

# **UNION SPOTLIGHT**

AFT Washington, AFL-CIO

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Fall 2014



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**Large photo:** AFT Washington members and field reps join other unions to reach out to voters. Front row: Amy Yount (4th from left), Back row: Jim Howe, Local 3533 president (5th from left). Photo by Labor's Voice.

**Inset:** Political Field Reps Renee Ambacher, Marc Seligson, Amy Yount, and Gus Voss.

# October “BOT Blitz”

by Dr. Bernal C. Baca, Lobbyist

**C**ollege and school campuses are full of the hustle and bustle of students again. AFT Washington has kicked off an action designating the month of October as the “October Board of Trustees (BOT) Blitz.”

The purpose of the “October BOT Blitz” is for your local to make a report to your trustees about faculty compensation (or lack thereof!).

Did you know that the community and technical college boards of trustees have the legal authority to spend, borrow, lease, and incur debt **on everything except for faculty step increases**? Why? Because RCW 28B.52.035 designates only the State Legislature can provide appropriations for salary increases.

AFT Washington has introduced a faculty compensation bill for years, and every year it has been opposed by your trustees through their Trustees Association. Together with the State Board for Community and Technical Colleges and the Freedom Foundation, the trustees manage to “kill” our bill to allow bargaining for local funds by testifying against it at public hearings and lobbying legislators to oppose it. We are uncertain whether the local trustees fully understand what they are voting against.

With that in mind, AFT Washington would like each faculty local to educate their trustees about how this affects faculty on their campus.

For example, at each BOT presentation, your local can use the following impact statements along with a personal story to illustrate the impacts:

1. Providing a variety of funding sources for step increases will help recruit and retain high-quality faculty and capitalize on their wealth of knowledge and the teaching excellence they gain through professional development and experience.
2. Rewarding faculty for teaching excellence will benefit our higher education system and the overall learning experience of students.
3. It's good for students. Passing this legislation will recognize faculty who work hard to improve their profession and to provide the best academic experience for their students.

**Will you help us get the word out about the BOT Blitz?** In the last couple of weeks we sent letters out to all Local presidents with a toolkit for doing this blitz. You may be asked to participate in this initiative, and we hope you will.

The bottom line is for faculty to ask each BOT to advocate and support the Local Bargaining Bill when it is introduced to the State Legislature in the 2015 session.

Other legislative priorities for the 2015 session are:

- Getting a COLA increase.
- Education budget transparency and accountability.
- Paraeducator professional development and standards.
- Converting more part-time faculty positions to full-time positions.
- McCleary decision funding.

## AFT Washington Executive Board

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**Janet Watson**

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Board meetings are usually held on the first Saturday of the month except for holidays and summer months. Board members are elected to two-year terms.

AFT Washington represents over 6,500 members in early childhood education, K-12, and higher education in Washington State and is affiliated with the American Federation of Teachers, which represents 1.5 million members nationwide.

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Karen Strickland

## President's Column

# How Will You Reclaim the Promise?

**G**reetings all! I hope your school year has begun with all the promise education has to offer. Of course, we are all well aware of the damage done and threats to that promise. This summer, I attended the AFT convention, the Washington State Labor Council (WSLC) convention, and our Northwest Leadership Forum. All three offered the hope of the promise we offer our communities, and the knowledge, ideas, and skills for reclaiming the promise of public education. My summer was topped off in September with AFT Washington's Executive Board/Local Presidents/Staff retreat.

**Reverend Dr. William Barber**, who began "Moral Mondays" in North Carolina, called attention to the rhetoric and lip service paid to the American Dream in contrast to the reality our members, students, families, and communities face in their daily lives. When he spoke at the AFT convention, his powerful speech contained a few nuggets that struck me and stuck with me:

- "It is not 'their power' – it is **our disorganization**" that limits our success in reclaiming the promise!
- We need to "hook up" around an **agenda based on hope**, not fear and create a **fusion coalition**!!
- The "soul of the nation" is at stake!!!

The Reverend's words demand acknowledgement of our losses as educators and workers and recognition that our success at adaptation is contrary to a thriving democracy. How, then, do we reclaim the promise?

### Get organized and disciplined –

Our retreat was all about becoming a more effective and powerful organization. We gained clarity as to what our members, leaders, and state federation need for success, identifying four focus areas: increasing participation and activism among membership, identifying and developing leaders, maintaining accurate data and effective communication, and engaging new hires and agency feepayers. Attention to these nuts and bolts will result in being better equipped to fight back, and then fight forward to achieve our goals.

### A fusion coalition –

The Reverend Barber called on us to erase arbitrary boundaries and seize upon common ground. It seems so obvious, and yet sometimes the easiest path is to remain isolated and do "our own thing."

We are planning a summit with higher education stakeholders – students, staff, faculty, and community organizations – to address defunding of public education and its consequences. We are building on the hope we share, rather than the fear, disillusionment, and despair that will further undermine the promise of education. (See pg. 8 for event details.)

**"It is not 'their power' – it is our disorganization that limits our success in reclaiming the promise." – Rev. Barber**

The speakers, workshops, and resolutions at the WSLC convention also reflected a fusion coalition around immigration reform, human rights for people in the transgender community, farmworkers' rights, healthcare for everybody, and more. Our unified voice calling for fairness, human rights, and democracy helps pave a path to gains for all.

### The soul of our nation –

As my kids faced "character-building" moments in their teen years, I asked them "what kind of person do you want to be?" The question echoes inside me when I look at the attacks on working people and education over the last several years. Is this the society we **want** to be? Really?

Right now we're at a critical juncture, and the soul of our state is in grave danger. Our governor asked state agencies, including colleges and universities, to show what a 15 percent cut would look like. Some refused, most went along with the exercise, paving the way for cuts the

State Legislature will claim are needed to fund the

McCleary decision.

As The Reverend Barber insists, we are not powerless. In fact, AFT Washington is part of an organized fusion coalition built on hope, whose goals are realized through action. I am working with other union and community leaders to ensure a broad, united front — we may even

(Continued on pg. 8)

# Early learning initiatives on Seattle ballot limit voters' choices

by Dorothy Gibson, Organizing Director

**S**eattle families are facing a child care crisis. There's a revolving door of providers who can't afford to stay in the profession because of low wages. The children are negatively impacted by not having a consistent caregiver.

AFT Washington has been working for many years in concert with early educators to build an organization and a united voice. Most recently, we have been working with SEIU 925 in a partnership called **KidsFirst** to pass legislation in Seattle to support early educators.

Based on conversations with leaders in the field, faculty, community



members, and our experience in working on this for nearly 20 years, we developed a proposal for an infrastructure for the city's early learning system that brings together community voices, creates an opportunity for a different kind of provider organization, and puts everyone at the table with the city leadership to work together to ensure all our children have access to high-quality, affordable early learning from birth through before-and-after school care.

At the same time we were developing our proposal, the city announced its intention to create a preschool program in Seattle. We were intrigued by the prospect of working with them to develop a comprehensive program for all kids. This was not to be. Despite months of conversation, the city could not see its way clear to expand its vision beyond supporting a very narrow band of

three- to four-year-olds in a very top-down model that was developed with little input from the community. They forced us into a situation where rather than coming together to build a high-quality, accessible system that ensures community support and involvement, voters have to choose between the citizens' initiative and their plan.

Who knew that the prospect of hearing the voices of talented, committed, hard-working, low-income, mostly women, would be so threatening to the powers that be?

Especially in a city as progressive as Seattle is purported to be. For those of us who have

been a part of the labor movement for any length of time, we know that change is hard and that those with power do not share it willingly.

So, what now? Our members and leaders remain committed to passing Prop 1A in order to ensure that all children have access to high-quality care and that early educators begin to have a wage and the respect they deserve as professionals.

## Why I'm active in my union



Lisa Beach, Clover Park Technical College Professional Staff Local 6431

**T**here are a number of reasons members get involved in their union. For new leader, Lisa Beach, it was because of the struggle to finalize their first contract after nearly five years.

"Initially I joined the negotiations team, and a few months later was elected the local president. I felt I brought a unique perspective. It was important to me that the relationship between the union and management become more positive and mutually beneficial, with the goal of a first contract that reflected the membership's interests. Our first contract was signed July 11, 2014."



*In her spare time, Lisa enjoys her Golden Retriever, Tango, the WSU Cougars, and her job of 22 years and counting!*



Amy Kinsel, president of Shoreline CC Faculty Local 1950, spoke at a press conference on I-594 to require background checks for guns purchased online or at gun shows. AFT Washington has endorsed this initiative because it will help ensure that a background check is conducted for every gun purchase, not only those from licensed dealers.



# Elections Matter

by Kristin Elia, Political Organizer

**T**he August primary is behind us and AFT Washington is hard at work on November's general election. Every two years, our members have an opportunity to make sure that we hold legislators accountable. **Our collective voice will help elect those who are going to be champions that invest in strong communities, build a strong working-class economy, and create a better future for Washington.**

That's why our Committee on Political Education (COPE) worked diligently to develop questionnaires that helped us determine which candidates will be those champions and which will not.

**Every candidate running for office is invited to participate in our endorsement process, no matter their party affiliation.** If candidates choose not to fill out the questionnaire, they are not considered for endorsement. Through a process of staff and committee review and evaluation, we recommend candidates who share our values and vision.

**These endorsements are about policy, not partisanship;** they are about which candidates are going to head to Olympia and fight for fully funding our education system at all levels, to protect working families, and to build a strong economy that can support our growing communities. We believe members should have the information needed to make informed decisions.

The candidates who become legislators and go to Olympia in January will make very real decisions about what we prioritize in Washington State. Will we see another two years of kicking the can down the road on **fully funding education**? Will we watch big corporations receive tax breaks while our members go without **proper compen-**

**sation and resources**? Will we witness continued **attacks on working families** at the hands of those who would like to quiet our collective voice?

When it comes to supporting education, working families, and strong communities, we believe these endorsements stand true. The decision is yours. **Don't forget to send your ballot in by November 4<sup>th</sup>!**

## General Election Endorsements

### US Congress

**1st CD:** Suzan DelBene  
**3rd CD:** Bob Dingethal  
**8th CD:** Jason Ritchie  
**9th CD:** Adam Smith

### Ballot Initiatives

**Yes** on Initiative 594 (Gun Safety)  
**Yes** on Initiative 1351 (Class Size)

### State Legislature

**1st LD:** Derek Stanford (House Pos. 1)  
**2nd LD:** Greg Hartman (House Pos. 1)  
**3rd LD:** Marcus Riccelli (House Pos. 1) and Timm Ormsby (House Pos. 2)  
**5th LD:** Essie Hicks (House Pos. 1)  
**6th LD:** Rich Cowan (Senate)  
**8th LD:** Larry Halder (House Pos. 2)  
**11th LD:** Zack Hudgins (House Pos. 1)  
**15th LD:** Gabriel Muñoz (Senate)  
**17th LD:** Monica Stonier (House Pos. 1)  
**18th LD:** Mike Briggs (House Pos. 1) and Maureen Winningham (House Pos. 2)  
**19th LD:** Brian Blake (House Pos. 2)  
**21st LD:** Strom Peterson (House Pos. 1), Lillian Ortiz-Self (House Pos. 2), and Marko Liias (Senate)  
**22nd LD:** Chris Reykdal (House Pos. 1) and Sam Hunt (House Pos. 2)  
**23rd LD:** Sherry Appleton (House Pos. 1) and Drew Hansen (House Pos. 2)  
**25th LD:** Dawn Morrell (House Pos. 1)  
**26th LD:** Nathan Schlicher (House Pos. 1), Larry Seaquist (House Pos. 2), and Judy Arbogast (Senate)  
**27th LD:** Laurie Jenkins (House Pos. 1) and Jake Fey (House Pos. 2)  
**28th LD:** Mary Moss (House Pos. 1), Christine Kilduff (House Pos. 2), and Tami Green (Senate)

**29th LD:** David Sawyer (House Pos. 1) and Steve Conway (Senate)  
**30th LD:** Greg Baruso (House Pos. 1), Roger Freeman (House Pos. 2), and Shari Song (Senate)  
**31st LD:** Pam Roach (Senate)  
**32nd LD:** Cindy Ryu (House Pos. 1) and Maralyn Chase (Senate)  
**33rd LD:** Tina Orwall (House Pos. 1), Mia Gregerson (House Pos. 2), and Karen Keiser (Senate)  
**34th LD:** Joe Fitzgibbon (House Pos. 2) and Sharon Nelson (Senate)  
**35th LD:** Kathy Haigh (House Pos. 1) and Irene Bowling (Senate)  
**36th LD:** Gael Tarleton (House Pos. 2) and Jeanne Kohl-Welles (Senate)  
**37th LD:** Sharon Tomiko Santos (House Pos. 1) and Pramila Jayapal (Senate)  
**38th LD:** June Robinson (House Pos. 1) and Mike Sells (House Pos. 2)  
**39th LD:** Charles Jensen (House Pos. 2)  
**40th LD:** Kris Lytton (House Pos. 1)  
**41st LD:** Tana Senn (House Pos. 1)  
**42nd LD:** Satpal Sidhu (House Pos. 2) and Seth Fleetwood (Senate)  
**43rd LD:** Brady Walkinshaw (House Pos. 1), Frank Chopp (House Pos. 2), and Jamie Pedersen (Senate)  
**44th LD:** Mike Wilson (House Pos. 1) and Hans Dunshee (House Pos. 2)  
**45th LD:** Roger Goodman (House Pos. 1), Larry Springer (House Pos. 2), and Matt Isenhower (Senate)  
**46th LD:** Gerry Pollet (House Pos. 1), Jessyn Farrell (House Pos. 2), and David Frockt (Senate)  
**47th LD:** Chris Barringer (House Pos. 1)  
**48th LD:** Joan McBride (House Pos. 2)  
**49th LD:** Jim Moeller (House Pos. 2)



## TFP Local 461 gives books to kids



On a hot summer Saturday, TFP sponsored a booth at Tacoma's Hilltop Community Fair and gave nearly 300 free books to kids through our FirstBook partnership.

According to local president **Barbara Randall-Saleh**, "We had such a good time connecting with the children as we gave them the gift of books."



If you are interested in holding a FirstBook community event, contact **Dan Troccoli** at [dans@aftwa.org](mailto:dans@aftwa.org) or 206-432-8076.

## Another successful NW Leadership Forum

Over 100 AFT members took four days out of their busy schedules to attend this year's *AFT Northwest Leadership Forum* in Vancouver, WA, from July 31 through August 3.

Leaders came from Alaska, Utah, Washington, Oregon, Idaho, Guam, and Nevada.

Mark your calendar for next year's forum July 31 through August 3, 2015, in Vancouver.

"Nice to have support from AFT National. Great they're here."

"I really enjoy the mix from other states... great opportunity for exchange of ideas..."

"Good variety of classes."

"Lots of practical information I know I will be able to put to good use!"



Photos by Kristen Fitzpatrick, AFT-Oregon

## 2014-15 education scholarships awarded

Three deserving students will each receive a \$1,000 AFT Washington/Schwerin Campbell Barnard Iglitzin & Lavitt scholarship in support of their higher education goals this year. Our congratulations to:

**Marisela Baca**, daughter of Bernal Baca, AFT Washington Lobbyist and former AFT Yakima Local 1485 president, who is attending Yakima Valley Community College's associate nursing program;

**Viktoriya Korsunskaya**, president of Lake Washington Institute of Technology Classified Local 4787, who is completing her master's degree in education at the University of Washington's Bothell campus; and

**Corinne Sebren**, daughter of AFT Yakima Local 1485 member Tracy Croshaw, who is completing a transfer degree from Seattle Colleges this winter and plans to start a bachelor's psychology/pre-med program in the Spring of 2015 at the University of Washington.

## How to save and share your personal legacy

The AFT Washington Retiree Chapter is hosting a free, fun, and interactive workshop on preserving your legacy on **Tuesday, October 21st**, from **12:30 to 2:30 PM** at 635 Andover Park W., Ste. 105, Tukwila.

There will be an optional taco bar for \$10 at 12 Noon.

**Jeannine Florance**, a Personal Historian and Photo Organizer, will offer ideas to get started on making your legacy meaningful along with well-tested ways to archive your visual

treasures. Bring one photo of you alone – or with others – for a practice exercise. An older photo would be ideal.

All AFT Washington members are invited to attend. Please **RSVP early to Merrilee Miron** at [mmiron@aftwa.org](mailto:mmiron@aftwa.org) or 206-432-8083. Maximum number of participants is 25.

## Increases to national per capita rates

Delegates to the 2014 AFT Convention approved changes to the per capita rates paid by affiliate locals effective September 1, 2014. These changes don't affect AFT Washington per capita rates, but do increase the AFT (national) per capita rates. The new rates are shown below.

Effective September 1, 2014:

Full:	\$18.23
One-half:	\$9.12
One-quarter:	\$4.56
One-eighth:	\$2.28

Effective September 1, 2015:

Full:	\$18.78
One-half:	\$9.39
One-quarter:	\$4.70
One-eighth:	\$2.35

The income thresholds for the one-quarter and one-eighth rates have also increased. The thresholds are outlined in the AFT Constitution, Article III, Section 6.

Questions regarding AFT (national) per capita should be directed to **[billinginquiry@aft.org](mailto:billinginquiry@aft.org)**. AFT membership questions should be directed to **[membership@aft.org](mailto:membership@aft.org)**.

## Filling in the gap



*Dan Troccoli*

**Dan Troccoli** has hit the ground running as he works with Green River United Faculty Local 2195, Lake Washington Institute of Technology Local 3533, and Pierce College Federation of Teachers Local 4821 helping them to build their membership and leadership. He is filling in for **Tracey Whitten** while she is on parental leave.

Dan, a high school teacher in Seattle, has been active in the Seattle Education Association for over six years. Dan worked on the "Measure of Academic Progress (MAP) Test" boycott city-wide organizing committee to build solidarity with boycotting teachers around the city and country. As an activist, he has traveled to Wisconsin for the uprising against Scott Walker and to Chicago for the teachers' strike to support them and show solidarity.

If you want to talk to him about ways to strengthen your local, Dan can be reached at **[dans@aftwa.org](mailto:dans@aftwa.org)** or **206-432-8076**.

**If you'd like to go green and get Union Spotlight electronically, please contact Christine Landon, 206-432-8075 or [clandon@aftwa.org](mailto:clandon@aftwa.org).**



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## Save the Date!

### Higher Education Stakeholders' Summit

Addressing Washington State's Disinvestment in Public Higher Education

**Saturday, October 25th, 9 AM - 3 PM**

Tacoma Community College

- Keynote Speaker: Rai Nauman Mumtaz,  
Washington Student Achievement Council
- Panel and Roundtable Discussions
- Breakouts:
  - ✓ Identifying Our Shared Values
  - ✓ Art as Advocacy
  - ✓ Influencing Decision Makers
  - ✓ Mapping to the Win: Assessing Our Allies & Adversaries
  - ✓ Story Telling for Social Change
  - ✓ Let's Organize: Legislature 2015

**Registration is open: <http://bit.ly/higheredsummit>.**

Sponsored by AFT Washington, Tacoma Community College Federation of Teachers Local 2196, Washington Student Association, Alliance for a Just Society, Equity in Education Coalition, and Jobs With Justice

#### **President's Column** (from pg. 3)

start our own Moral Mondays during the legislative session.

Your local leaders and I will be asking you to join our effort – please remain mindful of the value you bring and say, “**Yes, I want to be a part of the movement** to reclaim the promise of education, of democracy, of shared prosperity...indeed, of the American Dream.”

As a society, we are facing “character-building” times. As an organization, we will remain proud of how we answer the question, “is this who we want to be?”