Local 1600 Negotiating Team to Face CCC Board

Local 1600 President Norman Swenson, the chief negotiator for the CCC contracts, has appointed the following union members to the City Colleges faculty and professional employees negotiating team: Local 1600 Grievance Chair Perry Buckley (as assistant chief negotiator), Verna Anderson (Kennedy-King), Sonia Powell (Olive-Harvey), Wendall Wilson (Daley), Clyde Walker (Wright), and Joseph Figueroa (Washington). Special consultants to the team include Rausan Tamir (Dawson), Mel Anderson (Daley) and Hermine Krysa (Wright).

“This unity team will work hard together to deliver strong contracts for the faculty, the training specialists and the professional employees,” Swenson said. “This team will not yield to administrative pressures. You can trust this team.”

When asked what the negotiations will entail, Buckley noted, “The CCC negotiations will require a series of hard decisions to be made by the union team in the midst of a declining economy. Fortunately, we have Norm Swenson on our side to examine the CCC Board’s sources of income. He will help us determine what funds the board really has for our faculty members, training specialists, security officers, and our full-time and part-time professional employees.”

In the near future, the CCC faculty, training specialists and professionals will be surveyed to determine their bargaining issues. Swenson noted that the contract language must not suffer from erosion, particularly in workload, class size and retirement issues.

Swenson also announced his choices for the negotiating team for the security officers chapter, which includes Swenson as chief negotiator assisted by Buckley and Assistant to the President Janie Morrison, plus Tim Murphy (Wright), Jim Sullivan (Daley), Ronald Robinson (Olive-Harvey), Kenneth Corcoran (Daley), Wally Dworak (Truman), Richard Holub (Humboldt Park), Harry Mays (Westside Tech) and Wali Karim (Malcolm X). Morrison noted, “The security officers are primarily concerned about wages and working conditions as all of them are part-time employees.” Most of the security officers are full-time employees of a Chicagoland police department, correctional staff, or retirees from those institutions. Negotiations for the next contract are scheduled to start in November.

(Continued on Page 2)
OUTSIDE EXPERTS

Some Local 1600 members suggest we hire outside “experts” to represent us in contract negotiations. They suggest attorneys or staff from the IFT or AFT.

I oppose making outsiders the chief negotiators for our contracts. Under my presidency, our union has followed the policy of empowering and training our members to become contract negotiators.

Since the founding of our union in 1965, I have served as chief negotiator for City Colleges’ contracts. At suburban faculty chapters, I served as either chief negotiator or as the contract advisor at the bargaining table. To negotiate suburban classified and professional employee contracts, I hired Bob Breving as my full-time assistant and chief negotiator.

Why has Local 1600 followed this policy of training our members for negotiations, instead of bringing outside “experts” to the table?

• Local 1600 members who serve on the bargaining team have strong incentives to deliver excellent contracts. Their job, salary, benefits and working conditions are on the line. And if they sell out their fellow union members, they have to live with the consequences until they retire.
  • Outside “experts”, on the other hand, have strong incentives to compromise our demands and reach a quick settlement. If they are an attorney or a staff member from the IFT or AFT, their economic interest is not on the line. And they have many more contracts to negotiate each year after they settle our contract.
  • All politics are local. An outside “expert” in the City Colleges or at suburban colleges will have little knowledge or understanding of the local political relationships. He will not know the sources of power at a college and who pulls the strings. And he will have to develop many personal relationships to influence the campus powers in the few brief months he spends at the bargaining table. In the recent Harper faculty strike, our union’s personal relationships with labor unions, board members, administrators and elected officials were decisive in winning a good contract.
  • In 38 years of bargaining (including over 110 contracts), our union has been forced to strike 14 times to win just settlements. In every instance, we struck successfully and closed the college. Outside “experts” would never have been able to organize our membership and gain the required community and labor support for these successful strikes.

Beware of outside “experts” and their ersatz solutions to our challenges! They may appeal to some members who want to avoid confrontation and personal responsibility for our contracts. But outside negotiators and easy solutions for our difficult challenges will result in disastrous contracts that sell out our membership.

Meanwhile, the CCC part-time professionals have begun negotiations for their first contract. While the appointments to the part-time professionals’ team are being completed, Swenson, Buckley and Morrison have met with the board in preliminary sessions. The focus has been on non-economic items, such as job classifications and hours worked per week. Later negotiations will deal with economic issues. Part-time professionals from every campus will participate at the negotiations table.

The security officers have already prioritized their bargaining issues. The top five issues are:

• Salary increases
• Fringe benefits
• Seniority provisions
• Pay differential for shifts
• Overtime provisions

When buying gifts for the holidays, remember to look for the union label. It means we’re able to make it in the USA.

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

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and Midwest Labor Press Association.
**Buckley Wins Health Coverage for Kinard**

A Dawson professional employee Roscoe Kinard was laid off by the City Colleges of Chicago in June 2001. Confident that he would find another position with the City Colleges, he chose not to retire under the early retirement program. He applied for various positions with no success. In December 2001, Local 1600 filed a grievance on his behalf because of his not receiving “priority over all applicants” as provided under the contract. The grievance was “pended” while the colleges “tried to find a position.”

“Nothing happened,” said Kinard. “No one seemed interested in helping me. It was annoying and frustrating.” After 16 months of waiting for a job, Kinard retired from the CCC to look for work. To his horror, he discovered that by waiting to retire, he no longer qualified for the 10-year health coverage extension. When his wife became ill and the doctor bills began to escalate, he turned to Local 1600 Grievance Chair Perry Buckley for help. “From the very first day he took office,” said Kinard, “he worked hard to either get me a job or health coverage. He wrote letters of recommendations, made phone calls, and pestered the administration.” Finally, in order to establish a new “timely” grievance, Buckley filed a Step II grievance when Kinard was again turned down for a position.

Things began to happen when Buckley listed “provide health coverage” as a possible remedy for the grievance. After much negotiation, the Colleges agreed to a “non-precedent” provision of health coverage if Kinard and Buckley agreed to drop the grievance. They agreed to the provisions and the remedy was granted.

“There is no question,” said Kinard, “that it was only through Perry’s hard work that this got done. He kept at it until they gave in. I cannot praise him enough. I have no idea what I would have done if this hadn’t happened.”

**CCC BOARD PASSES DOMESTIC PARTNERS HEALTH CARE**

On October 9, the City Colleges of Chicago Board passed a policy granting same sex domestic partners the rights to health and bereavement benefits. Specifically, the language stated “qualified same sex ‘Domestic Partners’ of District employees shall be eligible for the same health and bereavement benefits available to legal spouses of individuals employed by the District in the employee’s same job family.” The CCC Board has established the qualifications for receipt of such benefits and is developing the process by which the benefits shall be applied for and granted.

Local 1600 Vice President CCC Division Judith Armstead noted that the new CCC Director of Benefits Shawn Koesterling would be forwarding information this semester on how to apply for the domestic partner benefits as soon as the payroll department had finalized its procedures.

Local 1600 Publicity Chair Jim O’Malley reminds the membership, “In 1973, I bought a Ford Van from Al Piemonte Ford in Melrose Park for $50 over the real cost. I have purchased my last eight American-made cars (Chevrolet and Chrysler) with Local 1600 help as a long standing member of United Buying Service. Call the Local 1600 office at 312-755-9400 and tell Gail, Janie, or Louise that you are interested in using the United Buying Service to buy a new vehicle and to save you money.”

Local 1600 Grievance Chair Perry Buckley receives thanks from Roscoe Kinard for arguing his case with the CCC.

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**CALENDAR OF EVENTS**

**JANUARY 23**
House Meeting
Merchandise Mart

**FEBRUARY 20**
Executive Board
Union Office
In three days, Oct. 2-4, over 200 members of AFT locals from the Great Lakes Region met with AFT President Sandra Feldman, Executive Vice President Nat LaCour and AFT Regional Director Ray Mackey to discuss the new challenges presented by the economic and political environment in the United States. Chicago Teachers Union President Deborah Lynch addressed a morning session as her local was facing a major decision on accepting or rejecting the Chicago Board of Education’s contract offer. Some of the strategy sessions included working with sister labor unions and organizing new locals.

Local 1600 Grievance Chair Perry Buckley attended workshops on recruiting new members and a well attended workshop on health care. The problem of negotiating new contracts in the face of the rising costs for health care was a constant theme in the workshops. Buckley said, “The health care workshop was an invaluable tool in presenting innovative approaches to funding and analyzing our health care costs. For example, the top two factors in increasing costs do not include catastrophic illness but rather prescription drug costs and claims under $1,000.”

Following a stirring address on Friday afternoon by Nat LaCour, 200 AFT members joined the picketers of H.E.R.E. Local One, who have been on strike since June 15, 2003. The absentee owner of the Congress Plaza Hotel (the old Pick Congress) refused to participate in the earlier negotiations workers in other Chicago hotels a large wage increase. Approximately 70% of the workforce consists of immigrants from Mexico, El Salvador, Nigeria, Iran, Ghana and Guatemala.

Swenson Wins Grant To Organize Adjuncts at Harper

President Norman Swenson lobbied successfully both the Illinois Federation of Teachers and the American Federation of Teachers for financial support for Local 1600’s effort to organize part-time faculty at Harper and Triton Colleges. Local 1600 is vying with the Illinois Education Association to organize adjunct faculty members.

On Nov. 4, Swenson met with the IFT and AFT and reached an agreement on an organizing program. This agreement has three components. First, an AFT project organizer will be appointed for both Harper College and Triton College. Second, the IFT will assign two staffers to help in the campaign. Bob Breving will work at Triton. Bob Shaevel will work at Harper. Third, the AFT project organizer and the IFT staffers can hire three part-time instructors at each campus for ten hours per week. Swenson says, “The Illinois Education Association has an unlimited budget and unlimited paid workers for this organizing campaign. With this grant, we will stand a better chance of winning the adjunct elections at Harper and Triton.”

Harper Faculty Chapter Chair Michael Harkins believes, “Only Local 1600 can provide the benefits and salary these faculty members deserve. It has a 30-year record of success in dealing with Harper’s Board.” At Harper, over 135 adjunct faculty signed cards designating Local 1600 as their “sole and exclusive bargaining agent for the purposes of negotiating wages, hours, and other conditions of employment.”

IFT Staffer Bob Shaevel will now be working with full-time faculty Michael Harkins, Pat Beach, Larry Knight, Paul Holdaway, and David Richmond as well as Pro/Tech staff Terry Engle and Pat Wenthold. Most importantly, the committee’s message is that Local 1600 has already negotiated excellent contracts for our part-time employees in Harper’s Pro/Tech Chapter.

At Triton College, Faculty Chapter Chair Maggie Hahn Wade, Jim O’Malley, Judy Darst, Stu Sikora, and Assistant to the President Paul Janus have formed a committee to sign up more adjuncts. Jim O’Malley, Triton Faculty assistant chapter chair, believes, “The adjuncts’ salary and working conditions are an embarrassment, not only compared to full-timers, but also to the other part-timers at surrounding colleges. A solid union contract will help stop the brain drain of competent adjuncts to other colleges.”
Local 1600 Grievance Chair Perry Buckley (with AFT sign) pickets with the Congress Plaza Hotel workers during the AFT Great Lakes Regional Meeting.

From left: Local 1600 Vice President Classified Gail Wiot, Legislative Representative Marie Caronti, and Vice President CCC Judith Armstead and other members from the AFT Great Lakes Regional Meeting picket in support of the Congress Plaza Hotel’s striking workers.

AFT Great Lakes Regional Meeting

Local 1600 Grievance Chair Perry Buckley discusses upcoming CCC contract negotiations with a group of mostly younger faculty at Wright College on October 3.

From left: Local 1600 Grievance Chair Perry Buckley and AFT Executive Vice President Nat LaCour proudly wear their “AIDS in Africa” pins as they discuss the AIDS in Africa campaign with President Norman Swenson at the AFT Great Lakes Regional Meeting.

Around Local 1600’s Chapters

On October 15, Assistant to the President Janie Morrison (center) visited the Truman Security Chapter to discuss upcoming negotiations with Elida Castanuela (left) and Abelardo Roman (right).

Back row, from left: Triton Classified Chapter Chair John Rossmiller, Local 1600 Publicity Chair Jim O’Malley, Grievance Chair Perry Buckley and President Norman Swenson met with Triton’s Classified Association’s area representatives on Oct. 1. They discussed Rossmiller’s Executive Board motion that prevented hundreds of Local 1600 classified members from paying a “pass through” of $105 per year in additional union dues.

On Oct. 30 at Riggio’s Restaurant, Oakton Classified Chapter Chair Alice Barnhart greeted a happy group of Halloween revelers, including Local 1600 officers and staff.

President Norman Swenson, Local 1600 Grievance Chair Perry Buckley, Dawson Chapter Chair Rausan Tamir and 11 members of the chapter gather during their Oct. 15 fall luncheon.

From left: Some of the members of Local 1600’s Security Chapter negotiations team prepare to meet with the CCC Board team on Nov. 5, including Local 1600 Grievance Chair Perry Buckley, Jim Sullivan (DA), Wali Karim (MX), Local 1600 President Norman Swenson, Assistant to the President Janie Morrison, Rich Holub (WR), Ronald Robinson (OH) and Dennis Fitzgerald (WR).
IFT Community College Council
Sets Agenda for Lobby Day

On Oct. 17-18 at the Oak Brook Hyatt Hotel, IFT Community College Council President Norman Swenson presided over the meeting of leaders from 10 community college locals throughout Illinois including Joliet, Waubonsee, Kankakee, Blackhawk, Illinois Valley, Southwest, Rend Lake, and Kaskasia. Director Larry Gold of the AFT Higher Education Department spoke on the ABC’s of Higher Education.

The IFTCCC business meeting passed two motions: to approve the legislative program and to establish April 21 as the official IFTCCC Springfield Lobby Day. The legislative program includes:

• To pass a bill to require that 75% of college credit courses in each department shall be taught by full-time faculty,

• To require that one of the members of the Illinois Community College Board be a community college faculty member or other non-administration employee,

• To prevent all budget cuts in state aid and to increase state aid to at least 50% of operating costs, and

• To pass federal legislation to repeal the Social Security offset provision which reduces union members’ Social Security payments.

A major topic of concern at the meeting was the inadequate monetary and staff support for organizing adjunct faculty from both the AFT and IFT.

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Web site Helps Buyers Find American Union-made Goods and Services

Graduate students at the U. of Massachusetts joined with the AFL-CIO to build an on-line database listing all goods and services produced by U.S. union members.

Many of our relatives, friends and neighbors have lost jobs because they were shipped to low-wage, nonunion countries like China or countries with few unions, such as Mexico. AFL-CIO Union Label Division President Charles Mercer says, “Checking with our web site helps support U.S. jobs.”

The web site will be fully enabled by early 2004. Currently, the older, on-line database Web site www.union-label.org/do_buy.asp is available for holiday shoppers to view before they make any major holiday purchases.

Swenson Attends International Conference in Senegal, West Africa

From Oct. 27-Nov. 2, Local 1600 President Norman Swenson, in his capacity as an AFT vice president, joined 80 teachers from 40 countries participating in an Education International Conference in Dakar, Senegal.

The conference participants made clear their opposition to the World Trade Organization’s proposals to move into the educational services area via their General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS). “The WTO would like private for-profit higher education institutions to replace government-sponsored colleges and universities throughout the world. In addition, there are no labor standards in GATS agreements — no right to organize, no right to strike, in other words, no collective bargaining. There are also no provisions in GATS for prohibitions on child labor or for environmental and safety standards,” Swenson said.

Swenson and some of his colleagues took the time to travel from Dakar to nearby Goree Island, one of the three main ports in West Africa from which African slaves were sent to the New World. Swenson said, “This was one of the greatest tragedies in human history.”

In addition, conference participants learned more about the American Federation of Teachers’ AIDS in Africa Program which has two full-time staffers working on educational prevention programs in Africa. AFT is also working on how to import inexpensive generic AIDS drugs to African nations. Local 1600 contributed over $1,000 last year for AIDS in Africa. This year, Civil and Human Rights Committee Chair Sonia Powell will introduce a motion at the November House meeting to renew this effort.

Union Leaders Meet to Plan International Human Rights Day

On October 20, a select group of 30 labor leaders met at the office of the Chicago Federation of Labor in the Prudential Building to discuss the labor activities on behalf of International Human Rights Day on December 10. Illinois AFL-CIO President Margaret Blackshere and Chicago Federation of Labor Secretary-Treasurer Tim Leahy presided over the meeting. The group’s intention is to use International Human Rights Day to express the demand of workers in the U.S. who want to belong to a union. This basic human right of belonging to a union is often denied to workers at such places as Wal-Mart and foreign car assembly plants in the U.S.

The meeting discussed various scenarios for attracting media attention. American unions plan demonstrations on Human Rights Day, December 10, in 30 major cities. One of the key issues in the demonstrations will be to demand federal bargaining rights if a union has signed up 50% plus one in any company. The State of Illinois and the government of Canada already have this “card check” legislation in place. In Canada, unions represent 35% of the workforce versus 12% in the U.S.

On Nov. 5, Human and Civil Rights Committee Chair Sonia Powell attended a follow-up meeting to insure Local 1600 participation in International Human Rights Day.

Pendant Found

Eagle-eyed Assistant to the President Janie Morrison found a silver pendant in the shape of a bird following the Oct. 24 Executive Board Meeting. Contact Morrison at the Local 1600 office for its return.
Security Officer Bill Malito of Daley College, 70, passed away on October 21. Malito, like so many of his security officer colleagues, was a retired Chicago Police Department officer with 33 years of service. His family has earned our good wishes and prayers.

Voice Managing Editor Bob Blackwood and his wife, Diane, presented the results of their polling of the World Science Fiction Society on the Top 10 Science Fiction Films of the 20th Century to the World Science Fiction Convention in Toronto last September. Bob is working on a book on the same subject.

Congratulations to Triton College Mid-Management member Tim Moore on the birth of his son, Nathaniel Dylan, on August 11. Nathaniel is the first child for Tim and his wife, Mary Rita, who is also a Triton College employee.


Harper Pro-Tech Jeri Gadberry, an international student advisor, has helped many students transition from their native country to the U.S. with help from the Connections International Peer Program. Harper’s International Peer Mentor Program received an award for its excellence this semester from the CIPP due, in part, to Gadberry.

Editorial Note: “Personal Glimpses” is the place for publishing good news about life-significant wedding anniversaries, births, deaths, 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 photo numbers to:

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