



UNION SPOTLIGHT

AFT Washington, AFL-CIO

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May 2016



Photo provided by: Christine Landon

Green River College Students, Faculty, and Staff Walk Out of Classes

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Our eleventh year offering education scholarships!

Once again, the partnership of AFT Washington and the law firm Schwerin Campbell Barnard Iglitzin & Lavitt are offering \$1,000 education scholarships. Together, our organizations typically make available three or four \$1,000 education scholarships to eligible applicants who are AFT Washington members in good standing, or spouses, domestic partners, children, or dependents of AFT Washington members in good standing. Qualified applicants must plan to attend an institution of higher education during the 2016-2017 academic year. A scholarship committee reviews the applications for eligibility and determines the winners. Spelling and grammar count!

To date, 33 students have been awarded \$1,000 education scholarships: Kiyoshi Shikuma, Peggy Butler, Micaela Baca, and Sean Connor (2006-07); Natalie Mohsenian, Claire Min-Vendetti, Colin Nix, and Misa Shikuma (2008-09); Leanne Sebren, Colleen Murphy-Carey, Kellie Blair, and Theresa Anderton (2009-10); Azalia Koestler, Joseph Toth, Chelsea Ruggiero-Diehl, and Megan Sullivan (2010-11); Casey Croshaw, Azalea Koestler, and Chelsea Ruggiero-Diehl (2011-12); Caleb Fritz, Clara Johnson, Sarah Ladderud, and Deidra Norgaard (2012-13); Kimberly McRae and Rebecca Byrd-Clough (2013-14); Marisela Baca, Viktoriya Korsunskaya, and Corinne Sebren (2014-2015); and Levi Moore, Kathryn Severson, and Emma Finnsson, (2015-16).

These previous scholarship recipients are affiliated with members from the following locals: AFT Yakima Local 1485, AFT Seattle Local 1789, United Faculty Green River Community College Local 2195, Tacoma Community College Federation Local 2196, Peninsula Community College Federation of Teachers Local 3439, Clover Park Vocational Federation Local 3913, Bates Technical College Local 4184, Lake Washington IT College Classified Local 4787, Clover Park Federation of Classified Local 4789, Skagit Valley College Federation of Teachers Local 4985, Cascadia Community College Federation of Teachers Local 6191, and University of Washington English Language Faculty Local 6486.

Schwerin Campbell Barnard Iglitzin & Lavitt LLP is the Pacific Northwest's largest union-side labor and employment law firm. Their roots and commitment to serving working people date back to the region's labor struggles of the 1920s. You may learn more about them by visiting www.workerlaw.com.

Eligibility requirements and application guidelines

Eligibility requirements, application guidelines, and the scholarship application (in PDF) can be

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

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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.

Editor, Sylvia Watson
swatson@aftwa.org

Photos by Sylvia Watson unless otherwise noted.

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Karen Strickland

President's Column

Winter Turns into Spring

You may have noticed that you didn't receive a Winter *Spotlight* as you usually do. During the last several months we have been fully engaged in our Powerful Locals Initiative, so we decided to delay our newsletter and invest all the time we could in engaging our existing members and reaching out to those who haven't joined . . . yet.

I'm pleased to report that we have nearly 200 additional members as a result of our efforts. These are people represented by the union, but who hadn't signed up to become a member. For some, they simply didn't know they weren't a member; for others, the benefits of membership – expressing a collective voice, voting, holding office, receiving great discounts – weren't clear; and some had misconceptions about unions, not understanding our role as a mechanism for raising our collective voice at the bargaining table, in the Legislature, and in our communities.

Full engagement also means working with community partners to plan our second bi-annual Solidarity Event at Renton Technical College (you may receive this newsletter after it occurred. If so, I hope you were able to join us!) We are “Standing

Together for Racial Equity and Justice” with **21 Progress, The Asian-Pacific Islander Coalition, Fuse Washington, Sound Alliance, Green River Community College's Black Student Union, the Laborers Union International, WEA - Rainier Uniserv**, and others. The presentations and workshops revolve around organizing for equity and include telling our stories for change, student organizing for influence on campus, building solidarity around state budget priorities, workers' rights, and more. Collective action is also a key part of the event.

We are working with partners who share our values and our goals for a more just, equitable society because we take very seriously the notion that we are **stronger** when **Standing Together**. Constituents of all of these groups contribute to their communities, just as our members do. Like you, they believe it's time to reclaim the promise of the American Dream.

This presidential campaign season has made abundantly clear the competing visions for this country, just as the most recent legislative session did for our state. Whether they are proposals to build a bigger wall, weaken the safety net, undo anti-discrimination laws, suppress voter rights, or weaken collective bargaining rights, the threat to the promise of the American Dream is like a flashing neon light right in front of our faces. But these threats are not new, and we know how to fight back.

In the coming months we have our work cut out for us, and as I usually do, I urge you to join your AFT Washington sisters and brothers, along with our community partners, to take action for equity and justice. Here's how:

- Build connections within your local community – with students & families, non-profits, human rights organizations – to achieve stronger communities.
- Participate in our political program to support the candidates who will fight on your behalf in the Legislature.
- Join our Legislative Affairs Committee to help shape our legislative agenda and strategize for success.
- Participate in our trainings to build your union leadership and organizing skills.
- Talk to fellow union members in your local – learn about each other and your needs and aspirations.
- Get involved in your local by attending a membership meeting and/or talking to your local's officers.

The November election and 2017 legislative session are ripe with both potential threat and opportunity. By joining together now, we can influence the outcomes so that opportunities open up and threats are minimal. “We can” is not good enough, however. In fact, we must!

Classified Council boosts professional development

For the fifth year in a row, the AFT Washington Classified Council planned and delivered professional development workshops on Saturday, March 12, at Giaudrone Middle School in Tacoma. Members came from United Classified Workers Local 4795, AFT Renton Classified Employees Local 6367, Tacoma Federation of ParaEducators Local 461, and Federation of Head Start Employees Local 6153. All together, 89 classified members attended the conference. The Tacoma Public Schools co-sponsored the conference by covering the cost of two presenters, which doubled the number of workshops offered.

Attendees could choose from workshops on Civility in the Workplace, Responding to Challenging Behaviors in Schools, Engaging Your Membership, Poverty: Understanding the Realities of Poverty so that Students Can Learn, and Using True Colors© to Understand Personality Types. These workshops were facilitated by qualified trainers in their fields of expertise.

After the workshops, **Maria Haynes** from TFP and chair of the Classified Council was the emcee for the afternoon. AFT Washington President **Karen Strickland** spoke about the importance of member engagement and building power to stand against anti-union attacks.

Last, but certainly not least, **Janet Watson** and **Beth DeCou** from AFT Renton Classified drew tickets for door prizes as everyone waited to see if they would be a winner. Several businesses donated items or gift certificates for the door prizes to show support.



Photo provided by: Sylvia Watson

Many of these door prizes would not have been possible without the hard work of Janet Watson, AFT Renton Classified Local 6367 president, who was helped this year by Beth DeCou.

Once again, the conference was a success! Some of the feedback we received from the evaluations included: “This is a great source of information.” “A good time to get together, review practices, learn new approaches to situations, and share experiences.” “Professional development provides different classes than we would get from the school district.” “I loved this

workshop!” “The presenter was very knowledgeable and made the class interesting. Lots of interacting.”

The one critique, which was the first ever, is that they wish they had more time to cover the topic. This was true of every workshop. The Council will look next year at four-hour workshops for some of the trainings offered.

If you would like to join the Classified Council to help out with next year’s conference or other issues affecting classified members, please contact your local president or Sylvia Watson at **206-432-8084** or swatson@aftwa.org.

Thank you to the many businesses that donated and showed support:

- Starbucks Coffee
- Lowe’s Home Improvement
- Whistle Stop Alehouse
- Wildfin Restaurant
- Jersey Mike’s Subs
- Red Robin Restaurant
- Applebee’s Restaurant
- Potbelly Sandwich Shop
- BITE Restaurant at Hotel Murano
- Sunrise Dental
- Barnes & Noble Bookstore
- Service Printing
- Tacoma Federation of ParaEducators
- Outback Restaurant
- Azteca Restaurant
- Unimark Construction Group
- Famous Dave’s Restaurant
- Torero’s Restaurant
- Jimmy Mac’s Roadhouse
- Cheesecake Factory
- Renton Printery
- Inspirus Credit Union
- Olive Garden
- Sizzler Restaurant
- United Business Bank

Fifth Annual North Puget Sound Conference on Race

by Traci Lai and David Ortiz, AFT Washington Human Rights Committee

Snohomish County - Community members concerned with social justice and human rights gathered on April 9 at the University of Washington Bothell Campus (UWB) for the Fifth Annual North Puget Sound Conference on Race; its theme: restorative justice. The free event was sponsored by the Communities of Color Coalition (C3) working in concert with representatives from numerous community groups and the UWB. As in prior conferences, the primary focus of the one-day race conference was to provide information and skills development that will help participants return to their communities better prepared to address issues of social justice and cultural and religious intolerance.

The American Federation of Teachers (AFT) Washington was invited to participate. Members **Tracy Lai** (AFT Seattle Community Colleges Local 1789 and AFT Washington board member) and **David Ortiz** (Cascadia Community College Federation of Teachers Local 6191) facilitated a lively discussion on how labor intersects with restorative justice efforts in both King County and in Washington State. Restorative justice is defined as a component of the criminal justice system that emphasizes the value of rehabilitation through a series of steps to help the offender transition back into their community. These efforts include reconciliation with both victims and the community as a whole.

Washington State's labor community can do more to help individuals transition away from the criminal justice system and back into society. In fact, AFT Washington has members who teach in the jails and prisons, as well as provide education and support for formerly incarcerated people. Assisting with job training and employment opportunities is critical in creating a labor force that is inclusive, diverse, and reflects the values of social justice and human rights.

For more information, contact David Ortiz at ortdavid1493@gmail.com or Tracy Lai at talyce.lai@gmail.com.

Contingent faculty discuss, learn, and share a variety of mutual issues

by Richard Burton, Internal Organizer

About 45 staff and faculty activists joined together on Saturday, April 9, to talk about how we can organize and fight for better pay, equal treatment, and respect for contingent faculty. The day-long Contingent Faculty Issues Conference was held at the Georgetown campus of South Seattle College, and featured presentations and workshops on a variety of topics.

A team of contingent faculty activists from the United Academics of Philadelphia talked about their efforts to build a union model that comprises contingent faculty from across a variety of different colleges and universities in the City of



Photo provided by: Sylvia Watson

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COPE Fundraising Now Online

By Kristin Elia, Political Organizer

It's 2016 and that means a lot of things; it's a huge election year, we're gearing up for campaign endorsements, and it's time to take COPE fundraising to the next level.

AFT Washington is excited to announce **a new and easy way for our members to make their voluntary contributions** to COPE – online! Members now have the option to make on-going and one-time gifts via our secure donation page: https://bit.ly/AFTWA_COPE

COPE contributions drive our ability to **support candidates who support our members**. Your union dues do not fund campaign contributions; that's a promise we've always made and will continue to keep. However, we've seen how elected officials can make an impact on our workplaces, our wallets, and our wellbeing.

Join hundreds of COPE donors in securing a stronger Washington this election!

Go to bit.ly/AFTWA_COPE

We need candidates who will **fight to fund education** at all levels, **support and respect** our public employees, and create strong communities. The only way to ensure that happens is for our members to be actively engaged in determining which candidates get our endorsement and helping those candidates make it over the finish line in November.

COPE allows us to **back the candidates who have our members' best interests in mind** and who will be accountable to working families once they are elected. Join us in reaching our goal to sign up **150 new donors** before the end of 2016!

You can **make your on-going monthly or one-time contribution online now** at our new website!

Vote for member Steve Kinholt

By the time you get this newsletter, AFT will be promoting their Everyday Heroes contest, and members will get a chance to vote on who they want to become AFT's Everyday Heroes.

One of the faculty members with Green River United Faculty Coalition Local 2195, **Steve Kinholt**, has been nominated. For good reason! Steve is always respectful but not afraid to challenge the legality of some of the actions the college administration has taken that are not in the campus' or public's interest, such as public meetings notices and accommodations. He is clearly an activist and leader and has remained steadfast as the lightning rod spokesperson for the college employees' rights. He has become an inspiration and a valuable role model for faculty, staff, students, and even administrators at the campus.

Recently Kinholt, a math instructor, received the 2016 Education Reform Award from the Washington Mathematical Association of Two-Year Colleges for the work he has done to modify course design to meet his students' needs and revitalize the college math learning center.

Please go to AFT's website at www.aft.org and vote for **Steve Kinholt** for the AFT Everyday Heroes award.





1916-2016
AFT 100TH ANNIVERSARY
 CELEBRATION
 HONORING OUR PAST AND
 INSPIRING OUR FUTURE

Cast your vote for AFT's most iconic photo

Nearly 100 years ago, on May 9, 1916, the AFT was founded in Chicago, when eight local unions were granted a charter signed by American Federation of Labor President Samuel Gompers. The AFT has compiled several iconic photo-

graphs that showcase major events and people in our union's history. These photographs show how AFT members and affiliates have played an important role in major milestones like the civil rights movement, women's rights and the evolution of

the middle class. Now, the union is asking you to vote for a favorite photograph in this collection. The top five picks will be made into postcards to share at the AFT national convention in July.

Vote for your favorite photo at
<https://actionnetwork.org/forms/vote-for-your-favorite-postcard>

Vote for AFT

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On Right: State Rep. Gerry Pollet speaking with a member at the conference

Brotherly Love. **DuValle Daniel** (Shoreline Community College Local

1950 president) and **Kimberly McRae** (AFT Seattle Community College Local 1789 and co-chair of their Human Rights Committee) co-presented on the urgent need for faculty to organize in support of racial equity in hiring and retention throughout our colleges. **State Representative Gerry Pollet** (D-46) shared information and advice about getting favorable legislation passed in Olympia. Afternoon workshops then focused on building power at the local level through organizing, successfully filing and winning challenges for unemployment insurance benefits, and building ties with local

political and community movements.

AFT Washington's Contingent Faculty Issues Committee, chaired by Mike Boggess, helped coordinate the conference and hopes to hold a follow-up event in the fall. In the meantime, people interested in being a part of the committee are welcome to join us for our monthly meetings, which are usually held the first Saturday of the month, or you can contact Mike at Mike4030@gmail.com; or AFT Washington staff person Richard Burton at rburton@aftwa.org or (206) 225-0621.



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Education Scholarships

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downloaded from the AFT Washington website at:

wa.aft.org/education-scholarship or requested from the AFT Washington office.

An original and two copies of the application and the supporting documents must be received in the AFT Washington office **no later than Wednesday, June 1, 2016**. Application packets can be mailed to AFT Washington/SCBIL Scholarship Fund, 625 Andover Park W, Suite 111, Tukwila, WA 98188-3328.

For questions regarding the scholarships, or to request application materials, please contact **Christine Landon** at **206.432.8075** or **clandon@aftwa.org**.

CALENDAR

AFT Washington Retiree Chapter Annual Meeting “AFT and the 2016 Elections”

Wednesday, May 18, from 11:30 AM to 2 PM

The Bridge at Village Cove
6846 Woodlawn Ave. NE, Suite B3
Seattle

Brief business meeting at 11:30 AM

Program features following guests:
State Senator Pramila Jayapal (running for 7th CD)
Gerard Friesz, AFT Western Regional Director
Kristin Elia, AFT Washington Political Organizer

**Please RSVP for lunch at
mmiron@aftwa.org or 206-432-8083.
All are invited to attend.**