

Stockton Federation of Teachers Local 2275

Quarterly Newsletter



2021 2nd Quarter



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A Fond Farewell and a Call to Action from Rodger Jackson

Rodger Jackson, President of SFT Local 2275, waxes poetically about exiting stage left, or at least moving a little backwards in line, but seriously wants members to consider a leadership role.

This is my final column as president of SFT 2275. I'd like to dedicate it to all the members who have ever considered taking on a more active role in the Union leadership.

I will become the vice president in July, starting a two-year term. However, I would consider it a success if someone else took over before I completed it. As the SFT Exec knows, succession planning has been one of my primary objectives. Four years ago at the

SFT installment dinner, when I spoke as president for the first time, I said "Thank you to everyone in this room who has worked and continues to work for the Union. All of us, including me, need to be looking for their replacement." Then I sat down. Emari teased me that she knew I was serious because I spoke so briefly.

I didn't say that because of some problem with the officers who were serving at that time. Quite the contrary, they were smart,

dedicated, hardworking Union activists. Rather, because of my experience with other locals across the state, I had seen how hard it was for their leaders to pass the reins. They would take on a role and then never leave. Our identity becomes intertwined with the position, thereby making it hard to imagine who we might be without it. Others see us this way, and then they have a hard time imagining themselves in those roles. Before you know it, the same faces are in the same places for decades at a time.



I don't believe you can sustain a dynamic organization unless it is regularly refreshed with new ideas and different perspectives. In this way you will be flexible and vibrant enough to face the onslaught of challenges. What is more, we need to allow members to see that they can take on a position, step away, and return again later in their career. If the Union leadership is a black hole into which people enter and are never seen again, then it's hard to persuade folks to take it on.

Finally, by encouraging, developing, and mentoring new officers before we retire, then those of us who have done these jobs will still be around to help when needed. I know that I could not have done this job without my predecessors still here on campus picking up some delicate but crucial task, using their connections to further our causes, and offering wisdom and comfort when needed. This will hold for me as well.

I will always be a member of SFT 2275. I will always be there for the Union when we are called to step up. It has been one of the great privileges of my career to serve as president. I urge each one of you to consider how you can take the reins. Thank you.

--

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



The SFT Local 2275 in the Digital Age

Stacey Rose, Treasurer, describes moving the SFT finances into the digital age and updates us on the phenomenal work done in the face of the pandemic.

As we conclude our fiscal year, I want to highlight some fun things (I suppose that is relative) for the new year.

We are taking steps to modernize our finances. We are doing a great job, but we can always do more.

First, we are converting our debit card to a credit card, so we have increased fraud protection if our account is compromised. This will also allow me to lean into my neurosis and get alerts for all charges to our credit card; I am excited.

Second, all requests for payment or reimbursement will become digital, replacing our paper forms. This will allow us to have a digital copy of every request and receipt. Again, this allows me to monitor

our finances more closely without physically being in the office to survey our bills, reimbursements, and requests for payment.

Third, since our requests are going digital - everything else is too! I am so excited, and I just can't hide it. In addition to QuickBooks, which we already use, we will migrate all of our paper financial work to a digital format. This will make the processes for the Financial Review Committee more efficient and allow us greater oversight of our finances.

Finally, I want to acknowledge some additional financial work I completed related to the COVID-19 pandemic. In addition to the above, I successfully applied for a PPP loan for SFT and for that loan to be forgiven. I made adjustments to our finances related to the loss of dues

income from furloughs, requested an adjustment in the hefty dues we pay to AFT and Council also related to the furloughs (still pending, but looks good to go!), and saved us a significant recurring expense by switching payroll processors. I didn't receive a bonus nor do I want one. Sometimes, when we have a crisis or a critical moment, you just do the work. I can say my fellow officers, as well as all of you, did the same. You did the work. Our workforce is the most valuable and vibrant thing we have; I am grateful for all of you.

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*Stacey Rose, MA
Stockton University
Treasurer SFT Local 2275*



Grievances and Unfair Labor Practices: What You Should Know

Nazia Kazi, Grievance Officer, describes how the SFT not only fights to protect our state and local agreements, but to help you ensure state and federal laws designed to protect employees are being adhered to.

You are likely aware that our Union has a process for ensuring our agreements (both local and at the statewide level) are appropriately enforced for all our members. Our website has a comprehensive repository of all our agreements for your reference. If you suspect a violation of any agreement, please contact the Union as soon as possible. The grievance process is initiated when we become aware of such a violation and are unable to reach an informal resolution on the matter.

What you may not know is that there is another type of employment matter we can also assist you with:

the Unfair Labor Practice charge. If you feel that your rights have been violated but cannot find a relevant section of an agreement in this regard, you may want to consider whether any state-or federal-level employment laws are being violated.

A Grievance, then, is the violation of any one of our contracts (for instance, our Master Agreement), while an Unfair Labor Practice charge is the violation of New Jersey state or national employment practices.

In either case, the Union is available to help determine whether

either a Grievance or Unfair Labor Practice charge is appropriate in your particular case.

If you believe that an agreement has been violated by your supervisor, please contact Nazia.Kazi@sftunion.org, providing a narrative of key events and the dates they occurred.

--

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



Progress/Persistence with Local Negotiations

Tina Zappile, Lead Negotiator, updates local negotiations including summer orientation, staff reclassification, staff performance-based promotion, intellectual property, faculty leadership and (pause, take a deep breath), the agenda for the upcoming year.

Negotiations

We will continue to update the local agreements page on our SFT website with anything new from this spring or summer, which is maintained by Robert Castillo

(CTLD), <https://www.sftunion.org/local-agreements>. Also, we will be holding a session at the annual SFT summer workshop on two of the staff issues noted below to make sure that our professional staff

members are informed about the new processes for reclassification and performance-based promotions. We hope you can attend!



Summer Orientation

As summer orientations come to a close, we want to thank you for your work! We also want you to know that in May, we fought to preserve the workday for summer orientation to be defined as 1 single academic advising session (i.e., the traditional model where faculty attend the larger school presentation and then advise 1 group of students to register for their classes). There were tentative plans to add a 2nd academic advising session for a new set of students on the same day. This meant that faculty could be asked to work either 1 or 2 separate advising sessions in a single day. We negotiated for faculty to be compensated at the current rate for 1 advising session so that if faculty worked 2 sessions in one day they would be compensated for 2 “days”. While the plan to double up orientations on the same day was eventually abandoned, this may come up again next spring when orientations are scheduled.

Staff Reclassification

In the last newsletter, we announced a new set of instructions and an application that are now posted on the HR website here: <https://stockton.edu/human-resources/reclassification.html>.

Staff Performance-Based Promotions

We are thrilled that after a delay of 16 months, the administration finally agreed to consider our demand for a new agreement to replace the current one. In late 2019 and early 2020, before the pandemic, we had solicited input from staff and worked with our VP of Professional Staff at the time to revise the old agreement to make it more clear and fair. This was in response to several issues that arose from the first round of applications. We anticipate the new agreement to be finalized in late July or early August. We will send an email announcement with the final version as soon as we can, and we look forward to rolling out a new process.

Intellectual Property (IP)

This is another reminder that until we have a local agreement in place for IP, the administration has agreed to continue to use ARTICLE XXXIII COPYRIGHT OWNERSHIP from the 2015-2019 Master Agreement located on page 45 here: <http://www.cnjscl.org/AFT%20FT%202015-2019%20final%20contract.pdf>. Section A.1 identifies when the employee (i.e., you) is the sole owner, which generally includes all the materials produced for a

course whether they are embodied in hand-written notes or a digital format. Please contact us if you have additional questions about this agreement and the implications it might have on your work.

2021-2022 New Faculty Leadership Agreements

Many of you are starting, or have already started, positions under the new set of faculty leadership agreements. Please stay tuned for opportunities to provide your input, as there were some significant changes. The expiration dates are relatively soon and we want to make sure that we hear from you about your experiences. We will be looking for as much feedback as possible for the next round of negotiations, which for us will start in Spring of 2022.

2021-2022 Agenda

Our agenda for the new academic year is shaping up right now and we will release more specific information on or shortly after September 1st.

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



The Staff Senate Needs You!

Tiffany Rice, VP of Professional Staff, describes how important a staff senate is and urges you to reach out to friends and co-workers in CWA and IFPTE, pass this column along, and invite them to join us!

We certainly live in interesting times! The past year and a half has presented us with a series of challenges and has stretched us beyond measure. Many of these challenges have had to be addressed by our Union (SFT 2275) and I am inspired by what we have accomplished. However, we have also found that there are important issues that cannot be addressed by the Union, and this is for three reasons.

First, in order for the Union to be effective in protecting our work environment, it needs to be able to focus on issues that are directly tied to the terms and conditions of our employment. I suppose you might say that everything here at Stockton involves the conditions of our employment, but if we expand the definition so broadly then the Union will be unable to do anything effectively. The second, and building on the first, is that we need a forum that talks about who we are, what the identity of Stockton is, and what it should be. Again, this is not really the role of a union. Third, as it stands, the non-faculty workers at Stockton have three

strong and capable unions (SFT, CWA, & IFPTE), which by their very nature are separate and distinct entities. This means that we do not have a forum for all of us to come together for conversation, debate, brainstorming, shared concerns, and the like.

If you look at the faculty, you will see that they actually have much the same issues. While it may seem to us professional staff that all faculty are alike (JK!), they have different concerns, projects, problems, solutions, etc. They too have significantly different visions about who Stockton is and should be. To respond to this, they created first the Faculty Assembly, and then the Faculty Senate. It is high time that we do the same.

Moreover, creating such a forum will allow us to come together and speak with each other openly and honestly about our shared experiences and explore our ideas. Plus, it will do so in a way that ensures our voices are heard, and not overwhelmed by faculty interests. Having done this, we will then be in a better position to

work with the faculty on our shared concerns with equal footing. We are not alone in this process; there has been a staff Senate at TCNJ since 2000. We can reach out to them for resources and ideas!

We are only at the beginning stages of creating our University's first Staff Senate and there's lots of work to do. Our goal is to have an introductory/informational meeting sometime within the next couple of weeks. If you are interested in learning more about the process and/or would like to participate, please email me at Tiffany.Rice@sftunion.org to receive more information. I also would urge you to reach out to friends and co-workers in CWA and IFPTE, pass this column along, and invite them to join us! I am very excited about this project and I'm looking forward to creating a positive, lasting change with you.

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*Tiffany Rice
Stockton University
Vice President of
Professional Staff SFT Local 2275*



American Federation of Teachers (AFT) Partners With NJ Department of Labor For Unemployment Insurance Workshop

Maxine Patroni, announces the AFT's partnership with the NJ Department of Labor in delivering an unemployment insurance workshop.

In July 2020, New Jersey Governor Phil Murphy passed a bill that qualifies adjunct faculty to receive unemployment insurance benefits where historically there was not much support. But according to a recent survey administered by AFT, adjunct faculty in New Jersey have been finding it difficult to secure the insurance they were promised. On Tuesday, June 22, 2021, AFT's Council of New Jersey State College Locals collaborated with the New Jersey Department of Labor to bring adjuncts to an informative workshop to help them in the process of applying for unemployment insurance.

During the session, a representative from the NJ Division of Unemployment Insurance explained the recent changes in laws allowing adjuncts to apply for unemployment insurance. The representative also answered general and individual questions from adjuncts who are represented by the Council of New Jersey State College Locals. If you are an adjunct who is a member of Stockton Federation of Teachers and missed this call, please contact me at maxine.patroni@stockton.edu to receive access to the recording. If you are not a member of the union, please contact me for details on how

to join and receive benefits such as this informative session.

If you are still having issues securing unemployment, hang in there – you are not alone in this. Again, thank you for all of your support. If you need assistance or have questions, I would be happy to help.

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



SFT Local 2275's Committee on Political Education (COPE) Thanks Assemblyman John Armato for His Work on the Behalf of Unions

Brian Tyrrell, Committee on Political Education (COPE) Director, describes an emergency call with the Executive Committee of the Stockton Federation of Teachers Local 2275 and Assemblyman John Armato.

The SFT Local 2275 wants to thank Assemblyman John Armato for his work on behalf of unions. Specifically, Assemblyman Armato took our call in a time of need and we should all thank him for that.

This past month, a bill known affectionately as the Responsible Collective Negotiations Act was passed by the State Senate ([S3810](#)), and while in committee in the State Assembly it hit some roadblocks. The bill is important to the SFT as the state currently can rely on a draconian provision that allows them to impose the last best offer in negotiations, which really corrupts the term "negotiation".

Not surprisingly, the presidents of the New Jersey colleges and universities showed up to voice

their opposition, because why their opposition to the bill. What they fail to recognize is that imposing a last best offer is not in the spirit of collective bargaining, not by a long-shot.

Reacting to this takes influence, and this is what we try and spend your voluntarily contributed COPE funds for. Over the Father's Day weekend we needed to cash in on some of that influence. Two text messages later, we were on a conference call with one of the co-sponsors of the Assembly version of the bill (A5862), our local Assemblyman John Armato.

While work remains on the bill, we continue the fight. Please, if you see Assemblyman Armato, be sure to thank him on our behalf. And

read more about the Responsible Collective Negotiations Act and how you can support it in the Get Involved column on the back page of this newsletter.

COPE funds do not come out of union members' dues, but rather from additional contributions by generous members who understand that 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.

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



The SFT Local 2275's Family is Growing! Pam Cross and the Union Welcome Lucas Alexander Bond

Pam Cross, introduces Lucas Alexander Bond, son of Jessica and James Bond, and beloved sibling of many.

Welcome to our world, Lucas Alexander Bond--born on June 30th to Jessica Spencer Bond, from Athletics. Lucas joins a Bond family which includes Jess, her husband, James Bond (no kidding), and three other young Bonds: James, Charlotte, and Matthew. The Bond family also has six angels in Heaven watching over them: Olivia, Noah, Jonah, Jude, River and Willow.

The early reports from Lucas's homecoming are all good: lots of snuggling and sibling love and not a hint of a Bond villain in sight (sorry, couldn't resist).

We send our love to Jess and family! Please let me know of any new babies at pam.cross@stockton.edu.

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Pam Cross
Stockton University
Executive Committee
SFT Local 2275



Welcome to the SFT Family Lucas Alexander Bond!

Urge Your Lawmakers to Support The Responsible Collective Negotiations Act

Please ask your state Senator and Assembly members to support the “Responsible Collective Negotiations Act” – also known as the “Janus 2” bill. This legislation would build on the “The Workplace Democracy Enhancement Act,” which was enacted in 2018 to address several outstanding issues related to the Supreme Court case “Janus v. AFSCME,” which overturned 41 years of judicial precedent concerning public employee union representation.

This legislation is strongly supported by the New Jersey State AFL-CIO, CWA, AFSCME, AFT, IFPTE, Professional Firefighters Association of New Jersey (PFANJ – IAFF) and the Fraternal Order of Police (FOP).

The bill also addresses parity for state workers and civilian local government workers regarding the imposition of contracts and subjects of collective bargaining or “scope of bargaining.”

Follow this link provided by the New Jersey State AFL/CIO to voice your support of the [Responsible Collective Negotiations Act](#).

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*New Jersey State AFL/CIO
Trenton, New Jersey*



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

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*Brian J. Tyrrell, Ph.D.
Stockton University
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