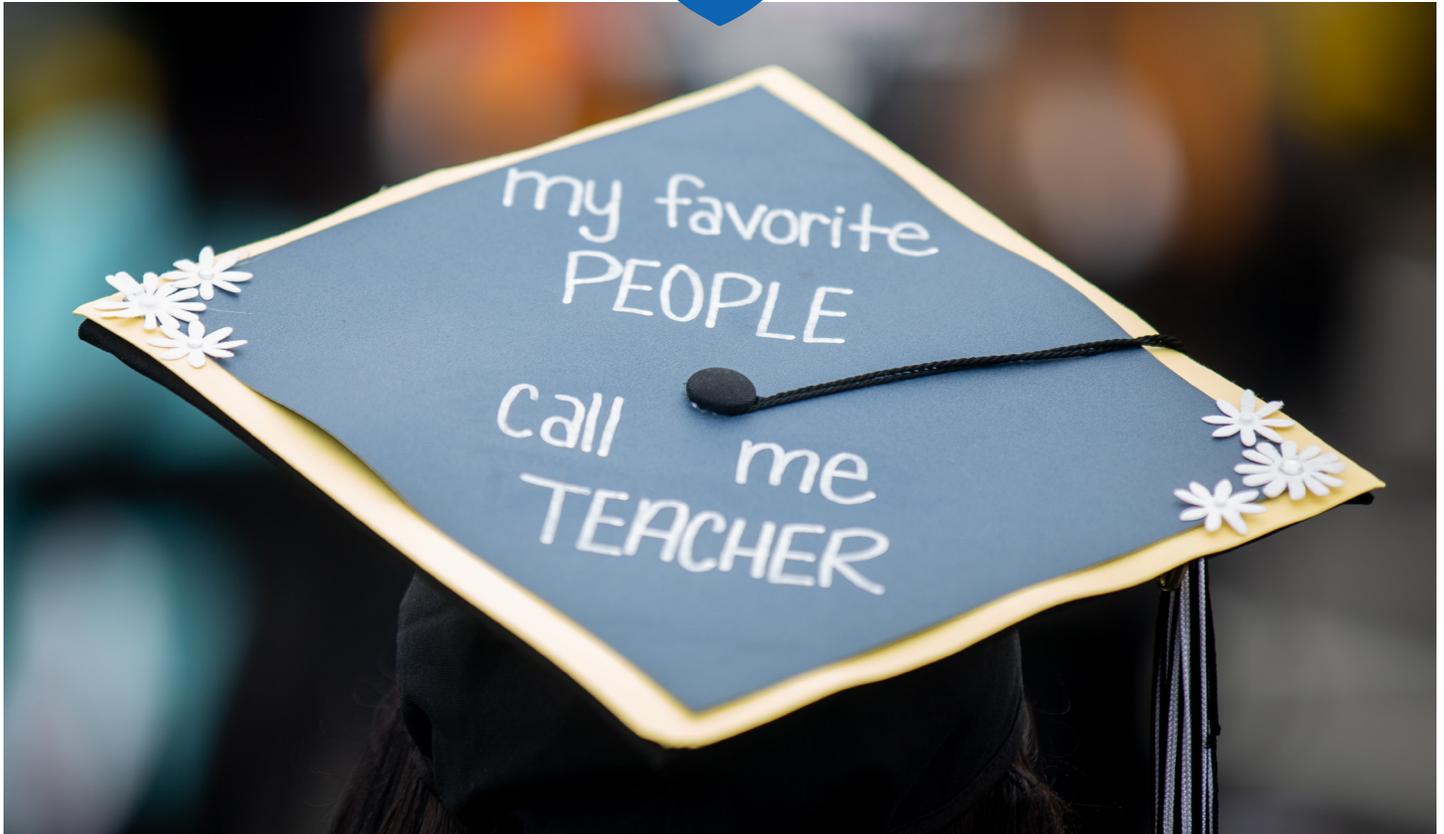


# Stockton Federation of Teachers Local 2275

Quarterly Newsletter



2020 4<sup>th</sup> Quarter



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# Reflections on Our Strong Commitment to Unionization, on This Campus and Beyond

*Rodger Jackson, President of SFT Local 2275, reflects on the value of our incredibly strong union membership, seeing clearly through the fog of war.*



It can be hard these days for Unions to maintain a positive outlook. When we're fighting one battle after another, it's hard to take even take a breath, much less look around and take some pride or joy in what we've accomplished. As soon as we solve one problem, five new ones present themselves, and they won't wait for us to clap ourselves on the back. Not surprisingly, this can create a "war-zone" mindset whereby all we see is an endless set of attacks that need to be fended off. We should remember though that this heads down-keep-on-pushing-through-it mindset can be as counterproductive as being uncritically optimistic. We need to take time out to reflect on our accomplishments, even in those moments when it looks bleak.

Take the furloughs. We are all furious about the university imposing these on us and rightly so. However, it's important to look around the (virtual) offices and classrooms and see that our fellow members are *still* here. Those people you see on the Zoom screen, or talk to on the phone, or email back and forth with were *not* laid off. They continue to draw a paycheck, pay their bills, contribute to their pensions, and see their doctor. This is an extraordinary victory in these days of fear mongering and short sighted management schemes. It could only be accomplished by the

power of the Union, by its members stepping up and saying that we would all fight together. At a different kind of place, one without a Union, management would simply say "We're implementing 20% layoffs" and that would be that. Or they would say everyone is taking *twenty-one* furlough days, which is exactly what management originally tried to impose. For many of us, being part of a Union that fights for us has been so much a part of our working lives that its seeped into our unconsciousness. We don't always take the time to consider what our working environment would be without it.

What is more, we should take a moment to reflect on the fact that this commitment to each other is widely shared. We have relatively few free loaders or scabs here. The vast majority of our bargaining unit is made up of Union *members*. That is to say, SFT 2275 is almost entirely composed of people who pay dues, serve as Union observers, raise their voices, march, and defend each other. We may disagree with each other, call each other out, fight about what direction we should take, but very few walk away. Very few say, "I'm going to leave all this work to others because I can't get my way." Such an ongoing commitment arises from a shared understanding that we *all* face difficulties and challenges, whether it be financial or emotional,

psychological, or spiritual. What we recognize is that our burdens are reduced when we stay committed to each other because we can see that we are not alone in our fight.

Finally, we should take strength from the fact that public sector Unions such as ours are *not* going away. Far from it. Despite the efforts of reactionary forces in the courts, the legislature, and the executive branch, in the recent elections in New Jersey the New Jersey AFL-CIO ran 39 successful labor candidates in the 2020 election. Here on our own campus we are building new, powerful working relationships with both CWA and IFPTE. We can be part of a resurgence in Union activism in the United States and beyond. The attempts to divide us through bribery, lies, and intimidation have failed.

There will be plenty of battles for us to fight in the years ahead. Yet, let us take a moment to take pride in how we have preserved the legacy of the work done by those who came before us and what we have built together on that foundation.

--

*Rodger Jackson, Ph.D.  
Stockton University  
President SFT Local 2275*

# Musings on Retirement: Elaine Ingulli and Her Husband Share Thoughts on Retirement

*Elaine Ingulli, Professor of Business Law Emerita, retired from Stockton in 2015 after 29 years teaching, a decade as chief negotiator for SFT, and 25 years as textbook co-author. Her husband, Brian Ackerman, Professor of Psychology at the University of Delaware, retired several years later.*

First question for those considering retirement is, of course, can I afford it? We knew we didn't want to change our lifestyle: modest spenders, except for the many and expensive trips we like to take. I took advantage of TIAA's free, one-on-one "financial advising" sessions—beginning roughly when I turned sixty and retirement no longer seemed like something that would never interest me. We have no children and thereby more accumulated wealth than many. For us, the answer was "yes, we can afford to." But if you want to retire and don't get repeated reassurances that you can afford it, you need to think about what changes you are willing to make.

Moving to a less expensive state (e.g. Delaware or Florida, where pensions are not taxed) is one. We never considered moving because we are happy in our home, comfortable in our neighborhood, and have a strong friendship network. We like living close to Philadelphia, where we have long gone to theatre, dance, art, dinner. Moving seems like a big effort.

However, for both of us, it was important to think about how we would maintain what Brian calls a "social network" and I call "community." I was knitted closer to Stockton than Brian ever was to UDel, because of our personalities and because Stockton is more self-consciously a community (payday Friday parties, GENS, etc.) Brian has not re-created his UDel social network, instead depending on friends (and neighbors). I already had both an avocation and an alternative community through decades of classes at The Clay

Studio in Philadelphia. More time to "go to the Studio" meant deepening those bonds in retirement.

There are, of course, ways to join new communities—through volunteer and political work, intentional efforts to meet regularly with friends ("lunch" is not trivial!). And, some people are more self-contained than others. But thinking about how you will connect with other humans is important.

Another issue is whether you want a gradual transition to retirement or to make a complete break? The Transition Program in effect at Stockton when I retired offered a reduced course-load and a semester spent on a "project" in lieu of teaching. To be honest, I never did my intended project. The Business Program was getting ready for an AACSB meeting, and both I and my Dean were happy to convert my project into work on accreditation.

My real transition came at a time when personal circumstances (elderly parents whose health was failing, the need for a bionic hip and knees) provided a somewhat clean break. I thought I would get my knees done after I retired until I spoke with a former SFT President who suggested I use my accumulated sick leave—I had never used any of it—to have my joints replaced. So taking care of health needs and helping my parents in their last years, provided a break from Stockton. I spent much of the summer and fall after my retirement working on the 9th (final) edition of my textbook. That was important to me, because I was invested in my professional identity and not yet ready to shut

it down completely. Now, five years after retirement, I identify more with my clay-work than my past academic career. I do political work. I still stay close with many Stockton friends, but the transition is complete.

Brian had a different sense: he wanted to cut loose. He stopped teaching, researching, writing, and connecting with UDel. Two years into retirement he still wishes he was teaching but insists he had to retire because he had "aged out." He was tired, had to work too hard to meet his own standards. It was time to move to a different life, to "build a separate universe that was meaningful, purposeful, engaging, and valuable." He needed to create discipline and structure in his daily life. He sees his academic career as a life about "becoming"—every semester began in one place and ended in another. With retirement, he needed to focus more on "being" in the present, to "dilute the concept of progress". For the past three years he has been teaching himself to play piano. He's never had a music lesson but music was always part of his life, as background. He needed an intellectual challenge to replace the professional one that had been the core of his life, and music works for him.

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*Elaine Ingulli, J.D.  
Stockton University  
Retired Chief Negotiator,  
SFT Local 2275*

# Technology Investments Pay Off, Despite Balls of Cat Fur Not Being Currency

*Stacey Rose, Treasurer, describes how our technology investments have increased communication with members and lead to more involvement, as well as extolling the virtues of bartering with balls of cat fur.*

We made it to December! 2020 has been an unrelenting year, requiring a lot of adaptation and flexibility from everyone. The financial operations of the Union had to change with it. As remote learning, social distancing, and generally avoiding anyone who looks like they may cough became the norm, the Union had to switch most of its operations on-line.

Previously, our budget allocated for things like negotiations, Pay-Day Parties, and keeping the office stocked for our members. It was designed for in-person interactions, to build our community, and to strengthen our ability to advocate for you, the members of the Stockton Federation of Teachers Local 2275.

As our current reality became the norm, we had to invest in virtual modalities like Zoom. I was skeptical and purchased plans according to our in-person attendance. And I was completely wrong to be skeptical. This shift to on-line has allowed increased contact with the Union members, not less. We have been pleasantly surprised, thrilled, and overwhelmed by your participation in our Union meetings, trainings, and webinars. Our Zoom subscription turned out to be one of our best investments.

Despite being the Treasurer, I'm not a fan of money. I wish we could barter with balls of cat fur. However, money provides access to resources. We try, every day,

to be good stewards of your dues and maximize those resources to best support and advocate for your working conditions. Being a dues paying member is a choice. As we approach the end of 2020, I want to express our gratitude to all of you for making that choice. It really does impact our ability to advocate for you.

Finally, if you have any creative suggestions for a Pay-Day Party substitute, please share via email at [stacey.rose@sftunion.org](mailto:stacey.rose@sftunion.org)

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Stacey Rose, MA  
Stockton University  
Treasurer SFT Local 2275



# Let Your Grievance Officer Assist with Disputes Between You and Your Supervisor

*Nazia Kazi, Grievance Officer, implores our members to enlist her help with disputes between our members and their supervisors, and stresses that letting us help might let you avoid a formal grievance.*

As your Grievance Officer, I'm readily available to discuss any workplace dispute that arises between you and your supervisor. This can include any violation of our Master or Local agreements (available on the SFT website) or any instance of direct dealing (in which your supervisor communicates directly with you regarding compensation not stipulated in our agreements). Additionally, the Union can help determine whether a contract violation has taken place. You can also contact me if you suspect your employer is not following the law regarding FMLA, OSHA, state or local laws, or any regulations related to the COVID19 pandemic. The Union executive board carefully protects your confidentiality to the extent possible in all such matters.

Our members often inquire about the difference between resolving a matter with the Office of Human Resources rather than the Union. At times, our approaches may overlap. However, the Union grievance procedure is distinct, as our goal is to advocate on behalf of our members when a violation has occurred. The Union will focus closely on local and master agreements and, when necessary, work with the Council of New Jersey State College Locals to resolve your matter.

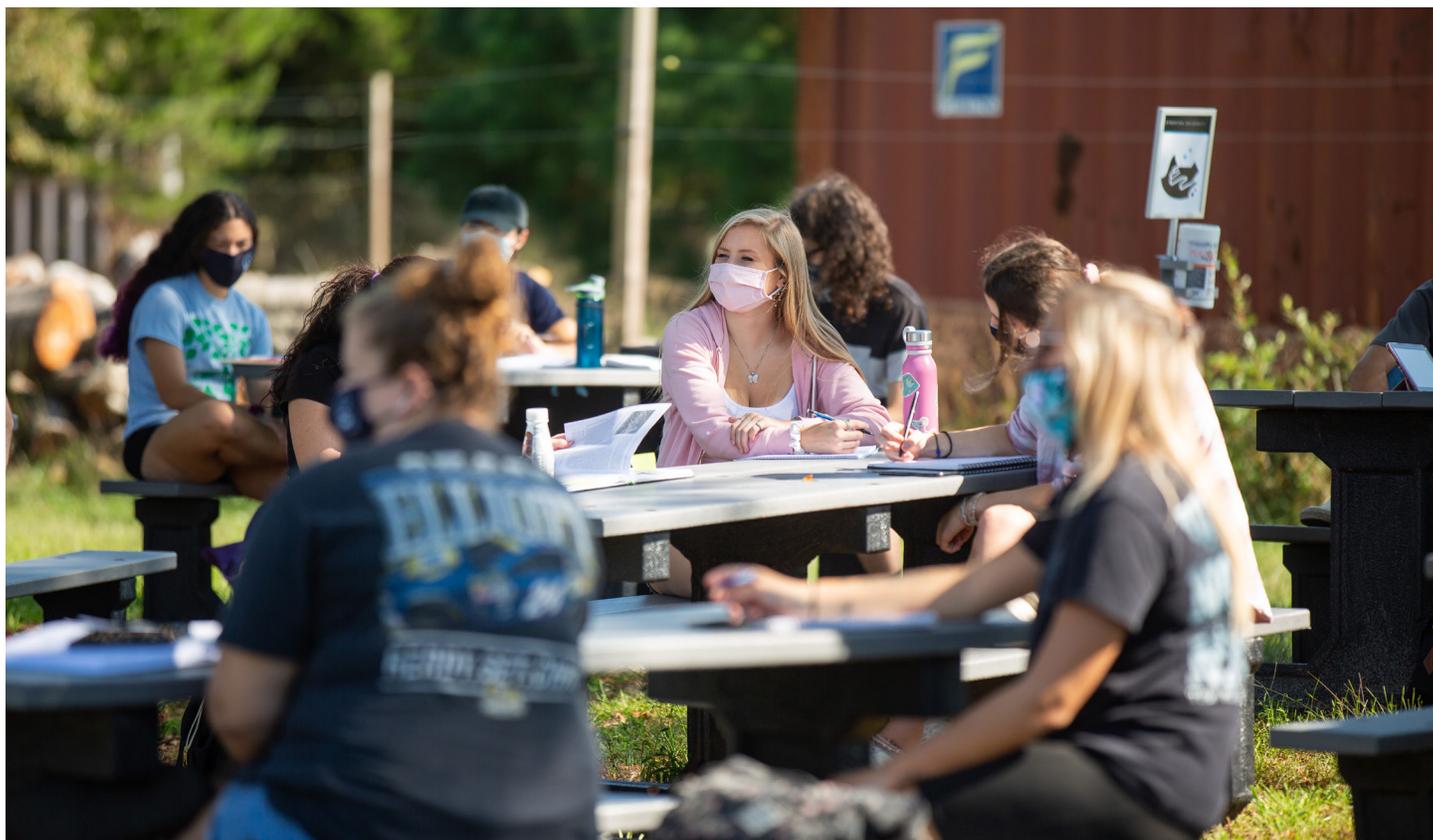
I'd like to note that many matters that are brought to me are resolved before a formal grievance is filed. Often, a Union representative can intervene and reach an internal, informal resolution to the matter at hand. Please remember that any

resolution, be it formal or informal, is easier to reach if you can provide me with any concrete details (dates, emails, etc.) that document the history and nature of the dispute at hand.

As always, you can reach me at [Nazia.Kazi@sftunion.org](mailto:Nazia.Kazi@sftunion.org)

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*Nazia Kazi, Ph.D.  
Stockton University  
Grievance Officer SFT Local 2275*



# Local Negotiations Update for Fall 2020

*Tina Zappile, Lead Negotiator, discusses a new faculty retirement program, progress on the question of intellectual property, the local agreement on on-line courses, and perseverance on Staff performance-based promotions and reclassification.*

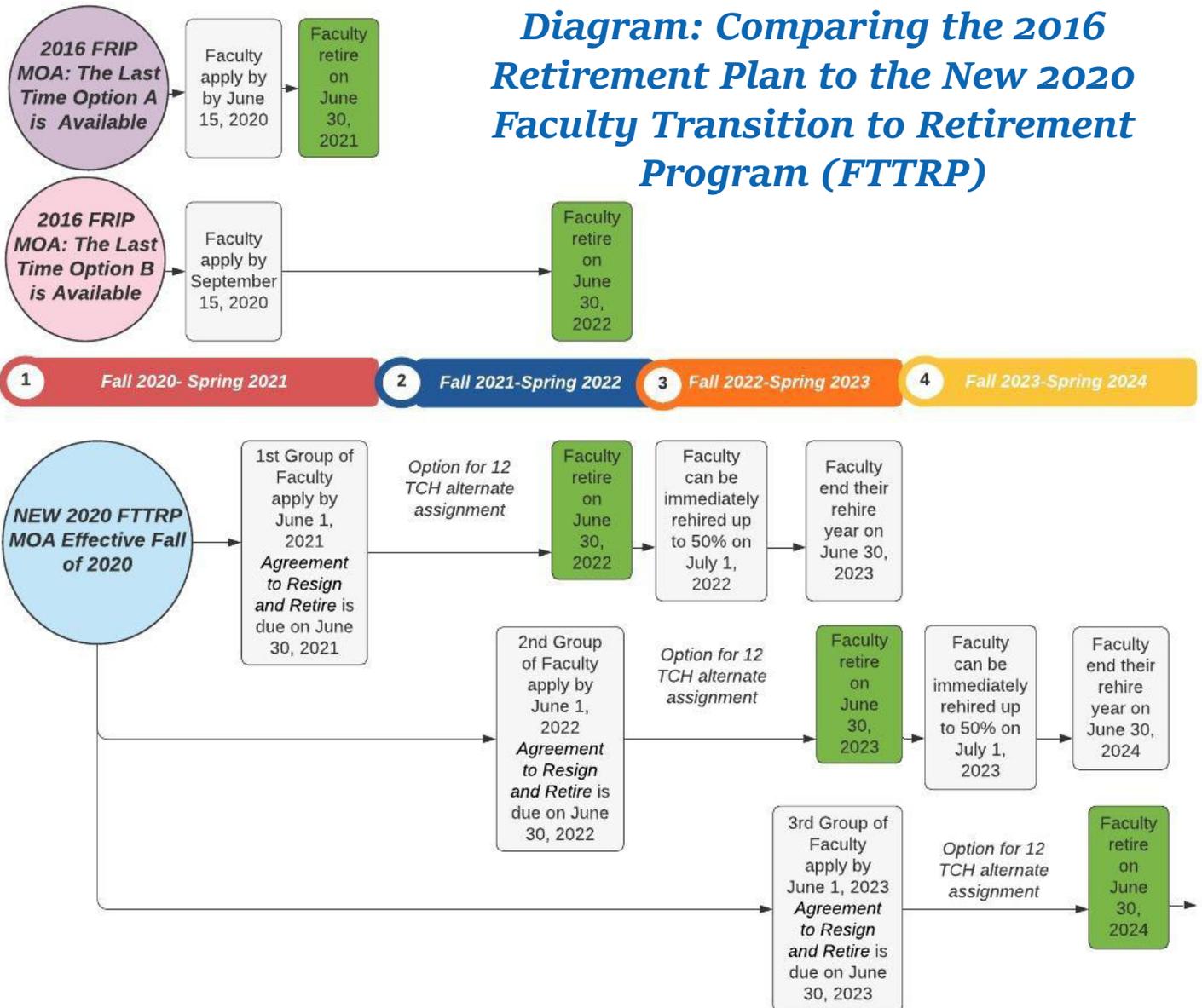
The local SFT negotiating team has continued to work at a fast pace this fall. We have met regularly with administration over the last three months, despite changes in senior leadership at the university. Additionally, administration has selected their new Special Assistant to the Executive Vice President as their new chief negotiator, replacing the dean who previously

held this position. Our team has put in an incredible amount of work, and I want to again recognize their contributions, in alphabetical order: Emari DiGiorgio, Rodger Jackson, Tara Luke, Adam Miyashiro, Anne Pomeroy, and Kerri Sowers. If you have an interest in joining the local negotiations team at some point in the future, please contact Rodger and Emari.

## A New Faculty Retirement Program

Earlier this fall, the negotiating team completed the MOA for a new faculty retirement incentive program (see diagram below). The program is now called the Faculty Transition to Retirement Program (FTTRP) and it adheres to new guidance from the State of New Jersey, as described here in the

**Diagram: Comparing the 2016 Retirement Plan to the New 2020 Faculty Transition to Retirement Program (FTTRP)**



[Alternate Benefit Program \(ABP\) Factsheet #38](#). We are currently working on a set of FAQs that will be distributed jointly between SFT and Administration, to ensure that the program is implemented according to the terms of the new agreement and state guidelines. This flowchart explains some of the changes to the new program and offers a time-line for the first three cohorts of eligible retirees.

**Coordinator Agreement**

The Task Force for Faculty Leadership submitted its [final report](#) to Dr. Kesselman on December 8th. This was a three-year long process of gathering input from faculty leaders, and we appreciate the additional feedback and input from our members. Negotiations are currently underway. Our team is keenly aware that faculty need to make decisions very shortly for Fall 2021 and Spring 2022, and some of that hinges on the outcome of these negotiations. Our goal is to finish negotiations before the Fall 2021 course schedule is viewable by students in January, however we are prioritizing fairness and equity in compensation for

these key leadership positions. We understand the position that you are in, and we will update you more frequently as we move closer to that date.

**Intellectual Property**

We have submitted our demand for a new local agreement on Intellectual Property (IP), which covers the materials you produce for any class including those delivered 100% on-line. In the meantime, administration has agreed to default to the terms and conditions for Intellectual Property from the previous [2015-2019 Master Agreement](#), identified in Article XXXIII on Copyright Ownership. Please refer to that article for all immediate questions and concerns about IP, and rest assured that we are committed to a fair agreement at the local level that preserves academic traditions regarding intellectual property.

**Online Courses**

Once SFT verifies that payments for the previous Online Course agreement have been made, we will move forward with a demand to negotiate a new local agreement on

Online Courses. As many of you have learned over the last 9 months, it takes an incredible amount of time and resources to build an on-line course that meets standards and best practices for on-line and hybrid teaching. We recognize all that hard work you have done so far, and will continue to do in the future, to develop and deliver effective on-line and hybrid courses.

**Staff Performance-Based Promotions and Reclassification**

These agreements remain at the top of our list for renegotiating, and at this time administration has refused to renegotiate the existing MOA for Performance-Based Promotions before its expiration date. The Office of Human Resources bears responsibility for several items related to reclassification, and we will continue to press for those changes to be made, especially as that office brings on additional employees.

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*Tina Zappile, Ph.D.  
Stockton University  
Lead Negotiator, SFT Local 2275*



## Covid-19 Protections for Professional Staff at the Top of the List for the SFT Local 2275

*Joe Everett, Vice President of Professional Staff, describes recent MOA for Staff Covid-19 Protections, as well as the joint efforts of the SFT Local 2275, CWA and IFPTE to extend the deadline on “use or lose” time.*

Professional Staff at Stockton have worked hard to adapt to the “new normal” of the COVID era, but they continue to face a number of challenges. Some of our current challenges are related to the ongoing pandemic-related logistics and safety concerns. Our recently-negotiated memorandum of agreement (MOA) for staff COVID-19 protections is emblematic of our continued dedication to making sure that our members are treated fairly and humanely during this tumultuous time.

Among many other things, the MOA for staff COVID-19 protections ensures that members who need to account for COVID-related work changes in their reappointment files are able to. This includes members who are temporarily reassigned to a

different department. Additionally, the Stockton Federation of Teachers Local 2275, in cooperation with our sister unions on campus (IFPTE and CWA), fought for and achieved an extension of the deadline for our “use or lose” accrued leave time, time our members have been too busy to use as they keep Stockton and it’s community safe during this pandemic.

Other current challenges for our members predate the pandemic, and there isn’t space to list them all here. Notably however, we STILL do not have a clear process for reclassification. Our feelings on this issue could be described as a mix of outrage, frustration, and astonishment. We will continue to push administration to negotiate with us on this issue,

which we know is important to our professional staff members. We also continue to handle all the individual and departmental issues that inevitably come up.

The SFT Local 2275 remains committed to helping, supporting, and counseling our members—a commitment that we know is especially important these days. Please don’t hesitate to reach out at [joseph.everett@sftunion.org](mailto:joseph.everett@sftunion.org) or any other officer if you have questions or concerns.

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*Joe Everett, MSW  
Stockton University  
Vice President of  
Professional Staff SFT Local 2275*



# New Legislation Helps Adjuncts Secure Unemployment Insurance

*Maxine Patroni, Vice President of Adjuncts, describes how the SFT Local 2275 negotiating team secured a victory which lead to important new legislation qualifying our adjunct members for unemployment benefits!*



On November 10, 2020, Governor Phil Murphy signed legislation that qualifies adjunct professors in New Jersey to receive unemployment insurance benefits. (Historically, adjuncts could not collect unemployment insurance for circumstances such as a class cancellation, class reassignment, or non-renewed contract, but that has changed under the new law.) This is a huge win for contingent faculty across the state. Hopefully, New Jersey will serve as inspiration for other states to follow in our footsteps in supporting the most vulnerable faculty in higher education.

In fall of 2019, the Stockton Federation of Teachers negotiating team helped secure an important article in the adjunct, state-wide contract, which helps with applying for unemployment insurance benefits. In Article XIII, the agreement states that in instances where the College/University does not intend to offer a subsequent assignment to adjunct faculty, the adjunct can ask management to provide a written letter of notice within 10 days of the request. When applying, this letter can be used to help secure unemployment insurance ([cnjscl.org](http://cnjscl.org)).

To request such a letter at Stockton University, please contact Dawn Channell in Human Resources by phone (609) 652-4384 x5819 or write to Dawn via her email at [Dawn.Channell@stockton.edu](mailto:Dawn.Channell@stockton.edu).

Again, this is great news for adjunct faculty. If you need assistance with this process, I would be happy to help.

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*Maxine Patroni, MFA  
Stockton University  
Vice President of Adjuncts  
SFT Local 2275*

## Results Are In: SFT Local 2275's Committee on Political Education (COPE) Backed a Winner in Freeholder Caren Fitzpatrick!

*Brian Tyrrell, Committee on Political Education (COPE) Director, describes how we backed a winner in supporting Caren Fitzpatrick in her reelection bid for Atlantic County Freeholder.*

This past election season marks the second such occasion the SFT Local 2275 Committee on Political Education (COPE) has endorsed and financially supported Atlantic County Freeholder Caren Fitzpatrick. A tireless fighter start to finish, Caren did not disappoint for a second time in a row ([read the news here](#)). Far from, Freeholder Fitzpatrick was the top vote-getter out of the four candidates. We are proud to have provided Caren support because of her tireless efforts. Thank you, Caren, and keep up the good fight.

COPE also supported Thelma Witherspoon for Atlantic County Freeholder. InsiderNJ.com reports Thelma Witherspoon has declared victory in a very tight race ([read the news here](#)). While Thelma secured the most votes, a challenge with several hundred incorrect ballots has the results headed to a judge for deliberation; only in 2020 folks, only in 2020. Thelma, we share your confidence in your victory and know you will do right by Atlantic County residents.

COPE funds do not come out of union members' dues, but rather only from additional contributions by generous members who understand the SFT needs to be engaged politically. If you are interested in helping the cause by giving anything out of your weekly paycheck, even \$2.00, that would be greatly appreciated. Contact myself at [Brian.Tyrrell@SFTUnion.org](mailto:Brian.Tyrrell@SFTUnion.org).

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*Brian J. Tyrrell, Ph.D.  
Stockton University  
COPE Director SFT Local 2275*



# The SFT Local 2275's Family is Growing Larger! We are Delighted to Introduce you to Bowie, Fisher, Kei and Acer.

*Susan Burrows, Office Manager, introduces the newest arrivals to our family: Bowie, Fisher, Kei and Acer. Congratulations to Emily Van Duyne, Lindsay Beddiges and Zornitsa Kalibatseva from our family to yours.*

I'm confident most of you are aware of the cork-board we've maintained in upper H-wing outside the SFT Local 2275's main office, a cork-board that keeps members abreast of our ever growing extended family. We are bringing that cork-board into the 21st century with our latest addition to the quarterly newsletter. We have four to report this issue, as we welcome Bowie, Fisher, Kei and Acer. Sounds like the beginning of a new faculty band; maybe we'll get a drummer next issue!

*Emily Van Duyne and partner Vincent DiGiacinto welcomed Bowie Thomas Orion into the world on 11/9/20, weighing 6.15 lbs. He shares a birthday with the poet Anne Sexton. Big sister Stella and brother Hank are thrilled, as are the six cats. Emily Van Duyne, Associate Professor of Writing and First-Year Studies.*

*Lindsay and her husband Fred are thrilled to announce the birth of their second child, Fisher Wallace Beddiges. Fisher arrived at 7:01PM on 9/7/2020, weighing 8lbs, 4oz and measuring, 19 1/2 inches. Lindsay Beddiges, Assistant Director of Event Services.*

*Baby Kei Tashiro arrived at 11.15am on 11/30/2020. We are all very happy to meet him and recovering well. Big sister Miya is excited to meet her brother in a few days! Zori & Ryo. Zornitsa Kalibatseva, Assistant Professor of Psychology.*

*I thought now would be a good time to send some happy news along because it seems there is a lot going on. So to brighten your day, please welcome Acer James Suppa to the world. I hope you are all doing well and taking care of yourselves. I miss my GENS family. Siobahn Suppa, Assistant Professor of Math and First Year Studies.*

Welcome all four of you to our family. If you know of any births you missed or ones to come, please keep us informed so we can share the good news.

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*Susan Burrows  
Stockton University  
Office Manager SFT Local 2275*



**Welcome to the SFT Family  
Bowie, Fisher, Kei and Acer!**

# Hollywood-style Teaser for SFT Local 2275 Video Recruitment Project

*Neil Aaronson, Executive Board Member, provides a teaser of the video recruitment project he and Lane Jackson will be premiering in the Spring.*

The task of maintaining and expanding the SFT's membership changed dramatically when all our lives and work were disrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic. The SFT is now faced with the challenge of encouraging new and existing faculty, librarians, and professional staff to become members while limited by the constraints of social distancing and video conferencing. Our usual approach, in which in-person interactions were such an important component, is not currently possible. In response, we decided to make a series of recruitment videos, targeted to faculty and librarians, adjuncts, and professional staff, respectively. In truth, the idea of making a

recruitment video was not new, but this new reality certainly seemed like a strong impetus to make it finally happen.

After outlining ideas for what the videos should look like and contain, Stockton alumni Lane Jackson was tapped to develop a creative vision for the project, write a script, and direct its filming and production. His approach is a mix of levity and sincere motivation. With humor inspired by corny corporate training videos, he aims to capture the attention of the viewers to deliver important messages about the strength, importance, and work of the SFT.

The videos exclusively feature SFT Union members, with some off-camera voice work by Director Lane Jackson himself. Shooting wrapped recently, and the process of editing and producing drafts has begun. We hope to be able to show you, and of course new potential union members, the finished products in early 2021.

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*Neil Aaronson, Ph.D.  
Stockton University  
Membership Director  
SFT Local 2275*

## Thanks for Reading!

This newsletter was produced through the generous contributions of the Stockton Federation of Teachers Local 2275 Executive Committee and our Friends. If you have any questions, comments or contributions you'd like to add, please do not hesitate to reach out to the lead editor, Brian Tyrrell, Communications Director for the Stockton Federation of Teachers Local 2275, at [Brian.Tyrrell@SFTUnion.org](mailto:Brian.Tyrrell@SFTUnion.org)

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*Brian J. Tyrrell, Ph.D.  
Stockton University  
Communications Director  
SFT Local 2275*

