April 15 Lobby Day Has Big Chance for Legislative Success; Swenson and Officers Raising COPE Funds

Times have changed for the Chicago Teachers Union and the Cook County College Teachers Union since the Republican-dominated General Assembly passed the “School Reform Act” in 1995. An agreement to restore collective bargaining rights has been reached with both unions and with the Chicago Board of Education, the City of Chicago and the Commercial Club of Chicago.

Senate Bill 19, which reflects this agreement, will restore collective bargaining rights to both unions. And CCCTU President Norman Swenson will lead the members of his union to Springfield on Lobby Day, Tuesday, April 15, to help pass our legislative program.

Senate Bill 19, sponsored by Senate President Emil Jones, passed the Illinois Senate on February 6 by 55-0. SB 19’s Illinois House sponsor is Representative Barbara Flynn Currie. The bill has been assigned to the House Labor Committee.

Another bill, House Bill 1457, will reduce the number of credit hours a part-time faculty member must teach to three hours per semester to be eligible for union representation. Representative Mary K. O’Brien is the bill’s sponsor.

Finally, Representative Kevin McCarthy will sponsor a bill to establish a 75-25 ratio of full-time to part-time faculty. The bill provides that 75% of credit hours at each college shall be taught by full-time faculty members.

President Swenson has asked the chapter chairs for a strong effort to bring members to Springfield for Lobby Day. “We want to pass our legislative program,” Swenson says. “In the past, the Republicans intended to take away the rights of our suburban members too. On Lobby Day, we will ask the legislators of both parties to support our bills.”

Swenson also urged those members of Local 1600 who cannot go to Springfield to take the time to visit, phone or write their legislators and encourage them to pass these important bills. Call Legislative Representative Marie Caronti or Janie Morrison at the Local 1600 office, 312-755-9400, for the names, phone numbers and addresses of your legislators.

To fund these lobbying efforts, President Swenson and other Local 1600 officers have been visiting faculty and professional chapters asking members to join COPE or to increase their COPE contributions through payroll checkoff. In addition, Vice President Classified Div. Gail Wiot and Marie Caronti have been working with the classified chapters.

“We have lost a number of retirees who were good COPE contributors,” Swenson notes. “We will need more funding.”

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WHO BARGAINS BEST?

How do Local 1600 contracts compare to other Chicago area unions?

Consider three membership priorities: salary increases, health insurance, and retirement packages.

Our current contracts contain average salary increases of 5% each year. Compare those with the 1/2 of 1% increases many of our fellow unionists will receive this year at Illinois state universities.

The City Colleges AFSCME union, which represents adult education teachers, now threatens a strike because it is offered 0% this year.

Our contracts also contain excellent health insurance plans. In the City Colleges our contract offers a Cadillac BC/BS plan, plus ten years of Board paid health insurance for retirees. And union members pay only 7% of the premium cost.

At Harper, we successfully struck last fall to protect our health insurance plan, which provides superior coverage at a low cost.

Compare our plans to those of other unions where members receive a fixed dollar amount from the employer and pay 100% of escalating insurance costs.

Our retirement packages in our contracts contain these outstanding provisions:

- Incentive payments of up to 160% of salary based on unused sick leave (CCC). In suburban chapters, incentive payments equal up to 125% of salary.

- Retiree health insurance benefits.

- Professor Emeritus status.

- A SURS retirement enhancement, which can increase the average pension by 10%.

Consider also that no Local 1600 member has suffered economic loss because of our contracts.

WHO BARGAINS BEST?

Local 1600 bargains best. Our contracts prove it. We face hard economic times because of state budget cuts. But you can be assured Local 1600 will continue to bargain superior contracts for our classified, professional and faculty members.

(Continued from Page 1)

By late-February, new or increased COPE memberships numbered 10 at Daley, 2 at Dawson, 5 at Kennedy-King, 12 at Malcolm X, 8 at Olive-Harvey, 9 at Truman, 6 at Washington and 12 at Wright—for a total of 64.

In the suburban faculty chapters, new or increased COPE memberships numbered 11 at Harper, 21 at Moraine Valley, 3 at Morton, 21 at South Suburban, and 23 at Triton—for a total of 79. Among the classified chapters, the growing numbers are 8 at Moraine Valley, 3 at Oakton, and Wiot and Caronti are still making visits.
One UP, One Down, in CCC Part-Timers’ Elections

By a vote of 116 to 3 on February 20, the City Colleges of Chicago’s part-time professionals voted for the CCCTU over “No Representative.” IFT Staffer Bob Breving, who led the campaign, said: “The CCCTU won the election because of a strong organizing committee on each campus. Those union members and the part-time professionals who wore their red ‘Vote Yes’ buttons, carried this election.”


Because of the election victory, Local 1600 will now represent a new bargaining unit of 219 part-time professionals. Bargaining for a first contract will begin this spring. But on February 25, Local 1600 lost an election to represent 219 part-time CCC faculty. After the vote count, the Illinois Educational Labor Relations Board announced that the Illinois Educational Association received 87 votes to Local 1600’s 63 votes plus 2 for “No Representative.”

The IEA is an independent “professional association” that opposes affiliation with the AFL-CIO and the American labor movement. In Chicago, the IEA represents no full-time union members in bargaining. It won the election by bringing in carpetbagger organizers from North Carolina, promising a pie-in-the-sky contract and conducting a smear campaign against Local 1600.

Local 1600’s Grievance Chair Perry Buckley, who led the CCCTU campaign, noted that Illinois law provides that, if a newly formed unit cannot achieve a contract within 12 months, a new election can be legally petitioned. “For now, we simply would like to wish the part-time faculty members well in their efforts to achieve pay equity and basic academic rights,” Buckley said. “And I would like to thank all our union members for their help in this hard fought campaign.”

Chapters Endorse Trustees for Election

Six chapters of Local 1600 at three suburban colleges are endorsing trustee candidates for their community colleges’ elections. CCCTU COPE will donate $2000 to each candidate’s campaign fund. Chapter members will work phone banks, distribute election materials, and support the candidates prior to the April 1st election.

At Moraine Valley, the faculty and support chapters have endorsed John Donahue and Patricia Roach. CCCTU Classified Div. Vice President Gail Wiot said: “The faculty and the support staff will continue to support John Donahue and Patricia Roach as both board members support our members on a continuing basis. With their support, both union chapters have successfully settled their contracts.” Moraine Valley Faculty Chapter Chair Randy Southard and Hal Hackett are coordinating efforts with Moraine Valley Support Chair Rose Sakaris.

At Harper College, the faculty chapter and the professional/technical chapter have held a series of forums and will endorse trustee candidate(s) in March. Harper Faculty Chapter Chair Michael Harkins states: “Our chapter will support candidates who focus on the interests of teaching, learning, and academic excellence.” Patrick Beach and Elayne Thompson have been designated the Harper College campaign coordinators.

At South Suburban College the faculty and the support staff endorsed Katie Jackson Booker, John Daly and Terry Wells.

S.S. Faculty Chapter Chair Bill Naegle says: “Over the past several years, the SSC faculty has fostered a non-adversarial, cooperative relationship with the South Suburban Board, Chairman Zuccarelli, and President Dammer. It is critical to the college and to the faculty to continue this relationship. The support of Local 1600 and the hard work of the union’s volunteers will enable these incumbents to continue their strong, fair leadership with a victory on April 1st.”

On another front, Triton Faculty Chapter Chair Maggie Hahn Wade reported a Triton vice president stated in late February that the chapter could not use Triton College property for a trustee candidates’ forum as it was “against the Triton College Board’s policy.” Despite difficulties, Triton endorsements are still a possibility.

Local 1600 Legislative Representative Marie Caronti explained to the CCCTU House of Representatives: “Local suburban trustee elections are just as important to our membership as our state legislators. We need to have friendly board members, so we are able to work with them to solve problems at our colleges.”

For news you can use
Visit our Web site at: www.cccatu.com

www.cccatu.com College Union Voice 3
The union banquet on Saturday, May 3, promises to be both a festive and a politically profitable event. Chicago Teachers Union President Deborah Lynch will speak on “The Future of Collective Bargaining under Senate Bill 19.”

The banquet will be held at the Holiday Inn-Chicago/Mart Plaza, just west of the Merchandise Mart. The hotel begins on the 14th floor of the 350 N. Orleans Street office building.

Park in the Holiday Inn parking facility and validate your parking ticket at the front desk on the 15th floor of the building. Mention the Cook County College Teachers Union for the discount price of $10. Then proceed down to the 14th floor where the banquet will take place.

Buy your discounted $20 tickets in advance from your chapter chair or representative; Local 1600 pays over $40 for each ticket. You must present your ticket with your entree selection circled to be served at the banquet.

The cash bar opens at 6:00PM; a pianist will play background music. At 7:00, the banquet begins. You will have your choice of entrees: Chicken Sonoma — boneless breast of chicken filled with spinach, ricotta cheese and sun dried tomatoes; or the vegetarian choice — Mediterranean Pasta--bowtie pasta, tomatoes, Greek olives, capers, feta cheese, red wine, artichoke hearts and fresh basil; or Fresh East Coast Cod—broiled with lemon butter sauce. Other courses include double baked potato, roasted vegetables, and ice cream with choice of chocolate or caramel syrup.

Following dinner, a 15 minute video presentation on the CCCTU — “A Proud and Powerful Union” — will be shown. Then, President Lynch will speak, and awards and student scholarships will be presented.

If you wish to spend the night at the Holiday Inn at the Cook County College Teachers Union discount rate of $130 for a non-smoking room with two beds, call the hotel directly at 312-836-5000 and mention the CCCTU discount for the evening when you make your reservation.

Illinois Federation of Teachers Convention Highlights — Feb. 21-23

CCCTU Vice President Judith Armstead and Moraine Valley Chapter Chair Randy Southard were re-elected as vice presidents of the Illinois Federation of Teachers. CCCTU President Norman Swenson will continue on the IFT Executive Board as an ex officio member per the IFT constitution.

The IFT Community Colleges Council (IFTCCC) elected President Norman Swenson as its chairman and CCCTU Secretary Verna Anderson as its secretary. The IFT represents employees of 30 of the 40 community colleges in collective bargaining. The IFTCCC will hold its Lobby Day on April 15, the same as the CCCTU.

The IFT passed an increase in dues of $12 for this year and $10 for next year. The IFT wanted an increase of $16 for this year, until the CCCTU and other locals protested at the Feb. 21 IFT Executive Board meeting.

The convention passed a resolution calling for IFT money and personnel to help the CCCTU organize part-time faculty. Also, the IFT will support the introduction of a bill in the Illinois General Assembly to reduce the number of hours qualifying part-timers for union representation from six hours to three per semester.

At the Awards Luncheon, Harper Faculty Chapter Chair Michael Harkins received the IFT Solidarity Award, given to any chapter forced to strike. Daley’s Marla Mutis was formally presented with The Robert G. Porter Award. The 100% Membership Awards were given to the following CCCTU faculty chapters: Malcolm X, Morton and Wright.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

MARCH 21
House of Representatives
Merchandise Mart

APRIL 11-13
AFT Higher Education Conference
Atlanta, GA

APRIL 25-27
AFT PSRP Conference
Detroit, MI

APRIL 25
Executive Board Meeting
Union Office

SATURDAY, MAY 3 — 6:00 P.M.
Union Banquet
Holiday Inn-Chicago/Mart Plaza
PSRP Chair Sandy Krysak of Local 943 speaks on classified issues to IFT Staffer Marietta Fray, Local 1600’s Legislative Representative Marie Caronti and Local 4100’s Kemy Brown.

1600’s delegates listen in a group to Senate President Emil Jones in the General Session and watch his image on a giant video screen.

IFT President James Dougherty presents Wright Chapter Chair Clyde Walker with the 100% Membership Award at its luncheon ceremony.

IFT President James Dougherty and CCCTU President Norman Swenson present Harper Faculty Chapter Chair Mike Harkins with the Solidarity Award for its strike.

With CCCTU President Norman Swenson on the left and Chicago Teachers Union President Deborah Lynch on the right, Illinois Senate President Emil Jones is in good company as he addresses the General Session.

At the Community College Council, Triton Faculty Chair Maggie Hahn Wade, Malcolm X Chair Jeannette Williams, Oakton Classified Chair Alice Barnhart, Marcia Boone of Local 4183 and President Norman Swenson discuss issues.
EXECUTIVE BOARD

At its February 14 Executive Board meeting, President Swenson announced that Senate Bill 19, sponsored by Illinois Senate President Emil Jones, has passed the Senate. SB 19 restores bargaining rights for the City Colleges of Chicago and the Chicago Teachers Union. You can help passage of this bill by writing or phoning your state legislators and by joining your union on Lobby Day.

The following motions were passed:
✦ to conduct a special executive board meeting to admit 20 new members,
✦ to buy four tickets to the Coalition of Labor Union Women dinner on March 6 at the Evergreen Park Drury Lake Theater,
✦ to hold a Springfield Lobby Day on April 15,
✦ to continue to support the Mike Rush case at the Circuit Court level, though the CCCTU will not support appeal of the case to the Appellate Court level.

In other business, it was announced that:
✦ Local 1600 will send 30 delegates to the Feb. 21-23 IFT Convention.
✦ Debbie Lynch, president of the Chicago Teachers Union, will be the featured speaker at the May 3 Union Banquet.
✦ A videotape presentation on the history of Local 1600 will be shown at this year’s union banquet.
✦ Other university locals are having negotiation problems: Southern Illinois University accepted a 7.5% increase in salary over the next four years. Chicago State and Governors State Universities have not settled yet.
✦ The retiree chapter will hold its spring luncheon/theater meeting on Thursday, March 27, 2003, at the Drury Lane Theater in Oakbrook Terrace, Illinois.

1600 Wins One Case, Continues Another with the CCC

On January 24, the City Colleges of Chicago overpaid 502 faculty members. The average amount was $1,400; the largest amount was almost $12,000. In 18 cases, where the amount was more than a single paycheck, the CCC stopped payment on the checks. These 18 members had no payday. By the following Wednesday, thanks to prompt action by Local 1600 Grievance Chair Perry Buckley, everyone had received a paycheck.

Buckley said, “This overpayment and recoup resulted, for the first time ever, in the CCC providing financial data and settling a financial grievance without going to arbitration.”

In a letter to the faculty, CCC Chancellor Wayne Watson apologized and indicated that human error and a weakness in the internal audit process were responsible for the overpayment.

In a second case, the union presented testimony in an arbitration hearing for the laid off CCC counselors. CCCTU Grievance Chair Perry Buckley, Vice President CCC Div. Judith Armstead, and Attorneys Jennifer and Larry Poltrock represented Local 1600 on Jan. 16 and 17. In the estimation of Buckley and Armstead, the union case looks good, so good, in fact, that the CCC Board’s representatives requested another arbitration session on March 14, when they will present rebuttal witnesses.

1600 Chapter Newsletter Winners to Be Announced at Union Banquet

Local 1600 will again conduct its annual Chapter Newsletter Contest. The deadline for submission is WEDNESDAY, APRIL 16. The contest is open to every chapter in Local 1600.

The contest rules require the submission of two different newsletters from the 2002-2003 school year. Mail them in an envelope postmarked no later than April 16, to:

Bob Blackwood
Cook County College Teachers Union
208 W. Kinzie Street
Chicago IL 60610

Blackwood, the managing editor of the Voice, will judge the newsletters based on their headlines, content, layout and design. The prizes will be $500 for the winning CCC chapter and $500 for the winning suburban chapter. The winners will receive their awards at the annual union banquet on May 3; winners must be present to receive their prize.

Please notify Blackwood in writing by April 16 if you will be present at the banquet to receive the prize. If a winner is not present, the second place chapter in each category will receive the prize. No prizes shall be awarded to any chapter for two years in a row.
On January 24, the House of Representatives met. President Norman Swenson described the "triple crown" victory of the Democrats in Springfield and announced a political fund raising (COPE) campaign.

The following motions passed:
♦ to urge Local 1600 Officers, Staff, House Delegates and Chapter Executive Committee Members to contribute to COPE at least twice the target levels for members ($3 for the professional employees, $4 for the classified, and $5 for the faculty) and to recruit new COPE members to replenish COPE funds and to replace COPE members who retired,
♦ to send the classified division vice president and three classified chapter chairs to the April 25-27 AFT PSRP Conference in Detroit,
♦ to send the Local 1600 officers and chapter chairs John Harris, Michael Harkins and Clyde Walker to the AFT National Higher Education Conference, April 11-13, in Atlanta, GA,
♦ to send $500 in support of the Southern Illinois Seven,
♦ to congratulate the South Suburban Faculty Chapter for its strategies in improving COPE enrollment.

In other business, President Swenson announced that he is going to various chapters to increase COPE funding. Legislative Representative Marie Caronti and Vice President Classified Div. Gail Wiot are going to classified chapters to boost COPE funding.

Legislative Representative Marie Caronti announced suburban community college trustees would have their Election Day on April 1, 2003. The following colleges have endorsed or are considering endorsing candidates: Harper, Moraine Valley, Morton, South Suburban, and Triton.

Retiree Chapter Chair Pat Dyra Cites Good Sources for Seniors

Keeping informed and staying abreast of developing issues, critical to the welfare of retirees, depends upon trustworthy sources of timely information.

The best source of information and action is the AFT-endorsed Alliance for Retired Americans (ARA). It seeks to realize its legislative goals through mobilizing grassroots action — communications to public officials.

It mails periodic reports to all AFT members and will send you a "Friday Alert" newsletter on email every Friday. Contact the ARA at www.unionvoice.org or call 1-888-373-6497 to sign up for "Friday Alert." AFT pays national dues for each of us as members of the ARA, but you may also receive requests for voluntary contributions.

Most importantly, ARA also provides an email vehicle on its website for you to email your U.S. senators and representatives about legislation that affects retirees. Since the biological warfare scares after the September 11 terrorist attack, regular mail is often delayed for weeks before it reaches your federal legislators.

The ARA analysis of Medicare and Choice programs — Dianna Porter’s “The Failure of Medicare and Choice: A Case for National Health Care” — showed that HMO’s or private plans should not be the vehicle for providing prescription drugs.

President Bush’s proposals in Congress will change Medicare from a defined benefit program with set benefits and set co-pays to a defined contribution health program, where only the amount of government contribution is set and both benefits and co-pays vary. Let your opinion be heard; e-mail now.

Professor Patrick Beach of Harper College’s Hospitality Department evaluated 10 U.S. Navy bases on the west coast during October 2002. Beach is a civilian “Ney Evaluator” for the U.S. Navy Supply Systems Command. The Ney Awards are given for effectiveness in delivery of good, safe food after evaluation by the Navy and a civilian evaluator.

Chairman Joan Libner of the Triton College Nursing Department won the “2002 Nurse Educator of the Year” award from the National Organization for Associate Degree Nursing.

Co-Chair Bill O’Connell of the Triton College Faculty Chapter will lead five GM students to Portugal for the month of March in an exchange program. Last semester five automotive students from Portugal attended his classes at Triton.

Professor Polly Gerber Zimmerman of Truman College’s Nursing Department was promoted to associate editor of The Journal of Emergency Nursing (JEN). JEN is the scientific, peer-reviewed official publication of the Emergency Nurses Association, the professional association for emergency nursing in the USA.

Editorial Note: “Personal Glimpses” is the place for publishing good news about your life-significant wedding anniversaries, commendations from your employer or college chapter, awards won, etc. Send your typed “personal glimpse” with a photo of your face (not a necessity), address, chapter and your college and home phone numbers to:
Managing Editor Bob Blackwood
Cook County College Teachers Union
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