Fond Farewell
Union Executive Director Retires After 16 Years

By Barbara Hanfling, AFT 6157 Executive Director

I write this from my heart and soul with some tears in my eyes. It has taken me more than two weeks to begin the process of summing up my 16 years here, looking back over the memories, all the accomplishments and all the assistance and caring I have been receiving from many of the Executive Board members, Council of Division Reps and the membership at large, not to mention our office managers. This will be my last newsletter that I will be writing for, editing and putting out.

In 2001, I was interviewed by Mark Newton, David Yancey and Carmen Castellano (our office manager at the time right before she accepted the lottery winnings). It was a new position; it meant that nothing had ever been written in a manual, job announcement or job description. It was an honor for me, when I was finally offered the job in December. Walking into a brand new job, even with 20 years of Union experience was daunting: Geri Evans was the chancellor and Mike Hill the chief financial officer.

Geri didn’t meet much with the Union or faculty; and Mike showed up at our first meeting, empty-handed without a pen or paper; which I subsequently gave him after saying: “if we are going to work together there needs to be mutual respect and conversation.” That was the last time he showed up unprepared. We had never met with the Board of Trustees. Now we meet with some of them monthly and some on a semester basis.

Stories
There are more stories than I can tell: A chancellor who did not respect faculty; a Human Resources director who yelled at David and me for giving her too much work; a CFO who tried to smoke screen us through much of the budget and male presidents who never looked at me the woman, but only at Mark and David our two Union presidents.

We had a grievance/administrative hearing that cost both the Union and District almost $3/4 million; the Union was adversarial and angry based on many years of contract violations and internal strife; adjuncts had one hour salary column with no credit for education; adjuncts were paid less than 45% of our full-timers and our Rehire Prefer-
Sexual Harassment and Assault Charges Piling up Against Prominent Men

By Paul Fong, AFT 6157 President

The “MeToo” movement is gaining momentum across this country and is happening here in this district as well. More and more women are getting the courage to speak out against sexual harassment and sexual assault. I have spoken out every April during Sexual Assault Awareness Month. The Union has always taken a very strong stand against sexual harassment, including giving workshops at PD Day. Many of us have also signed numerous pledges to help end sexual assault. It is of epidemic proportions what is being revealed by all of the “MeToos.”

All these big names are headed up by President Donald Trump and others in politics, entertainment and news program. Trump gave credibility to the statement “it’s OK to be men and harass and assault women,” therefore giving consent to many powerful men. These men in power knowingly or unknowingly sexually harassed and assaulted many women.

This “MeToo” movement is identifying many of these prominent harassers and assaulters, but no doubt there is an epidemic of full size; including but not limited to: Fox News Roger Ailes and Bill O’Reilly; author Garrison Keller, Sen. Al Franken and TV anchor Matt Lauer. Some have retired, some have been forced out, some have apologized (Franken) and some will be brought up on charges.

The worst predator at the moment is former Chief Justice Roy Moore, from Alabama, who continues to run for office after preying on 14-year-old girls with numerous women coming forward to claim assault and harassment when they were underage. An apology will not work for Moore; a criminal indictment is more in line for the denying animal who preyed on children. Conservatives will need a gut check before voting on Dec. 12, for the next senator from Alabama.

Our faculty Union is made up of women and men. Male faculty members have some power in our classrooms and need to be aware of this movement of “MeToo.” This is the time for all male faculty members to put on our best feminist hat and support the “MeToo” in our District. It will take a community of men and women to eradicate sexual harassment and assault. The Union has always been highly committed to work closely working with all Union members in the AFT 6157 to make our District sexual harassment and assault free.

We all must not tolerate this kind of behavior and must be cognizant of this conduct by anyone in a power position over others. We need to become a district of watchdogs, making sure that this does not continue to occur in our District. A State Assembly member has already resigned after allegations of sexual harassment. A State Senator is being investigated for acting improperly toward some interns. The “MeToo” movement is happening everywhere, and it is a very effective movement. Congratulations to all women for their long overdue victory in beginning to put a halt to sexual harassment at its roots. Together we can work to eradicate this issue among us.
ence (SRP) for adjuncts was not based on seniority; full-timers were told that sabbaticals were based on eight years of service. Really? And more issues than we all can imagine.

But the Executive Board immediately set to work as the new AFT 6157 Local. In my first couple of years of work, the following faculty were on the Executive Board: Mark Newton, David Yancey, Wilbur Mellema, Rose Anna Higashi, Frank Espinoza, Bob Wing, Bill Jacobs, Sarita Tamayo, Jeff Kirkbride and Patrick Butler. It was a great, energetic, unified group of diverse faculty members who had committed themselves to growing and building the Union. And they did it with a flare.

I cannot name all the Board members and Council of Division Rep members since the original group, who also contributed their hearts and souls, but I can let you know that we all worked extremely hard to build strong unity between the full-time and adjunct faculty members, so we could fight off division; create a great contract for our adjunct and full-time faculty members and craft the position of the Executive Director so the person could be the institutional memory of the Union and eventually of the District.

A Few Things We Have Accomplished:
It was under the leadership of the Executive Board that put forward the following priorities with guidance from the Executive Director:

• Increase and enhance everything possible for adjunct faculty members – SRP by seniority; at 33% and 40%; the right to take off time and not to lose SRP; partial medical benefits; pay for SLO reports, curriculum development, etc.; 10-pay periods; adjunct office space at each campus; 100% parity goal; almost full pay for participation in PD Days; right to take classes for free;

• For full-time faculty members; we bargained fully paid sabbaticals; rights of our retirees to many free services of the District; right to take classes for free; 11-month calendar for nurses and counselors; class size for every course;

• Create the best salary schedule we could for our adjunct and full-time faculty members. Over the years we have put the adjunct onto the full-time salary schedule at a pro-rata amount, giving them up to a 22% raise. The Union has created new steps and increased pro rata for our adjunct and full-timers on overload; for full-time faculty members since affiliation, we have bargained over 44% pay increases with some bonuses; and for adjunct faculty members we have bargained 63% (not counting the up to 22% mentioned above);

• Bargain, bargain, bargain: The Golden Handshake twice, 2004 and 2017; and never taking another grievance to arbitration since 2003 and not filing a grievance for almost 10 years-settling them early on; making our medical benefits the highest priority – being probably one or two districts in the state where there are NO payments for premiums for our health and welfare benefits; protection of non-credit, full-time temporary and categorical non-tenured faculty members; putting progressive discipline and a safety article in the contract;

• Engage in the community and with students: Work with Somos Mayfair; campaigns with our student leadership; participation in politics and community work almost on a monthly basis.

Friends, this is only the tip of the iceberg. What is most important is that all of this is about all of you.

We are all the Union, whether you have been an officer, a Council of Division reps member, shown up at a Board of Trustee meeting, been part of the listening campaign or membership campaign, done phone banking with me, spent time at CFT/AFT conventions, dropped by my office to talk or get/give some advice, wrote something nice when news went out I was going to retire, made constructive criticisms, etc. And what I will miss the most is all of you. You shaped me, you gave me strength when I felt tired and low; you gave me passion to continue to fight with and for you: you gave me good arguments for moving forward and helped me learn when to say “yes” or “no”. You all have been so much of my life for the last 16 years.

Thank you,

Barbara
AFT 6157 Mentorship Success

Mentor/Mentee KJ’s Outing
ESL faculty receives full-time position

By Jessica Breheny, SJCC English Faculty

It says a lot about the hard work faculty do when I say that Zerrin Erkal and I could not find a time in our busy schedules to meet off campus. Our planned relaxing outing to get to know each other and talk about the Union morphed into a post-teaching, post-meeting afternoon trip to KJ’s. Alas, this is faculty life in November. Yet a causal low-key coffee/tea date on campus is a nicely stress-free way to get to know a colleague.

Zerrin, though new to her full-time ESL faculty job, is not new to San Jose City College. She has taught part-time in ESL for 15 years, and I have always appreciated her presence and contributions at division meetings. Still, this is the first time that I ever had a chance to get to know Zerrin. She has an impressive educational background, with a bachelor’s in English from Boğaziçi University in Istanbul and a master’s in TESOL from Long Island University. Zerrin has also taught for many years, both at SJCC and at San Jose State University.

Over warm beverages on a rainy fall day, Zerrin and I talked about the importance of the Union. I shared my own experiences with the Union, all the times I received help and advice over the years, and the security I feel knowing that we have the Union behind us. I told Zerrin about my experiences coming to SJCC from a college without a strong union and the differences I saw when I got here. I encouraged Zerrin to get to know the Union leadership, to ask questions about the contract and bargaining, and told her how important I believe it is for all of us to be involved in the Union.

I am so glad that Zerrin and I were able to find a time to meet, and I am honored that the Union asked me to be her Union mentor.

Sophia de la Fuente
New case manager responds to student crisis, mental health issues

By Debbie Huntze Rooney, SJCC PE/Softball Faculty

Sophia de la Fuente is excited to join as San Jose City College’s case manager. She will be leading efforts to manage student mental health initiatives that include prevention and response to student crises, faculty education and support, case management and supporting SJCC’s Behavioral Intervention Team (BIT).

Sophia is familiar with both SJCC and EVC after working in Psychological Services this past year, providing individual therapeutic services to students on campus, imparting her with understanding and insight of the unique challenges and aspirations that many students on campus encounter today. I met with Sophia and was glad to be able to introduce her to the Union as her mentor. I wanted to make sure she understood that the AFT 6157 in our District is a Union that not only represents faculty, but stands for social justice, our students’ wellbeing and fairness. Also I explained that our Union is a continuing part of the culture of the college and the community.

Sophia holds a master’s degree in Marriage and Family Therapy and joins with a background of direct experience working in mental health counseling, case management and client advocacy. She’s worked within various community and academic settings, ranging from schools and youth courts in Alameda County, to a trauma-focused agency in Los Angeles County. Throughout the duration of her work experience, she has worked with diverse populations, varying in developmental and/or physical abilities, socio-economic status, age, cultural and sexual orientation. Sophia is also bilingual in Spanish and English.

Outside of work, Sophia enjoys active adventures, such as snorkeling, hiking and rock climbing. Still exploring and learning about the Bay Area after moving from LA, she welcomes any recommendations on hiking trails to check out.

Sophia has cultivated a deep passion and commitment to working with the college population. She’s enjoyed the opportunity to witness firsthand the vital and critical role the community college plays in the lives of its students, and is extremely excited to join us.
Born/Raised in Canada
Single Payer Benefits

By Garry Johnson, AFT 6157 Council of Division Reps, EVC Nursing Faculty

“Born and raised in Canada!” These are words that I have often said because I am very proud of my Canadian roots. I was schooled there. I worked there and acquired pension credits until I was in my late 30s. I was a union member there. But this is not an article about Canada. This is an article about fairness, decency and respect.

I grew up poor — very poor. It was the far north east coast of Canada. A place called Newfoundland, where poverty takes hold, like the barnacles that cling to the rocks on its shore. It’s ever present. Everyone around me was poor. Our families were fishermen, and a few lucky ones worked at the hospital. We had outhouses, fuel deliveries for oil furnaces, wood stoves, no insulation and lots of fish.

Our mothers baked bread twice a week. We ate fish six days a week. We ate mayonnaise sandwiches. We shared a single slice of cheese among four children. I distinctly remember my mother stretching dough so thin that it had holes in it, just like our clothes.

There was something else that helped. Something omnipresent that was there my whole life — something that provided hope and comfort to my single mother and our fishing community.

Single Payer Universal Health Care

I was born in 1965. That was the same year that a Canadian hero introduced Universal Healthcare under the Canada Health Act (CHA). His name was Tommy Douglas. Like me, Tommy grew up poor, on farms in Saskatchewan, and he knew the power and value of people coming together to form unions and alliances and programs such as Single Payer Universal Healthcare. He was revolutionary for Canada for using an idea that was already more than 80 years old then — and 130 years old now.

The Canada Health Act (CHA), that he introduced, guarantees that every Canadian receives all health care from maternity to nursing homes to acute care to health promotion and disease prevention. It is founded on the principles of Comprehensiveness, Accessibility, Universality, Public Administration and Portability. Founded in 1965, CHA is the same age as me. We celebrate our birthdays together and CHA is worth celebrating. It is treasured by Canadians.

All Medical Care- Provided for and Free:

You see, my mother could take each of us children for our immunizations. She could take us to urgent care when we needed it — like the time my sister had ear infection or my brother burned his hands on the wood stove. I’m not sure what my mother would have done if she had to pay for all that health care and continue to feed and clothe us. The fact that our healthcare needs, and some of our basic needs were met, meant that we survived. And we survived to climb out of poverty and pay back into a system that helped us out.

In 2003, I decided to come to Hawaii for a travel nurse experience. So there I was. Living in the land of palm trees and Hula dancers and wondering how a poor welfare kid from Newfoundland had hit it big. And the answer was always the same. I didn’t do it on my own. For nearly 40 years, I had Universal Single Payer Health Care. I never worried that my home would be taken if I was suddenly struck with a major illness. I never have had a healthcare bill. We are all interdependent and we all reap the benefits of collectivism.

I try to imagine what the USA would be like with a Single Payer Health Care System. It’s something that most of my American friends cannot imagine. But I can, because it’s the system that I actually know best. I know that the way out of poverty is not a handout. It’s a system that actually supports people and helps them find a way out. Imagine a system where everyone receives care irrespective of social status, wealth, pre-existing condition, age, gender, etc.

There are many arguments for a Single Payer system including improved access, fewer bankruptcies, boosts to the economy, less paperwork, improved public health and most importantly preservation of human rights. Detractors often talk about long wait lists, creeping socialism, increased taxes and debt, but those are not the experiences of all the developed countries with Universal Healthcare, including Canada. Caring about citizenry and providing Universal Healthcare is a way for our country to find pathways out of poverty.

If we want Single Payer Health Care in the USA then we have to be courageous. It will be a struggle. There will be much opposition, misinformation, division and fear. In the end, it will be worth it. The value can be easily found in my mother. The system invested in her and she continues to repay the system through her children and grand-children grandchildren.
California’s New Employment Law Aims to Narrow the Gender Wage Gap

By R.J. Ruppenthal, AFT 6157 Negotiator, EVC Legal Assisting Faculty

On average, women working in the United States make 22% less than men. California, along with several other states and cities, has acted to address this pay gap. Most recently, Gov. Jerry Brown signed a bill into law that will prohibit employers from asking prospective employees about their salary history. When this bill becomes law on Jan. 1, 2018, we can begin to see whether it has a positive effect on narrowing the wage gap.

The new law, known as AB 168, adds a section to the state’s Labor Code. Its main operative provision consists of the following text: “An employer shall not rely on the salary history information of an applicant for employment as a factor in determining whether to offer employment to an applicant or what salary to offer an applicant.” It goes on to forbid all public and private sector employers from asking about a job applicant’s salary history (though there are exceptions if the applicant voluntarily discloses salary history or if the information is publicly available, such as on a website that lists salary scales).

Since women, on average, make less than men, the idea is that employers should not be able to tailor salary offers to that lower average. Instead, they will be forced to make a more standard offer based upon skills and experience. Rather than perpetuating past patterns, this law could narrow the wage gap by standardizing salaries for certain positions over time.

Possible Criticisms of the Law

However, there are two main criticisms of this approach. First, it upends current practice, which is based to some degree on the free market. An employee can seek a job with higher pay and an employer can recruit that person by offering more than his or her present salary. As that becomes harder, we may see published salary schedules, but employers also will have to work harder to learn what the competition is offering. Counteroffers and bargaining may become more common. And all of that probably creates a higher cost for California employers.

The higher cost will be worthwhile if the new law can narrow the wage gap. But there’s no empirical evidence that it will succeed, according to the second major criticism. In fact, a recent survey indicated that salary history prohibitions may not be an effective way of addressing the pay gap.

Payscale is a site that allows job seekers to evaluate potential job offers to determine whether they are too high or too low, given the person’s experience, geographic area and other factors. According to Harvard Business Review, the Payscale Company launched a survey of its users in early 2017. More than 15,000 users were asked questions about their job title, industry, experience, location and other factors, and then each of these (except gender) was controlled to provide an equal playing field for the survey question.

That question asked users whether they disclosed their salary rate or history at any point during the interview process. And then it looked for patterns in the salaries that users reported to Payscale. Here were the answer choices:
(A) No, and the employer did not ask.
(B) No, but the employer asked.
(C) Yes, the employer asked about my salary history.
(D) Yes, I volunteered information about my salary history.
(E) I do not recall.

Women Still Paid 22% Less than Men

Because other factors were controlled, gender was the only difference that stood out. And unfortunately, the results pointed to one stark difference. When a woman was asked her salary history and did not provide one, she was offered 1.8% LESS in salary than a woman who was asked and did disclose salary history. But men who refused to disclose salary history when asked actually received a HIGHER offer (1.2% higher) than those who disclosed when asked.

Translation: Employers are offering men more money than women, regardless of salary history.

That was one survey. It may have been flawed or imperfect. Payscale may be biased because its business might be adversely impacted if salaries become more standardized and less secretive. And yet, if that survey result is accurate, it indicates that salary history may not be the best place to attack the wage gap.

Is the new law worth a try? Probably so. More information would be best, and such laws should use the least restrictive approach possible, but our society needs to end discrimination. The wage gap has been persistent and we need to eliminate this disadvantage. Good for California and others for attempting this fix; we all hope it works. If not, the state must remain flexible and proactive in seeking other ways to bridge the gap.
‘F’ailing Our Women
High-level individuals must be held accountable

By Marjorie Clark, EVC Counselor/Psychology and Service-Learning and Public Service Coordinator

Recently many courageous women have gone public with allegations of workplace harassment, assault and rape, against very powerful men in Hollywood, media, businesses and even politics. As a result of these high profile accusations, actress Alyssa Milano tweeted for a show of numbers, by those impacted by asking them to tweet #MeToo on social media platforms. Overnight, social activist Tarana Burke’s decade old “MeToo” movement gave voice to hundreds of women and some men, including members of our District community, the opportunity to tell their stories of harassment and abuse, or simply to say #MeToo.

Spotlight on Workplace Harassment

While gender-based violence is nothing new, what is new is the current red-hot spotlight on workplace harassment and assault. As women and social and political analysts try to make sense of the current public outcry and speculate whether the revelations will persist, and bring about change, some hypothesize that it all started in 1991 when Professor Anita Hill testified before the all-white Senate Judiciary Committee, during the U.S. Supreme Court confirmation hearing of Associate Justice of the Supreme Court Clarence Thomas, accusing him of sexual harassment.

Others speculate that it is the bravery shown by women in the U.S. military and on college campuses across the nation who went public after being sexually assaulted that has paved the way for the daily public allegations we are witnessing. Still others believe that women’s courage was unleashed when a man who bragged about sexually assaulting women by “grabbing them in the pussy” went on to be elected the 45th president of the United States.

Whatever the reasons, millions of women organized and took to the streets during the 2017 Women’s March with signs expressing their collective disgust “Same Shit, Different Century!”

As women speak out in our District, we need to remember that many more will not and cannot talk about their experiences. Some have chosen to send private emails, while others have remained silent. We must not judge their choice, for public disclosure comes at a very high price.

The retelling of painful stories of bullying, mistreatment, discrimination, harassment and abuse conjures up many complex and conflicting emotions, such as fear of not being believed; of being criticized, blamed and judged. Dread of being told, “get over it,” “you should have known better,” and fears of retaliation keep women from disclosing their painful experiences.

It Is About Power and Privilege

We must not forget that harassment, assault and violence against women occur because of power, privilege and leadership problems. Decades of sweeping many harassment and assault complaints under the rug, often turning a blind eye, not taking women seriously, excusing bullying and professional advancement of known abuser, create a hostile work environment for many women. Many talented women have felt silenced and have consequently retreated to the safety of their desk and classrooms.

If we are truly serious about addressing workplace harassment, discrimination and assault in this District, we have to look at the problem holistically, by examining the root cause of misogyny, sexism, power and privilege in our District. We need to ensure that women in power in our District do more to protect those with less power. Until we start to address these critical questions; workshops and trainings will not do enough to change the culture of power that exists here.

A couple of my colleagues recently asked their students to identify what they needed to feel safe on campus. The overwhelming responses were; more campus police, more signage about security, better lighting, escort services for evening classes, self-defense classes and arming women with pepper spray, Tasers or whistles. One student wrote “At least twice a month meetings when we can discuss any problems or events that happened on campus.” How tragic that we as a society are still focused on what women should do to protect themselves, rather than on how to ensure that men not abuse women.

Systemic change will not come easily. There is no one fix. We need to start holding those high-level individuals entrusted with our safety and students’ dreams accountable. Everyone must be at the table.

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We Will Miss You George
Former Theatre faculty dies of lung cancer

By Bill Jacobs, AFT 6157-R Retiree Chair

A great light went out when George Forrester died from stage four lung cancer on Tuesday, Nov. 14, 2017, at the age of 86. George taught speech, drama, film, and acting at both SJCC and EVC; he also directed numerous memorable plays over his long and illustrious career. During that career, he received the Kennedy Center Award for Performing Arts, the Susan Hammer Award for Dedication to the Arts and numerous prestigious and important awards.

He also served on the Board of Directors for Los Lupenos and as Vice President for the American College Theater Festival. After his retirement from teaching and directing in 1995, he continued to influence the theater community by serving as a visiting adjudicator of high school productions for the American Musical Theater of San Jose. In this activity, he was joined by his lifelong companion and wife, Gilda, who, as an actor and teacher, herself, shared George’s passion for theater. They also shared the creation of three wonderful children and eight grandchildren.

Those of us who were lucky enough to know George well were witness to the magical effects of the arts on a receptive individual. Throughout his adult life, George read/attended/viewed an average of about one play and several films per week (George owned a library of most films worth watching). Each reading/viewing experience included a careful analysis of the production in terms of technical craft considerations such as set(ting), lighting, costuming, acting, etc.

But more importantly, a lifetime of interaction with those dwelling within the worlds of novels, plays and films — the Humanities Effect — helped provide the fine-tuning that created such a person as George Forrester, a person who magically brought out the best in all those whom he affected, whether family members, friends, actors or students.

George also never forgot how important the Union was, as he continued to be active in the Retiree Chapter as both the vice president and the treasurer. He and his wife Gilda attended numerous conventions in both California and Washington, D.C. The light of his intensity, care and love for others shone brightly, and we will miss him.

For those who want to celebrate and remember his life, a memorial will be held in the theater at Del Mar High School, in San Jose, 1224 Del Mar Ave., CA 95128, on Saturday, December 16, 2017 at 2 p.m.

Applications Available for Raoul Teilhet Scholarship

The CFT offers scholarships to high school seniors and college students who are children or dependents of CFT members in good standing. Students enrolled in four-year courses of study are eligible for $3000 scholarships; those enrolled in two-year courses of study are eligible for $1000. Deadline to submit applications is January 10, 2018 for high school seniors, and July 1, 2018 for continuing college students. For application instructions, visit:

http://cft.org/member-services/scholarships/raoul-teilhet-scholarships.html