Remember when communication was simple?

It’s not anymore...

INSIDE

From the President p. 2
Voice Staff Changes p. 3
Campus Visits p. 4-5
Legal Update p. 6

Communication p. 7
Scholarship Banquets p. 8-9
Labor News p. 10
Officer’s Reports p. 11-13

End-of-Year Parties p. 14
Conferences p. 15
Letter to the Editor Back Page
FROM THE PRESIDENT’S DESK

The Value of Good Communication

I am sure we all remember the game “Telephone.” We would sit in a circle, and the first person would whisper in the ear of the person next to him or her. That person would turn to the person seated to the right (or left) and try to repeat what was said. Sometimes the story would change because it was misheard; sometimes it was inadvertently repeated with a slight change; other times, on purpose. If the message was too long and detailed, the “facts” could be changed or forgotten. The telephone chain would continue on and on until the story reached the person who originally started the game. Almost always the original message was so contorted by the time it completed the circle it was scarcely recognizable.

Although only a game, there are at least three lessons in “Telephone.” First, accurate communication is essential. Second, it illustrates why gossip must always be ignored. Finally, it is a game that has no winner.

Sometimes, if not often, things get lost in translation.

In our colleges, rumors abound. We know from experience that most of these rumors are baseless. It still doesn’t stop rumors from spreading, no matter how many prove to be false. As a union of educational employees, we might think we are somewhat immune from many of these issues. Sadly, we are not. As a union, we cannot afford to have our message misinterpreted or twisted. We must strive to be clear and precise, leaving little latitude for interpretation.

The challenges we all face in communicating our various messages can sometimes be a daunting task. On a member survey that the Cook County College Teacher’s Union sent out last autumn, “communications” was at the top of the list of what our members valued most. As a result, our Spring 2012 Workshop focused exclusively on better communication. Over one hundred members signed up for the Saturday training session in April. (See page 7.)

The day was designed, in part, to prepare the participants to deal with the media through a series of discussions and mock-media situations. Through these exercises, we were able to demonstrate the efficacy of developing and crafting a public “message,” to focus on delivering that message to an audience, and the importance of not deviating from one’s purpose. The response to the day was so overwhelming we are going to repeat the workshop again.

You do not need me to tell you that we are under attack as union employees like no time in history. Lies abound concerning the work we do, the salaries and benefits for which we work, and the modest pensions and benefits we have earned. In some cases our very good friends, who have read these lies about us, ask why we should have pensions “three times our salary,” or why we should get “free” health care, or why we “only” work 25 hours a week.

We know what the truth is and when we speak out, the message we deliver must be short, clear and succinct.

There is a popular Christmas story which is based, not unlike the “Telephone” game, on a mondegreen. Someone thought they heard “Olive the Other Reindeer” instead of “all of the other reindeer.” Part of our job is making sure we communicate clearly, accurately and forcefully, leaving no room for error.

Editor’s note: “Mondegreen” is a word or phrase that results from a mishearing of something said or sung.

Bookmark and visit often the new CCCTU website for the latest updates: cccstu.org

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

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College Union Voice

All materials submitted for publication should be sent to: COCC COUNTY COLLEGE TEACHERS UNION
COCC COUNTY COLLEGE TEACHERS UNION
208 West Kinzie Street
Chicago, Illinois 60654
Phone: (312) 755-9400 • Fax (312) 755-1030
tlakin@local1600.org

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Member of AFT Communications Association
Midwest Labor Press Association
Bob Blackwood Is Retiring: “It’s been a Long Trip Writing and Shooting”

In the mid-1960s & early 1970s, Bob Blackwood had been writing movie reviews for various underground newspapers—e.g., *The Chicago Seed*, *Rising Up Angry* and *Second City* (no comedy club affiliation). He later wrote movie reviews for *La Parola del Populo*, an Italian-American magazine. Blackwood was hired by the English Department at Wright College in 1967 and started writing for the *College Union Voice* in the early 1970s, when he served as assistant editor to then-editor Jack Swanson. After awhile, Blackwood was called back by President Norm Swenson to edit a monthly publication that appeared between issues of the *Voice*. When the strikes were fewer, Blackwood settled in as a professor at Wright College.

At Wright, Blackwood, who had taken a 16mm filmmaking course at Northwestern University, was asked to teach Communications Media and Photography. Blackwood’s still photography improved with his teaching of it. In the 1970s, Blackwood started doing political public relations work for state representatives, state senators and aldermen, mostly on the northwest side of Chicago.

In the 1980s, he continued to contribute stories to the *College Union Voice* focused on the Wright Chapter. He was also doing various stories and photo layouts for *Fra Noi*, “Chicagoland’s Italian-American Voice,” from the late-1980s to about 2003.

In 1998, he married Diane Miller of Grand Forks, ND. They met at a Science Fiction Research Convention in Arlington Heights, IL. They are happily married. Around 2002, Swenson accepted Blackwood’s service as editor of the *Voice* and, under President Perry Buckley, Blackwood continued editing, writing and photography as Web Manager of the CCCTU website: www.ccctu.org.

Blackwood said: “I’ve had many positions—flack, movie reviewer (I’m still reviewing films for the *Columbia River Reader* in Oregon & Washington), photographer, reporter, editor and web manager. But my heart was always with the Cook County College Teachers Union. It was as pure a cause as any I ever supported, and, as I age, my union is still fighting for me. Keep the faith, sisters & brothers.”

The Blackwoods are moving to Albuquerque, NM, in mid-June.

Lakin Steps Down as Voice Editor

After eight years on the staff of the College Union *Voice*, seven as editor, Todd Lakin is stepping down. “With Bob Blackwood retiring, it seemed like a good time for change,” Lakin said.

Lakin was hired as a correspondent just after the strike of 2004. Less than a year later, he replaced Blackwood as the editor and held that role until this final issue. “It has been an honor for me to have been a part of President Perry Buckley’s team,” Lakin said. “Not only has this been an opportunity for personal and professional growth, but, most importantly, I have become an active member in the union, a pleasure that I did not have during my first six years as a member.”

Since assuming the role of editor in 2005, Lakin has gone through many life changes. His daughter, Meredith, was born in 2006 and his twins, Natalie and Titus, are now nearly a year old. Additionally, he was elected Chapter Chair at Daley College last year, and his role as chair is taking more time than he anticipated. Finally, Lakin will be on sabbatical in Fall 2012 to begin pursuit of an M.A. in History at Northeastern Illinois University. “I’ve always loved history so this is perfect opportunity for me to jump in with both feet and focus my energies on my studies and my family.”

Buckley praised Lakin for his role in reshaping the *Voice*. “Todd has done an excellent job of making the *Voice* an award-winning publication. During his time as editor the *Voice* went from being a black-and-white publication to a full-color, glossy quarterly,” he said. “Many members now comment that they actually read the *Voice* from cover to cover,” Buckley joked. “But, seriously,” he continued, “both Todd and Bob will be missed. They have left a good legacy to follow.”
Buckley Talks Contracts and Pensions at OHC and HWC

‘Defined Contribution’ plan, the only ones who benefit are the bankers. Additionally,” he continued, “there are plans to hike employee contributions from anywhere from 14% to 22% to stay in a traditional plan. I know many of you are years away from retirement but this amounts to a huge pay cut.” He urged everyone to be vigilant and to pay attention to what is going on in Springfield.

- Sick-day Payouts: “If you have a lot of sick days and expect to cash them out and you are able to retire by July, 2013, then retire by the end of this contract,” Buckley urged. “It doesn’t take a thimble-full of wisdom to know that this perk will most likely not be in the next contract.”
- Retirement: “Check with SURS about the ‘Money Purchase Formula.’ The Illinois Legislature has removed this enhancement effective July 2, 2012. So, again, if you are able to retire, and the ‘Money Purchase Formula’ is beneficial to you, then retire.”
- Contract negotiations: “I have offered to begin early negotiations with the chancellor to see if we can negotiate a contract, much like I did in 2007 with the previous chancellor, over the course of four or five meetings this spring. However, if we are unable to reach an agreement this spring that I can bring to the membership, we will begin bargaining in May, 2013.”
Editor's note: There were three late-spring campus visits at the suburban chapters: Triton Classified on March 21, Triton Mid-Managers on March 23 and Morton Classified on May 16. For the full stories and photos please visit ccctu.org. Below are summaries of each visit.

Triton Mid-Management

While the faculty was on spring break, the Triton College Mid-Managers Association hosted its annual In-Service Day, which allowed the members a break from their daily duties to come together and share ideas. Chapter Chair John Cadero and his officers developed the agenda.

CCCTU President Perry Buckley discussed a variety of topics affecting educational related personnel in the state of Illinois. “The average teacher pension is $42,000. You pay 9.5% of your paycheck to SURS and .9 of 1% to CIP. We have done our part yet it seems fashionable these days to blame state employees for the mess created downstate.”

Regarding the upcoming election for the Triton’s Board of Trustees, Buckley stated that Local 1600 will endorse the candidates chosen by Cadero.

Classified Chapter Chair Missy Cabrera and Faculty Chair Stu Sikora. Buckley also commended Cadero for his solid leadership representing his constituency downtown.

Triton’s Mid-Managers “all scream for ice cream” during the afternoon break.

Triton Classified

Representing Local 1600 are V.P. Classified Rose Marie Sakanis and Legal Counsel Brenda Pryor. Chapter leaders are Missy Cabrera and Minerva McLaren.

The biennial Triton Classified In-Service Day saw record attendance of over 100. CCCTU President Perry Buckley was on hand to remind the members what a great job Chapter Chair Missy Cabrera is doing on their behalf. He also spoke to the importance of staffers as the face of the college. Buckley brought those in attendance up-to-date on downstate pension issues.

Local 1600 Legal Counsel Brenda Pryor gave a stirring presentation on “Tips and Traps for Union Members,” stressing proper documentation, one’s right to representation, damaging evidence and social media.

Morton Classified

At the Morton College Classified Association meeting, Chapter Chair Tim Visk announced that despite his early retirement from Morton College, he will stay on as the chapter chair through the end of his term. In order to do so, he will join the Local 1600 Retiree Chapter.

Legislative Chair Bill Naegle and Legal Counsel Brenda Pryor provided timely updates. Naegle focused on pensions. He noted that Illinois opted to have a pension system for public employees so as to not have to pay the 6.75% contribution to the Social Security System. “Our legislators have failed us by not contributing for the last 40 years.” He urged all to contact their state representatives and senators immediately and daily. “The richest 6% can outspend us but they can’t out-vote us.”

Pryor urged the membership to protect themselves by contacting the union in case of a disciplinary issue. “Remember your Weingarten Rights and get union representation.”

Union leaders enjoying a moment together are: Bill Naegle, Tim Visk and Brenda Pryor. Standing are: Michael Kott, Karen Piest, Eric Porod, Richie Pawlak, Diana Rodriguez and Ruben Ruiz.
Helpful Tips from “Aunt Brenda”

By Brenda D. Pryor, Esq.

Dear Union Brothers & Sisters,

I am writing to you today with some tips on how to successfully navigate the treacherous wilderness also known as the community college campus. Many of your fellow Union members are being seriously disciplined, and even terminated, for several common mistakes that seem to keep occurring, despite the Union’s best efforts. I want to let you know how not to make the same mistakes.

Tip #1: Trust, But Verify! We have had a number of employees who have run into trouble when it is discovered that they are in violation of college processes or procedures, but have done so at the behest of a supervisor. Unfortunately, many of these people have still been seriously disciplined. It is not a good defense to say: “I was just following orders!” As a college employee, you are tasked with knowing, understanding, and following college policies and procedures.

Tip #2: Keep the Safety On. Another problem that we keep running into is Union members who know they are on their supervisor’s radar in a negative way. For whatever reason, some insist on getting into trouble and hoping that we can save them. That is about as smart as handing a loaded gun to someone with the safety off and hoping for the best. If you’ve been talked to or written up for any reason, you need to keep your nose clean. Come to work on time; complete your assignments on time and according to stated specifications. Have a pleasant attitude. Don’t leave work early, and don’t overuse your sick time. These are minor infractions that have seen members sent out the door because they’ve already been in trouble for something else. Don’t be that guy/gal!

Tip #3: Weingarten? Weingarten. Weingarten! I keep writing about it, and yet people keep not utilizing their right to Union representation! When you’re called into a meeting with an administrator, you should always request Union representation. I don’t care if you think the administrator is your friend (he/she isn’t!) or that the matter isn’t serious (it is!). The right to representation kicks in when you want it, so you should always state that you want your rights before saying anything. Weingarten gives the right to respond to an inquiry after speaking with your Union representative first – i.e. you have the right to remain silent. It is always in your best interest to not say anything until you’ve talked to the Union first.

Tip #4: Ignore me at your own peril! Over the last few months, I have had a number of people contact me requesting assistance who have had to admit to me that they have ignored advice given to them by me or their campus Union representative. Don’t be this person! I, and many of your Union representatives, have years of experience in dealing with issues of a contractual and disciplinary nature. While you are likely a very intelligent individual, sometimes you don’t know all of the rules and processes in play in a given situation. It behooves you to listen to us NOW to prevent problems later.

For example, recently a faculty member was so angry about being written up that he or she wanted to go into their disciplinary meeting and admit to insubordination. This person had to be informed by me that insubordination, no matter how minor, is a “termination-eligible” infraction even on the first offense. Without my advice, this person would likely have been fired for an offense that eventually ended in a written warning.

In the end, the Union can only do so much in keeping you employed. Please take this opportunity to institute best practices for yourself in the workplace. Confirm what you are doing is correct. Don’t give them a reason to fire you. Utilize your Weingarten rights. Finally, take my advice. Or you can feel free to just keep ignoring me, and I’m sure I’ll be seeing you soon!

SAVE THE DATE!
The CCCTU Annual Banquet will be on Friday, August 31. Check the CCCTU website for details this summer!
Communications Training: “You Are the Message!”

Ever since he was elected in 2004, President Perry Buckley has insisted that the next generation of union leaders be prepared for the challenges of the future. To that end the CCCTU biannual training and leadership conferences have been the norm. Besides bimonthly Executive and House of Representative meetings, the training of current and future leaders has been on the union’s front burner.

On April 14, 61 members of Local 1600 gathered on a Saturday to prepare for their future as union representatives. The theme of this year’s CCCTU Spring Training Conference was “You are the message.” The agenda, prepared by Assistant to the President Randy Barnette, revolved around communication both with the membership and the media. After Barnette welcomed the capacity crowd at the IFT headquarters in Westmont, IL, V.P. Suburban David Richmond introduced the leaders of Local 1600 and presented the morning’s agenda.

The first session of the day, entitled “You are the Message,” was chaired by Lloyd Betourney of the “Principle of the Public Response Group.” Among other issues, Betourney presented media bloopers of candidates who made major gaffes during the interviews while stressing the importance of preparedness. “Don’t try to wing it. The media is trained to press the right buttons.”

The theme, “You are the message,” encapsulates the importance of realizing that when each individual speaks on an issue in public, he or she is not only representing himself or herself but also the local union and, by extension, all educational unions. The general public and viewing/listening audience doesn’t distinguish between spokespersons and their titles; we are all painted with the same broad brush. V.P. CCC Rochelle Robinson-Dukes then chaired a panel discussion with chapter leaders who have had success with member communications, both in electronic and print form. V.P. Classified Rose Marie Sakanis, Wright Chair Linda Murphy, MXC Chair William Stewart, and MVAFO Chair Robin Meade discussed best practices in getting the word out to their membership as well as identifying who the new hires are, both faculty and professionals.

Those in attendance then broke off into various discussion groups to prepare to face the media in a mock interview sessions. The topics included pensions, employee discipline and a strike. This is when the fun began. The group spokespersons were under fire having to face members of the media in a barrage of questioning. The mock press conferences were videotaped, viewed, evaluated and adjudicated by the conference attendees.

Before lunch and adjournment, Barnette recognized the assistance of new Staff Assistant Audrey Jonas in preparing this conference.

In a mock “Meet the Press,” MV Chair Delwyn Jones defends public employees while the “media,” played by Rochelle Robinson-Dukes, Randy Barnette, Bill Naegele and Lloyd Betourney, attack.

Sixty-one CCCTU members gave up their Saturday on Apr. 14 to polish their leadership skills representing you, the members of Local 1600.
SCHOLARSHIP BANQUETS

Editor’s note: In keeping with an annual spring tradition, eight (8) chapters awarded scholarships to deserving students. Those chapters are: Wright (4/13), Truman (4/19), Harper Pro-Tech (4/20), Kennedy-King (4/26), Daley (5/3), Oakton (5/4), Harold Washington (5/4), Olive-Harvey (5/8) and Triton Faculty (5/10; see page 14). Additionally, a number of chapters honored retirees and distinguished professors during the ceremonies. All stories of the events are posted on the website (ccctu.org) and photos can be found by following the links to SmugMug. Below are photos and captions at each event.

Local 1600 Chapters Give Generously

Scholarship Committee Chair Maria Jaskot-Inclan introduces scholarship winner Bridget Basan as her nominating professor, Doris Espiritu, applauds her success.

Truman Chapter Chair Tony Johnston thanks Elizabeth Lehl with a labor leadership award for her years of service to the chapter.

Barbara Singer (left) presents the Harper Pro/Tech Good Student Scholarship to Thomas Storey. Chapter Chair Margie McGowan looks on.

KKC Scholarship Committee Chair Corey Hall presents a $500 check to KKC student William Brown.

Wright College Chapter Chair Linda Murphy went all-out for the 40th Annual Scholarship Luncheon.

A crowd of Truman scholarship winners is leavened by V. P. CCC Rochelle Robinson-Dukes (left), President Perry Buckley (back row, left) and Chapter Chair Tony Johnston (back row, right).

V.P. Suburban David Richmond discusses the state of Harper Pro-Tech contract negotiations at the chapter meeting on Apr. 20.

KKC Professor Emeritus Audrey Turner catches up with President Perry Buckley.

Visit the CCCTU website: ccctu.org
Standing from left: Daley Chapter Chair Todd Lakin, Scholarship Chair Don Koss and President Perry Buckley addressing the scholarship winners.

CCCTU Treasurer Don Radtke, Daley Scholarship Chair Don Koss and Daley Treasurer Alan Gbur all served as treasurer of the Daley Chapter.

V.P. Classified Rose Marie Sakanis, Oakton Chapter Chair Kathleen De Courcey and Senior Systems Administrator Jeff Moro, an advisor to a student club-ULTRA (Universal Laboratory for Technical Resource Alternatives)—chat before the ceremony.

Employee scholars on the top row: Rawnsley Quilapio, Jessica Rubenstein, Amiko Lagrimas, Shraddha Patel and Paul Zurbano; Service Award Committee (seated): Sandy Feldman, Alex Delonis, Leslie Robinson, Lisa Bolinder and Chairman Krissie Harris.

Raffle winner Sunny Serres gets sage advice on what to choose from HWC College Advisor Saed Rihani as HWC Chapter Chair Jesú Estrada looks on.

V.P. CCC Rochelle Robinson-Dukes and Legal Counsel Brenda Pryor share a laugh between courses at the HWC luncheon.

V. P. CCC Rochelle Robinson-Dukes, OHC Asst. Chapter Chair Liza Mohanty and Legal Counsel Brenda Pryor make the afternoon just a little brighter at Olive-Harvey.

President Perry Buckley chats with OHC Chapter Chair Keith Jordan.
City Colleges Labor Leadership Council Holds First General Meeting

On March 10, 2012, the City Colleges Labor Leadership Council held its first general meeting from 10:00-noon at the 208 W. Kinzie, Chicago, office of the Cook County College Teachers Union, AFT Local 1600. Local 1600 President Perry Buckley welcomed the members from the other five locals who service the City Colleges of Chicago.

The following sisters & brothers were present:
• President Delores Withers, AFT Local 1708 (clerks);
• President Mark Freeman, AFSCME Local 3506 (adult education);
• Business Representative Willie English, SEIU Local 73 (janitors);
• President Floyd Bednarz, CCCLOC, IEA (adjunct faculty);
• and Business Representative Jim King and Steward Harvey Harris, IBEW Local 1220 (Channel 20 engineers).

A total of 36 union members were present from the six different locals.

CCCTU members present included Legislative Chair Bill Naegle, Asst. to President Joe Mustari, Todd Lakin (Daley College), Web Manager Bob Blackwood, Keith Jordan (Olive-Harvey College), Grievance Chair Chuck Mustari, Linda Murphy (Wright College), William Stewart (Malcolm X College), Maria Estrada (Washington College), V. P. Classified Rose Sakanis, V. P. CCC Rochelle Robinson-Dukes and Tony Johnston (Truman College).

Buckley encouraged each City College to develop a local leadership council among all different union locals represented at each college. He noted he met with CCCLOC last year, and it had enhanced communication greatly. That is why he asked for members to attend this March 10 meeting from as many City Colleges of Chicago as were possible from each local.

Freeman reminded all present that it was necessary for everyone to work together in the future. Every union must receive support from the other unions.

Buckley, AFT 1600, informed the members present that he has offered to negotiate directly with Chancellor Cheryl Hyman in the near future to see if an extension of the current contract can be accomplished with very limited negotiating issues. If that is not possible, he will open negotiations toward the end of the 2012-2013 school year as provided in the contract.

Buckley explained that the relationship with the CCC administration, and especially Chancellor Hyman, has been steadily improving over the past year. “The chancellor keeps us informed, meets with us regularly, and helps solve some of our more important problems,” said Buckley. “I am guardedly optimistic that an early contract might actually be possible with the Chancellor’s involvement.”

He also noted how helpful CFL President Jorge Ramirez can be on supporting any union’s issues throughout Chicagoland.

Harvey Harris (IBEW 1220) reported on the current concerns of the engineers of Channel 20 TV, which is managed by the City Colleges of Chicago. He received suggestions from other union leaders.

The union members from these six different locals finished their exchanges of information and pledges of support at quitting time, high noon. The thought expressed was that solidarity among unions was not just an ideal, but something that they all would work toward together to achieve as the days pass and contracts require negotiations.
OFFICER REPORTS

In Sickness and in Health: Know Your Rights on FMLA

By Rochelle Robinson-Dukes, Vice President, CCC

This time six years ago, I was pregnant with my son and on maternity leave. The Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) enabled me to take the six-week maternity leave, using sick days for pay. Luckily, I took this leave in 2006. Prior to 1993, if you were absent due to your illness or your child’s illness, you could be fired for that reason alone. FMLA was created for employees with serious medical conditions, those who cared for a spouse, child, or parent, or those who became new parents from natural birth or adoption. In 2008, the government extended FMLA to people enlisted in the military.

People working in all public agencies and education institutions, whether public or private, are covered under FMLA. The employee must have worked 1,250 hours during the year prior to applying for FMLA. The Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993.

Usually to take FMLA leave, one must submit written notice 30 days prior to the actual date of leave. A doctor’s note/statement is required to return to work. This removes the employer from any liability. Simply submitting a request for leave is not a guarantee of attaining one. There are two cases for which leave can be denied: failure of timely notice and waiver of notice. If an employee is negligent in timing of notice or failure of notice, he or she may be denied FMLA.

In some cases, notice can’t be given in advance, such as when one has complications from a pregnancy, a sudden chronic condition (diabetes, migraines, or a heart attack) or a permanent long-term illness (cancer or AIDS).

Even with these clear guidelines available at the Human Resources Department, there is still FMLA abuse. Usually, the employees who abuse FMLA do so in one of two ways: they have episodic absences (such as taking a day off work before and after a holiday weekend) or they claim special case of intermittent leave (claim to have to take a “special needs” child to therapy once a week during work hours, but are really playing in a pool league at a local bar).

Union members must be aware of the requirements for and repercussions of breaking FMLA. For example, if you are not able to return to work after your FMLA time is exhausted, your employment can be terminated; it is legal. Let your union know immediately if your FMLA time will run out before you can come back to work; maybe the union can help.

This is particularly important to employees of the City Colleges where our every move is being monitored in CCC email and by the inspector general. We should not abuse this act. We should use good judgment to avoid pre-disciplinary hearings while caring for ourselves and for our loved ones.
OFFICER REPORTS

The In and Outs of CCCTU Finances: Where Do Your Dues Go?

By CCCTU Treasurer Don Radtke

Many a member has wondered about their payroll deduction for union dues. Where does it go? How does it help? Below is a descriptive summary based on our 2011 finances.

The sum of $2,334,000 was collected from over 5,000 members who work as instructors, professionals, college support staff and security. Each paid .9% of their base salary to CCCTU plus a flat amount that partially paid for their obligation to our union affiliates. We also have 800 retirees contributing $48 a year. Another $195,000 was raised from 1,151 members through voluntary donations for political purposes. A total of $2,529,000 was available to improve and protect our contracts at 23 different chapters located at 14 different colleges.

Nearly 42% or $1,060,000 went to our national, state, and local union affiliates—e.g. the AFT, the IFT, the Chicago Federation of Labor. These affiliates assist CCCTU with best practices in unionism, professional development, legal advice, and political activities in Washington, DC; Springfield; and Cook County.

Next we spent 29% on our chapter operations. A total of $190,000 was used to reimburse your chapter leaders and their chapter’s activities. Another $299,000 was used for CCCTU officers and staff mentoring chapter negotiations and grievances. Furthermore, grievances that were advanced to the local level resulted in another $150,000 being spent for legal defenses. Additional training was offered to chapter members through conferences and workshops totaling $52,000. Finally, $36,000 worth of scholarships was awarded at our 23 chapters to nearly 100 students.

continued on next page
At the local level, 18% or $452,000 of the budget was incurred. The local’s office operations cost $123,000 which gave us a centralized facility for many meetings. Our quarterly newsletter, continually updated website and special mailings are also produced here. Communication activities cost us $108,000. Local’s recruitment efforts to sign up new members and motivate current members cost $64,000. Finally, at this location, administrative and accounting activities resulted in $157,000 in expenditures. Over the history of CCCTU, our careful spending has allowed us to own our office and accumulate a strike fund of over $1,000,000. During this time our credit union was established and offers help to members with loans—especially, if there is a strike.

Politically, we spent 11% or $290,000, all through voluntary contributions from our members. We made 92 donations to local and state candidates. Our lobbying efforts happen throughout the year in Springfield and Cook County. We focus on legislation pertaining to unionism, college funding, education, and pensions. Our political efforts are known throughout the state and admired nationally at the AFT.

As you can tell from this overview, your dues are always working to protect and improve your job security and benefits now and into the future.
END-OF-YEAR PARTIES

Editor’s note: While some chapters utilize their scholarship award banquets and luncheons as an all-encompassing end-of-the-year party, a few chapters celebrate their successful academic year with stand-alone events to say farewell to retirees and to recognize their colleagues’ achievements. This May three chapters held such parties: Moraine Valley Faculty Association’s annual picnic at Pioneer Woods on May 10, Triton College Faculty Association annual luncheon at Villa Brunetti in Franklin Park, also on May 10 and Morton College Faculty’s luncheon at Paisan’s Pizzeria in Berwyn on May 11. The full stories and photos can be found at ccctu.org.

Moraine Valley Faculty Picnic at Pioneer Woods

Maryan Jatczak (center) listens to Ann Marie Renfree (nee Buckley) ask President Perry Buckley about their common surname. It turns out that if they were related, it would be from generations ago in the old country.

While it was a beautiful day at the MVFA picnic, the better seat was outside in the sun and not in the pavilion. Standing is Library Services professor Lee Semmerling.

Triton Faculty at Villa Brunetti

TCFA chapter leaders Lesa Hildebrand, Deb Baker and Stu Sikora greet Local 1600 Assistant to the President Randy Barnette and Legislative Chair Bill Naegele at Villa Brunetti Banquets in Franklin Park for Triton Faculty’s end of year celebration on May 10th.

International Triton student Thang Dang from Vietnam accepts the TCFA Good Student Scholarship from CCCTU President Perry Buckley and Scholarship Committee Chair Sandra Hughes. Hughes recognized Local 1600’s financial commitment to the Triton Scholarship Fund.

Morton Faculty at Paisan’s Pizzeria

CCCTU Grievance Chair Chuck Mustari and Legal Counsel Brenda Pryor enjoy a chuckle with Chapter Chair Dante Orfei.

Morton Faculty Chapter Chair Dante Orfei greets the members that he represents at Paisan’s Pizzeria in Berwyn.

Visit the CCCTU website: ccctu.org
Local 1600 Sends Fantastic Four to PSRP Conference

At the Madison Hotel in Washington, D.C. an informational picket line organized by Unite Here Local 25, AFL-CIO, was held to get the word out on unfair labor practices. “I was concerned about crossing the line,” said Irene Ramirez. “But when I found out that it was just informational, the AFT happily joined with the picketers.”

The AFT Prepares Locals for Community and Student Organizing

On Saturday participants were divided into groups to do role-playing activities. In Group Red, led by Jessica Humphrey, a national rep. for the AFT, Tony Johnston (Truman), Myra Cox (Harold Washington), Margie McGowan (Harper), and Robin Meade (Moraine Valley) talked with U. of Chicago graduate students who were organizing as part of an AFT campaign and with other folks from around the country. The idea was to stress how we should approach community groups and how we should change our union structure, if necessary, to make us more adaptable to new allies and new situations.

In Group Yellow, led by AFT Senior Associate LaToia Jones, a somewhat larger group of our members dealt with people from throughout the country: Tim Visk (Morton), John Cadero (Triton), Dante Orfei (Morton), Legal Counsel Brenda Pryor, Treasurer Don Radtke, William Stewart (Malcolm X), and V.P. CCC Rochelle Robinson-Dukes.

One of the liveliest parts of their training was a role-playing negotiations exercise which took place a bit later in the day. Was it useful? One group certainly thought so. “You realize afterward that what takes place in any conversation like this is an exchange of perceptions,” Stewart said. “After doing this exercise, you have a broader understanding of the techniques and a better way to represent my union’s interests,” Cadero chimed in.
Dear Editor,

My name is Kent Randall. I was an instructor in the Air Conditioning and Refrigeration program at Triton College for ten years until the college made the very controversial decision to close my program. You can imagine my horror watching what I loved, and worked so hard to create, dissipate before my very eyes. In the blink of an eye I went from having one of the most secure careers in America to being unemployed with the prospect of losing everything for which I had worked hard to obtain.

I was surprised when Triton’s union leadership informed me of my right to “retrain” through the faculty negotiated contract. I watched as the union fought tirelessly to protect my rights. In the beginning they fought the terms of my retraining, in the middle they fought for my tuition reimbursement, and in the end they fought for my pay and my re-start date. Today I am doing what I love to do, working as a teacher teaching Speech. I didn’t lose seniority, sick days or pay and, in fact, I received a bump in my salary.

I sincerely want to thank my local chapter leaders, Stu Sikora and Deb Baker, as well as Local 1600 leadership. I trusted that my union would fight for my rights, and it did. If there is a lesson I can pass along to other members it would be to encourage members to become qualified to teach in another area. In the unfortunate event that your program is withdrawn, you can continue to work as a teacher. I didn’t lose much financially while I was unemployed for nine months, and, more importantly, I didn’t lose my teaching career.

I’m glad that I trusted my instincts and the Union.

Thank you!

Triton Faculty member Kent Randall (at left) is grateful that Local 1600 was able to save his job through retraining. Here he is celebrating with Triton Colleagues Jo Beth Halpin and Joe Dusek at the TCFA party at Villa Brunetti Banquets in Franklin Park on May 10.