Prez Sez

Trump pays back the Alt-Right by ending DACA

By Paul Fong, AFT 6157 President

The white nationalists “alt-right” are extremely happy with No. 45 (President Trump). They are also getting some payback for helping elect Trump to office.

The last time the “alt-right” was successful in excluding immigrants of color was when they advocated for the National Origins Act also known as the Asian Exclusion Law in 1924. This Act excluded Asians from immigrating to America because Asians could not become U.S. citizens; therefore they were denied immigration to the U.S.

The “alt-right” is an offshoot of the 1924 KKK. Both groups have pushed our federal government toward anti-immigration policies. It was the KKK then, now it’s the “alt-right” that is solidly against our DACA students.

Most exclusionary provisions of the National Origins Act were undone with the passage of the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965. This was passed mostly thanks to the Civil Rights movement. We need to start a DACA Civil Rights Movement, with many groups, including our California State Legislature, all of our Constitutional officers, Unions, Educators, including the AFT, CFT, and the vast majority of Californians not influenced by the propaganda of the “alt-right.”

We are proud that our Local and State Union and the entire District and both colleges are standing with our DACA brother and sisters. We are glad that our state’s Attorney General will be filing a suit against the elimination of DACA. The DACA dreamers are our students.

Source: Adobe Stock
Prez Sez
- continued from page 1

They are extremely successful and committed to their education. About 83% of DACA dreamers graduate with associate or bachelor’s degrees. These dreamers are American in every sense of the word.

I have passed out a red card to some of the dreamers in our District; this card describes their constitutional rights. It is also important to inform them of their Fourth Amendment protections against unreasonable searches and seizures; Fifth Amendment right to remain silent and other rights.

Please visit the AFT and CFT websites for other instructional assistance regarding what you can do to assist our DACA dreamers. This is a priority issue for our Union.

The president decided to make the cruel and heartless decision to eliminate the DACA program that protects 800,000 young undocumented immigrants brought to the U.S. as children.

Nearly 200,000-300,000 of our DACA brothers and sisters are here in California. Together we will continue to fight for what is best for America — a nation that celebrates our differences and our diversity. We must all stop this fear mongering, initiated by the “alt-right.” We must all raise our voices in outrage against the president’s inhumane and cruel action influenced by the “alt-right.”

Call Congress to pass the bipartisan Dream Act of 2017 that will protect our DACA and other immigrant youth. The more Americans make their voices heard about this injustice, the more we will be able to prevent the “alt-right” from maintaining their status in our political mainstream. They were confronted in Charlottesville; we must confront them on this issue as well.

Visit www.cft.org, click on “key issues” and choose “safe havens.” You will find resources that can assist our DACA brothers and sisters. Si Se Puede and Power to the People.

What Has the Union Done for YOU Lately?

Keeping My Medical Benefits

By Carol Abohatab, SJCC/EVC Dance/PE Adjunct Faculty

AFT 6157 helped me so much this semester. When I went under 0.40 load, I was so concerned about having to possibly lose my medical benefits or COBRA (meaning I would have to pay); but it’s double the cost, even though it is a much better plan than the equivalent premium on the open market. I knew there was a class available at EVC, and I needed my equivalency application from SJCC to be reviewed.

Everyone was very proactive in the process, and got right back to me, answering all of my questions. The Union helped push the process through for me. I was able to teach students at another campus, keep my load and keep my insurance for another semester. Thank you Barbara and Jory!
By Lorena Mata, AFT 6157 Council of Division Reps, EVC Librarian

This summer I had the opportunity to attend the American Library Association (ALA) Conference in Chicago. It had been several years since I attended an ALA Conference partly because of the location, cost and most importantly, childcare. I have three children ages 12, 10 and 5, and it’s tough leaving them behind or bringing them along. Earlier in the spring, I’d receive emails from ALA, announcing confirmed keynote speakers and special events. As usual, I’d delete them and move on.

That was until I received notice that Hillary Rodham Clinton would be the closing speaker. I forgot about the kids, my husband and the cost. There was no way I was going to miss this opportunity. Without hesitation, I planned my trip to Chicago.

The conference was not only a memorable experience mostly because of seeing Hillary Clinton, but also because I reconnected with former colleagues, made new contacts and learned about what other libraries are doing.

This all reminded me of how much I enjoyed attending conferences during my early years as a librarian. If you’ve forgotten as I had, here are some reasons why you should attend a conference periodically:

1. To learn something new and/or innovative about the profession. One can learn from the successes of other institutions, so that you know you’re on the right track or want to try out.

2. To reenergize and renew your excitement for the work that you do. There’s nothing like getting pumped up and rejuvenated about your profession.

3. To network with peers in the profession. It’s the perfect opportunity to meet people and to bounce back ideas to one another. It’s also the perfect opportunity to meet up with former colleagues.

4. To meet with vendors at the exhibits. There’s nothing like getting tons of freebies to add weight to your luggage, but it is the perfect opportunity to learn about innovative products and services that will better serve you and your students.

My moment with Hillary Clinton happened on the last day of the conference. I arrived two hours before the doors opened only to find a long line of excited librarians. Once the doors opened, it was free for all to grab a seat. I managed to find a seat within 20 rows to the stage and high-fived the person next to me for our success on great seats.

The energy in the room was fascinating with music booming and librarians socializing, taking selfies and even dancing. When the song “We are Family” by Sister Sledge filled the room, we knew the moment was near. This was my kumbaya moment. When she walked on stage and did her signature salutary wave, so many emotions came over me. I was both honored and proud to be in the presence of our former Secretary of State.

She announced her upcoming book, which explores the 2016 election and her personal journey of resilience after a loss. She spoke about how we need libraries and librarians now more than ever and shared three reasons:

1. Reading changes lives. Whether it’s old-fashioned books or e-readers, wherever it is.

2. Libraries are places for communities to come together. You see this every day. Libraries are one of the few places in America, shared by people of every income, race, background, ethnicity, religion, sexual orientation; everybody is there.

3. We need critical thinkers more than ever. Long before fake news and alternative facts were familiar terms, librarians were teaching media literacy. In libraries and classrooms across the country, librarians helped learners of all ages sort out truth from fiction and build an argument based on rational evidence.

I hope my experience motivates you to attend an upcoming conference. You can obtain Staff Development Funds: $1,000 for fulltime faculty and $500 for adjunct faculty per academic year. And yes, the deep dish pizzas of Chicago are the best.
17th Annual AFT 6157 Picnic

October 7, 2017
Hellyer Park
Mentorship Program Successes
Privilege of Being a Union Mentor for a Counselor

By Hasan Zillur Rahim, SJCC Math Faculty

Valentin Garcia is a counselor with EOPS at San Jose City College (SJCC). This is his fourth year at SJCC but his first year in a tenure track position. I have the privilege of being his Union mentor this year on behalf of Union AFT 6157. After recently meeting with Valentin, I can sum up my impression of him in three words: Counselor par excellence!

Valentin has been working with students and their families for the past 18 years as an academic counselor. He has extensive experience developing and implementing college-readiness curricula for parents and students at Foothill College, San Jose State University and University of California, Santa Cruz.

Valentin won the 2016-2017 “Adjunct of the Year” award, as an EOPS adjunct faculty counselor at SJCC. He has a bachelor’s degree in sociology and a master’s degree in counseling with a PPS Credential from San Jose State University.

“I love my job at SJCC,” Valentin said. “To be able to help others overcome life’s challenges, be it academic or personal, gives meaning to my own life.”

In our meeting, we discussed the importance of regularly visiting the new, user-friendly Union website http://aft6157.org/, filled with useful information about the rights and responsibilities of members.

The five categories the Union focuses its efforts on are “Advancing, Negotiating, Advocating, Educating and Promoting.” Because what the Union does is often behind the scene, Valentin and I agreed that we sometimes ignore and overlook the critical role it plays in our successes. That is why it is important that we visit the website at least once a week to keep abreast of the latest developments in education, negotiation and politics.

As a faculty, I concentrated my effort, until recently, on teaching and on trying out innovative methods for reaching students and getting the best out of them in the classroom. My focus was almost exclusively on academics. But in talking with Valentin and other counselors, it has dawned on me that I must look at students within a holistic framework. I must work not only as a teacher but also as a counselor, mentor and confidant to students.

When students visit Valentin in his office, he counsels them not only on academics and graduation pathways, but also on their hopes and aspirations. That way he develops a holistic view of them and is better able to inform them on the right choices to grow as a complete human being.

A synergy between faculty and counselors is critical to the success of our students, with suggestions and guidance always available from AFT 6157. It is an insight I could not have gained had I not been privileged as a Union AFT 6157 member to mentor one of our committed counselors, Valentin Garcia.

Welcome Tina Iniguez
International Programs Counselor Committed to Make Students Successful

By Jory Segal, AFT 6157 Adjunct at Large, Negotiator, Grievance Office

Being an AFT 6157 mentor for Tina Iniguez was exciting. She was a delight to talk with as she is an amazing, enthusiastic and caring woman. Tina has been a classified employee in the District for 13 years.

When we met, we discussed AFT issues, and Tina expressed interest in the Union and getting more involved, as her tenure moved forward. My goal was to make her feel at home, as a Union member, and know that the Union was involved in many aspects of the District.

Tina was employed for eight years to assist CalWORKs students with their learning disability testing at the Social Services office on Senter Road. The program was called “Keys to Success,” and the focus was on disability testing.

About 80% of the individuals she worked with had not finished high school. Tina worked to refer them to adult Education Programs and the community college system and find assistance for their learning disabilities.

Tina was hired as a full-time International Programs counselor in September. There are approximately 180 students in the International Program at Evergreen. Almost all of those students will transfer to four-year institutions to finish their bachelor’s degrees.

She has volunteered to work on the early alert program because she is committed to make students successful, and early alert is just one tool to assist students to complete their classes. (Hint: Faculty: Don’t forget to fill out your early alert forms.)

Tina is married and lives in Alum Rock. She and her husband both attended Mt. Pleasant High School and knew each other. She has two girls Sophia and Grace, aged 9 and 6 and two dogs Cloe and Coco.

We all welcome Tina and are thrilled she has joined the faculty at Evergreen.
Selecting the Sabbatical Fork in the Road: 2018-19

By Sterling Warner, SJECCD Professional Recognition Committee (PRC) Chair

A freewheeling sage, Yogi Berra once advised: “When you come to a fork in the road, take it.” Of course, full-time instructors in the San Jose/Evergreen Community College District have a less nebulous decision to make: They may select the fork that will enable them to “teach as usual” or take the less traveled pathway afforded by a Sabbatical Leave opportunity.

“Sabbatical Leaves” as outlined in Article 14 of our Collective Bargaining agreement, continue to thrive in the San Jose/Evergreen Community College District. Although our district Faculty Association, hereafter referred to as AFT 6157, continues to champion anything to do with faculty rights, take nothing for granted.

PURPOSE. A sabbatical leave enhances the “instructional integrity” of the SJECCD by providing an opportunity for professional faculty growth and development “through a variety of activities and/or experiences which have significant relevance to the specific assignment and/or to the retraining of the faculty member” (AFT 6157 and the San Jose Community College District Collective Bargaining Agreement 14.1.1).

ELIGIBILITY. At this time, following every six years — or more — of consecutive service to the district, full-time faculty may apply for a sabbatical leave for one semester or two semesters during the seventh year. The nature and depth of projects, activities and course work — naturally — helps to define and determine the necessary duration of a sabbatical request.

PROCESS. No substitute exists for reading Article 14 on “Sabbatical Leaves” several times before proceeding with the sabbatical process. Feel free to ask former sabbatical recipients for advice. Then, obtain the official application for sabbatical leaves — the form “developed by the Professional Recognition Committee and approved by AFT 6157 and the District” (14.4).

SIGNATURES. Before submitting a sabbatical request for consideration by the PRC, applicants should share their plan of action with a peer or someone on the PRC. Next, applicants present their proposal to division deans for approval (signature). Deans may make suggestions to address concerns — if any. Applicants may address these concerns and resubmit for signatures. “If discrepancies and/or disagreements are resolved, pertinent comments shall be removed and shall not be passed beyond this point” (14.4.2.2).

Division deans pass on the sabbatical request that they have signed to the college president, who also has an opportunity to make comments and/or express concerns that applicants may address and then resubmit the entire proposal. However, don’t lose sight of important dates.

Remember that the SJECCD Human Resources must receive all completed sabbatical applications by 5:00 PM on November 1, 2017.

The PRC reviews all applications and documentation, and upon its recommendation, the PRC chair arranges interviews in November, which offer faculty applicants a chance to present their sabbatical plans and answer any questions. Then, depending on interview results, the PRC forwards a written recommendation to the chancellor. The chancellor then confirms receipt of the PRC sabbatical recommendations before the end of the fall semester.

Finally, the chancellor has an opportunity to add comments, sign and forward sabbatical requests to the SJECCD Board of Trustees. “Board actions on sabbatical applications are to be taken no later than the first meeting in February” (14.5).

PRC EXPECTATIONS AND FACULTY RESPONSIBILITIES. Faculty members must complete interim reports to the PRC, explaining the progress of their sabbatical request. Also, upon completion of a sabbatical “an oral presentation to faculty, students, and/or the community regarding the completed report is required in order to communicate to the college community the concomitant benefits of the leave” (14.7.1.2). By the end of the first semester after returning from a sabbatical, faculty members “shall be required to submit a written report to the PRC, applicants should share their plan of action with a peer or someone on the PRC. Next, applicants present their proposal to division deans for approval (signature). Deans may make suggestions to address concerns — if any. Applicants may address these concerns and resubmit for signatures. “If discrepancies and/or disagreements are resolved, pertinent comments shall be removed and shall not be passed beyond this point” (14.4.2.2).

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Welcome to the Executive Board

RJ Ruppenthal: AFT 6157 Negotiator, EVC Legal Assisting Faculty

Since 2005, I have been a full-time faculty member at Evergreen Valley College, where I teach Paralegal Studies, Business Law and Political Science. I hold degrees from the University of California, Davis and the University of Wisconsin Law School, though I am a Bay Area native. Prior to joining the faculty in this district, I worked in the legal field and at St. Mary’s College. Before law school, I taught English as a Foreign Language overseas.

At EVC, I have served as Accreditation co-chair and I am a past chair of its Institutional Effectiveness Committee. I look forward to working with the union in a greater capacity and both learning and contributing to its success. The negotiations team has worked hard to secure good working conditions for faculty here. It’s an honor to be able to give something back and help the team.

Alex Lopez: AFT 6157 SJCC Full-Time Rep, SJCC Metas Counselor

Alex is a faculty member assigned to the Metas program at San Jose City College. He is on his eighth year at SJCC as an academic counselor /coordinator/instructor. He obtained his associate degree from Modesto Junior College, bachelor’s degree in sociology from CSU Stanislaus, master’s degree in education counseling at San Jose State University, and his juris doctorate from the University of Denver.

He has been an academic counselor at Gavilan College, Monterey Peninsula College and an academic adviser at San Jose State University and CSU Stanislaus. Outside of academia, Alex served as a law clerk for the Colorado District Court, Colorado Housing and Finance Authority, Santa Clara County District Attorney’s office, and the Mitchell Law Firm where he did extensive legal research on various topics. Alex grew up in San Jose, Oakland and Modesto.

While employed at San Jose City College, he has been actively involved on committees and has volunteered to meet the needs of our students. He serves on the Academic Senate Executive Board, the Multiple Measures Task force, the Matriculation Committee and the scholarship Committee. He has also served on the College Planning Council, Professional Recognition Committee, the Basics Skills Committee, and is currently a member of the Latino Educators Association.

Regarding his involvement with the Union, Alex said, “I am compelled to become involved in the union as a campus representative to bring about just representation to faculty within our district.”

Welcome to Baby Breland!

SJCC President Byron Breland and his wife Gilda welcomed their new baby girl Alessia at 3:26 a.m. on September 6th. Alessia weighed in at a healthy 7 lbs. 4 oz. and 20 inches. Welcome Alessia!

Correction

Please note the following correction in our September 2017 Faculty Matters newsletter:

On page 7 in the list of New Full Time Faculty, Shanna Erickson, Mathematics faculty at EVC was mistakenly listed with the first name Sophia. Our deepest apologies to Shanna.