

CCCCD Governing Board Candidates Attend UF Forum

There are three Governing Board positions potentially in transition this year. Tony Gordon (Ward 1; West County) is not seeking reelection and will be replaced by John Marquez, a retired part-timer from CCC and longtime Richmond City Council Member, who is running unopposed. John Nejedly (Ward 4; Alamo; Danville; San Ramon; Walnut Creek) is being challenged by middle-school teacher Denise Tully. And Sheila Grilli (Ward 3; Concord; Martinez; Pacheco; Pleasant Hill; Bay Point) is facing two opponents in Evelyn Centeno, an education consultant and former teacher; and Greg Enholm, a high-school math teacher and financial analyst.

All five candidates for Wards 3 and 4 spoke at a forum on October 7 hosted by the UF and the League of Women Voters of Diablo Valley. A complete video recording of that event (in two parts) is available on the UF web site at www.uf4cd.org (on the left, under "Latest News"). To view the videos, you'll need a recent version of Windows Media Player (available on-line for free).

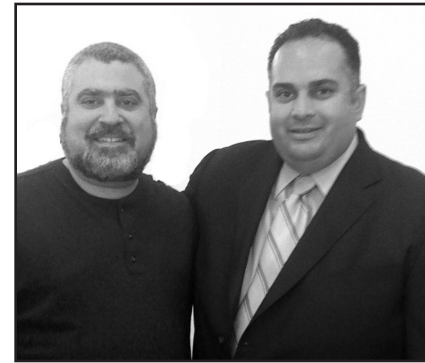
Members of the Executive Board who attended the Forum were pleased to hear all five candidates voice strong support for many UF priorities, including higher salaries and the top-third-of-the-Bay-10 goal; protecting sabbaticals and step increases, even during lean years; restoring sections and lowering class sizes; the need for more full-timers and fairness for part-timers; and recognizing the extra work most faculty are doing these days for accreditation and SLOs.

Following the forum, the UF E-Board considered making endorsements, as we have done in the past. But this year, we elected to remain neutral. There is, we think, a clear advantage to having a stable Governing Board, and we have been working well with the current Board for several years now. We have worked hard to establish relationships and build trust with the current Board members. The challengers in both races offer new energy and fresh ideas that could certainly benefit the District. But our current trustees have given us no reason of late to beat the drum for change.

We know that the UF leadership will need to work productively with whomever is elected. In the recent past, we have too often supported candidates (both incumbents and challengers) who have lost despite our endorsements and contributions. And then we have set about mending our relationships with the winners. This time, we have voted to take no official position. We appreciate the work that Mr. Nejedly and Ms. Grilli have done for our district; in these difficult last few years, they have been supportive and accessible; they have taken their roles as custodians and ambassadors for the District seriously; and although it was under their watch years ago that we fell into bad times, in more recent years, they have been instrumental in beginning our recovery. We likewise applaud the concern for our colleges and the commitment that Mr. Enholm, Ms. Centeno and Ms. Tully have brought to their campaigns. We wish all the candidates well, and we encourage faculty to watch the video of our forum before voting.

President's Message

John Pérez, the Speaker of the California Assembly, attended our Faculty Association (FACCC) Board meeting last week, and he lamented the line-item vetoes that cut crucial programs (like childcare for low-income families) which the Legislature had agreed to save. Pérez reminded us that although college funding was spared by the Governor's pen, many of our students would still be hurt by the cuts to Calworks and social services.



UF President Jeff Michels and CA Assembly Speaker John Pérez

And since most of our new money has been deferred, Pérez warned that the next Governor might yet be able to go after this year's funding.

Pérez noted that the new budget included \$5 billion more for K-14 education than the Governor's originally proposed budget, but he also suggested that next time around it could be even harder to reach agreement. We need a governor in office, he said, who won't undermine our agreements by blue-lining programs we have made compromises to support. We need to pass Prop 25 to get rid of the 2/3 majority to pass a budget.

Pérez is one of many key legislators that I have met in recent years at FACCC meetings. They come because FACCC, under the leadership of Jonathan Lightman and Andrea York, has developed into more than just the voice of community college faculty in Sacramento. FACCC has become a resource, for legislators as well as for faculty and even students. Whether on benefits or the budget, whether through publications, conferences or workshops, FACCC provides facts and perspectives that often shift the debate and influence legislation.

If you're not a member of FACCC, you should be. FACCC is our professional association (like the AMA for doctors), our voice in government, and the only organization that advocates exclusively for community college faculty. They protect our funding and our working conditions, our bargaining rights and our retirement. And with every one of us that joins, they become stronger. It costs only \$18 a month (deducted from your paycheck) to belong to FACCC as a full-timer, and \$5 a month for a part-timer. Membership includes a subscription to *FACCTS*, our professional journal. (Look for my article in the current issue on "The Myth of Accountability.") And FACCC members gain access to programs and services (like health plans for part-timers) and discounts on workshops.

Mostly you should join to support FACCC's efforts. As FACCC says, it takes an active academic senate and a strong union to protect you on campus and an effective professional association to protect you in Sacramento. About 50% of our faculty currently belong, but we should do better. We have membership cards in the UF Office. Or sign up on-line at www.faccc.org.

United Faculty Executive Board Members

Contra Costa College	Los Medanos College
Vern Cromartie	Nancy Bachmann
Stuart Lichter	Casy Cann-Figel (P-T Rep)
Jeffrey Michels (Pres.)	Milton Clarke
Dionne Perez	Marco Godinez
Aminta Mickles (Vice Pres.)	Michael Zilber (Vice Pres.)

Diablo Valley College	Jason Mayfield
Emmanuel Akanyirige	Steve Padover
Glenn Appell (Vice Pres.)	Mary Ulrich
Deborah Dahl-Shanks (PTF Advocate)	Bruce Koller
Doug Dildine (P-T Rep)	
Katrina Keating (Treasurer)	
Donna Wapner (Faculty Advocate)	

UNITED FACULTY OFFICE
Terri Adame, Office Administrator
(925) 685-1230 x2502 or 680-1771 fax (925) 680-7283
email: uf@uf4cd.org website: www.uf4cd.org
(Email Jeffrey Michels at ufjeffmichels@gmail.com)



Table Talk

The Newsletter of the United Faculty of
Contra Costa Community College District

October 20, 2010

ELECTION ISSUE



News at a Glance

- State's Budget Leads to Cautious Optimism in Negotiations
- UF Elections in Early November: SDI; Budget; Vice Presidents
- Aminta Mickles Named New UF Vice President for CCC
- UF E-Board Makes Recommendations for November Elections
- Governing Board Candidates Speak at UF-Sponsored Forum
- President's Message: What's So Great About FACCC

State's Budget Leads to Cautious Optimism in Negotiations

Our UF/CCCCD Compensation Workgroup has met twice in the past week, and the newly signed California budget has certainly helped bring us closer to an agreement, but as our next negotiations session approaches (October 25), it seems likely that we will need at least one more meeting before we reach a Tentative Agreement.

There is some good news: the 2.2% growth/restoration funding in the State budget will mean about 3 million new dollars to our district (although much of the money is actually deferred to the following year). There is some ongoing backfill of categorical cuts too, replacing the one-time backfill the District received last year.

If we could count on the new money, even with the deferred dollars, we'd be left with a discussion of priorities: restoring sections; hiring more full-timers; part-time parity/pay equity; raising salaries towards the top third of the Bay 10 (plus, of course, restoring cuts to categorical programs like EOPS; restoring counseling hours, student services, classified staffing... the list goes on). Unfortunately, the likelihood of mid-year cuts (since much of the budget is built on accounting tricks and wishful thinking) makes planning more difficult.

Still, we are in better shape than we expected, and both sides are cautiously optimistic that we'll be able to address at least some of our priorities in the short-term. In the long-term, of course, much will depend on California's new governor and on what happens in the legislature after the Nov. elections (and on the state of California's economy). In negotiations, we have been exploring a variety of options and formulas, one-year and two-year plans that take into account the possibility of mid-year or future cuts. The variables make our work difficult, but the UF team has been generally heartened to find that our and the District's priorities are mostly aligned at this point.

UF Elections Coming in Early November

We're putting together several ballots at the moment: a vote for part-timers only on participation in State Disability Insurance and Family Medical Leave; a ratification vote for our 2010-2011 UF Budget; and a confirmation vote for our three UF Vice Presidents (each of whom needs to be confirmed for a new two-year term). At some point soon, we hope to also have a Tentative Agreement with the District, which will be followed by union meetings to discuss the details and then a ratification vote, but that will likely come later in the semester. For now, our plan is to group the rest of our elections into one ballot that should be ready soon. We did not have more candidates come forward during our nomination process than we have E-Board spots, so all current E-Board members whose terms were set to expire but who agreed to stay on, including UF President Jeff Michels, are considered re-elected for another 2-year term.

New UF Vice President for Contra Costa College



Aminta Mickles

Following the resignation of Rudy Zeller as UF Vice President for CCC (Rudy plans to continue working with the UF in the future in a different capacity), the E-Board last week approved the appointment of Professor Aminta Mickles to fill the post. Aminta has already taken over as Acting VP, but will need to be confirmed by a vote of members from CCC in our next election.

A tenured Professor of Health and Human Services, Aminta is a CCC alumna with a Master's Degree in Clinical Psychology. She also works with the City of San Pablo on youth violence and education.

UF Board Makes Recommendations for Nov. Elections

The United Faculty has typically not endorsed candidates for statewide office or taken a stand on propositions unless there was a clear connection to community colleges, as with Proposition 92 in 2008, for example. This year, however, the E-Board felt strongly that since the State Legislature and the budget process have such a huge influence over our working conditions and the learning conditions of our students, we should review the propositions and consider the candidates to highlight connections to our colleges that may be less clear.

We see a lot of deceptive advertising these days. Everyone claims to support education. But public employee unions and pensions are under attack (even though the average teacher pension in California is only \$30,000 per year). Nobody who cares about our colleges can afford to sit on the sidelines in this election, and still less those charged with protecting faculty rights. So our E-Board decided to follow a process whereby we considered each proposition and candidate on the November ballot. First, we looked for the connection to education, to our faculty and students. Second, we voted on whether to take a position at all. And for those where the Board elected to weigh in, we voted to support or oppose. What follows is a list of only those races where the Board decided to make a recommendation.

We know that our faculty are educated professionals with diverse political leanings, and we respect those differences. Our endorsements are not meant to reflect the unanimous opinion of CCCC faculty, but only to advise *Table Talk* readers of how these propositions and candidates look to us, when viewed through the narrow prism of educational interests.

Proposition 23: Suspends Air Pollution Control Law

OPPOSE Not only is pollution bad for us and our students, this proposition would jeopardize green-energy jobs in manufacturing and construction at a time when community colleges are expanding training and partnering with industry to meet green-tech needs.

Proposition 24: Repeals Legislation that Lower Businesses Taxes

SUPPORT To quote the California Teachers Association: let's stop cutting corporate taxes so we can stop cutting schools. CTA estimates that Prop 24 will save public education half a billion dollars from being cut. Considering that California's K-14 schools have lost more than \$17 billion in funding over the last two years, while corporate profits exceeded \$65 billion last year, repealing a new corporate tax break that would have to be paid for from future budgets seems entirely in our best interests.

Proposition 25: Eliminates the 2/3 Requirement to Pass a Budget

SUPPORT This is the big one that we need to end the budget gridlock in Sacramento. It doesn't go as far as some would like because it still requires a 2/3 majority to pass any new taxes, but at least this change would likely result in on-time budgets. California is one of only three states in the nation with 2/3 budgeting, and the other two both have large one-party majorities (more than 2/3). So we're the only state that requires a bipartisan 2/3 vote to pass a budget, and it just isn't working. The late budget this year cost CCCC significant interest revenue (as we've had to front huge sums to maintain cash flow). The on-time budget won't end our funding problems, but it's an important step in making things better.

Proposition 26: Requires Some Fees to Be Approved by 2/3 Vote

OPPOSE This is a deceptive proposition that would make it harder to assess fees on corporate polluters. California's general fund could lose more than \$1 billion in income with the savings going mainly to big oil and tobacco companies.

California Governor

JERRY BROWN We hesitated to weigh in on the Governor's race, but we're just too concerned about Meg Whitman's bizarre belief that budget cuts are good for our colleges. Last year's \$438 million cut to community colleges resulted in 137,000 students being turned away, and 203,000 students being educated with no state funding for them at all. Translation? Higher class sizes; fewer student services; fewer full-time faculty. Quality goes down while our workload goes up. And our friends in the legislature are telling us now to brace ourselves for mid-year cuts if Whitman wins. Brown, on the other hand, signed into law collective bargaining for faculty last time he was governor. He's much more likely to support the investment in education

that California needs. Check out www.educators4brown.com to learn more or to contribute to Brown's campaign.



UF Vice President Glenn Appell with Assemblymember Joan Buchanan and UF Office Manager/Administrator Terri Adame

State Assembly, District 15

JOAN BUCHANAN Joan has been terrifically accessible to the UF in her first term in the Assembly; she has met with us regularly to discuss issues, and she has attended our campus events too. She is in a tight race, having won her seat in the last election following the departure of Republican Guy Houston. This year, she is running against San Ramon Mayor Abram Wilson (R), whom she defeated last time, and although the Mayor has been a friend to SRC, we were troubled by his take on education, as expressed on his website, where he seems to attack "public employee unions." The current "cuts-only" approach to budgeting championed by Republicans in the Assembly has also led us to strongly endorse Joan. Knowing the importance of this race statewide, the UF PAC contributed \$3900 to Joan's campaign, and FACCC made a substantial contribution as well. Faculty who want to help in the final weeks may volunteer at www.joanbuchanan.com.

State Assembly, District 14

NANCY SKINNER Nancy has attended student rallies at both CCC and DVC, and she has met regularly with UF leaders to discuss the budget and policy issues. She has been our ally in Sacramento.

State Assembly, District 11

SUSAN BONILLA As a member of the County Board of Supervisors, Susan has consistently supported the UF by attending our rallies and events. We expect she will be a leader in advocating for community colleges in the Assembly.

Congress, District 15

GEORGE MILLER George has long been a friend of our district and a major advocate for education in Congress. He chairs the House Education and Labor Committee. Last year, he worked hard to support a federal investment in community colleges.

California Controller

JOHN CHIANG John refused to furlough state workers when the Governor ordered it, and he has always stood up for labor. Plus he's been a friend to FACCC, and a regular speaker at faculty events.