

Robinson-Dukes Elected VP of City Colleges



When not urging her colleagues on, the new V.P. just smiled at the July 16 House meeting.

At the July 16 Union House Meeting, President **Perry Buckley** stepped down from the podium to propose the nomination of Olive-Harvey Chapter Chair **Rochelle Robinson-Dukes** as vice president of the City Colleges of Chicago Division of the CCCTU, to replace **Sonia Jean Powell**. There were no other nominations, and Robinson-Dukes was elected unanimously.

Buckley had interviewed every CCC chapter chair privately before proposing Robinson-Dukes for the important position. For the last two years, Robinson-Dukes has been representing the Olive-Harvey Chapter. She has persuaded her administration to give the chapter a union office, has held monthly meetings, threw a holiday party in December, and improved communication among faculty and professionals as well as enhanced communication with the administration.

Robinson-Dukes had served as a reporter for the College Union *Voice* from 1999-2003. Her MA in English Literature is from DePaul University.

Robinson-Dukes is the wife of **Marc Dukes**, who has recently earned an M.S. in Computer Science from Northwestern University. Marc Dukes is transitioning into the I.T. Department of Rotary International, the non-profit charitable organization. Their son, four-year-old **Scott Dukes**, shows acting skills in his ability to perform segments from “Sesame Street” and various computer shows. Robinson-Dukes sees her job as requiring efforts in many areas, such as:

- Making the chapter chairs’ jobs easier,
- Assisting in filing arbitrations,
- Assisting with Step 3 Grievances as needed,
- Assisting Perry Buckley and the other Executive Board members,
- Protecting CCC members’ jobs, and
- Re-establishing a rapport with CCC administrators.

Long before the upcoming Strategic Planning Retreat on July 23-24, Robinson-Dukes had been given the position of supervising the communications and training discussions at the retreat, a position for which she is suited.

When asked her thoughts on being elected to the CCC V.P. position, her comments were about her predecessor, Sonia Jean Powell. “During my first year as chapter chair at Olive-Harvey College, Sonia and I communicated a great deal. When I felt like my job was too big for anyone who taught English for a living, she often said, ‘You are doing a great job, Rochelle. Just press on and pray.’ I had no idea that she was molding me into someone more critically astute, mentally stronger and more resourceful.”

Robinson-Dukes closed with the following words: “I honor Powell’s legacy and embrace my new role as vice president. I want to thank Sonia for pushing me to do great things. I will continue to press on and pray, as my mentor instructed me to do.”

The Next Generation of Leadership



First time attendees to the CCCTU Strategic Retreat are (l-r): **Larry Buonaguidi, Chuck Mustari, Tom Dowd, Delwyn Jones, Kristine Christensen, Rose Sakanis, Helen Agresti, Christine Balesteri, Keith Jordan, Eric Porod and John Cadero.**

Local 1600's Strategic Planning Retreat brought about 15 people who never attended a union retreat before, and most of them had never attended any local-wide event. About the same number of chapter chairs and staff also attended. Their job was to reach out to the next generation of union members as well as to deal with some new and old issues.

As part of the "Next Generation" mission, no officers were scheduled to appear with any group. **Rochelle Robinson-Dukes'** election to Vice President CCC at the Union House on July 16 made her an exception, as Robinson-Dukes previously had been scheduled to chair the "Technology" discussion.

Legislative Chair **Bill Naegele** attended the "Negotiations" discussion as an observer. Those who know the experienced negotiator, however, were not surprised to hear a steady flow of Naegele's input. Naegele's commentary prompted **Dave Richmond** to respond at the conclusion: "Every committee should have Bill Naegele on it." President **Perry Buckley** sat in with several different groups on Friday night.

The event opened at the Doubletree Hotel in Oakbrook, IL, on Friday afternoon, July 23. The first discussion took place from 4:00-6:00. The five discussion groups were: "The Next Generation" with **Arlicia Corley** and **Todd Lakin**, "Legal Rights" with **Chuck Mustari** and **Brenda Pryor**, "Negotiations" with **Dave Richmond** and Intern **Alex Baker**, "Technology" with **Rochelle Robinson-Dukes** and **Randy Barnette**, and "Classified/Support" with **Rose Sakanis** and Intern **Jennifer Visk**.

Dinner at the Doubletree followed the discussion. **Tom Ryder**, a lobbyist for the Illinois Trustees Association and last year's retreat facilitator, opened a conversation at 7:00 before asking each discussion group to comment. Buckley stated: "The best thing I can do for this union is to surround myself with intelligent people—Randy Barnette, Brenda Pryor, Chuck Mustari, and many others. That's why you're here today—not only learning bargaining skills but also people skills."

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Perry J. Buckley

New Leaders are Stepping Up

In education, we often hear ourselves talk about the need to prepare the next generation of leadership. We, of course, are talking about our students when we are referring to training. And we, as a Union, must also prepare the next generation for Union leadership. Any educational organization should practice what it preaches. If its true mission is to provide the training and guidance for tomorrow's leaders, that training should start with their own organization.

As a Union, we must stay faithful to our mission, to pass our knowledge to the next generation of leaders that will take our jobs. We must do this at the chapter as well as local level. When we talk of "organizing" in the Union business we are not simply talking of recruiting new members; we are talking of recruiting workers, officers, and leaders among our ranks. Often I hear chapter leaders say "I can't find anyone to be grievance chair," or delegate, or committee member. That is one of the hardest jobs in our "business," but one of the most important.

In this special edition of the *Voice* you will find an article on our "new leadership retreat" held last month. There were a dozen "rookies," identified by their chapter leadership attending for the first time. In each case a veteran Union member sought out those who might lead us in the future. It was an inspiring affirmation that the next generation of Union leaders are among us. Our job is to identify them and get them involved.

Rochelle Robinson-Dukes

Perhaps the best current example of Local 1600 "seeking out the next generation" of leaders is Olive-Harvey College's **Rochelle Robinson-Dukes**. The CCCTU House of Representatives unanimously elected Rochelle to complete the remainder of the 2008 – 2011 term as CCC Vice-President. Rochelle became involved early in her career in Union work. For five years she was the Union's editorial chair responsible for editing the *Voice*. At OHC she worked on various Union committees and had the keen ability to be a consensus builder at the Chapter. She was selected for the AFT Leadership Conference in Washington D.C. as well as the Union Leadership Institute in Wisconsin. She has led leadership workshops at both our Local 1600 workshops and retreats the past two years.

In 2008 she was elected the Chapter Chair at OHC where she did an excellent job of "growing the chapter." When the CCC -VP position opened I met with all eight CCC Chapter chairs to seek their advice and counsel on the position. Each one expressed respect, confidence, and support for Rochelle. In only three weeks on the job she has proved herself worthy of their confidence. The City Colleges members are in good hands with Rochelle leading the CCC Division of Local 1600.



COOK COUNTY COLLEGE TEACHERS UNION, LOCAL 1600, AFL-CIO

- President.....Perry Buckley
- Vice President, City Colleges.....Rochelle Robinson-Dukes
- Vice President, Suburban Faculty.....Jim O'Malley
- Vice President, Suburban Classified.....Jillian Verstrate
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- Special Assistant to the President.....Randy Bamente
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STRATEGIC PLANNING

The Next Generation of Leadership (cont.)



Intern **Jennifer Visk** and MV's **Rose Sakanis** exchange views at Friday's pre-dinner discussion with the classified and support group.

The next morning, Saturday, July 24, at 8:30 within the IFT Headquarters at Westmont, Barnette made a key point: "We're not expecting to have a finished product today. This is just the beginning. This is the group where changes in our methods and perspectives can start." The groups met throughout the morning, had lunch around noon, and starting giving their PowerPoint presentations at about 12:45.

Sakanis' "Classified/Support" group went first and proved to be the most detailed of the presenters. The group—including PSC's **Susan Braasch**, Morton's **Eric Porod** and **Ruben Ruiz** with Visk as note-taker—gave something close to a finished product—specifying possible solutions and action plans for the objectives:

- Leadership manual for new officers;
- Need for mentoring and Training programs for new chapter chairs and/or Executive Board members;
- Training on grievance and disciplinary meetings/hears representation; and
- Recruitment.

Corley noted that many members of her "Next Generation" committee were also part of this generation. She made the following points: "To cultivate and sustain a community of brothers and sisters which is educated and mobilized, we recommend:

- A new member orientation;
- Establishment of a membership/community awareness chair position at every chapter;
- Establish a leadership conference for new members;

- Create two annual low-cost, local-wide major social events; and
- A variety of topics for education: history of our union, preparation for membership & leadership, contract negotiations, etc."

Robinson-Dukes' "Technology" group came up with a project that met approval. "We recommend the creation of a CCCTU Facebook page to enhance communication with newer and tech-savvy members:

- We chose Facebook as it is a non-invasive, intermittent and not overwhelming medium.
- It is also the largest of the social networking sites.
- It can support a wide variety of platforms and offers private unlimited messaging.
- Our Facebook page will not replace the CCCTU website; the goal is to drive members to that site for more detailed information.

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Triton's **Deb Baker** and Harper's **David Richmond** share a moment at Friday's pre-dinner discussion of the Negotiations group.



President **Perry Buckley** and new V.P. CCC **Rochelle Robinson-Dukes** bring both style and substance to the Friday night dinner.

The Next Generation of Leadership (cont.)

Richmond gave an 18 point presentation on “Negotiation” issues. Some of the key issues were:

- Creating a system to compare common issues in various Local 1600 contracts—e.g. insurance, office hours, early retirement, etc.;
- Listing services provided by Local 1600 to the chapter;
- Listing prior negotiators to serve as a source of information; and
- Training for the negotiating team.

Mustari, who has been serving as Local 1600 grievance chair for a semester, talked about the following needs for the “Legal Rights” group:

- To develop forms;
- To re-establish the Grievance Council;
- To digitize the archive of Local 1600 grievances and arbitrations;

- To better define the roles of chapter officers and create a protocol for downtown office communication; and
- To formalize communication from the grievance chair to the negotiations committee.

Most importantly, Mustari noted that it is not good for Local 1600 for only one person to know everything about the status of every grievance—a responsibility that has fallen upon IFT Field Rep. **Brenda Pryor**, an attorney. This information should be documented and shared, when possible.

Buckley was pleased with the reports of the groups. He accepted many of the suggestions immediately, noting: “So many of these suggestions are so easy to do, and we should have been doing them. We will see soon how these suggestions are implemented in the upcoming Executive Board and Union House meetings.”

Larry Buonaguidi: One of the Next Generation

The July 23-24 Strategic Planning Retreat sponsored by the CCCTU was the first Local 1600-wide event attended by Wright College’s **Larry Buonaguidi**, 24. Buonaguidi (pronounced “bone-ah-GWEE-dee”) is completing his first year as a full-time employee at Wright; he worked there part-time for four-years while earning his BA in Business Administration at DePaul. He plans to start earning an MBA at Roosevelt in the fall.

Buonaguidi’s job is essentially to identify and to assist students who have some sort of difficulty in achieving success with college courses. He is eager to explain what his job entails, a good sign for a professional starting a career in helping students. He works with students in these areas:

- Foundational Studies (formerly called Pre-Credit): These developmental education courses aim to refresh student’s knowledge in basic mathematics and English content areas.
- Early intervention system:
 1. Repeaters—students who have attempted to pass a course two or more times,
 2. Student Readiness Inventory (SRI)—a non-cognitive ACT-developed assessment that helps to identify areas of challenge for individuals in “at-risk” groups,
 3. Motivational Rubric—an assessment that was co-developed by Wilbur Wright College and ACT that helps to gauge students’ behavior in the classroom; behavioral ratings are predictive of academic success.



Wright’s **Larry Buonaguidi** was attending his first Local 1600-wide meeting.

Appropriately, Buonaguidi was working with the “Next Generation” discussion group at the Doubletree Hotel on Friday evening, talking communication media with **Todd Lakin**, the College Union *Voice* editor; **Kristine Christensen**, the MV website professor; and other folks, such as Daley’s **Christine Balesteri** and fellow professional **Tony Johnston** from Truman. On Saturday afternoon, you could find Buonaguidi entering on his laptop the comments from the entire discussion group headed by KKC’s **Arlicia Corley** and featuring Triton’s **John Cadero**, Balesteri, Christensen and Johnston.

AFT CONVENTION

Rose Sakanis on Bill Gates at the AFT Convention

Moraine Valley Support Chair **Rose Sakanis** had a few words on multibillionaire Bill Gates' keynote speech at the AFT Convention in Seattle on Saturday.

Sakanis noted that Gates was a controversial speaker on education issues. He urged that teachers be given merit increases based on how well the students do in the class. This position cost him the support of the majority of the crowd by the conclusion of his remarks. Some of the teachers even interrupted the megabucks spokesman.

In these tough economic times, teachers may have students who barely speak English, are not well fed except by school lunches and lack parental support; it is difficult to get these types of students to succeed as well as one would like. "When students don't have food and parental support, it is hard for the students to be successful," Sakanis observed.

In other areas, Sakanis noted though AFT President **Randi Weingarten** did have opposition, Weingarten won with about 95% of the vote. The many resolutions on the floor of the convention were interesting; Sakanis was glad to be representing her members. She noted that there was yet another increase in dues, though "many of us voted 'no.'"

Sakanis and Chapter Chair **Sue Braasch** of Prairie State College were on the AFT committee for support and classified issues. "One resolution our committee worked on urged helping students receive healthy food for their lunches, meals that were not microwaveable cartons but rather locally grown foods prepared by trained dieticians."

On Thursday of the AFT Convention, Sakanis convened a strategic planning meeting with Braasch, CCCTU office staffers **Randy Barnette** and **Brenda Pryor**, Oakton's **Patty Lucas**, Morton's **Eric Porod** and intern and **Alex Baker**. They discussed the retreat program for the classified and support members, where Sakanis would be chairing the caucus. A mentor program was discussed as well as the need for improved communication among the chapter chairs. "We'll have to see what the chapters can do and what Local 1600 can do even better than they are doing now," Sakanis said.



Rose Sakanis and **Sue Braasch** share a laugh at the AFT Convention hall.

AFTCN Conference: All About Effective Communication



Voice editor **Todd Lakin** accepts five awards on behalf of Local 1600 at the AFTCN Communications Award Reception from **Lenora Robinson**.

Although the 2010 AFT Convention in Seattle, WA, officially began on Thursday, July 8, the two days before were full of pre-convention workshops, orientations and meetings. Local 1600's *Voice* editor, **Todd Lakin**, attended the AFT Communicators Network 2010 Conference to get ideas on how to better communicate with the membership.

"The theme, 'Communicating Effectively – Today and Tomorrow,'" Lakin said, "was entirely topical and very informative. From the morning's general session about communicating with different generations within the union to the best practice panels on engaging members via email and Facebook, this conference has given me useful information that I will put into practice," he continued.

That evening Lakin briefly attended the AFTCN Communications Contest Awards reception where he accepted the five awards that Local 1600 won in April.

AFT CONVENTION

"In their own words..." Local 1600 Delegates at the AFT Convention



Malcolm X's **William Stewart** and Triton's **John Cadero** pose for a photo at the start of the AFT Convention.

"What I found to be most inspirational was the AFT's overall message: 'Fighting back, fighting smart.'"
—**Todd Lakin**

Editor's notes: Local 1600 delegates were asked to summarize their experiences at the AFT National Convention in Seattle, WA. Below are the thoughts of eight of them. The asterisk (*) indicates that the person is a first-time delegate.

Additionally, Local 1600 conducted interviews with delegates on the floor of the AFT Convention and posted them to YouTube. Interviewees are **Perry Buckley, Bill Naegele, Deb Baker, Arlicia Corley, Todd Lakin, Chuck Mustari, Pat Wenthold, Eric Porod, John Cadero, Sue Braasch, Rose Sakanis** and **Jan Hill**. (<http://www.youtube.com/user/CCCTUtube>).

Finally, for a summary of the AFT Convention with video highlights, press releases, lists of award winners and much more, visit <http://www.aft.org/convention/>.

For photos of the AFT convention, follow the link to SmugMug at www.ccctu.com.

In their own words...

Mel Anderson, Professional, Daley

After attending session after session, it became apparent to me that AFT is becoming stronger and stronger. It was also obvious that our elected Local 1600 leadership and delegates are just as passionate about education as the rest of the country. One of the many underlying themes of the convention was that we must stay united. It was inspirational hearing about where we have been, where we are and where we are going. It is clear to me that each union member needs to involve him or herself in combating the negative campaigns that are labeling our union and all unions as the "problem" of education and of our country. We are not the problem, but a main part of the solution!

***Deb Baker, Faculty, Triton**

This was my first time serving as an AFT delegate and it was a transformative experience. Seeing the thousands of delegates come together with a shared mission was inspiring, and seeing the delegates stand up for their individual beliefs was wonderful. It demonstrated that we can stand together even when we disagree on some issues. I will bring the messages of hope and courage back to the Triton College faculty. I was proud to be a part of the dignified and spirited Local 1600 delegation. It was a week filled with fellowship and I was happy to be a part of it.

***Todd Lakin, Faculty, Daley**

As a first-time delegate I learned a great deal about the AFT and how it functions. Sure, there were the sometimes dry, nuts-and-bolts procedural issues like adopting resolutions and amendments that are essential to any union. However, what I found to be most inspirational was the AFT's overall message: "Fighting back, fighting smart." In this negative, anti-public education environment, knowing that the AFT is being proactive to counter the critics is heartening.



Wright's **Linda Murphy** chats with President **Perry Buckley** at the pre-convention planning meeting on Wed., July 7.



A sharp-dressed trio don the specially designed AFT Convention CCCTU wear: **Bill Naegele**, Triton's **Deb Baker** and **Perry Buckley**.

AFT CONVENTION

“In their own words...” (cont.)

Jan Hill, Faculty, Moraine Valley

As a third-time delegate, the first thing that struck me was the overwhelming challenge of the event. AFT President Randi Weingarten announced that there are now 1.5 million members from different states, different cultures and different viewpoints. Over 3,000 delegates traveled thousands of miles to represent the thousands left at home. Our goals were not the same. Our priorities were not the same. The process of moving the agenda of the American Federation of Teachers forward was loud, messy and often confusing. It is also a democracy in action. Every single member of Local 1600 benefits from the work accomplished last week.

*Mark Joseph, Adjunct Faculty, South Suburban

What I found most inspirational is the broad range of politically and economically relevant issues discussed at the convention and the resolutions passed supporting those issues. We know we cannot operate in a vacuum. On the one hand, we must support disadvantaged brethren world-wide. On the other, we must advocate for stances that protect resources to provide quality teaching in our public schools, community colleges, and universities. The convention was extremely energizing.

*Rochelle Robinson-Dukes, Faculty, Olive-Harvey

I learned about the mechanics of the AFT and the democratic process in education. I was able to vote on key issues in the areas of education, healthcare, human rights, and women’s rights, but I also was able to connect with important national union leaders, such as Vice-Presidents **Saundra Schroeder** and **Barbara Bowen**. Most importantly, I was inspired by the speeches of The Honorable **Joyce Elliott** who spoke of a child’s desire to dream and **Juan Andrade, Jr.** who praised the impact of Latino women in America. This experience has strengthened my belief in the power of unions.



Kennedy-King’s **Arlicia Corley** and Malcolm X’s **William Stewart** corral AFT President **Randi Weingarten** for a photo.



Oakton’s **Patty Lucas** and **Terri Quam** check out the hot-off-the-press Summer 2010 *Voice* issue.

Rose Sakanis, Classified, Moraine Valley

As a fifth-time delegate to our national convention I found this one to be quite exciting. Most people consider the discussion of resolutions to be boring, but I do not. I enjoy listening not only to the opposing viewpoints of each resolution, but also to the story about what prompted a group to sit and write that resolution. Behind each resolution is a story of a struggle that those people encountered or that they have seen others encounter. This is part of what the convention is all about – learning and talking about the struggles that we all have encountered over the past two years, seeing how the AFT came to the aid of various locals to help them overcome their struggles and celebrating the good things that we have all achieved as a union – together!

“The process of moving the agenda of the AFT forward was loud, messy and often confusing. It is also a democracy in action.”

—Jan Hill



Local 1600 has a tradition of sitting up front and to the left at all conventions.

William Stewart, Professional, Malcolm X

As one of your elected delegates I found the convention to be very informative. We gained a lot of insight into the national voting and amendment procedures. I volunteered to serve as a Sergeant-at-Arms on behalf of Local 1600. I met many other delegates from the east coast to the west coast. In networking with other delegates I found that some things we do alike, some we do differently and others we do better.