

SPRING 2024 VOLUME 2

AFT GUILD 1931

Standing in Solidarity, Building Our Community



BUILDING OUR COMMUNITY

Larissa Dorman-Cobb
Organizer/Trainer

AFT Guild, Local 1931 Members,

We have had such an amazing spring so far!!

From our LOVE OUR UNION Valentine's Day events on every campus to our Contract Q&A sessions to our Adjunct Day of Action and our many opportunities for professional development, we have seen so many of our members come out in support and to build community with their colleagues!

There are so many ways to get engaged and involved. We have an updated website (aftguild.org) which includes all of our union committees, a union leadership page to help you find your campus representatives and campus coordinators and our events page which has all the remaining events for this semester! Two upcoming events (one of them happening tomorrow) that we want to highlight this month are below. Get your tickets today: <https://aftguild.org/events>

In Solidarity,
Larissa Dorman-Cobb~aftlarissa@gmail.com



Member Spotlight



ASHLEY BURCH

CITY COLLEGE
NEXTUP PROGRAM SUPPORT TECHNICIAN

I have over 12 years of experience working within California Community Colleges. I moved all over California but graduated from a tiny town in the high desert and worked at Victor Valley Community College prior to coming to San Diego City College. I came to San Diego City College because the mission and values aligned deeply with my own.

I have been at City College for over 6 years, I began in the Office of Student Equity and transitioned to EOPS/NextUp to utilize my equity-mindedness to directly support students. I have been actively engaged in the Pride Hub, Lavender Graduation, City Women Rock, District and Regional Queer Alliance, Social Justice Committee, safe zone trainings and advocating for students. I hold a BA in Gender, Ethnicity, Multicultural Studies and an MA in Education with a concentration in College Counseling and Student Development.

My favorite moments at City are organizing the first Lavender Graduation to celebrate the success of LGBTQ+ students and watching students growth from the time they enroll in college to their graduation.

I am so grateful to be a part of such an amazing union, being part of the union means never being alone and always having someone to turn to when I need help!

I'm proud of our union for fighting for a 32 hour work week! A 32 hour work week would help every aspect of my life – my mind, body and spirit. It would give me a better work life balance and allow me to have time to maintain friendships, my health, my home, and have time to do things I enjoy like go to the beach or read.



Soon-Ah Fadness
Professional Development Coordinator



Hello from the AFT Professional Development program!

I want to thank each and every one of you for your emails, your suggestions, and most of all for your support for the events that we offer. This is my first year in this role and your attendance and the feedback and suggestions you give are so appreciated. Thank you!

In May, our mentors & mentees will gather to celebrate a year of new experiences, insights and professional growth. Our Leadership 101 cohort will also gather for their final workshop on Leading Restoratively. But even though the semester is drawing to a close, we still have events for you to take advantage of. If any (or all!) of the workshops below are of interest to you, put them in your calendar and register for them when the emails are sent out!

- Individual Development Plans (IDP) for Professional and Personal Growth (City College, S 301)
 - Friday, April 12, 11:00 – 12:30
 - Do you keep thinking "I really need to do X for my career" but then don't get started? Then this workshop is tailor made for you! Come and learn what an individual development plan is, how it can help you get started and stay on track in your professional and personal growth, and how to create an IDP.
- Wills & Trusts (City College, BT 301)
 - Tuesday, April 23, 2:00 – 3:30
 - Come and learn about why you need a current will how to financially safeguard your financial estate for your heirs!
- Effective Project Management: Tips, Techniques, and A.I. Insights (CE North City, 212)
 - Wednesday, May 1, 2:00 - 3:30
 - Do you a project you want to complete over your summer break? Join us to learn how to get started on that project, ensure that it is completed, and what tools and resources are available to assist you!

Thank you again and please, keep sending me your feedback, ideas and suggestions!
AFTprofdev@outlook.com.

Cheers~

AFT LOVE OUR UNION SPRING 2024



AFT ADJUNCT DAY OF ACTION





YVONNE SCHMELTZ AFT GUILD MEMBER ADVOCATE

CALLING ALL CLASSIFIED CONTRACT EMPLOYEES:

Want a 32 hour work week? Then we need your support at an upcoming Board of Trustee Meeting!

Our next opportunity will be: Thursday, April 25th at North City Center - College of Continuing Education

Time commitment: over estimation 4-6pm, a more realistic time frame 4:45-5:45pm.

However, as we learned at the last meeting sometimes things take a left turn and demand more waiting time.

Please let us know if you can commit to attending the meeting in support of our proposal.

aftYvonne@gmail.com

Frequently Asked Questions:

Q_Will I be paid the same?

Yes. Same pay with 32 hour work week.

Q_Will this affect my retirement service credits?

No. 1 year of service still equals 1 year of service.

Q_Will this affect vacation or sick leave accrual?

No. Sick leave accrual is 8 hours per month.

Vacation accrual is based on years of service. See Article 10.4 of our contract.

Q_Does this mean the entire District will be closed on Fridays?

No. 32 hours will be considered a full week of work.

It will be up to your Manager/Supervisors to set your schedule.

Q_How does the 32 hour work week affect the remote work policy?

The remote work policy is separate and exists in a separate Article of the contract from the 32 hour work week. While we are advocating that remote work be requested similar to vacation leave, this is separate from the 32 hour work week.

Q_If I'm a 50% contract classified employee, would a 32 hour work week mean that I'm only responsible for 16 hours of work per week instead of 20?

Yes. If you are not a 100% Contract Classified, whatever percentage you are, will be proportionate based on 32 hours being the full time expectation.

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Q_Can my supervisor, or manager, exclude my department from a 32 hour work week?

No. This will be for all AFT Classified Professionals from facilities to front facing student offices, no matter.

Q_Does this mean they will hire more Classified positions for my area?

Not necessarily. It is the District's purview as to what positions they post and recruit for.

Q_What will happen in one person offices or areas?

Schedules are still set by Manager/Supervisor. This means you could work 4 days and close one day of the week, or you could have reduced hours everyday. It is supervisor dependent. Anything over 32 hours worked would be considered over-time.

Q_What does this mean for areas for positions who already work consistent overtime?

While we can't tell the future, it would be a good guess that at some point the District would recognize that it is costing them more to pay you overtime than to hire another Classified professional in your area. Hopefully, appropriate staffing and hiring.

Q_If a 32 hour work week is successful, how can we better hold our Faculty, Supervisors/Managers, and Administrators accountable for timely signatures, turn-in of timecards, paperwork, etc.?

AFT and District HR can both work to offer workshops and professional development for all constituents to ensure payroll input deadlines and paperwork timelines are met, and folks are held accountable to ensure workflow, and appropriate pay.

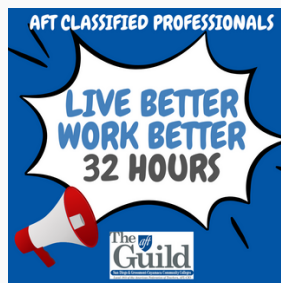
Q_What if my scheduled day off or time off falls on a paid district/legal holiday?

We would still follow our contract for members and holiday pay.

Please read Article 9.3, page 50 of the contract, page 53 of the pdf online.

Q_Where are we at in the process, what is the latest update on when we will start the 32 hour work week?

We're heading to the negotiation table in mid-April to begin the back and forth.



Tina Solorzano Fletcher Organizer & Membership Coordinator



April is our unofficial Member Appreciation month!

We are having two member events this month. Our first gathering is at Punch Bowl Social on April 11 and our second is a family event at Petco Park to cheer on the San Diego Padres on April 28. We'll have an AFT tailgate before the game with food being provided. Be sure to buy your tickets early and enjoy the day at the ballpark!

We have many new members that have joined AFT Guild this semester. I would like to welcome all the new members and thank our members that have assisted the Organizing Department in keeping our Union Strong!



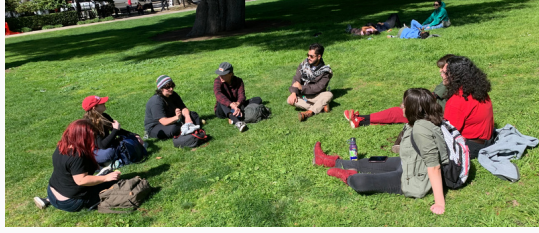


AFT GUILD INTERNS IN ACTION



You can keep up with our amazing interns between newsletters by following @aft1931interns on Instagram.

AFT GUILD INTERNSHIP



All of our interns are GREAT!

There are two events that I'll highlight for the April newsletter because they were big milestones: The March in March, and the panel that interns organized for City College's Social Justice Conference.

AFT locals from across the state worked together to organize the March in March on the 7th in Sacramento. Thousands of students, faculty, and staff traveled to the state capitol to demand that lawmakers put our students first, not only in terms of affordable and quality education, but also for climate justice, affordable housing, part-time faculty rights, and more. 17 interns and three faculty traveled up to Sacramento to be a part of the event, and it was pivotal for our interns. (Especially for one of our interns who had never been on a plane before!) For the first time this semester, a majority of interns were able to spend an entire day together, trouble-shoot difficult situations together, and bond while demanding that their voices be heard. We decided to organize the only Free Palestine contingent that was at the event. Morgan Ault (new intern) did the graphic design for our banner and I lost track of how many marchers asked to take their picture! Our interns marched and chanted with pride, helping our fellow union siblings and the public recognize the interconnectedness of education, economic democracy, and human rights both here and abroad. While some media outlets and main organizers for the march weren't as appreciative of our contingent (especially when it was front and center for the spirited rally in front of the capitol) the rest of our labor community showed us a lot of love and solidarity.

The interns also organized their first panel for City College's Social Justice Conference on March 21st called "Young Workers Unite! Practicing Social Justice Unionism in San Diego." Ximena Valerdi (senior intern) moderated the panel and Cal Byrd (senior intern), Dalia Ramirez (2nd term intern), and a spokesperson from Western Service Workers Association (a pro-labor group that focuses heavily on activated students from across college campuses) talked about why all students (not just the "young" ones!) are so important for movement building for unions and progressive social justice. We had over 25 people in the audience, and half of them signed up to stay connected with the internship. Hopefully a few of them will be joining us as interns next year!

Which reminds me: Fall recruitment has started! If you know a student who is passionate about social justice, please tell them to get in touch with Erin Evans ASAP at erin.evansaft1931@gmail.com and I'll take it from there!



May Day Then and Now: Demanding the Impossible

Today is International Workers Day when we should all remember the folks who brought us the weekend. Rather than a legacy of the former Soviet Union, it is a holiday with deep American roots. In 1886, workers in Chicago called for a General Strike on May 1st, and they vowed not to return to their jobs unless employers agreed to an eight-hour day. While this struggle ended in violence in Haymarket Square and resulted in the unjust execution of several immigrant workers, it must be noted that Americans would never have gotten the basic workplace rights they enjoy today were it not for the radical demands of these early advocates for workers' rights.

While there is much to be said about the significance of the history of May Day and the Haymarket martyrs, what is particularly noteworthy at this moment in time is that what we now consider basic rights were once radical demands that the robber barons of the first Gilded Age fought with everything they had. But what the workers in the eight-hour day movement were struggling for was not just the bread and butter demands that took center stage, but the even more daring idea that ordinary working people should have a role to play in American life and the accompanying notion that economic rights were central to a real, thoroughgoing democracy.

During this earlier period of American history, unionists, populists, and others who believed in small "d" democracy were disturbed by the accumulation of vast wealth and political power by the very rich who they compared to King George, while framing their struggle as one of "wealth versus commonwealth." The answer to this was to build a union movement and push for a government that represented the people, not just the rich and the emerging corporate lords of the American economy. The kind of concentrated power they saw building was the central obstacle to real democracy and the ability of working people to have any dignity and autonomy in the workplace and/or voice in the political arena.

One does not need to read Thomas Piketty's *Capital in the 21st Century* to see the obvious parallels to our own age in this history. But what, in our new Gilded Age, can workers, unions, and others who are concerned with the current, dangerous level of economic inequality and subsequent failing health of American democracy do to contest it?

One big, very encouraging thing is already happening as support for unions is surging across the country, with American approval of labor unions now at the highest level it has been for decades. This new enthusiasm for unions, however, will not be sufficient on its own unless it is accompanied by persistent efforts at the local, state, and national levels to break down the legal, economic, and political barriers to organizing. The desire to have a union is not enough if we continue to allow employers to undermine what should be a basic human right.

Another task lies inside the labor movement and the progressive community as a whole: develop and grow a larger sense of solidarity. Just as the old Knights of Labor had a broad view of who a "producer" was, the contemporary labor movement needs to enlarge its circle, support community allies, and commit to a deep social justice unionism that incorporates the concerns of all working people whether they are fortunate enough to be in a union or not. Those outside the labor movement also need to understand how a progressivism that ignores economics and/or undermines unions is not, in fact, progressive. We also need to think beyond nationalism and realize that since capital has no borders neither should social movements.

Finally, we need to remember, as the folks who struggled for the eight-hour day did, that class matters. The historic level of economic inequality we now face is a not just an obstacle to unionization, it is a threat to democracy itself. Racial, gender, and other forms of inequality intersect with and are exacerbated by deep economic inequities. The rich and the corporate sector are also by far the biggest contributors to catastrophic climate change and can better insulate themselves from its dire effects.

Consequently, if we want to win the future, we need to talk about redistributing wealth openly and honestly through progressive taxation and roll back the top-down class war that has obscenely concentrated wealth at the top over the last several decades. Progressive labor should also start discussing things like a universal basic income, a shorter work week, and more flexible arrangements on the job. Unions need to include things like housing, transportation, and childcare in negotiations. It's also important that a more robust social safety net be part of what worker justice means in an era where there may be less work and more unemployment and inequality due to technological disruption of many traditional jobs. We need a new kind of workplace that puts humans first and moves beyond grind culture to a better quality of life for everyone in every sector of the economy.

In sum, be bold. As the old labor song put it when no one thought it possible, "We mean to make things over."

-Jim Miller