids will tell me, "My mom tried helping me with my homework, but she had a hard time." Students are saying they can't do it — and Mom can't do it either. They may have left my classroom feeling positive about their ability to complete the assignment, and then a parent became involved and now the student is confused. When that happens, it overshadows all the hard work done in the classroom.

It's also very important to remember that homework should always reflect teaching. If teachers send home assignments, it should always be something that was already taught in the classroom.

Students also need to take responsibility for their homework, because being responsible is a life skill. When they get to college they need to know how to study and problem-solve on their own, and their parents won't be there to help them.

There are things that parents can do to help students with homework without becoming too involved. They can talk about perseverance. They can encourage students to think about alternative ways to approach a problem. They can serve as a sounding board for ideas. And if a question is too difficult to understand, they can help their child break down the question and try to make sense of it. We work on all of this in the classroom.

When it comes to helping students with homework, parents should step back. It's important, especially with the Common Core, for students to develop critical thinking and problem-solving skills on their own, which will help them not only in school, but in life.



Christina Sotelo Benson, National City Elementary Teachers Association, teaches fifth grade at Central Elementary School.



In Cecilia's words:

WHY IS IT CALLED ABILITY AWARENESS?

We focus on abilities, rather than disabilities. The kids all dressed up to reflect their strengths. For example, a student good at math might be wearing numbers. Everyone is good at something. Every student in the school participated. We hone in on what kids are good at, and support those skills. It was wonderful to see students feeling successful and confident about themselves.

SO WHAT'S AN 'EMPATHY ROOM'?

It's a room where students go to learn what life is like for those with disabilities. For example, a student might wear oversize plastic gloves and be asked to do a cutting activity with scissors, to understand the challenges some students face with motor coordination. They might be given something to read with every other word blacked out, and be asked to figure out the meaning, to understand what it's like for students with reading disabilities. They might watch a short video clip called "Arthur Explains Asperger's," which talks about someone being a genius, but having a hard time being around other people.

HOW DID ABILITY AWARENESS WEEK IMPACT THE SCHOOL CLIMATE?

Our students felt empowered and were able to discuss things they usually don't talk about. Students of all abilities talked to each other about some of the difficult things they may be

going through. It definitely improved the climate of our school. I saw a lot of kids reaching out to other students they wouldn't normally reach out to. There were a lot more "peer buddies" socializing together. I was very proud of all of the students, who felt they were a part of something important.

DID IT HELP IMPROVE LEARNING?

Yes. I started to see students brainstorming as a class on ways they could help each other out as friends. For example, if one student had trouble following directions, another student might pat them on the shoulder and "re-explain" the assignment. There were a lot of high fives around the school.

WHAT DID PARENTS THINK?

They loved it. There was a lot of support. We sent home packets of information that had conversation starters so students could extend what they learned at school into their homes and families.

HOW CAN I IMPROVE ABILITY AWARENESS AT MY SCHOOL?

There's a lot of good information at pbs.org/wgbh/misunderstoodminds, which is sponsored by PBS. Or visit selpa1cac.org/_/Ability_Awareness_Program.html, which provides free materials such as scripts and schedules. It's a wonderful way to advocate for students and improve your learning environment.

SPECIAL EDUCATOR FOCUSES ON ABILITIES, NOT DISABILITIES

Staff and students may not always realize it, but special education students are a "gift" to those at their school, says Cecilia Timek, a special day class teacher for students with mild to moderate disabilities at Murray Elementary School in Dublin.

"We can learn so much from them," says Timek, Dublin Teachers Association. "These children can teach us about empathy, compassion and meeting our potential."

Schools, she observes, are slowly making a cultural shift beyond merely "including" students with special needs in mainstream classrooms. This means special educators are training colleagues in ways to help all students succeed by using strategies to help students with learning disabilities, such as differentiating instruction and encouraging real friendships between students of differing abilities.

Timek and other school staff held an Ability Awareness Week at Murray Elementary — and at nearby Dublin Elementary School — to spread understanding and goodwill throughout classrooms and playgrounds. The event was held in April, which happens to be Autism Awareness Month. The first-ever event was a resounding success, and it will be repeated next April.

Member spotlight



ADD YOUR VOICE

The court of public opinion is in session, and your voice counts — *now*

WITH THE LAWSUIT *Friedrichs v. CTA* going before the Supreme Court in January, members are speaking out about what CTA means to them, how the union is integral to the work they do with students every day and their goals for our economic future.

Add your voice to a growing list of working men and women taking a stand. Tell us your story at cta.org/OurVoiceOurUnion. For details about the *Friedrichs* case, see pages 36-41. [#OurVoiceOurUnion](https://twitter.com/OurVoiceOurUnion)



From Fair Share fee payer to activist

ROBERTO RODRIGUEZ
Sweetwater Education Association President

Rodriguez has served for 28 years as a government and economics teacher at Otay Ranch High School in the Sweetwater Union High School District.

It's pretty ironic that I'm a union chapter president today, considering that I began my career as a "Fair Share payer" and not as a union member at all. But a close colleague spoke to me about all of things I could take for granted as a new teacher — ranging from due process protections to fair salaries to sick leave and a secure retirement — that had come directly as a result of collective bargaining and union efforts. At the end of the conversation, I not only signed up as a union member, I also volunteered to hand out fliers and work to engage more of my colleagues in the association's work.

With mentoring from colleagues, over time I took on more responsibility until I was elected to CTA's State Council of Education, serving on committees including Credentials and Professional Development, and Political Involvement.

As a union member, I have a chance every day to help make students' lives better. The work we do through our union removes the bureaucracy and obstacles that can get in the way so educators can do what they want to do — teach our students.

I believe we need to think about our unions as more than just organizations that provide better salaries and benefits. Unions are agents of change for workers, our students and our communities. When we come together and make it a priority, we can have a greater impact on issues of social justice and economic inequality.



Proud of his colleagues

DAN KIVETT
Redlands Education Support Professionals Association President

Kivett is a public safety officer with the Redlands Unified School District. He was at Victoria Elementary School next door to the Inland Regional Center in San Bernardino when a couple opened fire and killed 14 people and wounded 22 others on Dec. 2.

Victoria Elementary went into lockdown, requiring staff — including teachers and education support professionals like secretaries, cafeteria workers and janitors — to act quickly and calmly, despite the danger.

I am very proud of all educators at Victoria. They played a vital part in making sure children were safe and secure. Teachers and ESPs comforted students and got them safely to their parents. Despite their own fears, they maintained composure so as not to have children give in to their own anxieties.

Training and safety drills supported by the Redlands ESP Association made all the difference. We have been strong proponents with the district for the training that prepared our members to respond to this kind of emergency.

Throughout my 16 years focusing on student safety, my co-workers and I have seen various threats to our students, but because of our union, we've been able to work together to develop ideas and practices to improve safety conditions for students and their communities. It's why I got involved. I saw the difference we could make both in and out of the classroom by speaking with one voice.

The *Friedrichs* case concerns me because it has the potential to take this all away and greatly impact our ability to stand up for our students and communities.



It all adds up

SUSAN MERCER
Santa Ana Educators
Association President

Mercer has a degree in computer and information science, and worked in the private sector for more than four years. But she always found something lacking. Now, as a middle school educator, colleagues often remind her of the adage, "Heaven has a special place for those with the courage to teach middle school."

I've been a math teacher in Santa Ana for more than 21 years. That's not what I planned to be. Believe it or not, teaching math to teenagers is what I've always loved. In my last assignment, I served as the district's intermediate math coordinator, helping colleagues prepare students to meet the increasingly tough mathematics challenges.

I had the advantage and challenge of looking at my work from two perspectives — as a middle school teacher and as a single parent of three who were in public schools themselves. The profession matters to me both as an educator and as a parent.

So when in 2003 I had to confront a principal who, instead of helping us do our jobs, seemed much more inclined to get in the way, I was stymied. What could I do?

It was then that I first learned the importance of collective action, of working with and organizing my colleagues at the school. As individual teachers, we didn't have much of a voice. But raising our collective voice made all the difference in the world, and it ended up benefiting our students.

That experience is what got me involved in my local teachers association. I understood how important the association is to making sure educators can practice their craft and help all of our students succeed. On any given day I meet with administrators, community leaders, and other parents to secure the support our teachers and other education support professionals need to prepare our students for the challenges of the 21st century.

And we have plenty of other challenges. Now we're following the *Friedrichs v. CTA* lawsuit, which is in the hands of the U.S. Supreme Court. I sure hope their decision considers what we as educators can do for our students because of our affiliation with our union. The backers of the suit are part of the same group seeking to silence our voices and weaken our unions.

Particularly at this time of year — when I see that great Frank Capra movie, *It's a Wonderful Life* — I reflect on the impact that my colleagues and I have every day on our students and our communities. I wouldn't trade my job for anything.

CCTC Approved Reading and Literacy Added Authorization

UC San Diego Extension offers the CCTC Approved Reading and Literacy Added Authorization (previously referred to as Reading Certificate) which is a comprehensive program of study that provides students with a solid foundation in the research and methods of reading instruction.

The Reading and Literacy Added Authorization program is geared towards teachers with the potential to become leaders and mentors in the area of reading. It will provide educators with the right tools to improve student achievement.

Program Highlights:

- The program provides participants with the skills to develop a research-based program of reading instruction for implementation in their own classrooms or as a resource for other classroom teachers
- This certificate is aligned with the requirements and standards established by the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CCTC).
- **100% online**

To view credential requirements, the program FAQs and to download an application please visit our Reading Instruction at extension.ucsd.edu/teachreading

UC San Diego Extension also offers accessible and affordable online programs for K-12 and Postsecondary Educators.

- New courses begin every month
- Most programs can be completed online within 1 year
- Interactive, Research-Based Programs with Practical Classroom Application

Programs include:

- CCTC-Approved Clear Credential Program
- CCTC Approved CLAD Through CTCL Program
- College Counseling Specialized Certificate
- Gifted and Talented Education (GATE) Specialized Certificate
- Teaching Adult Learners Professional Certificate
- Teaching Online Certificate
- Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) Professional Certificate
- Professional Development/Salary Point Coursework

**For more information, please contact Morgan Appel,
 Director of Education at: (858) 534-9273 or mappel@ucsd.edu**



Inspired Dreamers

Thinkers and doers making
a mark in education

By SHERRY POSNICK-GOODWIN
Photography by SCOTT BUSCHMAN



“I want to put a ding in the universe.”

STEVE JOBS

Innovation is a popular buzzword in education these days, but what exactly is an innovative educator? Is it someone who would rather blaze a new trail than follow a beaten path? Someone who is willing to take risks and even fail? Or, as the cliché says, someone who thinks outside the box?

Yes to all of the above. But innovators also identify trends of the future and incorporate them into present practice. They are curious and questioning. They are driven by a commitment to excellence and constant improvement, not to satisfy others, but to satisfy themselves.

Innovators, as you will see in the group below, embrace project-based learning and the four C's — critical thinking, creativity, communication and collaboration. They are passionate about what they do, connect with students' ideas and interests, approach challenges as opportunities needing creative solutions, and see everything as a teachable moment.

And they definitely put a memorable “ding” in the lives of their students.

Nicole Robinson

Bringing dance to the masses

DANCE WAS OFFERED in only one high school in Fontana Unified School District for years. But Nicole Robinson changed that in one quick step by asking her students at A.B. Miller High School to dance their way into the heart of the community. They stepped up to the challenge by presenting uplifting community performances and sharing dance moves with younger students.

Robinson and her students created two innovative programs, which were the catalyst to expand dance districtwide and integrate dance with the community.

In one, Miller High's Conservatory of Dance (which Robinson created in 2009) partnered with the city of Riverside, the Riverside Transit Agency, and Riverside Community College to produce Trolley Dances Riverside, where the audience rides trolley cars to view performances by

community dancers in unique locations. Students participated as dancers, choreographers and production managers.

Riding high on the success of the Trolley event, Robinson created another program, the Dance Collaborative, partnering with the California Arts Project and community dance artists. Her students taught Saturday dance workshops for fourth- and fifth-graders, while Robinson and local dance artists offered professional development for their teachers and master classes to elementary students, demonstrating how "time, space and energy" relate to dancing.

Robinson's programs have been supported by Institute for Teaching (IFT) grants from CTA for several years.

Seeing more youngsters dance made her want *all* students to have the opportunity. She asked the school board to fund

"Dance lets students express themselves in powerful ways beyond speaking and writing."

a "dance pipeline" to high school. It wasn't fair, she said, that most students had no exposure to dance until ninth grade. The board agreed; members were enthusiastic after seeing the progress made with IFT grants. Now more than 600 Fontana elementary school students at seven schools (and their teachers) are dancing.

"I believe in the power of dance," says Robinson, Fontana Teachers Association. "Dance provides an opportunity for students to express themselves in powerful ways beyond just speaking and writing. Dance develops coordination, strength, emotional maturity, fitness, and opportunities for social encounters and joy. Dancing makes a difference."



Amy Conley

Changing the world

AMY CONLEY, an English teacher at Fortuna High School in Humboldt County, observed that most students chose mundane activities to meet the school's community service requirement, such as mowing a neighbor's lawn or donating old clothes. She wanted students to be creative, learn important skills and have a meaningful experience.

So Conley dreamed up Change the World (CTW), which tasks students with creating projects to make the world a better place.

Kyle Isaacs took CTW to heart. The Fortuna senior organized a basketball team for special education students to help them enjoy sports.

"They may have differing abilities, but they are excited and capable and eager to participate in sports," says Isaacs, who has twin brothers with special needs. "This project makes me happy

"They don't believe in their own power at first. Then they start to dream big. It puts a fire in their bones."

while I'm doing something to help others. It feels good."

CTW was only for AP students initially, but teens liked it so much that Conley decided every senior at her school should have the opportunity. CTW, supported by a grant from CTA's Institute for Teaching (IFT), now includes 200 students at three high schools. Students ask local mentors to guide them.

"The goal is to develop personal strengths and passions through unique service projects, which benefits the local community and the world as a whole, one project at a time," says Conley, Fortuna Union High School Teachers Association. "Students engage in brainstorming, proposal and budget writing, collaboration, and networking. They grow so much from this experience."

Sam Sederberg would agree. She started a Soroptimist Club at Fortuna, which encourages leadership in young women. She

developed enough confidence to engage in public speaking, which used to terrify her.

Katie Holland revived the school's neglected garden, and is proud to see it producing food for the school's cafeteria. She says she finally understands the importance of fresh food and proper nutrition, and is spreading the word in a healthy foods campaign.

Past projects have included a poetry slam to bring the community together, a soccer camp for youths, a program to mentor bilingual kindergartners, and a Mother's Day event for seniors.

"Students often remark that they have no way to make the world better," says Conley. "They don't believe in their own power at first. Then they start to dream big. It puts a fire in their bones. You might say that Change the World launches students out of their comfort zone — and into the rest of their lives."

Brad Collins

Class is a zoo

in there from a pet store in a shiny new wrapper. But if it doesn't move, it doesn't interest our geckos."

The same might be true of students, muses Collins, who teaches second grade at Camarena Elementary School in Chula Vista. If something moves, they are definitely much more interested.

The Chula Vista Educators member has a menagerie: five fish, two aquatic turtles, two leopard geckos, three land hermit crabs, two hamsters, a few birds and two starfish in his classroom, renamed the Camarena Life Science Center.

— as well as responsibility, since animals depend on them for survival.

Then there's the wow factor. Students were amazed to learn that starfish eat and poop out of the same opening. As hushed as grownups watching a golf tournament, they wait for a shrimp to be eaten, then applaud.

"This is just so dramatic!" exclaims Maranda Santos.

Collins turned his classroom into a zoo three years ago and received an IFT grant last year. Students learn what various animals need to survive; how to manage those needs in an indoor, controlled environment; and how those needs interact with other species, plant life, the water cycle and the larger environment. Everything is interconnected: Math calculations determine animals' food and space needs; students blog about animals for language arts; and science is everywhere.

Students broadcast happenings on Apple TV for YouTube viewers. They create videos about habitats using a special "green screen app" that creates backgrounds that look as though they are standing in a jungle or desert.

"It's authentic learning," says Collins. "Students are having real experiences. Sometimes it isn't perfect. But everything is a teachable moment."

"Students are having real experiences. Sometimes it isn't perfect. But everything is a teachable moment."

Kids love learning about critters, so Collins uses them to inspire a love of learning. Students are so enthralled that they don't realize they're learning challenging science, math and English lessons

THE GECKOS ARE motionless, but when crickets are sprinkled into the aquarium they gobble them at lightning speed. Some students gather around the glass to observe. Others watch on a screen.

"Observe how the animals' senses are triggered by movement," says Brad Collins, in the whispered tone of an Animal Planet host. "You can put something





Jeff Ramirez and Jesse Barber

Math lessons that rock

JEFF RAMIREZ AND JESSE BARBER were married in July. They both teach fifth grade in Romoland School District in Riverside County. They're passionate about each other, the Common Core, and creating curriculum. They design meaningful, real-world math lessons for students and other educators.

They describe their passion as “creating complex, real-world scenarios in which students choose appropriate concepts for application, encompassing cross-curricular activities while working through multiple math standards.”

For example, their Airdrop Project asks students to design several small boxes for supplies, along with the



actual package in which these supplies will be dropped by parachute. First, students create models based on each item's dimensions. Next, they determine what size box is needed to package the items. The goal is to discover the formula for volume rather than having a teacher dispense it, so students can solve problems on their own. It's tied in with an engineering task to create a parachute, and drop and test their creations — safely landing packages without damage the items inside.

The Romoland Teachers Association members also created a Park Project, where students create a city park by researching real-world

costs, budgets and dimensions, along with efficient, eco-friendly use of space. This combines standards from several content areas.

Barber, who teaches at Mesa View Elementary School, and Ramirez, who teaches at Boulder Ridge Elementary, are part of the Instructional Leadership Corps (ILC), a collaboration between CTA and Stanford University that is building a network of educators to support Common Core implementation.

“Our goal is for students to no longer ask, ‘Why do we need to know this?’” says Barber. “By providing experiences where students discover the math, students immediately understand why these skills are necessary. That’s because they are actually using them, on their way to becoming successful and productive members of the 21st century.”

“Our goal is for students to no longer ask, ‘Why do we need to know this?’”



Liz Miller

Building community

AS THE 150TH anniversary of Curtis Creek Elementary School approached last year, Liz Miller saw the milestone as more than just a schoolwide celebration. She felt it could also unite the community, provide hands-on learning, and offer opportunities for students to create beautiful artwork. It was a team effort, but the third-grade teacher was the catalyst that made it happen.

"I saw this celebration as something that could give

breadth and depth to instruction," says Miller, president of Curtis Creek Faculty Association. "I wanted to create something positive to boost morale, because it's tough being in public education these days. I wanted something where teachers, administrators, classified staff, retirees, parents and community could come together and be part of something amazing."

The pre-K-8 campus is located in Gold Rush country and steeped in rich history. No doubt the sesquicentennial



celebration will be studied one day by future historians, who should note that an IFT grant from CTA helped make it possible.

The yearlong school celebration included an archaeological dig of the nearby original 1915 school site with a local archaeologist. Grinding rocks on the school grounds — once used by Miwok Indians for grinding acorns — were surveyed by students, and the data was recorded in the state’s database about grinding rocks. Common Core lessons integrated local history with math, science and English lessons.

The school held a two-day fair open to Sonora residents, showcasing student work

and the school’s heritage, featuring old-time favorites like egg tossing, a dunk tank, sack races and country dancing. Students designed a geocache trail so participants could search for hidden treasures using GPS coordinates. They performed plays and sang,

and opened a time capsule from 1973. The school band led a parade through the school parking lot.

Students also created six panels of murals depicting world history over 150 years, with each panel representing 25 years. Nearly 70 students worked on the murals with a local artist. Students decided on the events and people to depict, including Vietnam, the Beatles, Neil Armstrong and *Star Wars*.

“Our legacy is creating lots of smiles and a feeling of euphoria that we’re doing something right,” muses Miller. “School staff feel validated and united. Parents and community feel welcome. We have made strong connections. And we will continue to build on these connections in the future.”

“I wanted something where everyone could come together and be part of something amazing.”

Matt Anderson Through the Learning Glass



SAN DIEGO STATE UNIVERSITY

physics professor Matt Anderson didn’t like turning his back on students in class while writing on a whiteboard — even though most of the 200 to 300 students in the auditorium and those online view him on a jumbo screen. He wanted to maintain eye contact with them. At one point, he even considered learning how to write backward.

Anderson’s solution: He created Learning Glass.

With help from a few of the university’s instructional technology engineers, Anderson developed a transparent glass “whiteboard.” When he writes on the glass with neon dry-erase markers, LED side lighting causes the writing to glow. With the glass between him and the students, Anderson can look at them through the glass and write at the same time. Since the writing is backward from the students’ point of view, he uses a mirror to reflect the image or a computer projection system to flip it digitally, enabling students to read along as he writes.

“It helps me maintain a sense of connection,” says the California Faculty Association member. “It absolutely enhances the auditorium setting. And online students love it.”

Anderson has his own YouTube channel and has created 300 videos

about physics. In one of them, he’s jumping off a cliff into water to describe velocity. His channel has 400,000 views and 1,700 subscribers. (His handle on YouTube is [yoprofmatt](#).) In newer videos, he’s using Learning Glass.

Rather than patent it, Anderson is sharing it. Professors from the CSU and UC systems have embraced it. Instructions on how to create Learning Glass with mirrors can be found at its.sdsu.edu/tech/learning_glass.html.

“It helps me maintain a connection. It enhances the auditorium setting. And online students love it.”

Recently Anderson studied its effect in lecture halls and online classes. He found a “learning gain” when Learning Glass instruction was compared with traditional teaching. He thinks students are so engaged by the technology, they are less likely to look at their phones or text.

“For me, it’s changed the entire teaching experience,” says Anderson. “It would feel awkward to go back to a whiteboard not facing my students.” ■



B U I L D I N G

B E A U T Y

Architecturally stunning schools inspire students and educators

By SHERRY POSNICK-GOODWIN
Photography by SCOTT BUSCHMAN



Sarah Lorenzen

Schools are places to gain inspiration, share ideas and talk about the world, asserts Sarah Lorenzen, chair of the architecture department at Cal Poly Pomona. “When we provide beautiful spaces for our students, they think about the world differently,” says Lorenzen, a California Faculty Association member. “Providing well-designed spaces for our children should be as much a part of our mission as finding them good curriculum and books to read.”

A beautiful school conveys the message that society values education — and students and educators. Inviting spaces create opportunities to congregate, collaborate or just contemplate. Take a look at the remarkable schools on these pages and see for yourself.



Ramon C. Cortines School of Visual and Performing Arts LOS ANGELES

IT'S ONE OF THE “30 Most Amazing High School Campuses in the World,” according to Best Education Degrees. The school was designed and built for \$232 million in 2009 by international architecture firm Coop Himmelb(l)au. The campus — devoted to visual and performing arts — has seven buildings on 10 acres.

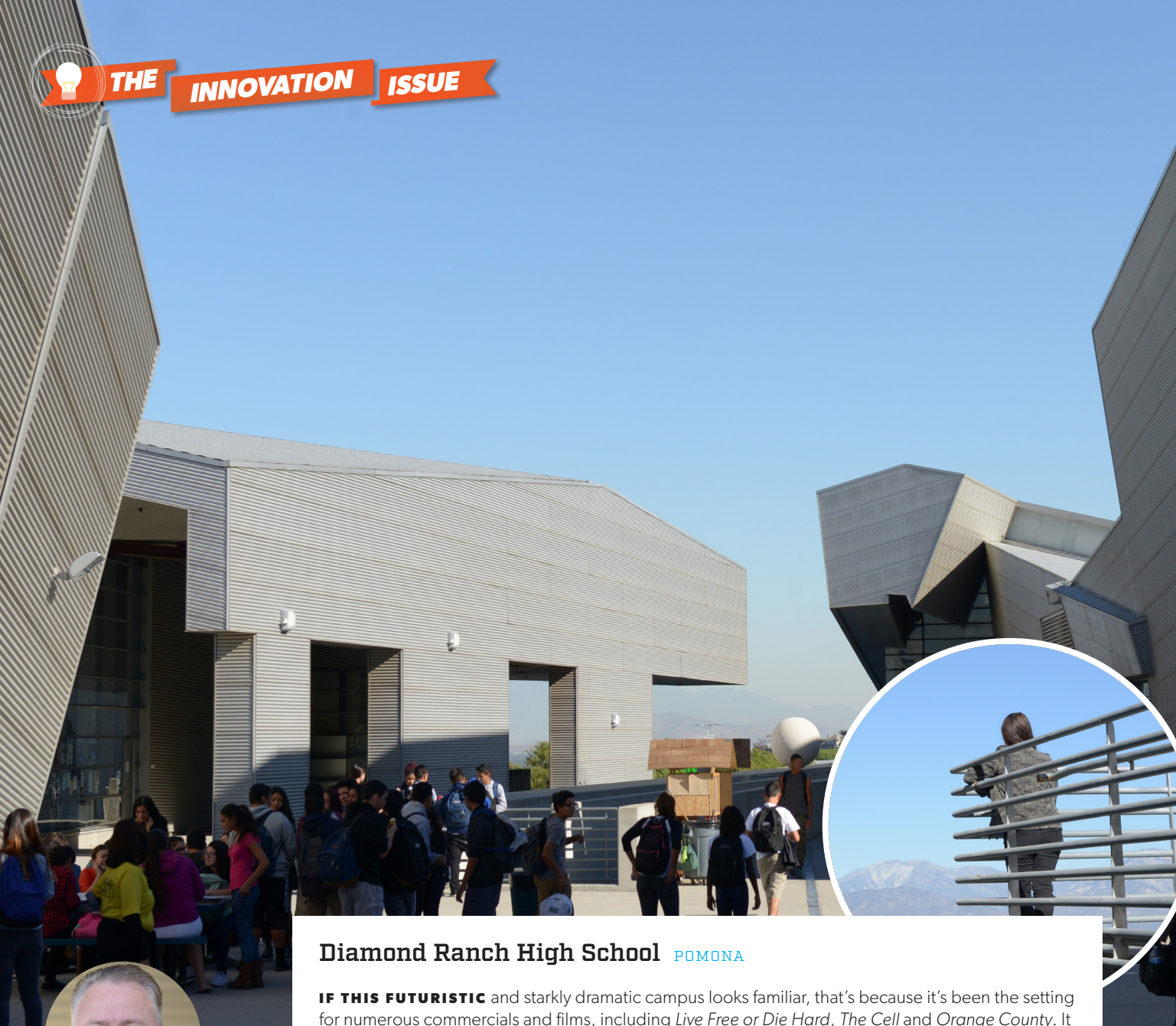
The prominent tower, planned as a community meeting room, remains unfinished since investors pulled their money after the school refused to become a charter. A conical library, a theater with a Broadway-size stage, huge windows and other features prompted such phrases as “architecturally thrilling” from *Los Angeles Times* critic Christopher Hawthorne, who observes that the school, like its students, is “something of a proud outcast: gangly, dreamy and beautiful at the same time.”



“[The school] has not only an enriching environment, but buildings that stimulate students’ artistic side. It’s a place where students want to learn and express art. I’ve heard students from poor neighborhoods such as South Central say that after coming here, they believe they can do anything.”

—**GREG SCHILLER**, science teacher and site rep, United Teachers Los Angeles





Diamond Ranch High School POMONA

IF THIS FUTURISTIC and starkly dramatic campus looks familiar, that's because it's been the setting for numerous commercials and films, including *Live Free or Die Hard*, *The Cell* and *Orange County*. It also is on the list of the "30 Most Amazing High School Campuses in the World." The tri-level school, opened in 1999, was designed in an expressionist modern style by Morphosis design firm and built into the side of a mountain. Funds for the \$80 million cost came from a combination of bond money, school district funds and a grant from the City of Industry.

Situated on 72 acres of land previously considered "unusable," Diamond Ranch's angular, jutting structures integrate into the surrounding landscape. Classrooms and stairwells boast spectacular views. Three distinct schools-within-a-school feature clusters of classrooms, each with its own courtyard. Two rows of fragmented, interlocking forms on either side of a central "canyon," or street, cut through the face of the hillside and allow for student interaction. Says Alice Y. Kimm in *Architecture Week*, "If buildings really

do reflect society's values, we can applaud the new Diamond Ranch High School. Here is a place where social conscience coexists comfortably with creativity and imagination."



"I love it. We've seen rabbits outside our doors and once saw a hawk fly off with a squirrel. Sometimes I have to tell my students to stop looking out the window. You can get lost in the view, and it's mesmerizing when the clouds align with the mountains and the light changes."

—**KENNETH LAMBRIGHT**, math teacher,
Associated Pomona Teachers



Impact of aesthetics on learning

Most schools are designed to be functional, and the aesthetics are an afterthought. Preliminary research, however, shows:

- Pupils with plenty of daylight in the classroom learn up to 21 per cent more than pupils with less daylight.
- Noise has a negative impact on pupils' behavior.
- Bullying is worse in asphalted school yards than in well-ordered, challenging outdoor areas of varying design.
- Feelings and learning are connected. A good atmosphere in the room creates better learning.

Source: Ulla Kjærvang, educational architect, DesignShare



Wasuma Elementary School AHWAHNEE

FINANCIALLY STRAPPED Bass Lake Joint Union Elementary School District made headlines and saved millions when it decided to build the first dome-shaped school building in California. Now nearing completion, the gym will serve youngsters who previously had to use their cafeteria as both gym and event center. The 8,000-square-foot structure was paid for by bond money and cost \$2 million, about half the cost of a traditional gym. The dome is made of concrete insulated with polyurethane foam; materials will reduce energy costs up to 75 percent compared with a regular gym, according to California Dome Builders, which oversaw the project. School officials plan to hold a contest to name the new dome.



“The kids are totally in awe. It will be nice to have a place where we can go inside. We held our graduations outside on the grass, and it can get up to 108 degrees here. There’s not much in the town of Ahwahnee; we have a school and a post office and a restaurant. But now we’re on the map. We’re the school district with the dome.”

—**SHANNON ECKLUND**, Bass Lake Teachers Association president

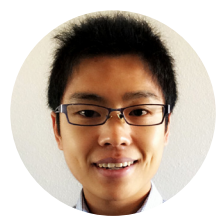




Summer Heartt shows how the theater's modern design allows easy access to the lighting instruments.

American Canyon High School AMERICAN CANYON

THIS NAPA COUNTY campus is also one of the “30 Most Amazing High School Campuses in the World” and serves as a model of architectural and green innovation. Designed by Quattrocchi Kwok Architects, all classrooms feature natural light. The underground geothermal system reduces energy costs, as does the solar farm behind the school. Sports fields are irrigated with reclaimed water, and the school uses low-flow water fixtures. The state-of-the-art theater has a “tech ledge” walkway that connects the control booth with the lighting catwalks. In addition to a large campus green area, the small learning communities each have their own courtyard. Often called “the school of the future,” American Canyon resembles a college campus more than a high school. For details on the school and its teachers, see the story on the next page.



“As a teacher, I appreciate the new buildings and beautiful environment that I work in. I find it easy to fall in love with the environment and create a sense of community. Students feel the same way.”

—**JUN DU**, Mandarin teacher, Napa Valley Educators Association



SCHOOL OF THE FUTURE

A cutting-edge high school shows how it's done


By SHERRY POSNICK-GOODWIN *Photography by* SCOTT BUSCHMAN

IT'S 8:30 A.M. No bell signals the school day has begun, but students scurry to class. They don't need bells; they have cellphones and watches. They are responsible for being on time, just as they would be in college or the working world.

Class begins, and students unpack their computers. This is a "bring your own device" campus. By logging on to ECHO, the online learning management system, they access their grades, daily agendas, assignments, project

"briefcases," and more. Connected 24/7, they collaborate on projects with classmates anywhere via videoconference, Google Chat or Google Docs.

Many of the students seem to be singularly focused and mature.

"I write grants," says 12th-grader Jordan Jackson. "I write business letters. I set up my own fundraisers. I know how to dress professionally and how to speak to adults. I'm ready to go into the business" 

environment. I can handle myself.”

Welcome to American Canyon High School (ACHS), which some call the school of the future. Part of Napa Valley Unified School District, it was built in 2010 with \$185 million in bond money, making it the most expensive high school in California. Architecturally striking and set on almost 50 acres, it resembles a college (see story, page 30). Its philosophy is also like a college’s: Students should be treated like adults.

It sounds serious, but learning is fun. During a recent visit to Nhu-Y Vu’s math class, she stood on a chair while students threw paper airplanes at her midsection, using their nondominant hand. The exercise was created to help students overcome “obstacles and limitations” and see themselves as better students.

“I love teaching here,” says Vu. “From the very beginning, we were a school that utilized technology, used project-based learning (PBL), and emphasized collaboration with co-workers and positive relationships. We’re encouraged to take risks and to fail. This environment fosters innovation and allows teachers the freedom to create along with their students.”

A DIFFERENT KIND OF SCHOOL

Yes, it’s different here, say Napa Valley Educators Association members at the site, located in American Canyon. In fact, there is nothing like it in the state — and perhaps the country.

The campus currently has 1,593 students divided into four small learning communities predominantly by grade level, with counselors and administrators stationed in buildings housing those communities instead of being lumped together in one administration building. The idea is to make everyone feel connected.



Matthew Smith



Student collaboration is the norm, with PBL in all classes. Class size cannot exceed 36 students to one teacher.

And teachers collaborate daily — yes, daily — on how to improve their craft. Every student is expected to bring a device to class. If families cannot provide one, students can check out a Chromebook computer from the school library.

“Having a device in class allows students to use the world as their resource,” says English and theater teacher Summer Heartt. “My agenda is projected on a Promethean [interactive whiteboard], and students follow links to use classroom resources and assignments.”

ACHS has programs for English learners, special education, art, drama, culinary arts and music. It offers Mandarin classes to give students a competitive edge in the job market, and a biotech program that segues into an aligned Solano Community College program. All classes incorporate technology.



“Sixty-five percent of students will eventually work in jobs that don’t exist today. Therefore, instead of training them for careers, we teach them skills that can be applied to any job.”

—**NHU-Y VU**, math teacher

Music teacher Matthew Smith, for example, has students tune their instrument with online apps, view marching band formations on their devices, and create compositions on noteflight.com, a free Web-based program. Students Skype with professors at colleges for feedback on their performances, and play along to smartmusic.com, which assesses their note and rhythm accuracy. MP3 recordings are emailed to parents.

“These kids are always willing to try things,” says Smith, director of



Clockwise from top left: English and theater teacher Summer Heartt onstage with students; sheep graze near American Canyon's solar panels; teachers work together in one of their two daily prep periods; an empowerment exercise in teacher Nhu-Y Vu's class where students throw paper airplanes with their nondominant hand.



responsibly, Vu says.

"Of course, there are times they do not make the best choices with the freedom they're given. But we hope they learn from those choices so they can make better decisions in the future."

A PLACE WHERE THINGS FLOW

English and social studies are combined into humanities classes much like at college, to offer students a broader understanding of language, history and cultures. Humanities classes are large, double-period classes, co-taught by an English teacher and a social studies teacher. The idea is that subjects are not separated in the real world; they flow together, so literacy is entwined with history.

Curricular crossover extends elsewhere, too. For example, it's not unusual for the culinary arts teacher to collaborate with a science teacher on assignments demonstrating both scientific theories and deliciousness.

The school has adopted an integrated math approach. Students take Math 1, Math 2 and Math 3, with classes blending algebra, geometry and statistics all three

years, instead of the usual route of Algebra 1, Geometry and Algebra 2. Again, it allows students to see how math concepts flow together.

The school also has an unorthodox grading system. In every class, students are evaluated on collaboration, agency growth

mindset, communication, content knowledge and critical thinking skills.

"Sixty-five percent of students will eventually work in jobs that don't exist today," Vu says. "Therefore, instead of training them for careers, we teach them skills that can be applied to any job."

Students "are asked not only to be responsible for their own learning, but for other students' learning," says instructional coach and business teacher Andrew Goff. "They are encouraged to see themselves as a community of learners, and it's *us* and not just *me* in this mindset."

The ability to think outside the box, encourage critical thinking, blend together subject matter, and incorporate PBL has made the teachers' shift to the Common Core not such a big deal, says Goff. "We definitely had a jump on the transition."

The student body is diverse: 45 percent are white; 31 percent Filipino; 12 percent African American or black; 7 percent Asian; and overlapping the other categories, 36 percent are Hispanic or Latino. Students we spoke with say that ACHS is inclusive, and that almost everyone finds a way to fit in, which is largely



Andrew Goff

instrumental music. "They are receptive, responsive and creative. They know how to think for themselves."

Performances take place in a 400-seat, fully modern theater with a "tech ledge" walkway that connects the lighting catwalks directly with the control booth. The theater also has acoustic drapes, dressing rooms and a makeup room.

"There are so many opportunities to be creative and to be yourself," says Wyatt Ellis, a junior. "That's what I like about the school."

"They treat you like an adult, and I appreciate that," says Antonio Lee, a junior. "For the most part, we are independent learners."

An example of that is "Access Period" on Wednesdays, when students can go anywhere they choose and are free to seek help from teachers and make up missing assignments. Most students act



attributed to the emphasis on collaboration.

“Everybody is pretty friendly here,” says Alex Ford, a junior. “Project-based learning increases cooperation and interaction among students. It’s just like being at work, when you collaborate with people you don’t know.”



Antonio Orozco teaches Spanish class, which places a heavy emphasis on project-based learning and research, and multimedia assignments.

TACKLING REAL-WORLD CHALLENGES

In Antonio Orozco’s Spanish class, students are assigned to create their own cooking show entirely in Spanish, film it, then prepare the same dish for their family. Their dish must be from a Spanish-speaking country, and their show must incorporate cultural aspects of that country. Students also create “novelas,” or short soap operas in Spanish, reflecting themes such as marriage, divorce or mental health, and then film their productions.

Project-based learning is the goal in every class, so learning is relevant, student-centered, creative and has applications in the community. Like the workplace, students are expected to tackle big projects that can take weeks or months. Many of the district’s elementary and middle “feeder” schools also embrace PBL, so students are used to it.

“Our PBL model is not a traditional model. It requires a teacher to act more in a facilitator role,” says humanities teacher Elaine Bolyan. “There is not what we grew up with — where the teacher was the ‘sage on the stage.’ Here the students are collaborating and working in groups, requiring teachers to circulate and spend hands-on time with each group.”



Elaine Bolyan

When studying the Great Depression and the New Deal, her 11th-graders are asked to give voice to today’s “forgotten man.” Student groups collaborate to create an infographic about people they feel are forgotten in today’s society — such as migrant workers, homeless teens or the mentally ill — and then write letters to someone in a position of power to influence support of this group, arguing the importance of addressing this group’s needs and outlining specific ideas about how to help this population.

“The emphasis on relevancy and real-world connections is something that makes our campus a special place,” says Bolyan. “Our students are often solving real problems that exist in the community.”

A CULTURE OF COLLABORATION

The school has a seven-period day, and teachers have two prep periods daily. One is spent collaborating with their peers. The goal is to change the definition of teaching as something done in isolation to something that is shared with peers.

Some days, teachers may be grouped together by subject matter in professional learning communities; other days, teachers may meet according to grade level.

On the day the *Educator* has come to visit, teachers are meeting with “cohorts” — other teachers who have prep period at the same time.

The topic is how to align PBL across subject matter, and ceramics teacher Adam Musto shares that he’s had an “epiphany” for cross-curricular PBL with a business class: He will ask students to design mugs for Starbucks featuring their heroes, which will lead to a broader discussion of marketing ethos and practices.

“I love the collaboration among staff,” Orozco says. “Our meetings are very valuable. They allow us to improve our curriculum, share different strategies to implement curriculum, and share results from our assessments. We also come up with solutions to help students who don’t understand the material.”

This style of teaching is not for everyone, Goff says. “But for teachers who are innovative, collaborative, willing to look at their practice and try new things without worrying about failure or judgment, this is an amazing place to work.” ■

American Canyon High School

A comprehensive public school and member of Napa-based New Tech Network, a national nonprofit that help schools implement project-based learning and embed the use of technology with teachers and students.

Advocacy

INSIDE:

- 36** Special Report:
Friedrichs v. CTA and
the Case for Fair Share
- 42** Claim your money with
help from a free tax
refund program
- 43** Bargaining Roundup



In mid-November, more than 1,500 California Faculty Association members and students marched through the streets of Long Beach demanding a raise for 26,000 California State University faculty members. For details and more advocacy activities, see page 43.



STANDING TOGETHER FOR O

E PLURIB

FRIEDRICH'S V. CTA AND

THE ISSUE

It is no secret that America's economy has swung out of balance. It's getting harder and harder to get by, let alone get ahead, and everyday Americans are working more than ever before. Our work has created record wealth for an economic recovery that's been everywhere but ordinary peoples' wallets. In addition, our schools and other public services have suffered.

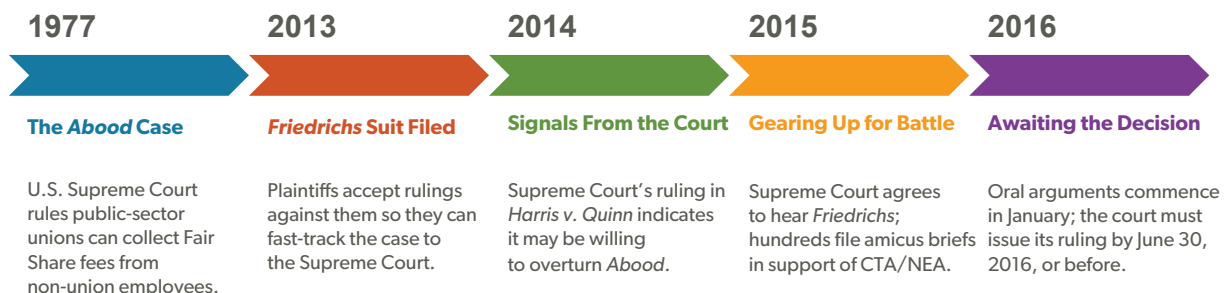
Now there is a Supreme Court case that threatens to make things worse. *Friedrichs v. CTA* is about wealthy special interests that want to shift the balance of economic power in their favor, and make it even more difficult for working people to come together, speak up collectively, get ahead and help create an economy that works for everyone, and serve their communities in the best way possible.

Our very future is at stake. Educators, in particular, must fight to ensure that our schools remain strong and our students get the quality public education they deserve.



On Jan. 11, 2016, the United States Supreme Court will hear oral arguments in *Friedrichs v. CTA*, a lawsuit that challenges the authority of CTA and other public employee unions to collect Fair Share fees.

THE TIMELINE



THE CASE FOR FAIR SHARE

WHAT IS FAIR SHARE?

Fair Share fees are the cost of union representation and bargaining. No one is forced to join a union, but unions are legally required to represent all workers. Teachers and other public employees who don't want to belong to a union only have to contribute to the costs of representation they receive.

Since all workers enjoy the benefits, job security and other protections the union negotiates, it is only fair that all contribute to the cost of securing those benefits and protections. It's not fair for some to pay more for the benefits all workers enjoy. **The current Fair Share system is a good compromise and common sense.**

In states where Fair Share has been banned, workers are worse off. If the Supreme Court bans Fair Share, it will make it harder for teachers, firefighters, and nurses to stand together to fight for our students and schools, and to negotiate for wages and benefits.

ROBERT REICH

Professor of public policy and former U.S. Secretary of Labor

The decline of union membership has mirrored almost exactly the decline of the middle class.

Strong unions mean a strong middle class, which means a strong economy. ”



THE FACTS

NO ONE IS REQUIRED TO JOIN A UNION, AND NO ONE IS REQUIRED TO PAY ANY FEES THAT GO TO POLITICS OR POLITICAL CANDIDATES

● — *but* — ●

BY LAW, UNIONS MUST REPRESENT AND BARGAIN FOR EVERY WORKER, WHETHER THEY JOIN THE UNION OR NOT.

25

Number of states with "right to work" laws (more accurately termed "right to work for less") that deprive workers of bargaining power

\$5,971

Average amount less that workers in right-to-work states make compared to workers in states that allow Fair Share fees

WHY IS THIS CASE IMPORTANT?

Public employee unions are made up of teachers, firefighters, nurses and other working people. Our victories are everyone's victory, contributing to our economy and the quality of life for all.

Everyone who works should be able to make ends meet, have a say about their future, and have the right to negotiate collectively for better wages and benefits that can sustain their family and community.

Friedrichs v. CTA is being pushed by those who seek individual profit and personal gain by damaging protections for hardworking families and their communities. These are the same rules and protections that have formed the foundation for people to work together for better public services — smaller class sizes, quicker response times in emergencies, and better staffing for hospitals — and more vibrant communities.

WHAT'S AT STAKE?

A WELL-ROUNDED EDUCATION WITH ART, MUSIC, PE AND MORE

The stakes are high for our students, educators and communities. A ruling in favor of *Friedrichs* could jeopardize a quality education for our children.

CLASS SIZES THAT ALLOW FOR ONE-ON-ONE INSTRUCTION

Students and schools have already been hit by funding cuts that deprive them of arts and PE programs, up-to-date textbooks, recess, and smaller class sizes. If our unions are weakened, it will be harder for us to fight collectively for what our students need. It will be harder to negotiate good working conditions, wages and benefits.

LEARNING INSTEAD OF MORE AND MORE HIGH-STAKES TESTING

When we're able to give our children a quality education, make our work more effective and sustain our families, we leave our communities better off than we found them. *Everyone* benefits from collective bargaining.

SCHOOL SAFETY WITH HEALTHY LEARNING AND WORKING ENVIRONMENTS

In states that have banned Fair Share, the average worker makes \$5,971 less per year, workers are much less likely to have health insurance, and the rate of workplace deaths is 36 percent higher.

A FAIR SALARY THAT INCLUDES RETIREMENT AND HEALTH CARE

Worker rights that unions have fought for and won include:

- 8-hour work day, 40-hour workweek
- weekends off
- all breaks at work, including lunch
- paid vacation, sick leave
- pensions
- and much more

CAROL PEEK
SCHOOL MONITOR

Ventura Education
Support Professionals
Association

My job is to be on the front lines to make sure our students are safe.

It's important for me to have the right to voice concerns over anything that might impair the safety of my students. Jeopardizing my ability to speak up for them is a risk for everyone. ”

WHO IS SPEAKING UP FOR WORKING FAMILIES?

Hundreds of legal and educational scholars; civil rights organizations; public employee unions; educators and school districts; cities, counties and states; and elected officials and lawmakers have filed amicus briefs in support of CTA and NEA. Here are some excerpts:

Overturing Abood “would undermine one of the most successful vehicles for providing economic and professional opportunities for American workers, and, in particular, for women, people of color, and lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender workers. ... Unions have provided a critical path to the middle class for generations of working people, including the nurses, first responders, teachers, and others who comprise the membership of public sector unions.”

— National Women’s Law Center, the Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights, the Human Rights Campaign, and 70 additional organizations committed to civil rights

CIVIL RIGHTS ORGs

“[We] have gone into the relatively low-paying profession of public education out of love for our country’s children. [We believe] that public education is the bedrock of what has made, and what will continue to make, the United States of America a great nation. ... Without the ability to effectively engage in collective bargaining, individual teachers will be left voiceless in protecting their livelihoods, the learning environments of their students, and the future of public education.”

— 16 individual teachers

EDUCATORS & SCHOOL DISTRICTS

School districts secure more effective collective bargaining relationships with unions that have “the stability to make difficult agreements that may be unpopular but are in the long-term interests of employees, students and the entire community.”

— 14 school districts

FEDERAL & STATE GOVTS

“Petitioners’ attempt to demolish this Court’s settled framework for analyzing conditions of public employment [under the First Amendment] would astonish the founding generation and would stamp out the state-by-state variation in public-employment structures that has been the hallmark of this Court’s First Amendment jurisprudence for decades.”

— United States government

“States have a significant and valid interest in being able to employ the models of collective bargaining that have proved successful for achieving labor peace and avoiding ... strikes,” and for improving the efficiency and quality of public services.

— 21 states and the District of Columbia

LEGAL SCHOLARS & UNIONS

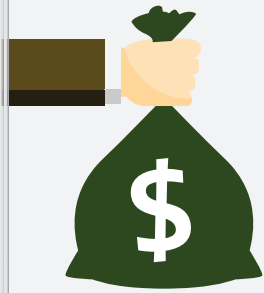
“Collective bargaining has proven benefits for public employers. ... [It] is linked to a host of related workplace benefits, including reduced employee turnover, increased job satisfaction, and improved worker productivity. These benefits run to both employers and employees.”

—48 Labor and Employment Law Professors

AARON HALL
THIRD-GRADE TEACHER

United Educators of
San Francisco

Making sure that everyone has access to the American Dream and a fair shot at the middle class is essential to this country’s future. ... The U.S. Supreme Court should reject this attempt by wealthy special interests in the *Friedrichs* case to make it even harder for working people to come together, speak up for one another, and get ahead. It is a basic concept of fairness that even a third-grader can understand. ”



WHO IS BEHIND THIS? Money and Power

This case is backed by corporate special interests who want to reduce wages for working people to fund tax cuts for the wealthy and large corporations. Weakening unions enables those with purely profit-driven motivations to get their hands on the billions of dollars that are invested annually in public education. Who are the monied interests against Fair Share?

The **Center for Individual Rights (CIR)** is a Washington-based public interest law firm whose mission is “the defense of individual liberties against the increasingly aggressive and unchecked authority of federal and state governments.” CIR has sought to ban affirmative action legislation, including California’s Proposition 209. Its funders include:

- **Charles and David Koch of Koch Industries.** The brothers, whose personal wealth is estimated to be \$42.3 billion each, have supported numerous ultra-conservative political candidates and causes; in 2012 they spent millions in an unsuccessful attempt to defeat California’s Prop. 30, the tax initiative to increase education funding, and another initiative (defeated) to deny workers the right to contribute to political causes. They have announced they intend to spend \$900 million on the 2016 elections.

The brothers are associated with the American Legislative Exchange Council, which has pushed for privatization of public education and eliminating school employee unions, and modeled legislation to eliminate teacher rights in the classroom, certify non-credentialed individuals as teachers, and promote private voucher programs.

- Koch-linked groups known to have made grants to CIR, according to the Center for Media and Democracy, include **DonorsTrust**, **Donors Capital Fund**, and the **Claude R. Lambe Charitable Foundation**. Groups that receive either direct funding from Koch entities or are linked to the brothers’ funding network filed amicus briefs in favor of the *Friedrichs* plaintiffs. They include the **Cato Institute**, **National Right to Work Legal Defense Fund**, and the **Mackinac Center**, a major force behind the 2012 anti-union legislation enacted in Michigan.

- **Lynde and Harry Bradley Foundation.** One of the largest and most influential ultra-conservative foundations in the United States, it supports privatizing education and was instrumental in the legislative attack on labor in Wisconsin.

- **John M. Olin Foundation.** Now closed, it provided funding to develop anti-environmental, pro-business legal advocacy organizations.

- **F.M. Kirby Foundation.** It disperses grants in areas of education, health and medicine, civic and public affairs, and other areas.

- **Sarah Scaife Foundation.** It has given millions to anti-worker, conservative think tanks and funded several initiatives in California to eliminate worker rights.

- **Carthage Foundation.** It gives to conservative organizations such as the Federation for American Immigration Reform, which was designated an anti-immigrant hate group by the Southern Poverty Law Center.

- **Christian Educators Association International** (*Friedrichs* plaintiff) provides support for initiatives that undermine LGBT rights in schools and efforts to make schools safe for students and educators.

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See cta.org/friedrichs for the latest information about the *Friedrichs* case, including key points, summaries of CTA and others’ respondents’ briefs, summaries of amicus briefs and media coverage.

For an interactive PDF of this report, as well as a printable poster of these pages, see cta.org/friedrichs.

WHO ARE DEFENDING OUR RIGHTS?

People and Passion

CTA, NEA and other unions represent teachers, nurses, firefighters and other public service workers who are passionate about what we do. We join together to make our voices heard on issues that affect all of us: quality education for our students; safe and healthy schools, hospitals and other community environments; fair pay; and retirement with dignity.

The rights of working people have come under attack many times before, at the ballot box and in the courts. We have prevailed because we have come together, stood strong and spoken with a powerful, unified voice.

We are fighting back again. With 325,000 members, **CTA is one of the strongest and most successful advocates for students and educators in the country.** NEA, at 3 million members the nation's largest professional employee organization, is committed to advancing the cause of public education.

With you and our partners, we are a potent force to defend our rights and protect the future of our families and communities.

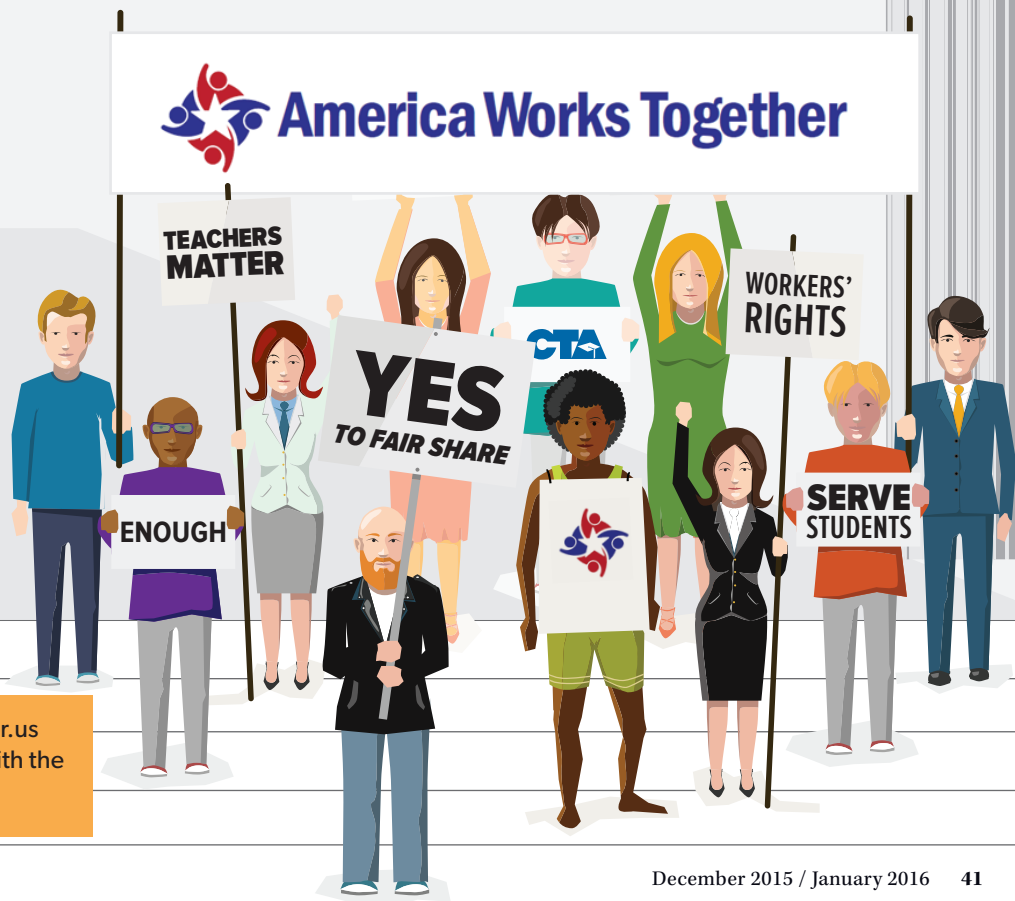
LACY BARNES
COMMUNITY COLLEGE
INSTRUCTOR

California Federation
of Teachers

This case means a lot to me as both an educator and a union member, because I want working people everywhere to have the same opportunity I've enjoyed to improve their communities through fulfilling, rewarding public service jobs. ”

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CTA and NEA are part of the broad-based "America Works Together" coalition which is raising public awareness and providing updated and accurate information about *Friedrichs* and Fair Share.



Find out more at americaworkstogether.us and [@AmWorksTogether](https://twitter.com/AmWorksTogether). Keep up with the conversation at [#WorkTogether](https://twitter.com/WorkTogether).

CLAIM YOUR MONEY

Free program helps low-income families, others access billions in tax refunds

By LEN FELDMAN

Over \$2.3 billion in federal refundable credits and more than \$180 million in tax refunds go unclaimed by California families annually, including parents and guardians of low-income public school students.

State Board of Equalization (BOE) Chairman Jerome Horton wants to see that changed. “It’s your money,” he says. “Claim it.”

Horton is a champion of the Volunteer Income Tax Assistance (VITA) program, provided by the BOE and the Franchise Tax Board, because it helps low-income Californians get the tax refunds they’re owed and use the money for basic needs.

“The tax refunds and Earned Income Tax Credits help families pay for housing, food, clothing, transportation, and other vital needs that help to ensure their students’ success in school,” Horton says. “These credits lifted the incomes of almost 5.7 million people above the poverty line, including 3.1 million children.”

VITA can help qualified families with income from wages and other payments from a job receive up to \$6,242 in federal Earned Income Tax Credits (EITC) and \$2,653 in state EITC.

Offered at multiple sites around the state, VITA provides basic income tax return preparation with electronic filing to people who generally earn less than \$53,267, persons with disabilities, the elderly, and limited-English-speaking taxpayers who need assistance in preparing their returns. This year the state will also offer a state EITC for families earning less than \$13,870.

The free service saves individual taxpayers on average \$150, including the cost of tax preparation and filing fee that private agencies charge for capturing the EITC.

Families also gain access to valuable resources such as financial literacy training, low-cost transportation, insurance and more.

The BOE and the Franchise Tax Board work with a wide range of partner organizations to present VITA events. For example, 16 events are scheduled in Horton’s District 3, and six events in District 4, for a total of 22 days in 2016. Sites include several California State University campuses, UCLA, Rio Hondo College, Oxnard College, Santa Monica College, and California State Polytechnic University, Pomona. VITA events are also held at community centers, libraries, schools and shopping malls.

“In addition to our tax-preparation services and access to valuable resources, I hope that families will take advantage of the job preparation assistance, food and nutrition services, low-cost and free medical services, and health screenings offered at VITA events,” Horton says.



Jerome Horton

Chairman Horton was appointed to the Board of Equalization in 2009. He is the first African American to serve on the board and the third African American California constitutional officer.

Previously, he served on the Inglewood City Council, in the state Assembly, and on the California Medical Assistance Commission.

He earned his bachelor of science degree in accounting and finance from CSU Dominguez Hills. He and his wife, Yvonne, have two children and one granddaughter.

“To ensure maximum participation, language assistance is available in English, Spanish and Mandarin.”

Horton notes a number of reasons why taxpayers don’t file for the refunds. Some are members of busy working families, while many are elderly, have disabilities, or don’t speak English. He also cites members of the military, who are focused on defending the nation.

In 2014 VITA helped over 6,700 Californians secure more than \$8.3 million in refunds, including \$3.8 million in federal EITC reimbursement.

For the 2016 tax filing season, the BOE has recruited more than 340 volunteers from the BOE, the IRS, the Franchise Tax Board, universities, law schools and non-profit agencies who will earn certification and pass a rigorous Standards of Conduct examination.

VITA volunteers also help participants file returns in accordance with provisions of the federal Affordable Care Act, which aims to ensure that all Americans have access to health care.

CTA supports VITA because of its direct impact on students and because of the union’s commitment to social and economic justice. ■

Find a VITA site near you at 800-906-9887 or online at boe.ca.gov/vita.



Modesto Teachers Association educators rally on city streets. Credit: John Haley Scott

Bargaining Roundup

Details of these stories at cta.org/bargainingupdates

Modesto: Stop Shortchanging Our Students

Modesto Teachers Association (MTA) members are rallying in support of schools and education before school board meetings.

Modesto teachers are frustrated over the lack of teacher involvement in education decisions, and disrespectful treatment at the bargaining table. MTA members want the Modesto City School District to put monies earmarked for classrooms into teacher recruitment and retention, and to stop the bullying behavior by Superintendent Pam Able and her administrators.

“For our schools to be the best they can be, we need more input from teachers, not less. We need to be partners in student learning,” MTA President Doug Burton says.

Santa Ana: Settlement Adds Student Enrichment

Santa Ana Educators Association (SAEA) members put their students and profession at the forefront of the bargaining process. Their ratified agreement adds additional student instructional minutes to the calendar, includes preparation and planning time for teachers, and adds a third week of winter break for students to engage in voluntary enrichment activities and other interventions with teachers. The agreement extends the school year by 1 1/2 days; increases compensation 9 percent; and creates flex time for educators to work with colleagues, meet with parents, and complete professional duties during the regular school day.

SAEA President Susan Mercer praises the team’s efforts in winning the settlement. “We’ve shown that when district officials and educators put the focus on student success, we can accomplish a great deal for the community of Santa Ana.”

Glendale: Teachers Secure New Workplace Rights

After nearly 15 months of hard bargaining, members of the Glendale Teachers Association (GTA) overwhelmingly ratified

an agreement in November that offers new stipends for teachers of combination grade classes and teachers in Glendale Unified School District’s Foreign Language Academies dual immersion program, and increases salaries by 8 percent over two years.

GTA also secured a new right to union representation in any administrator-member meeting related to working conditions, and will now have a voice in determining how yard duty is staffed.

“I’m incredibly proud of our members,” says GTA President Taline Arsenian. “They were ready to do whatever was necessary to achieve a fair settlement. The ratification puts that extra layer of stress that comes with prolonged bargaining behind them so they can focus fully again on the classroom.”

Campbell: Special Education Class Sizes Reduced

After nine months of negotiations, Campbell High School Teachers Association (CHSTA) members have a new one-year contract that reduces special education class sizes and secures badly needed raises in their high-cost Silicon Valley area. At least one-third of all existing teacher collaboration time will now be teacher-driven.

“If we’ve learned anything from this protracted dispute, it is that we are stronger together, and when we collectively raise our voices and speak out, change can happen,” says Santiago Gomez, CHSTA president.

In the agreement, approved Dec. 10 by the school board, class size targets will be 14 students for certain special education levels, and 25 students for other levels. If Campbell Union High School District exceeds these targets, teachers will be compensated.

Educators will see a 5.5 percent raise for the 2015-16 school year, and an additional 1.5 percent one-time payment.

CAVA teachers deliver a failing report card to parent company K12. Credit: Ed Gutierrez



Vista: Educators Avoid Strike, Win Raises

In early December, members of the Vista Teachers Association (VTA) in San Diego County ratified a contract settlement providing salary and bargaining improvements and avoiding a strike.

“Thanks need to go out to all of our members, because together we are strong and together we make a difference,” says VTA President Tod Critchlow.

Their new contract includes a 6 percent increase to the salary schedule retroactive to July 1, 2015. Beginning next school year, the calendar will increase from 180 to 182 instructional days.

In addition, new hires (as well as those hired since 2005) can receive up to 10 years of service credit for teaching in other districts instead of six. And starting July 1, 2016, the Vista Unified School District’s contribution to health benefit costs will increase by \$300 per full-time VTA member.

Paradise: New Contract Aims to Stem Attrition

“We care about our kids and about this community,” says Christine Dunlap, president of the Teachers Association of Paradise (TAP). “We know the best way to improve is to put a quality teacher in the classroom.” That message and parent support helped TAP recently settle a drawn-out contract dispute that educators hope will prevent quality teachers from leaving Paradise.

Concerned that students were being hurt by excessive turnover with a loss of at least 34 teachers, TAP members had filed unfair labor practice charges, picketed and worked to the contract. Ultimately, TAP’s community engagement contributed to the settlement. It makes the top of the new salary schedule the highest in the county and addresses issues around leaves and substitutes.

Turlock: Teachers at Impasse

Frustrated with their school district’s refusal to invest in educators, the Turlock Teachers Association (TTA) filed for impasse in contract negotiations with the Turlock Unified School District.

“Teachers are fed up with making financial sacrifices for a district that does not respect our dedication, professionalism or expertise,” says TTA President Julie Shipman.

While salary is a concern, teachers have filed several unfair labor practice charges against the district over the last few years. Teachers want binding arbitration as a solution. “It costs the district nothing,” Shipman says. “Now they’ve spent upwards of \$50,000 in legal fees for the two major hearings we’ve had — and they’ve lost each one of them. They’re short-changing students.”

CAVA Teachers Protest at K12 Shareholders Meeting

Teachers from California Virtual Academies (CAVA), the state’s largest virtual charter school, as well as CTA and NEA members demonstrated outside of a shareholder meeting of CAVA parent company K12 Inc. in Washington, D.C., earlier this month. CAVA online educators say the for-profit education company is failing its 15,000 students. ■




Fight for Five

In mid-November, California Faculty Association members and students from all 23 California State University campuses converged on the Office of the Chancellor in Long Beach in their Fight for Five Campaign. Faculty members are seeking a 5 percent pay increase after years of no or negligible raises. CTA Vice President Theresa Montaño, professor of Chicana/Chicano Studies at CSU Northridge, was among the marchers (at right). “People are suffering and hurting financially,” Montaño says. “Faculty members can’t pay off their debt, raise a family or buy a home.”

Learning

INSIDE:

- 46** Dreaming can help children survive trauma, and heal
- 48** Educational travel lets teachers gain firsthand experience



“Others may have the power to shackle my body, but I always hold the power to free my mind.”

— FROM *THE CAT WHO CHOSE TO DREAM*, BY LORIE NE HONDA

Lawrence Honda was one of thousands of Japanese Americans forcibly relocated to Manzanar and other internment camps during World War II. He and his grandson are pictured above on a recent visit to Manzanar, now a national historical site. See story on page 46.



THE POWER OF DREAMS

Children's book explores the mind's role in surviving trauma



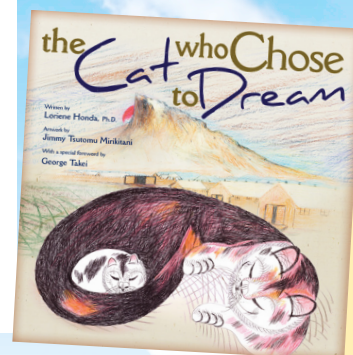
How do children deal with loss, abuse and other tragedies? How can they survive and heal?

Lorine Honda's story *The Cat Who Chose to Dream*, a California Reads recommendation for 2015-16, answers these questions through a visually compelling tale of a cat's life with his family in a Japanese internment camp in World War II. Though the book deals with a specific — and shameful — period in United States history, its message is universal: To survive trauma, there is much you can't control, but you *can* control your imagination and your dreams.

Through the cat's eyes, readers see the injustice of the camp, and experience its impact on the family and others. But through breathing and visualization exercises, the cat is transported to a place where he is no longer encumbered and restrained, but self-empowered and free.

Honda was inspired to write the book by the artwork of Jimmy Tsutomu Mirikitani, an internment camp survivor who ended up homeless but became known for his drawings of cats. A Harvard and Columbia University-trained psychologist, Honda was familiar with using art as a therapeutic tool in her work with children who have been neglected or abused, or have suffered other trauma. In addition, her own father had spent four years in the Manzanar internment camp.

Here are excerpts from a CTA video interview in which Honda, who lives in Davis with her husband and children, talks about how the book came together, its message, and her deep connection to educators. See the full video at cta.org/lorienehonda. Honda will be signing her books at the Issues Conference and State Council in January 2016 and at both of CTA's Good Teaching Conferences (in February and April) as well.



Photos courtesy Amy Shane



Manzanar internment camp: Lawrence Honda is in the top row, far right, wearing a cap; Ralph Lazo is in the second row from the bottom, far left, in a dark shirt. Source: Katsumi Taniguchi Collection/Manzanar National Historic Site

American, but he chose to be there alongside his friends as a young teenager. He had the remarkable precociousness to say, “This is not right. I’m going to stand by them and be a witness to what they have to go through.”

[Ralph Lazo followed his Japanese American friends to Manzanar, spending two and a half years there. The subject of a 2004 film, *Stand Up for Justice*, Lazo became an educator in the Los Angeles area.]

On making the personal universal

My father, Lawrence Honda, was incarcerated at Manzanar as a teenager. He went through high school there. [In the relocation, children] had to leave behind beloved pets and toys, not knowing if they would see them again. The idea of the book was this feisty cat smuggled in to be a witness to his family, to learn through the cat’s eyes of the devastation of camp, the unfairness of the situation. But it’s also a story of resilience. The cat doesn’t succumb to hopelessness; instead, he turns it around and harnesses internal strength, internal tools. One can use different techniques to control one’s internal state and perception of life, even though circumstances around that person might be out of control.

On learning different ways to respond

Mass hysteria, racial ignorance and intolerance — those are all things we are all vulnerable to experiencing. There are so many other options, as we’ve learned from civil rights leaders. It’s important to respond to tragedy and difficulty not with violence and hatred, but instead to use peaceful, empowering and enriching tools.

In therapy, I can explain concepts to children about anxiety and depression, but when I show them a book about a raccoon struggling with depression and what he has to do to work through it, it internalizes in them in a very different way because it’s such an approachable and friendly medium to use.

On the importance of bearing witness

Being a witness to someone else’s story, history, pain and challenge is a powerful role. [When there is a witness,] people feel they’re not alone as they journey through difficulties.

The cat was the witness, the outsider looking in who had a certain objectivity: How could you do this to your own people?

The person who really inspired me as someone who bore witness was Ralph Lazo, a friend of my father’s. He lived in the same barracks. He was Mexican/Irish-American. He wasn’t Japanese

On the impact of the book

The people I’ve heard most from, which has been the most gratifying, are educators — how teachers have used it in the classroom, how school counselors use it, how librarians use it to foster understanding for civil rights or the [internment] camp experience.

Most moving was hearing from people formerly incarcerated in camps. [They told me the book] helped them with childhood trauma, helped them understand their own personal experience and be able to talk about this ordeal without shame.

On the importance of reading

Reading is a conduit for connection — to knowledge, concepts, ideas, historical events, learning about different parts of the world. Books are such a tangible resource for building bonds to oneself, the outer world and other people. Children can have a sense of independence, have their own personal relationship with a book, interpret it differently, read the same book again and again and be able to experience it in very different ways.

There’s the emotional attachment as well. One of things that was most coveted in my house as a child were the hardcover books. Books were special, to be treasured and taken care of. Reading together conveys this special connection.

On her link to education and educators

I come from a family of many, many teachers. I’m married to a teacher; my mom was an office manager for LAUSD for about 40 years. Most of our friends were teachers. I grew up in the world of teaching; it was the backdrop of my childhood. And I was a TA for many years while going to college.

To be acknowledged by this body of individuals — professionals I really admire — and by extension to feel part of the educational family means a lot and honors the people who have inspired me.

The Cat Who Chose to Dream, by Lorie Honda with illustrations by Jimmy Tsutomu Mirikitani, Martin Pearl Publishing, 2014; forward by George Takei. Common Core lesson plan and other educational and therapeutic materials based on the book available at lorienhonda.com and martinpearl.com. For more California Reads book recommendations, see cta.org/californiareads.



HEAD TRIPS



Educational travel is a great way to go

EARLY THIS YEAR, Barbara Summey brought back sand from the Sahara Desert to share with her sixth-grade students at Endeavor Middle School in Lancaster.

“It’s red,” says Summey, a Teachers Association of Lancaster member. “We used it to talk about climate, geography, deserts. I talked to them about the indigenous peoples I met, about the language, culture and dynamics of the people and place.”

She had traveled to Morocco for 10 days on a teacher tour presented by Global Exploration for Educators Organization (GEEO), a nonprofit that runs travel programs for educators and their guests at a discount rate. She’s also gone to Turkey with GEEO, and is considering a tour to the Baltic region this summer.

“Travel and doing things with people from other cultures validate you as a teacher,” Summey says. “I become a primary source doc for my students.”

Educators, not surprisingly, love to learn as well as teach. So summers — and even school breaks — are perfect opportunities to combine vacation with learning. In addition to expanding horizons and developing professional expertise, educational trips provide teachers with experiences and resources they can bring back to their classrooms.

It’s not too late to plan and book for 2016. Options include **teacher tours**, such as those offered by GEEO, which combine sightseeing, history, culture and school

visits, and offer graduate school and professional development credits. On GEEO trips, teachers submit action plans detailing what they want to learn and bring back to their students before departing; GEEO helps them meet their goals and serves as a hub for lesson plans and presentations (geeo.org).

Teachers who lead **education tours** travel for free and can often earn continuing education units. For example, EF Educational Tours, which offers language immersion and service tours as well as educational tours, covers your travel when you enroll six or more students (eftours.com).

Those who prefer to go it alone may still want to keep within the educator community. An easy way to do this is by swapping homes with teachers abroad. You can sign up for access to other educators interested in housing trades. Some sites, such as teacherstravelweb.com, lists teachers’ residences where you can stay (no home swap necessary) and even be hosted for free or for a nominal amount.

Grants for teachers taking educational trips help defray costs. Check out NEA’s article on available educator travel grants at bit.ly/1lcztlyL. Edutopia also lists possibilities at edutopia.org/teacher-travel-grants.

Finally, if you just can’t swing a trip this year, you can still learn about new people and places by hosting a visiting teacher. See educatorstravel.com for ways to do it.

Members on the Go

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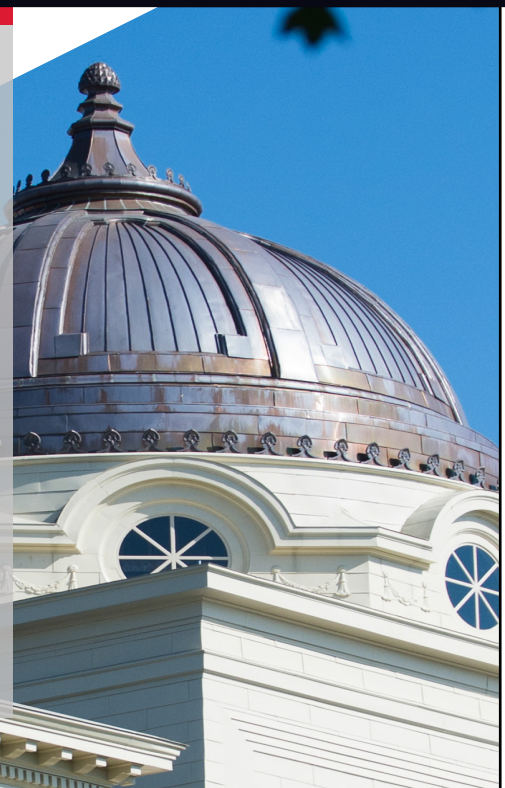
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CTA & You

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What do you do after the last bell rings? Here's how Neil Schwartzfarb, seventh-grade teacher at Alvarado Middle School in Union City, decompresses after school. For more candid snaps of educators outside the classroom, see page 54.





David Platt and Alicia Harris, educators at Crescenta Valley High School, have led efforts to create a more welcoming, supportive environment for LGBTQIA students.

GLBT Conference Examines School Culture

By SHERRY POSNICK-GOODWIN

How can you transform school culture so all students feel safe and valued on a daily basis?

This question was discussed throughout CTA's Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender (GLBT) Issues Conference held in November in San Jose. More than 250 educators attended the gathering, which addressed issues affecting lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender/transsexual, questioning/queer, intersex, ally/asexual (LGBTQIA) youth, school employees, parents and community.

In the workshop "Ideas to Transform Your School Culture," two Glendale Teachers Association members shared their ongoing efforts to create a more supportive environment for LGBTQIA students at Crescenta Valley High School (CVHS) in the San Fernando Valley.

It starts with creating "allies," said David Platt and Alicia Harris — two educators who have done just that.

Platt is a physics teacher and the only openly gay educator on campus. As sponsor of the Gay Straight Alliance, he worried about

What did you learn from CTA's GLBT Conference?



"Teachers need to be aware of our biases and understand differences within the GLBT community. These days many students define themselves as gender nonconforming. Gender and sexuality are much more fluid than in the past."

RAY CLARK, *U.S. history teacher,*
United Teachers Los Angeles



"Knowing about specific legislation can be helpful if something is going on at your school that's not right. I learned amazing things about Title IX protecting GLBT students from harassment. Something needs to be done to help transgender kids. They have a hard enough time as it is; we don't need to make it harder."

MARY BETH WEST,
Modesto Teachers Association



"It's definitely made me more aware and sensitive about what I say to students. Instead of saying 'Please give this to your mom and dad,' I will say 'Please give this to your parents,' because maybe they have two moms or two dads."

RAMON MACIAS, *fifth-grade teacher,*
Cabrillo Unified Teachers Association



"What I got out of the presentation is that students are never too young when it comes to starting a discussion or opening a dialogue. Sometimes to support students, you must reach out to them."

KIM ILVENTO, *middle school social studies teacher,*
South Tahoe Educators Association

LGBTQIA students being bullied, and wanted to create a more welcoming, caring school environment. He sent an email to colleagues asking if they were also interested in this goal. An emphatic yes came from U.S. history teacher Alicia Harris, who is straight. It's been four years since they teamed up to foster school climate change.

It's still a work in progress, but steps they took included:

* **Distributing a survey** to determine whether students felt safe on campus. Platt was shocked by results showing that many students were treated badly because of their sexual orientation and gender identification. Nearly one quarter — or 22 percent — reported they



“lived in fear” of being bullied and harassed by peers. “It was disturbing,” Platt said. “I didn’t realize how many kids are getting shoved into lockers on a daily basis and how pervasive it is on campus.”

* **Asking students to write down their experiences.** The drama teacher turned their stories into a musical called *22 Percent*, performed by students. “It was intense,” recalled Harris. “Students were singing their own stories.”

* **Creating “Safe Space” posters** and asking colleagues to display them in their classrooms, to inform students they could talk to their teacher if they were feeling confused or upset, and that slurs and negative comments would not be tolerated in the class.

* **Organizing a “fishbowl” exercise** where students sat in a circle surrounded by school staff, who listened as students shared stories about what it was like to be an LGBTQIA student at CVHS. Many staff had no idea of the challenges their students faced.

* **Sponsoring Ally Week** in fall 2015, a celebration of LGBTQIA students and peers who support them. All students were asked to write positive, encouraging messages to LGBTQIA students and share stories about being an ally to someone. The messages and stories were turned into a “paper chain of kindness” and displayed in the hallway. Tie-dyed “Ally” T-shirts sold like hotcakes.

At a school football game that week, Associated Student Body members, cheerleaders and band performers wore rainbow stickers and ribbons. However, some staff members, parents and football players were opposed to players wearing stickers on their helmets. One player feared upsetting his parents and asked if he could wear the sticker *inside* his helmet. Some critics predicted that players with stickers would be punched by members of the opposing team, but that didn’t happen.

At times Platt and Harris have had to remind staff that certain policies and behaviors toward LGBTQIA students are not only wrong, they are discriminatory and illegal. For example, forcing seniors to choose a drape for girls or a tux for boys in graduation photos does not take gender identification into account and is discriminatory, they pointed out.

Some staff members were not always receptive to their suggested changes.

“We’ve had to remind everyone that it’s our job to make sure the school is safe for all students,” Platt said. “That’s something that no one can really argue against. That’s the real message. It’s not about ‘those kids,’ it’s about ‘our kids.’” ■

LET EVERY STUDENT SUCCEED

Educators’ activism helps pass historic ESEA reauthorization

IN DECEMBER, President Obama signed the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), the most recent reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), marking the end to the one-size-fits-all approach to educating students and the misuse of standardized testing.

It was a triumph for educators in California and across the country, who repeatedly called on legislators to rewrite the flawed 14-year-old No Child Left Behind Act and give all students an opportunity to succeed and educators a stronger voice in the classroom.

“This new law is a well-deserved victory for our nation because ESSA will create greater opportunity for every student regardless of ZIP code,” says NEA President Lily Eskelsen García.

CTA President Eric Heins says California is actually ahead of the curve when it comes to standardized testing.

“In many ways, the new federal law will mandate that states do what we in California have already been working on for a few years now, including a broader accountability system of using multiple measures of student success, instead of just test scores,” says Heins. He notes that ESSA separates test scores from high-stakes decision-making, and lets states determine their own accountability plans, rather than follow top-down directives from Washington, D.C.

Educators should be proud, Heins adds. “This law empowers educators to do what they do best: reach our students where they are, instead of forcing them to keep up with a testing manual. California’s educators are proud to have joined the nationwide mobilization of teachers and parents to get Congress to pass this overdue law.

“We did it, at last, and we did it together. California’s students will succeed as a direct result of our unity and perseverance.”

For information about ESSA’s implementation, go to educationvotes.nea.org/essa.

EXTRA CREDIT ANSWERS

Shapes (2-dimensional and 3-dimensional)

1. Square 2. Triangle 3. Cube
4. Octagon 5. Pyramid
Challenge: Rectangle

First names of U.S. Presidents

1. Dwight 2. Warren 3. Lyndon
4. Abraham 5. Ronald
Challenge: Barack



SEE ME AFTER SCHOOL

The Winners

Candid snaps capture members in action after school hours

IN OUR “See Me After School” contest, we asked you to show us what you do after the last bell rings, and dozens of you responded. We were astonished by the sheer scope and variety of activities that take up your precious free time.

The fact that you teach class all day and then have energy to make math music videos for kids, advocate for breast cancer survivors, hit the gym for strenuous workouts, or lead cooking classes to push for healthy eating blows us away. We bow down before you in awe.

It was difficult, but we identified four winners, each of whom will receive a gift card for \$50 worth of school supplies. There were so many honorable mentions that we intend to publish several here and more in the next few issues, as well as on our Facebook page.

Thank you for all you do — and congratulations to our winners!



APRIL WU, United Teachers of Pasadena
Off hours, I defy gravity and dance in the air!



NEIL SCHWARTZFARB, New Haven Teachers Association

A couple of years ago, my passion for skateboarding was reignited. Here are recent photos of me after school. On any weekend you’ll find me at the skatepark with the old, the young, and occasionally a former student or two.

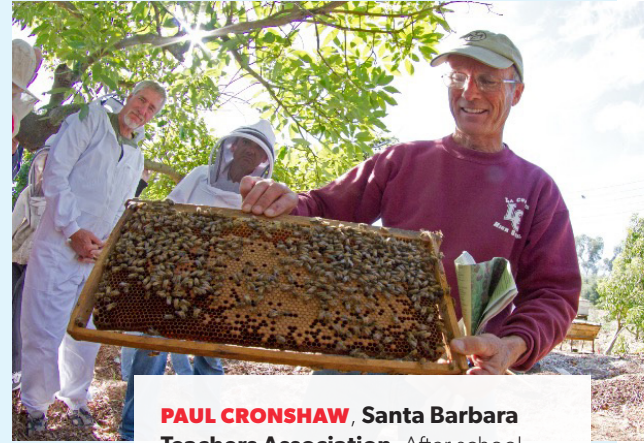
Very Honorable Mentions



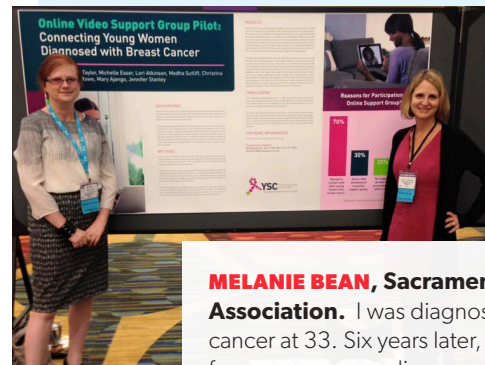
JENNIFER REASNER, Rocklin Teachers Professional Association

I am a black belt in taekwondo. I have been practicing since 2007 and just earned my fourth-degree black belt. I also teach taekwondo to students that practice at my *dojang* (school) where I train in Roseville.

I am also a national taekwondo referee, and referee at local and national USA Taekwondo tournaments.



PAUL CRONSHAW, Santa Barbara Teachers Association. After school, I change from a teacher to a beekeeper (aka The Beeman). I coach and manage beehives in my community. I also teach youth about beekeeping in a program called SweetStart (sbba.org/initiatives/sweet-start).



MELANIE BEAN, Sacramento City Teachers Association.

I was diagnosed with breast cancer at 33. Six years later, I am an advocate for young women diagnosed with breast cancer. I volunteer as state leader with Young Survival Coalition. Here I am at left with YSC's Nicole Taylor; we are at 2015's American Society of Clinical Oncology Breast Cancer Symposium presenting research for our new online support group.

Look for more honorable mentions in upcoming issues and at [facebook.com/californiateachersassociation](https://www.facebook.com/californiateachersassociation).



JEN TERUYA, San Diego Educators Association

When I'm not working, planning, writing curriculum or grading, you can find me country line dancing! I am a line dancing and two-stepping instructor at a country western "dance hall and saloon" in San Diego. Because I teach over 60 line dances, I draw upon my lesson planning skills to think through how to break down dances and steps to make them accessible to dancers of all different experience levels.

I also dance with a team of dancers who volunteer their time to perform and teach at charity and western-themed functions, such as military events, cancer and diabetes fundraisers, and elementary school chili cook-offs.

Helping Hands

Vallejo educators give back to their community and students *By MIKE MYSLINSKI*



Julia Jameyson, a teacher at Solano Middle School, hands out supplies.

IT'S A LABOR OF LOVE that Vallejo teachers named "Helping Hands," and it clearly gives needy students a hand up. Solano County families in the Bay Area have come to depend on the free school supplies that educators pay for and distribute each year.

For the seventh year in a row, Vallejo Education Association (VEA) members representing educators in the Vallejo City Unified School District in Solano County gave back to their community and the children they teach, spending two full afternoons in October handing out the much-needed school supplies to hundreds of students.

"It's a very rewarding thing to do for our kids every year," says Loree Tackmier, a transitional kindergarten teacher at Dan Mini Elementary who coordinated the team effort this year. "We wouldn't be teachers if we didn't value our community. And it really fills a need. We have a lot of poverty in our district."

As in many districts, student poverty is a hardship here. In Vallejo, 74 percent of the district's 15,000 students qualified for free or reduced-price meals last school year.



Tackmier says more than 1,000 Vallejo students this year received free pens, pencils, notebooks, coloring pencils, crayons, erasers and bookmarks at two locations in town. They lined up in a local library and a Boys and Girls Club facility to pick items stacked on tables, and also took home books donated by the Friends of the Vallejo Public Library.

VEA will keep the tradition alive in years to come as well, says President Sheila Gradwohl.

"As educators, we understand and appreciate that investing in our students and schools means investing in our community's future," Gradwohl says. "We are proud of this tradition that's about giving back and providing extra help by giving school supplies to help our kids succeed in our classrooms."

The association spent more than \$5,000 on supplies this year.

In a CTA video, four teacher volunteers shared their feelings during the event about why giving back to Vallejo this way is important work for educators. They are Tackmier; Hulan Barnett, Vallejo High School teacher; Katie Vevoda, fifth-grade teacher, Federal Terrace Elementary; and Nancy Turner, kindergarten teacher, Elsa Widenmann Elementary.

Watch the video at this link: bit.ly/1LHtNoF. ■

From left: Katherine Catanzerite, Everest Academy; Nancy Turner, Widenmann Elementary; Dave Tillay, Vallejo High; Ruscal Cayangyang, Vallejo City Unified School District school board member.

Basics for Those in Need

HOTEL ROOMS USUALLY come stocked with complimentary mini-bottles of shampoo, lotion, small soaps and other toiletries. Most of us use and toss them without much thought. But Bea Montoya has made it her mission to collect these items and distribute them to the homeless, providing the less fortunate with basic necessities we take for granted.

Montoya, a clerical assistant at CTA's Region II Headquarters, leads CTA's Toiletry Program in the Sacramento area. She and her colleagues collect hundreds of boxes of personal care items, the majority of which are distributed to the homeless community at the annual AFL-CIO/United Way Loaves and Fishes Labor Day lunch.

Earlier this year, AFL-CIO/United Way selected Montoya as a Community Services Award winner for her work.



DECLARATION OF CANDIDACY

For CTA/NEA-Retired Officers
And State Council Alternates

Deadline to return declaration is January 29, 2016

CTA/NEA-RETIRED OFFICES TO BE FILLED:

President, Vice President, Secretary-Treasurer

Term: 2 years, June 26, 2016 – June 25, 2018
Requirements: Must be a member of CTA/NEA-Retired

State Council Alternate

Term: 3 years, June 26, 2016 – June 25, 2019
Requirements: Must be a member of CTA/NEA-Retired and must reside in the electoral district

I AM A CANDIDATE FOR THE OFFICE OF: (Please select one)

<p>State Officers:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> President</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Vice President</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Secretary-Treasurer</p>	<p>State Council Alternate:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> District 1 <input type="checkbox"/> District 3</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> District 2 <input type="checkbox"/> District 4</p> <p style="text-align: center;">_____</p> <p style="text-align: center;">County of Residence</p>
--	--

MY CONTACT INFORMATION: (Please print)

Name (as it should appear on the ballot)	CTA ID
Home Address	Mailing Address
City & Zip	City & Zip
Home Phone	Cell Phone
Email	

MY CAMPAIGN STATEMENT:

You may write a candidate statement of no more than 35 words, which will be included with the ballot. If more words are used, the statement will only include the first 35. Reference to ethnic minority identification will not be counted in the 35-word limitation.

Date _____ Signature _____

This form must be received no later than 5 p.m. on January 29, 2016.
Mail to CTA Region I, CTA/NEA-Retired Elections, 1705 Murchison Drive, Burlingame, CA 94010. **Candidates may wish to return this form by certified mail in order to get a receipt and ensure compliance with the deadline.**

CTA/NEA-Retired to elect officers and State Council Alternates

Jan. 29 is the deadline to submit declarations for CTA/NEA-Retired officers and State Council Alternates. Alternates shall serve when an elected representative cannot attend a meeting.

Anyone wishing to run for a position should complete the Declaration of Candidacy form (left) and return it to the address on the form.

Terms, which begin June 26, are two years for state officers and three years for State Council Alternates.

The ballot, including names of the candidates and their campaign statements, will be mailed to members in February.

For more information, call 650-552-5561.

ELECTORAL DISTRICTS

Following are the counties in each electoral district for CTA/NEA-Retired:

District 1

- | | |
|--------------|---------------|
| Alameda | Napa |
| Contra Costa | San Benito |
| Del Norte | San Francisco |
| Humboldt | San Mateo |
| Lake | Santa Clara |
| Marin | Santa Cruz |
| Monterey | Sonoma |

District 2

- | | |
|-----------|-------------|
| Alpine | Placer |
| Amador | Plumas |
| Butte | Sacramento |
| Calveras | San Joaquin |
| Colusa | Shasta |
| El Dorado | Sierra |
| Fresno | Siskiyou |
| Glenn | Stanislaus |
| Kern | Sutter |
| Kings | Tehama |
| Lassen | Trinity |
| Madera | Tulare |
| Mariposa | Tuolumne |
| Merced | Yolo |
| Modoc | Yuba |
| Nevada | |

District 3

- | | |
|-----------------|---------------|
| Los Angeles | Santa Barbara |
| San Luis Obispo | Ventura |

District 4

- | | |
|----------|----------------|
| Imperial | Riverside |
| Inyo | San Bernardino |
| Mono | San Diego |
| Orange | |

CTA Service Center Council addresses

You can represent CTA at NEA's convention

ON THE FACING PAGE is the official Declaration of Candidacy form for state delegates to the 2016 NEA convention in Washington, D.C.

Declaration of Candidacy forms for state delegates are also available on the CTA website (www.cta.org/racandidacy). It is the responsibility of each member wishing to run for state delegate to fill out a Declaration of Candidacy form and file it by the deadline. You must use the Declaration of Candidacy form that is printed in this issue (photocopies are acceptable) or downloaded from the CTA website.

Each candidate filing a declaration form will receive an acknowledgment of receipt.

In order to attend the Representative Assembly, you must pay for your meals, hotel room and transportation for July 1–8.

The first caucus meeting is set for July 2, and the annual meeting of the Representative Assembly runs July 4–7. CTA will reimburse state delegates up to \$2,250 with appropriate receipts. If a delegate stays within the CTA meal allowance, shares a room with another delegate and purchases a super-saver airline ticket (if applicable), the CTA reimbursement should cover delegate expenses.

In keeping with CTA's commitment to minority involvement, members who are ethnic minorities are urged to become candidates.

For more information, or if your chapter has not initiated an election by March 18, 2016, contact the Elections Committee through CTA Governance Support, P.O. Box 921, Burlingame, CA 94011-0921; 650-552-5300.

Service Center Council	Counties	Service Center Council	Counties	Service Center Council	Counties
ALCOSTA 2177 Diamond Blvd. Concord, CA 94520 925-676-2822 925-676-2915 (fax)	Alameda, Contra Costa, Solano (Benicia)	FRESNO/MADERA 5330 N. Fresno St. Fresno, CA 93710 559-222-6593 559-222-9827 (fax)	Fresno, Madera	SANTA CLARA COUNTY 4810 Harwood Rd., Ste. 100 San Jose, CA 95124 408-266-1321 408-266-7893 (fax)	Santa Clara
BAY VALLEY 6095 Bristol Parkway, Ste. 100 Culver City, CA 90230-6601 310-215-0326 310-215-0341 (fax)	Los Angeles	GOLDEN GATE 1705 Murchison Dr. Burlingame, CA 94010 650-552-5561 650-552-5023 (fax)	San Francisco, San Mateo	SERVICE CENTER ONE 1333 S. Mayflower Ave., Ste. 150 Monrovia, CA 91016 626-357-2095 626-357-2451 (fax)	Los Angeles, San Bernardino
CAPITAL 4100 Truxel Rd. Sacramento, CA 95834 916-288-4925 916-288-4912 (fax)	Alpine, Amador, Calaveras, El Dorado, Placer, Sacramento, Tuolumne, Yolo	HIGH DESERT 9329 Mariposa Rd., Ste. 215 Hesperia, CA 92344-8086 760-244-2239 760-244-1665 (fax)	Inyo, Kern, Los Angeles, Mono, San Bernardino	SHASTA CASCADE 760 Cypress Ave., Ste. 301 Redding, CA 96001 530-243-5623 530-243-5813 (fax)	Lassen, Modoc, Shasta, Siskiyou, Tehama, Trinity
CENTRAL COAST COUNTIES 928 E. Blanco Rd., Ste. 100 Salinas, CA 93901 831-783-3200 831-783-3211 (fax)	Monterey, San Benito, Santa Cruz	IMPERIAL COUNTY 2419 La Brucherie Rd. Imperial, CA 92251 760-355-4600 760-355-0906 (fax)	Imperial, San Diego (Borrego Springs)	SIERRA 3409 Calloway Dr., Ste. 201 Bakersfield, CA 93312 661-587-1366 661-587-1365 (fax)	Kern
CHANNEL ISLANDS 1930 Outlet Center Dr. Oxnard, CA 93036 805-485-1706 805-485-1658 (fax)	San Luis Obispo, Santa Barbara, Ventura	MERCED/MARIPOSA 510 W. Main St., Ste. E Merced, CA 95340 209-723-8871 209-723-9598 (fax)	Mariposa, Merced	SOUTHEASTERN 11745 E. Telegraph Rd. Santa Fe Springs, CA 90670 562-478-1359 562-478-1432 (fax)	Los Angeles
CHICO 1430 East Ave., Ste. 1 Chico, CA 95926 530-345-9743 530-345-1839 (fax)	Butte, Glenn, Plumas	ORANGE 281 N. Rampart St., Ste. A Orange, CA 92868 714-978-8861 714-978-2423 (fax)	Orange	STANISLAUS 3900 Mitchell Rd. Ceres, CA 95307 209-537-0702 209-537-4049 (fax)	Stanislaus
DELTA 7330 West Ln. Stockton, CA 95210 209-478-6091 209-478-5923 (fax)	San Joaquin	REDWOOD 4300 Redwood Hwy., Ste. 200 San Rafael, CA 94903 415-479-6616 415-479-6435 (fax)	Del Norte, Humboldt, Lake, Marin, Mendocino, Napa, Solano, Sonoma	TULARE/KINGS 301 W. School Ave. Visalia, CA 93291 559-733-7706 559-739-7863 (fax)	Kings, Tulare
FEATHER RIVER 950 Tharp Rd., Ste. 901 Yuba City, CA 95993 530-755-2082 530-755-0641 (fax)	Colusa, Nevada, Sierra, Sutter, Yuba	SAN DIEGO COUNTY 5333 Mission Center Rd., Ste. 200 San Diego, CA 92108 619-683-3990 619-683-3994 (fax)	San Diego	UTLA/NEA 3303 Wilshire Blvd., 10th Fl. Los Angeles, CA 90010 213-368-6259 213-251-9891 (fax)	Los Angeles
		SAN GORGONIO 430 E. Vanderbilt Way San Bernardino, CA 92408 909-890-4520 909-890-2461 (fax)	Riverside, San Bernardino	HIGHER EDUCATION 4100 Truxel Rd. Sacramento, CA 95834 916-288-4921 916-288-4911 (fax)	2-year and 4-year colleges and universities

DECLARATION OF CANDIDACY

For State Delegate to the 2016 NEA Convention in Washington, D.C.

Name	Cell phone
Address	Home phone
City, Zip	CTA/NEA Member ID Number
Personal email address	Gender <input type="checkbox"/> M <input type="checkbox"/> F
I am a member of: <input type="checkbox"/> CTA <input type="checkbox"/> NEA _____	
Chapter	

Category:

- NEA Active (Non-Supervisory) Member (including Education Support Professionals)**
Send or fax directly to your Service Center Council (see addresses and fax numbers on facing page).
- Higher Education Member (eligible to be in bargaining unit)**
Send to Community College Association, 4100 Truxel Rd., Sacramento, CA 95834.
- CTA/NEA-R Member (must be member of NEA-Retired)**
Send to CTA/NEA-Retired, c/o CTA Region I Office, 1705 Murchison Dr., Burlingame, CA 94010.
- Student NEA**
Send to Student CTA Office, CTA, P.O. Box 921, Burlingame, CA 94011-0921.

Ethnic Grouping, Other Information:

I am: American Indian/Alaska Native Caucasian Hispanic
 African American Asian Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander

I am or plan to be a declared candidate for a local delegate position also.
 Yes No

If yes and you are elected to any delegate position (state, local, or both state and local), you are responsible for informing the Service Center Council of your choice by April 8, 2016.

Name	Service Center Council
------	------------------------

Please give a brief biographical sketch of no more than 30 words. (If more words are used, the information that accompanies ballots will include only the first 30 words.) If you wish your ethnic grouping to be listed, this will not count as part of the 30-word limitation. Please print.

Signed

THIS FORM MUST BE FILED NO LATER THAN 5 p.m. on Jan. 29, 2016, at the appropriate office listed above. Candidates are urged to return this form by certified mail in order to get a receipt and ensure compliance with the deadline. It is the responsibility of the candidate to ensure that this document is received by the due date and time.

Duties of delegates to Rep Assembly in Washington, D.C.

1. Each delegate will be expected to arrive in Washington, D.C., in time to ensure registering as an official delegate to the Representative Assembly (RA) with both the California delegation and NEA.
2. Each delegate will be expected to attend all caucuses of the California delegation. Normally, the caucus begins at 7 a.m. daily. Delegates must be registered with the California delegation to participate in the caucus. Delegates are expected to remain through the convention.
3. Each delegate shall attend all business meetings of the RA.
4. Each delegate is strongly encouraged to attend NEA budget committee hearings, resolutions committee hearings, bylaw committee hearings, speeches by prominent national figures, etc.
5. Each delegate should take into consideration CTA State Council and caucus policy when voting.
6. Each delegate is encouraged to participate fully in all activities of the California delegation.
7. Each delegate — state and local — will be expected to sit with his or her Service Center Council delegation on the RA floor or to inform the appropriate person where he or she will be seated. This is to ensure communication regarding RA business and/or personal emergency information of concern to the delegate, as well as to verify attendance.

I understand that, as a state delegate, my attendance is being directly funded, at least partially, by membership dues. I accept my responsibility to carry out the above specified duties.

Date

Signature

By Alan Stillson

Letter Zaps

IN THE PUZZLES BELOW, you are given a short phrase. Your task is to zap (cross out) five of the letters (or seven letters in the challenge questions) so that the remaining letters in order spell a word in the category. Answers on page 53.

Shapes (2-dimensional and 3-dimensional)

Example: CHAIR ICICLE = **C H A I R** | **I C I C L E** = **CIRCLE**

1. SEQUEL AIRED _____
 2. STRIPE AND GLEN _____
 3. SCOUR BASE _____
 4. ONE COAT WAGON _____
 5. PAY RATE MIXED _____
- Challenge: REACH TALKING FILE _____

First names of U.S. Presidents

Example: FIRM BLANK LINE = **F I R M** | **B L A N K** | **L I N E** = **FRANKLIN**

1. DRAWING HOST _____
 2. WATER TRENCH _____
 3. ONLY HANDS ON _____
 4. ALGEBRA CHARM _____
 5. PERSONAL BID _____
- Challenge: BEAR ROADBLOCK _____

Alan Stillson is a CTA member and the author of *Middle School Word Puzzles* and numerous other puzzle books. Find out more at stillsonworks.com.



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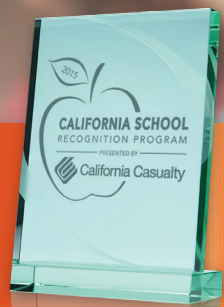
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