# ADVOCATE



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# Honors Changemakers

# AND ELECTS NEW BOARD MEMBERS

By Gabriella Landeros



"Learning that we have a voice and being able to do that [use voice] has been really inspirational for me."

#### AMONG THE FANTASTIC

professional development workshops and general sessions that were offered at the 2023 CCA Spring Conference, such as advanced bargaining, building a bargaining campaign to increase member engagement and learning about your member benefits, the conference was filled with honoring changemakers across the state and electing your new CCA board members.

Members across the state shared their stories on what or who inspired them to get involved with their union, their reasons for attending the conference and their feelings about their work being honored. These are some of their stories:

"There is so much going on

with part-time faculty at the state level, and we are in the process of just starting the healthcare part of it. I wanted to learn as much as I can from the people who have been doing it," said Jean Proppe, executive board member and parttime faculty representative for the Faculty Association of Rancho Santiago Community College District (FARSCCD). When asked who or what inspired Proppe to be involved in the union, Proppe said, "Two former executives of our local helped me at a time when I was having some difficulties, and I just realized how important being part of a union is. Part-timers in particular really need someone in those meetings to speak their voice and be a phone call away

if they need to call me. It's important to be part of the union." Proppe teaches music at Santiago Canyon College.

First-time attendee Cindy Carney (*left*), who is the president of the Calbright Faculty Association (CFA), wants to make sure that her brand-new faculty union is being represented the way it is supposed to be. "Learning that we have a voice and being able to do that [use voice] has been really inspirational for me," said Carney. CFA received a membership award for the chapter with the Largest Percentage Increase of Full-Time Members.

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# CCA IMPLEMENTS REDISTRICTING PLAN

By CCA Secretary John Sullivan

AS OF JUNE 1, 2023, CCA has redistricted its 15 geographical districts. This plan was approved at the Fall 2022 CCA State Council, and elections for the new districts were held during the Spring 2023 CCA Conference and Council. As part of CTA and NEA, CCA must review its geographical districts every three years to ensure it maintains a membership balance. Similar to the way the U.S. House of Representatives redistricts (except without the gerrymandering), the CCA Governance Committee pulls the official membership numbers for every chapter and then examines the geographical districts to ensure the numbers fall within +/- 10% of the mean. In 2022, the mean was 673 members for each of the 15 districts.

As part of the redistricting, CCA reduced the number of multi-director districts to one, with the district letters expanding from A to N. To locate your district director, refer to the CCA Board Directory on the CCA website under the About tab. Members can also locate their board director's information, including the director's new email address (directorx@cca4us.org).

Geographical directors liaise with chapter presidents, sharing and collecting information about bargaining, advocacy and membership, and reporting that information in the monthly CCA Board Meetings. The board also includes eight at-large directors (north and south) representing BIPOC

Equity and Justice, Women's Rights and Issues, LGBTQ+ and Part-time Faculty, and the four CCA officers.

The board is responsible for the fiduciary activities of the association, including hosting the three annual CCA conferences, advocating at the state level with other faculty organizations and with the California Legislature and governor and providing various other trainings and representation of faculty to ensure faculty rights are voiced and upheld. Additionally, CCA serves as an advising and support system for our chapters.

CCA has ongoing opportunities for involvement, including on one of the seven CCA committees: Elections, Faculty Equity and Diversity, Legislation and Advocacy, Membership Development, Parttime Faculty Issues, Policy and Campus Safety. Committees are a great way to get involved at the state level and learn about the work of CCA. In addition, half of the board of directors and two officers are elected each year with limits of a maximum of three full terms served in a position.

Members can also serve as delegates to each of the two CCA state councils (fall and spring). If you are interested in serving in CCA, please contact your chapter president and request that your name be forwarded as a delegate, potential committee member or board candidate. More information can be found on the CCA website at cca4us.org.

## **ADVOCATE**

The Community College Association, with CTA and NEA as our partners, advocates for California's public higher education faculty, empowers locals, builds strong and effective coalitions, promotes equity and inclusion, and strives to preserve quality public education.

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If we work under the assumption that we don't want our employing district taken over by the state due to fiscal insolvency, what is "adequate"?

By CCA President Eric Kaljumägi

HEN BUDGETING, all districts require reserves. Attendance might be below estimates, electricity or fuel costs might suddenly spike or emergency repairs might be needed. CA Title 5 section 58311 requires that community college districts have "adequate cash reserves," but offers no other guidance. If we work under the assumption that we don't want our employing district taken over by the state due to fiscal insolvency, what is "adequate"? How much is enough?

For many years we had a general sense that low single-digit percentages would suffice. Title 5, Section 15450, which applies not to us but to K-12 school districts, stipulates a minimum 3% reserve for districts with 1,001 – 30,000 students (as measured by average daily attendance, or "ADA") and 2% for districts with 30,001 – 400,000 ADA. The State Chancellor's Office's Fiscal Services Memorandum FS 05-05 from October 2005 states that "the minimum prudent unrestricted general fund balance is five percent," and ACCJC agrees, with their supplemental guidelines for Standard III.D. worksheet asking, "Does the College maintain a minimum 5% unrestricted reserve of cash or cash equivalent?"

Coming out of the "Great Recession" of 2007-09, few districts used more than a couple of percent of their reserves, preferring instead to dramatically cut class sections and to freeze hiring. For the fiscal year 2009-10, the average California Community College district general fund reserve was 16.2 %, and several districts actually increased their reserves during the recession! The average district general fund reserve has increased consistently since then and now stands at 27.1 % of general fund expenditures. That's \$2.84 billion dollars sitting in bank accounts for the proverbial "rainy day."

Although some colleges have occasionally found their reserves below 5%, a low reserve balance has not predicted disaster. College of the Sequoias went from a 4.7% reserve in 2010 to a 26.4% reserve in 2022, College of the Redwoods went from a 5.1% reserve in 2010 to a 5.5% reserve in 2015 to a 13.6% reserve in 2022, and though Gavilan fell to a 2.2% reserve in 2020, that rebounded to 15.5% by 2022.

Further reinforcing the 5% standard was the state's own Fiscal Crisis and Management Assistance Team (FCMAT). In its 2019 standards, standard 11.1 asks "Does the district have at least a five percent reserve for economic uncertainty in the current year?" The FCMAT standards also include standard 7.1, which asks "Is the district avoiding a structural deficit in the current and two subsequent fiscal years?", which effectively is saying "Is the reserve going up?" These two standards were the primary tools the Chancellor's Office used when the Board of Governors (BoG) began to hear reports of districts with fiscal difficulties. The Peralta district's finances were on the BoG agenda in January 2019, and Palomar followed in January 2020. Lassen and San Francisco were also mentioned as receiving advice from the Chancellor's Office.

In early 2022, the Chancellor's Office released Fiscal Services Memorandum FS 22-03 in which "the Chancellor's Office recommends that districts adopt formal policies to maintain sufficient unrestricted reserves with a suggested minimum of two months of total general fund operating expenditures." Shortly thereafter, many local districts updated their reserve policies to either specify "two months" or percentages of 17% or more. Suddenly, the recommended reserve percentage has more than tripled!

This "two months" recommendation comes from a group called the "Government Finance Officers Association" (GFOA). The GFOA is a professional association consisting of roughly 20,000 state, provincial and local government finance officers in the U.S. and Canada whose mission is to "advance excellence in public finance." A short review of their website reveals that 68% of their members are city, town, county or village employees and another 17% come from special districts, like water, fire or mosquito abatement. They do not indicate what percentage of their members come from school districts (although there are at least some) or what percentage of their members come from California.

Finance officers tend to be a fiscally conservative group. Large ending balances are likely presented by your VP (or VC) of Administrative Services as indicative of "a healthy fiscal position," while small balances are cause for stress or even losing one's

position. It makes sense that the GFOA's members would want a really high reserve. However, this recommendation, taken from their document "Best Practices: Fund Balance Guidelines for the General Fund," is inapplicable for at least three reasons:

First, it is an international recommendation that doesn't consider California's funding system. The Student-Centered Funding Formula uses three-year smoothing and one-year stability protection that isn't uniformly used in the rest of the U.S. and Canada.

Second, the GFOA's recommendation also doesn't consider California's new Public Schools System Stabilization Account (also called the "PSSSA" or the "Prop. 98 Reserve") that voters put into place in 2014 under Proposition 2. Proposition 2 prohibits K-12 districts from having general fund reserves over 10%, but for some reason, community colleges weren't subject to this clause even though we also benefit from the PSSSA. There is a backup fund in California specifically for use when Prop. 98's annual allocation goes down.

Third, the GFOA's recommendation isn't even for us. The GFOA's document recommends that "at a minimum, general-purpose governments, regardless of size, maintain an unrestricted budgetary fund balance in their general fund of no less than two months of regular general fund operating revenues or regular general fund operating expenditures." General-purpose governments, where over two-thirds of GFOA's members work, are counties, cities, towns and villages. They are not school districts.

It is true that CA Education Code 84040(c) empowers the Board of Governors to adopt the standards for determining the fiscal condition of community college districts, but there's no requirement that a misapplied international recommendation from a professional association of finance officers be that standard. If your district is one of the 13 community college districts that currently have less than a 17% reserve, show your Board of Trustees this article. Of course, that leaves 60 other districts that clearly, by any measure, have more than enough. You can find the details for your own district at misweb.ccco.edu/fiscalportal/reports.aspx.





▲ Photo by Unseen Studio on Unsplash

**AS THE 2022/23 YEAR** comes to an end, CCA wants to remind our chapters and members of several items:

#### **UNEMPLOYMENT:**

Just a reminder to part-time, adjunct faculty that we have the right to unemployment and underemployment. The recent CCA Unemployment Webinars covered this, so if you missed one of those and would like the slides, please email CCA Secretary John Sullivan at <a href="mailto:secretary@cca4us.org">secretary@cca4us.org</a>. Please include your chapter and college when you email him.

#### **MEMBERSHIP LAPSES:**

If you have a gap in your dues payments during the academic year, you may receive a notice from CTA that you have been dropped from your membership. If that happens, you can either directly pay your dues to your chapter or you can wait until your next payroll period, as long as it happens within a year. If you paid less than the full dues (\$212.80 for part-time; \$1071 for full-time), please contact your chapter to bring it current.

For questions or clarifications, please contact your chapter president or membership chair.

#### **GRANTS:**

CCA has a number of grant opportunities to help chapters:

- LOCAL CHAPTER REASSIGNED TIME GRANTS: for hourly release time for members of the local to perform essential work for the local;
- PART-TIME MEMBERSHIP TRACKING GRANTS: for chapters to reconcile their membership rosters each month;
- **INNOVATIVE GRANTS:** for projects that support local chapter operations;
- MEMBERSHIP DEVELOPMENT GRANTS: for membership specific activities.

If you have any ideas or desire to help your chapter by using one or more of these grants, please contact your chapter leadership. More information is located on the CCA website at <u>cca4us.org</u> under the Members tab.

### **CCA FALL CONFERENCE**

► HYATT REGENCY, SFO AIRPORT

OCT 13-15, 2023

The CCA Fall Conference will take place in-person from October 13-15, 2023. Scan the QR code or visit <a href="mailto:cta.org/event/2023-ccafall-10-13-23">cta.org/event/2023-ccafall-10-13-23</a> to register today!





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▼ Jean Proppe, Faculty Association of Rancho Santiago Community College District



### **► CCA SPRING CONFERENCE**

"One of the things we worked on was to create equity task forces, and our union supported that. What a difference it has made on our campus to be able to have our voices heard, our collective voices heard, but at the same time, we all meet the needs of our students – our student constituents," said Martha Villareal, who teaches business and law at San Joaquin Delta College. Villareal is the recipient of the CCA BIPOC Award in Honor of Mary Ann Pacheco.

When asked what made CCA board member Jesus Gutierrez get involved in his union, Gutierrez said, "We always get involved because we have bad actors on the other side, and so I felt that I would be able to play my position, be able to make my local stronger, and then the advocacy efforts that we all need to do - we all play a part and I just want to do my piece." Gutierrez is a We Honor Ours (WHO) award recipient.

Annette Deglow, WHO State award recipient and president of the Los Rios Teachers Association, encountered challenges when she first started teaching at the Sacramento City Unified School District (SCUSD) decades ago. Her inspiration to be active in her union came about because the district took away her job. "They said as a woman your financial needs and responsibilities are such that you didn't need the job. And that was enough to motivate me. I had previously challenged the maternity policy at SCUSD when I first started teaching. If you were six months pregnant, you had to quit. This award really belongs to the legal department at CTA. All my accomplishments are only there because I had group legal services from CTA," said Deglow. She is now in her 59th year of teaching at Sacramento City College.



"What a difference it has made on our campus to be able to have our voices heard, our collective voices heard, but at the same time, we all meet the needs of our students – our student constituents."

-**Martha Villareal,**San Joaquin Delta College
Teachers Association

### Congratulations to our WHO award recipients!

#### **WHO STATE AWARD**

ANNETTE DEGLOW,
 Los Rios Teachers Association

#### WHO CHAPTER AWARDS

- DANIEL VERNAZZA,
   South Orange County Community College District Faculty Association
- JESUS GUTIERREZ, Citrus College Faculty Association
- BECKY PLAZA, San Joaquin Delta College Teachers Association
- BYRON WILLIAMS, San Bernardino Community College District Teachers Association
- HERSCHEL GREENBERG, Mt. San Antonio College Faculty Association
- JILL PFEIFFER, Rio Hondo College Faculty Association
- MICHAEL GIANVECCHIO, Napa Valley College Faculty Association
- ROB UNGER, Southwestern College Education Association

▲ Deglow (left) with her husband John (right). Attribution: Kristen O'Meara Photography

## Congratulations to our CCA Statewide Advocacy award recipient!

• **GREG GIBSON,**San Joaquin Delta College Teachers Association

## Congratulations to our Faculty, Equity and Development Committee award recipients!

#### **CCA LGBTQ+ AWARD IN HONOR OF DAVID SANCHEZ**

CORINNA EVETT,
 Faculty Association of Rancho Santiago Community
 College District

#### CCA BIPOC AWARD IN HONOR OF MARY ANN PACHECO

 MARTHA VILLAREAL, San Joaquin Delta College Teachers Association

#### **CCA PT FACULTY AWARD IN HONOR OF DAVID MILROY**

• **GEOFFERY JOHNSON**, Southwestern College Education Association

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### **► CCA SPRING CONFERENCE**

Congratulations to all those who won CCA board member seats! To learn more about your newly elected board members, check out this map and visit cca4us.org.

