

The Voice

Part-Time Faculty Association of Allan Hancock College • Parity & Fairness Through Advocacy



ASSIGNMENT RIGHTS!



Another rung up for
part-time faculty

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Moving forward!

MARK JAMES MILLER, PFA President

First, let me apologize for the long delay since our last newsletter. We have been extremely busy working on your behalf. Bargaining, the state budget, and the general business of keeping the local going has been tough and time consuming on our entire executive board. As always, we want our newsletter to be the best it can be, and some things seemed to change so often that getting viable information to you became difficult. But with the start of the new fall semester we now have up-to-date information to pass on to our members to make a newsletter worthwhile.

a stable workforce was in everyone's interest, that if part-time instructors had a reasonable belief that they could expect to be rehired next semester (if classes were available) they would feel more a part of the campus community. At long last the breakthrough came, and we need to take a moment to commend the administration and the board of trustees for being willing to take a risk and be a leader rather than a follower in this area, to be innovative rather than simply standing pat. This was courageous on their part and we in the executive board wish to acknowledge that.

al AFT Communications Network Competition, *The Voice* earned four awards: First Place for General Excellence, First Place for Best Profile, First Place for Best Organizing Materials, and First Place for Best Design/Layout. The judges commented: "Layouts are inviting, stories are well written and concise—every one has a beginning, a middle and an end. First-class work!"

So once again, congratulations to our newsletter committee: Dorran Nadeau, Gary Aston, Susan Case, Vivian Bryan, Roberto Armstrong and Mark James Miller.

Please see **Benefits**, page 3

This was the culmination of ten years' of hard work, dedication, and effort. [The Agreement] contains the most comprehensive and far-reaching rehire rights for any part-time local in California.

Reopeners Completed

At last we have concluded the 2009–2010 contract reopeners. Your bargaining team and your executive board agree that what we have negotiated in Article 12, Workload, Assignment, and Support Services, contains the most comprehensive and far-reaching rehire rights for any part-time local in California. When all the sections of the new article go into effect (and some are delayed due to the implementation of the new IFAS and Banner computer systems) credit instructors at Allan Hancock College will have true seniority rights.

This was the culmination of ten years' of hard work, dedication, and effort. When we originally began collective bargaining in 2000, seniority rights for part-time faculty was at the top of our proposals. The district's representatives reacted as if we had suggested they all jump into a school of sharks. "We can't give up our flexibility!" they cried. "It would be an administrative nightmare!" Year after year we kept at it, patiently explaining over and over that true rehire rights would benefit everyone, that

The contract amendments have been ratified by our membership by a 98% yes vote. You will soon be able to view them on our Web site.

Entire Agreement Negotiation

The entire collective bargaining agreement is up for negotiation this year. Bargaining will probably start in November. If there is anything in our current contract that you as a member think should be changed or improved, please let us know as soon as you can. As always, we seek direction from you, our members, when it comes to improving our contract.

More Newsletter Honors

At the annual California Federation of Teachers Convention this past March our newsletter, *The Voice*, once again was honored in the competition for CFT's Communications Awards. For the second year in a row *The Voice* won First Place for Best Newsletter (4 page). We also won First Place for Best Flyer, and Honorable Mentions for Best Art and Best Use of Graphics. Then, at the annu-

The Voice

Volume 13, Number 1

The Voice is published by the Part-Time Faculty Association of Allan Hancock College, Local 6185, California Federation of Teachers, American Federation of Teachers, AFL-CIO. The PFA's goal is to attain respect, achieve parity, and improve working conditions for our bargaining unit members.

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PFA awards third annual \$500 scholarship

Hearty congratulations to Jessica Mayhugh, our 2010 recipient of the annual AHC Part-Time Faculty scholarship. Vivian Bryan and Joan Mahony shared time with Jessica and her parents, Gary and Laura Mayhugh, and grandmother, Phyllis Fox, at the scholarship banquet in May. Her grandmother proudly informed us that Jessica is her first grandchild to graduate from college.

Here at AHC, Jessica has delved into many majors such as engineering, architecture, math, English, and art before settling on her current major in anthropology. She'll be exploring Irish culture via an international summer studies program at Queen's University in Belfast, Northern Ireland in July. Jessica plans to continue her education at UCSB in 2011 and hopes to use her degree to benefit people, especially desperately poor people in the United States.

In addition to her studies, Jessica rounds out her life with a full-time job, is an avid tutor in math, English and anthropology, and finds time to spend with her family and boyfriend.

— JOAN MAHONY



Jessica Mayhugh (Right), recipient of the PFA's third annual scholarship, with PFA board members Joan Mahony (Left) and Vivian Bryan (Center).

AFT Benefits Programs

Continued from page 2

One of the advantages of being a member of the AFT is the access to the many benefits the AFT provides for its members. Among these are low-cost medical and catastrophic medical insurance, legal services, credit counseling, home refinancing—the list goes on. I can personally attest that these benefits are worthwhile checking out. You can request a brochure by contacting our office.

Personal Stories Wanted

We all know it is one thing to read about something in the abstract, and another to read how it has impacted a real human being. Putting a human face on a story can change it from a mere article to an event that we can relate with. Reading about how many teachers have lost their jobs due to the state budget crisis is one thing; reading about how the loss of a job has forced a teacher

into poverty makes the story real. This is why we would like to hear from you. If you have a personal story about being a part-time instructor at Allan Hancock College that you think would be of interest to others, please contact our office by e-mailing ahcpfa@verizon.net. I can't guarantee we will print your story but I promise it will be given all due consideration.

ACR 138

From www.cft.org, September 2010

After a lengthy process involving the education of Legislators by CFT lobbyists and members regarding the growing role of part-time temporary faculty in the community college system, the state Legislature adopted Assembly Concurrent Resolution 138. ACR 138 expresses the intent of the Legislature that "part-time and temporary faculty receive pay and benefits that are equal to those of

specified tenured and tenure-track faculty, to the extent funding is provided, and that the California Community Colleges increase the percentage of tenured and tenure-track faculty."

Although not binding, resolutions such as ACR 138 set guidelines for future legislation. ACR 138 is part of a national effort, the Faculty and College Excellence (FACE) Campaign, led by the American Federation of Teachers, to address problems relating to trends in academic employment.

For more information on the FACE Campaign, go to www.aftface.org.

**Freedom to learn is
the first necessity of
guaranteeing that
man himself shall be
self-reliant enough to
be free.**

~ Franklin D. Roosevelt

Focus On: Possible Social Security Pitfalls

BY DORRAN NADEAU

If you have ever worked for an employer that did not withhold Social Security taxes, or will receive a pension from a federal, state or local government based on work where you did not pay Social Security taxes, there are two Social Security provisions that might reduce your Social Security pension amount, or your Social Security spouse's or widow's or widower's benefit. These are the Government Pension Offset provision (GPO) and the Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP). This article will cover how these provisions might affect part-time instructors at AHC by summarizing the pertinent portions of each provision obtained at www.socialsecurity.gov.

Each of these provisions is fairly complex and has exceptions, so it's best that after reading this summary you read the entire article to determine how these provisions will affect you in particular (the Web address for each is given below).

Please note that the PFA is not taking a stance, one way or the other, on these provisions. There are lively debates in Congress and elsewhere on both, but the PFA only wants to make our members aware of these provisions so they can plan their retirement with all the facts at hand.

The PFA thanks George Torbert, a part-time ESL instructor, for bringing these two provisions to our attention.

Government Pension Offset provision

Part-time instructors at AHC are subject to this provision, because the pension received is based on work where no Social Security taxes were withheld. Under the GPO provision, your Social Security *dependent's benefits* will be reduced by two-thirds of your government pension. Note that this doesn't affect *your* benefits, but affects any spouse's, widow's or widower's benefits that you might receive. For example, say you will receive a monthly pension of \$600 from AHC. Two-thirds of this, or \$400, must be deducted from your Social Security dependent's benefits. If you are eligible for a \$500 monthly spouse's widow's or widower's benefit, you would receive \$100 per month instead (\$500 - \$400 = \$100).

Government Rationale

These benefits were established in the 1930s to compensate spouses who stayed at home to raise a family and were therefore financially dependent on the working spouse, whereas today it is more common that both work and will earn his or her own benefit. The law always required that a person's benefit as a spouse, widow or widower be offset dollar for dollar by his or her own benefit. However, until 1977 when the GPO provision was enacted, for a government employee who did not pay into Social Security, there was no offset; the government employee would collect his or her full dependent's benefits in addition to a government pension. This provision ensures that government employees who do not pay Social Security taxes will be treated in a similar manner to those in the private sector who do pay Social Security taxes.

For further information on the GPO see: <http://ftp.ssa.gov/pubs/10007.pdf>.

Windfall Elimination Provision

Part-time instructors at AHC are also subject to this provision, because Social Security taxes are not withheld from their salary. Under WEP, a modified formula is used to calculate your benefit amount, which could result in a reduced amount. While the amount of reduction is not hard to calculate, it is based on several factors and exceptions that will vary

If you have less than 30 years of earnings that qualify, you will be receiving less than you expect.

from person to person, so only a general example can be given here (see the Web address below for the Windfall Elimination provision article that contains the following example, along with a detailed discussion of how any reduction is calculated).

The reduction is based primarily on the number of years you had "substantial" earnings, which ranges from \$900 prior to 1955 to \$19,800 in 2009-2010. If you have less than 30 years of "substantial" earnings, what Social Security calls the "90 percent factor" is reduced; for 20 years or less this factor is reduced to 40 percent. Without going into the specif-



ics, a person retiring at 62 in 2010 with 20 years or less of "substantial earnings" would have his or her total benefit reduced by \$380.50.

The important point here is that if you have less than 30 years of earnings that qualify, **you will be receiving less than you expect.**

Government Rationale

Social Security benefits are intended to replace a percentage of a worker's pre-retirement earnings, and, benefits are calculated so that lower-paid workers get a higher return than highly-paid workers (an average of 55% to 25%, respectively). Before WEP was passed in 1983, those with jobs not covered by Social Security had their benefits calculated as if

they were long-term, low-wage workers, thereby receiving a Social Security benefit representing a higher percentage of their earnings on top of a pension from a job where they did not pay Social Security taxes. Congress passed WEP to remove that advantage.

For more information on WEP see <http://ftp.ssa.gov/pubs/10045.pdf>.

More Information

Lastly, on the www.socialsecurity.gov site you can search on GPO and WEP to find general and detailed calculators for each, and a wealth of other information.