



The Advocate

Skin in the Game: Salary Supplements for Top Executives

As the Texas Legislature works its way through the current session, we are reminded that the Lone Star College System faced significant belt tightening in the past bienium. By and large, employees have understood the significance of these funding cuts and have willingly accepted their share of the burden. In light of the fact that employees in other colleges and K-12 schools faced furloughs, salary cuts, and layoffs in the 2011/2012 school year, we accepted that salary increases were not possible that year. We also accepted a deferred 2% increase for the current year although employees at other nearby schools fared better, and increases in fuel and other costs have eaten into that increase significantly.

Good citizens accept sacrifice in the midst of adversity as long as they feel that everyone, including those who lead, share in that sacrifice. For that reason, the AFT was recently disappointed to learn that, even while the vast majority of Lone Star employees have made do with nearly fixed incomes over these last two years, a few at the top have been receiving a “performance-based salary supplement of between 8-12% of the[ir] annual base salary.” As a result of an open records request, the AFT has learned that the president of one LSCS college received a 12% supplement in September 2012, that another president and the chief legal counsel each received supplements

in excess of \$30,000 for their work for the previous two years, and that another vice chancellor received a supplement in excess of \$18,000. In addition, although we do not yet know our allocation from the state, and although the Lone Star budget is months away from approval, four other college presidents are already slated to receive supplements in September 2013 ranging from 9% to 11%. These supplements are on top of generous base salaries and significant perks unavailable to other employees, including an \$800 per month automobile allowance and \$600 per month community service allowance for presidents and vice chancellors. Although we have asked for information about criteria for these supplements, all we know so far is what these employees’ contracts say: “payment of any supplement remains solely at the discretion of the Chancellor.”

For most public employees in the state of Texas, information about base salaries is easily obtained from a database on the *Texas Tribune* website. Obtaining information about supplements and special stipends at LSCS takes an open records request. At the April 4 Board meeting, the Vice Chancellor of Administration and Finance explained that these supplements are previously agreed upon “total compensation that is withheld for two years.” But the *Texas Tribune* web site shows only the “base salary” of these

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employees without any report of the amount of total compensation that is withheld even when it is already promised in their contracts. Transparency builds trust. The public and the college community have a vested interest, not only in what supplemental pay is offered to select employees, but also in the criteria used to award this pay.

According to the *Texas Tribune* web site, which was last updated on August 10, 2011, the lowest paid LSCS employee receives an annual salary of \$20,794. The AFT believes that this figure puts these \$18,000 to \$34,000 salary supplements in a revealing context. The AFT does not begrudge competitive salaries for anyone. However, we ask the Board of Trustees to reevaluate a contract structure in which the majority of Lone Star employees are asked to give their pound of flesh while others have no skin at all in the game.

Summary of Information about Salary Supplements (based on copies of employment contracts received from the LSCS Office of General Counsel, February 2013):

In September 2012, the President of Kingwood College received a “lump sum distribution” of \$34,340.98 for the previous two years.

In September 2012, General Counsel received a “lump sum distribution” of \$31,515.63 for the previous two years.

In September 2012, the President of North Harris College received a “lump sum distribution” of \$21,142 for one year.

In September 2012, the Vice Chancellor of Administration and Finance received a “lump sum distribution” of \$18,894.58.

In September 2011, the Vice Chancellor of External Affairs received a “lump sum distribution” of \$18,887.54.

During September 2013, the President of CyFair College “shall receive 9%” of \$175,032.

During September 2013, the President of Montgomery College “shall receive 10%” of \$175,032.

During September 2013, the President of Tomball College “shall receive 11%” of \$171,001.

During September 2013, the CEO of University Park “shall receive 11%” of \$175,032.

During September 2013, the Senior Vice Chancellor “shall receive 10%” of \$176,517.

All of the employees listed above also receive the \$800 per month automobile allowance and \$600 per month “community service allowance.”

According to the Chancellor’s contract, LSCS makes an annual contribution in the amount of 15% of his base salary to his “Optional Retirement Program,” provides a \$17,000 automobile allowance, and pays for his wife’s travel expenses if she travels “in the best interest of the System.”

John Burghdoff, Professor, LSC-CF

LSCS Election 2013

The Lone Star College System Board consists of nine trustees elected for six-year, staggered terms in an at-large voting system. Every two years, three Board seats come up for election. On February 20, the LSCS Board approved the ballot for the upcoming May election in a special meeting. In addition to three Board seats, the ballot includes a bond referendum for \$497.7 million

With three incumbents and five challengers on the May 11 ballot, voters will have some sorting out to do before casting their votes. The incumbents running for reelection are David Holsey (position 1), Tom Forrestier (position 2), and Randy Bates (position 8). The challengers are Liz Jensen (position 1), Janie Branham (position 2), Kyle Scott (position 2), Bill Morris (position 8), and Ron Trowbridge (position 8).

Candidates had from January 30 to March 1 to file



their intent to run with the college. On March 5, AFT Lone Star sent questionnaires to all eight candidates, asking them to reply by mail or email within one week of receipt. On March 22, the AFT Lone Star Committee on Political Education reviewed the five questionnaires that had been received and recommended that the Executive Committee endorse Liz Jensen, Janie Branham, and Ron Trowbridge as well as the bond referendum. The Executive Committee voted to do so on the same day. On March 25, Tom Forrestier returned his questionnaire, the only incumbent to do so. Unfortunately, we received it too late for it to enter into our deliberations.

Employees have already been given information about the bond referendum in "Election Forums" on campuses that were led by the college presidents, the Vice Chancellor of External Affairs, and the Special Assistant to the Chancellor. Some employees have asked what opposition they might encounter if they campaign for the bond. First and foremost, it is imperative that all employees understand that they cannot campaign for Board candidates or the bond referendum as representatives of LSCS. Furthermore, they cannot use any LSCS resources, including work time, to campaign. Having said that, if employees are interested in campaigning on their own time, with their own resources, the AFT is concerned that campaigning for the bond may be an uphill battle. Even some of the challengers we have endorsed have articulated cogent arguments against it.

Some opponents argue that the LSCS growth projection of 110,000 students by 2018 is based on the rate of growth during the Great Recession that began in 2007.¹ The Houston area unemployment rate peaked in January 2010 at 8.8% and in January 2013 was down to 6.7%.² These critics note that LSCS enrollment has now leveled off as a result of the falling unemployment rate. Thus they believe LSCS growth projections are exaggerated and so is the dollar amount of the bond referendum. This view is bolstered by the growth prediction issued by the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board in January of this year. According to the Coordinating Board, LSCS will have 81,762 students in 2020.³

Employees should also be prepared for criticism of

the 83 member Citizens' Review Committee that recommended the bond to the Board. Barbara Thomason, president of the Houston Northwest Chamber of Commerce, led the Committee. Indeed, one critic says that 49 committee members, or 60%, are also members of area Chambers of Commerce who might have a vested interest in large construction projects.⁴

On February 20, Jon Bauman addressed the Board on behalf of the Texas Patriot PAC. According to Bauman, while enrollment was increasing rapidly from 2006 to 2012, LSCS only increased its full-time faculty by 11 percent. Bauman claims that "the ratio of students per faculty member increased from 17 to 1 in 2006 to 29 to 1 in 2012." Bauman also pointed to the college's poor full-time/part-time faculty ratio. Bauman's central point seems to be that the college is more focused on the construction of buildings than on the quality of education. The AFT has not been able to verify all of the factual claims made by Bauman about total college debt, increase in the number of "administrative staff," etc., but we recommend that interested employees read his presentation online before they venture out onto the campaign trail.⁵

Employees should be aware of evidence that may substantiate Bauman's concern. The May 2008 LSCS bond included \$19.7 million for the construction of the LSCS Cypress Center at 19710 Clay Road near Fry Road. For more than a year, construction was delayed because Harris County was concerned about additional traffic in the area. That problem was finally resolved by LSCS purchasing a right of way for a second entrance. Construction is now in progress with an expected opening date in Fall 2013.⁶

Despite five years to plan for the opening of Cypress Center, LSCS failed to budget any money for staff, faculty, or administrators to operate it. Current plans are to reassign staff and administration from LSC-CyFair and the Fairbanks Center and to hope that some LSC-CyFair full-time faculty will volunteer to teach there. Recently, the center was authorized to hire two full time faculty members but with projected enrollment of 3,000 students, the vast majority of classes at the new center will be covered by



adjunct faculty who are paid \$1860 per semester for each class they teach. Because adjuncts are paid so little, they have little time to help students beyond the classroom. Many have to rush off to other paying jobs as soon as class is over. And with the worst full-time/part-time faculty ratio in LSCS, LSC-CyFair faculty will be stressed even more than they are now.

Peer Benchmark Institutions	Fall 2012 Enrollment*	Percent of sections taught by adjuncts
Alamo Community College District	59,640	50
Austin Community College	40,152	56
Dallas County Community College District	78,415	46
El Paso Community College	29,980	56
Houston Community College	47,784	50
Lone Star College System	78,023	62
San Jacinto College	33,106	40
South Texas	30,825	26
Tarrant County College District	65,955	48

*Enrollment numbers obtained from Texas Association of Community Colleges: <http://www.tacc.org/ccenrollment.htm>

Bauman’s claim about LSCS’s full-time/part-time faculty ratio will also be difficult to counter. According to Texas Community College Teachers Association data, LSCS has the second to the worst full-time/part-time faculty ratio of the 49 community colleges in Texas.⁷ The only college with a worse ratio is Ranger College. With approximately 1,900 students, Ranger is not exactly a peer benchmark institution for LSCS. The table above compares LSCS to the eight largest community colleges in Texas.

Finally, employees who wish to campaign for the bond should be prepared to discuss stewardship issues. For example, some critics argue that LSCS’s failure to appropriately supervise some administrators has led to unnecessary, expensive litigation against the college, a poor use of taxpayer money. Another stewardship issue is large salaries and salary supplements for upper administrators. Although bond money can only be used for capital improvements, not litigation or salaries, some local taxpayers have already expressed the view that unnecessary litigation, high salaries, and large salary supplements for upper administrators are indicative of poor stewardship of taxpayer money.⁸ They would like to see more of that money going more directly to instructional costs.

We hope this information will help employees prepare to campaign for the bond on their own time. You can find more information about voter eligibility and early voting (April 29 - May 7) locations and times on the college web site:

<http://www.lonestar.edu/bond2013/voting-information.htm>.

Staff

¹“2013 Bond Election,” *Lone Star College System*, accessed March 29, 2013, <<http://www.lonestar.edu/bond2013/bond-2013.htm>>.

²“Databases, Tables & Calculators by Subject,” *Bureau of Labor Statistics Data*, accessed March 29 2013, <http://data.bls.gov/timeseries/LAUMT48264203?data_tool=XGtable>.

³“THECB - Report Center,” *THECB - Report Center*, accessed March 29, 2013, <<http://www.thecb.state.tx.us/reports/DocFetch.cfm?DocID=2964>>.

⁴“Citizens Review Facilities Committee,” *Dr. Liz Jensen for Lone Star College Position #1*, accessed March 29 2013, <<http://drj4lsc.org/citizens-review-facilities-committee/>>.

⁵“Lone Star College Board Asks, How Much Is Too Much Debt?,” *Texas Patriots PAC*, accessed March 29, 2013, <<http://www.texaspatriotspac.com/articles/>>



lone-star-college-board-asks-how-much-too-much-debt>.

⁶“Traffic Issues Delay Lone Star College Project,” *Ultimate Katy*, accessed March 30, 2013, <<http://www.ultimatekaty.com/stories/254206-community-traffic-issues-delay-lone-star-college-project>>; “NO on Bond Proposal,” *Ronald Trowbridge*, accessed March 29, 2013, <<http://rontrowbridge.org/no-on-bond-proposal-2/>>.

⁷“Compensation and Utilization of Part-Time Instructors,” *Texas Community College Teachers Association*, accessed March 29, 2013, <<http://www.tccta.org/news/salariesurvey12/PT12FINAL.xls>>.

⁸“Topics,” *Dr. Liz Jensen for Lone Star College Position #1*, <<http://drj4lsc.org/topics/>>.

Due Process Rights in the Lone Star College System

In December 2010, the LSCS Board of Trustees voted to eliminate from the Policy Manual the process that allows employees to appeal grievances to the Board. It also voted to eliminate due process rights for non-contractual employees (i.e., staff). For over 30 years LSCS staff had the same due process rights as contractual employees (faculty and administrators). As a result, staff can now only appeal a grievance to their second level supervisor, a person who is not likely to be a neutral arbiter. The AFT finds it astounding that in a majority/minority college, the Board saw fit to eliminate due process for staff, our most diverse group of employees. LSCS’s stated goal of being “a premier community college and leader in higher education” means that we should strive to adopt, maintain, and follow the best grievance policy among our peer institutions.

The AFT believes its concerns about these changes are germane because of recent events at Montgomery College (MC). During the Spring 2012 semester, the MC Faculty Senate elected a committee to pursue concerns about shared governance and a hostile work environment. The MC Vice President of Instruction (VPI) responded by targeting those faculty

in what they interpreted as retaliation. The faculty involved used every means provided to them in the LSCS Policy Manual to resolve the situation through proper procedures, including meeting with their President and filing formal grievances that cited evidence of specific instances of abusive and retaliatory behavior by their VPI. In his handling of the grievances, LSCS General Counsel committed numerous violations of the LSCS Policy Manual and hired outside counsel who also violated policy as he conducted a profoundly flawed investigation that ignored a great deal of evidence. The AFT believes any reasonable person who reads that investigation would agree that outside counsel determined his conclusion and then picked evidence that upheld it. Fortunately, the AFT has reason to believe that LSCS may have stopped hiring that outside counsel, which indicates that they also realized that his work was subpar.

As the grievance process continued to go awry, the MC Faculty Senate cast a vote of “no confidence” in their VPI. The MC President and the Chancellor belittled the vote of no confidence and ignored the evidence on which it was based. At that point, the AFT encouraged three of the faculty involved (only two of whom were AFT members) to appeal to the Board, on the grounds that they had the right to do so whether LSCS policy said so or not. Those three faculty assembled a packet of evidence, a chronology of events, and a cover letter beseeching the Board to intervene. Copies of the packet were then mailed to each member of the Board, the Chancellor, the President of MC, and LSCS General Counsel. The President of the LSCS Board returned his packet unopened, and the Board never acknowledged receipt of the packet, never responded to the employees, nor made any public statement about the appeal. Although we have already stated that the Board has no obligation to respond to complaints, the AFT finds it alarming that the Board has publically expressed no concern about documented violations of policy by several administrators, including General Counsel. The Board has done nothing publicly to revise what we believe is a profoundly flawed grievance policy despite evidence that the policy does not work.



It is imperative to emphasize that the new grievance policy *does not forbid employees from appealing to the Board*. The AFT believes such a restriction would violate the First Amendment rights of citizens to petition their government for a redress of grievances because the LSCS Board of Trustees is a local governing body, obligated to respect the Constitutional rights of U.S. citizens. Instead of forbidding petition to the Board, the Board merely deleted any mention of appeal to the Board. If the LSCS Board believes they are not required to honor the First Amendment right of petition, the AFT believes that they should demonstrate that conviction by explicitly stating so.

By contrast, Dallas County Community College, one of LSCS's peer institutions, has a much better policy manual posted on their web site. Not only is the DCCC Policy Manual written more clearly, unlike the LSCS Policy Manual, it cites legal authority for all of its policies. Citations are an important sign of academic integrity, and in the case of policy, they allow readers to find relevant statutes, case law, or passages in the US or Texas Constitutions to learn more about the justification of a particular policy. The AFT believes LSCS should aspire to the construction of a policy manual at least as good as DCCC's. Let us examine what the DCCC Policy Manual says about the issues in question.

First, the DCCC Policy Manual states: "A College District shall take no action abridging the freedom of speech or the right of the people to petition the Board for redress of grievances. *U.S. Const. Amend. I, XIV*" In this passage, the DCCC Policy Manual cites the First and Fourteenth Amendments to the U.S. Constitution because the First Amendment guarantees Americans the right to petition their "government for a redress of grievances," and the Fourteenth Amendment requires state and local governments to abide by the U.S. Constitution. This passage applies to all people wishing to petition the DCCC Board, but another passage in their policy manual specifically extends this right to employees as well:

Employees shall have the right, in a peaceable manner, to assemble together for their common good and to apply to those invested with the

powers of government for redress of grievances or other purposes, by petition, address, or remonstrance. *Tex. Const., Art. I, Sec. 27*

There is no requirement that the Board negotiate or even respond to complaints. However, the Board must stop, look, and listen and must consider the petition, address, or remonstrance. *Prof'l Ass'n of College Educators v. El Paso County Cmty (College) District, 678 S.W.2d 94 (Tex. App.—El Paso 1984, writ ref'd n.r.e.)*

The AFT believes the first paragraph above makes it clear that DCCC employees retain their First Amendment right to petition their government for redress of grievances. Indeed, in another passage, the DCCC Policy Manual explicitly states: "College District employees do not shed their constitutional rights to freedom of speech or expression at the schoolhouse gate." The second paragraph above makes it clear that the DCCC Board is a body "invested with the powers of government." Although it is correct that the DCCC Board is not legally required to "negotiate or even respond to complaints," it is required to "stop, look, and listen" and to "consider the petition, address, or remonstrance."

To be sure, not all of LSCS's peer institutions provide a process by which employees may appeal grievances to their Board. For example, Houston Community College states:

The HCC Board of Trustees does not have a role in the Complaint Procedure and consequently there is no review or appeal to members of the HCC Board. However, nothing in the procedure precludes the affected employee(s) from appearing before the Board of Trustees during the Hearing of the Citizens.

But DCCC is not the only peer institution that provides a process for appeal of grievances to their Board. The Tarrant County Community College (TCCC) Policy Manual is almost identical to the DCCC Policy Manual. Both are based on a manual developed and maintained by the Texas Association of School Boards. The sections on grievances rights are substantially identical. Alamo Commu-



nity College (ACC) also provides a process by which employees can petition its Board for a redress of grievances (see section D.3.3.1). All of these policy manuals, including HCC's, also provide the same due process rights for contractual and non-contractual employees, and are available online for LSCS Trustees and other interested readers to study for themselves. Thus, all avoid reducing rights for staff, the most vulnerable and, no doubt, the most diverse employees in their systems, too.

The AFT believes that as the DCCC, TCCC, and ACC Board Policy Manuals demonstrate, the LSCS Board can eliminate policy that provides a process by which employees can appeal to it for a redress of grievances, but it cannot eliminate employees' Constitutional right to appeal to the Board. Thus the AFT maintains that LSCS employees retain that right.

Another problem with the LSCS Board's recent restriction of the appeals process concerns the possibility of an employee filing a grievance against the Chancellor. Imagine a hypothetical situation in which an employee feels compelled to file a grievance against the Chancellor for serious misconduct such as sexual harassment or racial discrimination. According to the LSCS policy manual, it would be the Chancellor's responsibility to appoint a committee to hear the grievance against him. The AFT believes this is an obvious conflict of interest that LSCS policy currently promotes because there is no formal mechanism built into LSCS policy for the Board to find out if such a grievance had been filed, much less to remedy the conflict. The Board would only find out if someone voluntarily chose to inform the Board of the grievance, which would be a very risky action to take. If the employee in this hypothetical situation did appeal to the Board and the Board refused to hear the grievance, it would effectively be refusing to supervise the Chancellor in that grievance, the one and only employee in the system that the Board is obligated to supervise.

With these two policy changes, the Board has effectively surrendered its obligation to supervise the Chancellor in matters of employee grievances. All of

the currently seated Board members had that responsibility when they were chosen to serve on the Board (eight were elected by local voters and one was appointed by the Board when a sitting Board member resigned in 2010). Rather than fulfill this responsibility, Board members voted it away and now have no formal way to know if the grievance policy is being followed or applied fairly. Yet they do have evidence that some administrators do not always follow it.

When the LSCS Board of Trustees was presented with that evidence, they did not see fit to reinstate due process for staff or to reinstate the process by which employees could appeal grievances to the Board. The Board has willfully neglected a responsibility for which they were chosen despite evidence that the grievance policy is not always followed, nor applied fairly.

LSCS needs Board members who are committed to the fair treatment of all employees. With a Board election coming up in May, the AFT urges all employees to study the available candidates and look specifically at their commitment to fairness and openness.

Staff

My Sojourn in For-Profit Higher Education: A Cautionary Tale

Last summer I was contacted by one of the major for-profit universities to teach a statistics class at one of their Houston area campuses. I had not sought them out; I had filled out a reference for a colleague who wanted to teach there, and one of the university's faculty recruiters decided to contact me. Thinking (rather mistakenly) that the upcoming summer looked quiet, I got approval from my college president (as required by Board policy) and joined, once again, the rank of adjunct faculty.

Although I've been in the teaching business for almost 38 years, I've never taught for anything other than a non-profit public school. Being a typical aca



demic, I couldn't help but make note of the comparisons and contrasts between my new employer and Lone Star College. Ever since then, I've wanted to write an article to describe what I saw, talk about the things I observed that were not as effective as what we do, point out some things I think they do better and raise some cautionary red flags about how Lone Star in particular and community colleges in general could drift towards some of the concerns I had about this school.

The name of the university is not important; most for-profit universities share a lot of similar characteristics and I don't want to single this one out as unique. Also, although you might expect that an article about for-profit universities would be universally critical, that would not exactly match my experience. First of all, the administrators I worked with were universally welcoming and supportive. They were also very involved with the students on a one-on-one basis and checked in on them regularly. The facilities were comfortable, clean and spacious. The students, who were a very diverse group of mainly adult learners, were polite, friendly, and cooperative, and many of them were trying very hard. The online support technology was far more reliable and user friendly than our iStar. The faculty were all paid correctly and on time, which isn't always the case here, and adjunct pay was over 26% higher than what we pay. (Lone Star boasts that our adjunct pay is in line with our "peer institutions." However, that is only the case if we compare our pay with the closest community college systems like Houston Community College and San Jacinto College. Other community colleges, Blinn College for example, pay significantly more, and all of the universities in town, whether public, private non-profit or private for-profit, pay considerably more for a comparable course than we do.)

With that said, there were a number of issues at the for-profit university that made me glad to be in a public community college for my "day job." However, at the same time, I realized that there are significant pressures that could push us down the road to be more like them.

Regimented Curriculum

At Lone Star College, and most other public community colleges, we have learning outcomes for each course and textbooks that are the same campus wide. Looking beyond that basic structure, however, faculty have academic freedom to tailor their classes (syllabi, presentation style, assessment, etc.) to the needs of the specific students in each class and to the personal strengths and style of the professor.

For-profit schools, in general, permit considerably less freedom. There rarely is any way to tailor a class to the specific needs and interests of the students in the class. Where I taught, for example, all of the homework assignments, quizzes, tests and class projects were set by the university. The weights of all of these items in the overall grade were also preset. I only had discretion for a "participation grade" that counted as 10% of the overall grade. The class schedule was preset, too, even to the detail of what should be done in each hour of class. It was really not possible to vary from that schedule because assignments could not be edited and deadlines could not be changed. There is nothing more painful to a teacher than to look out at a classroom, see panic and confusion in the eyes of the students, and know that you cannot spend any more time to help them understand.

Other for-profit universities are even more prescriptive than the one for which I taught, giving faculty members a specific script with examples and questions already built in. None of us got into this business to be "teacher drones," mindlessly following scripts and assigning homework and tests that someone far away wrote for us. In general, community colleges (and non-profit universities, too) trust the expertise of their faculty to prepare engaging classes and to respond to the dynamics of the class to meet the needs of the moment.

However, there are those who would bring the for-profit model here, too. A prime example is the New Mathways Project being developed by the University of Texas Dana Center. The New Mathways Project is being marketed as an alternative program for freshman community college mathematics, although,



in fact, they have prepared very few materials and have not met with universities to ensure that the course work would be transferrable. What they have developed is exactly the type of detailed script some for-profits use—down to specific questions that the professor should ask and what kind of answers their students might give. A sample of an early version of their materials can be found at <http://www.utdanacenter.org/wp-content/uploads/nmp-statistics-module1.pdf>. The Dana Center gave a presentation on this project at LSC-CyFair for system math faculty during Spring, 2012, and garnered no support. Since then, they have managed to enlist the support of the Texas Association of Community Colleges (TACC), the professional organization for administrators. In some colleges around Texas, administrators are forcing their faculty to use these materials over their objections. Since the Dana Center will receive the royalties for their materials, we can expect them to continue to try to push this unproven curriculum.

Lack of Student Support

Although there were some very nice online materials, students at the for-profit school where I taught had very little access to face to face help outside of class. The math instructors were all adjuncts, and we tried to come in early on class nights to meet our students, but there were no tutors on hand to help outside of those times. Lone Star students have access to walk in tutoring in high enrollment disciplines, basically, whenever they want. Called different things at different campuses, our tutoring centers are treasures that should be valued and supported.

Also, I was shocked by the lack of good advice the students were getting in planning their academic careers. All of my students were working full-time jobs (two full-time jobs in some cases) while taking a full class load. The focus of student services in for-profit universities tends to be on recruiting, not on counseling. Students were signed up for schedules with which they could not possibly be successful. One of my students was working fulltime, going to school fulltime, and dealing with serious medical problems all at the same time. When I talked to him about reducing his course load to make his life more

manageable, I was reprimanded by the dean. (Fewer hours means fewer tuition dollars coming in.) The student tried to stay in the class but ultimately failed. In fact, I had the lowest pass rate in this class that I have ever experienced – about half of what my pass rates usually are at Lone Star. No matter how effective a teacher is, if the students in the class are over-extended, they have little chance of success.

Community colleges are focusing increasingly on helping students map out a reasonable plan that will allow them to be successful. Lone Star's addition of student success courses for incoming freshmen is a case in point. Yet here, too, we have problems. For a number of years, Lone Star has been cutting back on counseling staff. Cy-Fair College opened in 2003 with around 6000 students and 7 counselors (at the main campus and the Fairbanks Center). Now we have around 18,000 students and 3 counselors. Much of what promotes student success happens before students walk through classroom doors, and I worry that we are shortchanging that process.

Lack of Quality Control

The class I taught was face-to-face, but most for-profit universities rely heavily on online teaching. I teach online at Lone Star and believe online teaching plays a valuable role for many students, so this is not a diatribe against online education. However, there is an anonymity to online education that can threaten the integrity of both the course and, ultimately, the degree. At the for-profit university where I taught, all online students could complete all of their course requirements unsupervised, including all of their tests. All tests were open book, open notes, and had a five-hour time limit (for tests that would ordinarily be given in a 90-minute class). There was no mechanism to insure that the students enrolled in the class were the ones taking the tests or to insure that the students' work was their own. We'd all like to believe that all of our students are honest, but we know that assumption would be naïve.

At Lone Star, we have excellent testing centers on every campus that will proctor tests for online classes. These centers are costly and those costs come under scrutiny. However, these are costs that



an institution must incur to guarantee that online classes are credible and are actually preparing students for future work.

Administrative Bloat

The campus where I taught had fewer than 200 students. On the nights I taught, there was only one other class scheduled besides my own. However, we two professors were not lonely. The campus had a dean, an assistant dean, a campus director, a librarian, a couple of office workers and three or four recruiters on campus with us. If Lone Star College CyFair had one dean for every 200 students, we would currently employ 90 deans!

This is truly a cautionary note, not only for Lone Star and other community colleges, but for the entire economy. There seems to be a trend everywhere to think that the solution to every challenge is to hire more management. This makes the organization more costly and more unwieldy. This is especially true because, all across the economy, executive level managers are commanding wildly inflated salaries. In 2012, the chancellor of the Alamo Community College District received a 7% salary increase to \$343,475 with other compensation leading to a total of \$373,000 (<http://www.mysanantonio.com/news/education/article/Alamo-Colleges-chancellor-gets-pay-bump-3893744.php>). This is a far higher percentage increase than most professionals in education received this year. The rationale, as published in the college newspaper, was “to align him with chancellors from peer community colleges in the state” (<http://www.theranger.org/mobile/chancellor-receives-7-percent-increase-to-align-with-peers-1.2768476>). This is an example of a compensation “arms race” across all of academia in which executive salaries are bumped up much faster than other employees’ salaries, ostensibly because this is the only way to keep valuable talent. Another article in this issue discusses the supplemental pay that executives at our own college receive.

Now, the arms race for executive pay in community colleges can’t compare with what happens in for-profit education. The CEO of the university where I taught was paid \$41.9 million in 2009 (<http://www.bloomberg.com/news/2010-11->

[10/executives-collect-2-billion-running-for-profit-colleges-on-taxpayer-dime.html](#)). As hard as I looked, I couldn’t see how that salary was benefiting the students.

Centralized Authority / Global Reach

For-profit universities tend to have interesting and varied histories. The one I taught for is over a century old, but, for most of its history, it was a small vocational college in Baltimore, MD and Washington, DC. In the 1990s it began expanding rapidly, opening new campuses all over the country. Regardless of history, most for-profits share a highly centralized organizational style. Curriculum is designed at the national office. HR issues are handled at the national office. Questions that I had as a teacher of a statistics class had to be routed to a course coordinator at the national level.

By contrast, the hallmark of the comprehensive community college is the word “community.” We listen to the citizens of our communities. We make decisions at the level of that community and design our programs to meet the needs of those communities. We know that, even across a single city, communities vary and one size most definitely does not fit all. Certainly, the colleges of our system were all founded on this commitment to communities.

When we changed our name from the North Harris Community College District to the Lone Star College System, the word “community” disappeared. At the time, I think we all thought the change just represented a cooler name. However, I wonder. The hallmark of our current chancellor’s administration has been centralization. This is most clearly visible in the consolidation of continuing education programs into a central Corporate College. An example of the erosion of commitment to the needs of local communities occurred at LSC-CyFair last fall when three workforce programs (programs originally built based on community feedback about local needs) were abruptly closed without proper review. There are many examples of how decision making has increasingly shifted from the individual campuses to 5000 Research Forest Drive. In uncanny similarity to what is happening in for-profit education, Lone Star



has not only centralized, but globalized. With college operations currently open or in the planning stage in Vietnam, Indonesia, Kazakhstan, and Brazil, I wonder if we are losing focus on the communities we were chartered to serve. It is time that we put the “community” back in “community college.”

Working in a for-profit university was truly a fascinating experience for me. I met many dedicated professionals who worked tirelessly to serve their students. I saw some processes that worked well. I believe that, in many ways, what we do in community colleges in general, and specifically here at Lone Star, serves students much better. This is also a cautionary tale. There are roads that the for-profits have trod that, I believe, look tempting to some in authority in community colleges. Let us hold on to who we are and return to our roots where we are going astray. Our students deserve no less.

John Burghduff, Professor, LSC-CyFair

Evergreen Solutions

Less than one week after the campus shooting at LSC-NH, LSCS workers received an email from the Chancellor stating, “we have retained Evergreen Solutions to conduct a classification and compensation study and make recommendations to revise the current system to ensure internal equity (relationship of jobs within our System) and external equity (relationship of our pay ranges to the pay ranges of market peers).” According to their website, “Evergreen Solutions partners with public sector clients to effect positive change. Across the country, school districts, cities, counties, and states leverage our team’s expertise so they can better serve their employees, stakeholders, and constituents. Evergreen has partnered with public sector clients in 41 states in the U.S.” As December 2012 News, their website announces:

Lone Star College System has selected Evergreen Solutions to conduct a comprehensive classification and compensation study to assess both internal and external equity of the college system's current classification and compensation

plan. The study will include a review of Lone Star College System's current compensation and classification philosophy and structure through documents review, interviews, and statistical analysis, as well as use Evergreen's job evaluation tool to collect information directly from employees. Evergreen will then design and administer a survey for the external market to assess local and regional market conditions. Based on the internal and external analysis, Evergreen will recommend adjustments to Lone Star College System's existing classification and compensation plan.¹

This controversial consulting firm has a record of recommending solutions that include firing teachers, reducing student services, and trying to substitute North Carolina’s elected state superintendent with an appointed CEO. They also have a record of public controversy and high-profile blowback from parents, journalists, and courts. *The Lee Dispatch* has uncovered major accounting errors in Evergreen Solutions’ findings, along with a flawed methodology. According to *The Dispatch*, Evergreen’s president Linda Recio was unable to substantiate the firm’s claims to large savings for institutions Evergreen has consulted for in the past.² The savings Evergreen recommends come largely from increasing teacher-student ratios, reducing student services, and outsourcing custodial and grounds keeping services to private companies.

In 2009, Evergreen Solutions recommended to the North Carolina General Assembly that they replace the elected state superintendent of education with a CEO who would be appointed by the governor and confirmed by the General Assembly and the State Board of Education, members of which were also appointed by the governor. Earlier attempts by the state Senate to change the role of superintendent from elected to appointed had failed in the House and would have required a constitutional amendment, which, according to Evergreen’s report, would have been “unlikely to be initiated and passed by the General Assembly, and much less approved by the electorate.” To help the Governor bypass the democratic process, Evergreen recommended “changing the title of the Chairman [of the State Board of Edu-



ation] to include Chief Executive Officer and adding responsibilities of the administration and management” to create “a governance structure like the common corporate model.”³

North Carolina Governor Beverly Perdue then announced on local news television that Cumberland County superintendent Bill Harrison would become the CEO of North Carolina public schools with a salary of \$265,000.⁴ Three months later the elected state superintendent June Atkinson filed suit.⁵ Governor Perdue’s appointment of the CEO was overturned by the Wake County Superior Court as unconstitutional.⁶ During this time, at least nine television news stories were devoted to the controversy by local television WRAL Channel 5.

The Hamilton-Wenham School District brought in Evergreen Solutions to do an operational audit in January 2011, after being pressured by the anti-tax citizens group Enough is Enough. Over 100 citizens attended a public hearing about the report.

“Most of the attention during the open question period centered on the suggestion to cut teachers and increase the teacher-to-student ratio, because a bulk of the suggested \$16 million in savings over five years comes from the teacher cuts.”

The president of Evergreen Solutions, Linda Recio, also suggested that the district could save \$100,000 by reducing teachers’ planning time. John McWane, chairman of Hamilton’s Finance committee, said that Evergreen was “double-counting” savings by adding teacher cuts to an “across-the-board budget cut” meant to reduce the district’s overall per-student spending. The chairman of Wenham’s Finance Committee, Roger Kuebel, found that Evergreen had double-counted \$184,000 in projected savings.⁷

At North Carolina’s Richland Two School District, Evergreen Solutions recommended “eliminating 47 assistant principal or similar positions.”⁸ The report further recommended eliminating 26 clerical staff.⁹ Evergreen suggested the district save \$214,000 by cutting extra duty teacher pay in half for work “completed on days beyond their stated contract time period.”¹⁰ The report recommended that the district “should outsource the security services to a private

company” in order to save money, shift liability to the private company and streamline the process of terminating officers.¹¹ The report suggested savings by eliminating 2 teachers of home-bound students, 3 guidance counselors, 19 career development facilitators, 5 career information specialists, 8 librarians, 33 library support staff, 22 health aides, and 2 Public Relations officers.¹²

Soon afterward, the Student Improvement Council (Richland Two’s parent-student group) rallied against the proposed cuts, especially the phasing out of 145 retired workers, and they also opposed Evergreen’s finding that “schools in the 25,000-student district are too distinctive.”¹³ After an Implementation Task Force meeting was postponed July 15, 2011, the district’s Board of Trustees agreed to allow eight parents onto the Task Force subcommittees “addressing community concerns regarding the makeup of the Implementation Task Force.” The parents were to be chosen randomly from a computer program. Two more Implementation Task Force meetings, scheduled for July 2011, were then postponed. At the August 23 meeting of the Board, superintendent Dr. Katie Brochu announced that eight more parents would be added to the Implementation Task Force subcommittees, this time drawn from a pool of 34 parents “nominated by their school principals and lead teachers, school improvement committees, education foundations and parent teacher organizations.” At this point, the implementation timeline, listed in the Public Information tab of Richland Two’s website, ends.¹⁴ Perhaps the implementation process ground to a halt amid public opposition.

Evergreen Solutions has not made an auspicious beginning at LSCS. Their job assessment survey tool was entirely unsuited for measuring faculty work. After the survey was sent, via email, to all faculty and staff, statistics experts among the Lone Star College faculty noted that it would produce meaningless data about faculty workloads. The Faculty Senate Presidents met first with the LSCS Chief Human Resources Officer and then the Chancellor. Soon thereafter, the Faculty Senate Presidents announced that faculty should abstain from submitting the job assessment tool. The AFT salutes the Faculty Senate Presidents and the Chancellor for addressing this issue. However, the fact remains that Evergreen Solu-



tions arrived with a controversial record and a tool kit unsuited for the job at hand.

In the short run, yes, LSCS might save some money by laying off teachers, librarians, and secretaries, while privatizing the police, bookstore, café, coffee shops, custodial service, grounds keeping, and student services. But none of that would really save money. It would just shift costs onto the shoulders of our students, while services decline. We don't need an expensive consulting firm to tell us that. It's common sense.

Staff

¹Evergreen Solutions. <http://www.consultevergreen.com/>

²"Audits Drop from Incomplete to Irrelevant," The Lee Dispatch, Sunday, March 18, 2012. <http://www.leedispatch.com/2012/03/audits-drop-from-incomplete-to.html>

³Evergreen Solutions, "A Study of Structure and Organization of the State Board of Education, State Superintendent of Instruction, and Department of Public Instruction, FINAL REPORT" January 5, 2009, pp.7-10 (Quote 1 on p. 10, Quote 2 and Quote 3 on p. 9).

⁴"New CEO to Fill Leadership Void for N.C. Schools," WRAL Channel 5, January 27, 2009, <http://www.wral.com/news/local/story/4410777/>. The Salary figure comes from "Atkinson Calls Job Fight a Distraction," *ibid.*, July 22, 2009. <http://www.wral.com/news/local/politics/video/5635648/#/vid5635648>

⁵"State Denies Education Superintendent's Claims," WRAL Channel 5, June 4, 2009. <http://www.wral.com/news/local/politics/story/5283717/>

⁶"Injunction and Declaratory Judgement," State of North Carolina, County of Wake, In the General Court of Justice, Superior Court Division, 09CVS06655. August 12, 2009.

⁷Robert Gates, "Audit Review Focuses on Proposed Teacher Cuts," Hamilton-Wenham Patch, Friday, January 28, 2011. <http://hamilton-wenham.patch.com/articles/audit-review-focuses-on-proposed-teacher-cuts>

⁸Evergreen Solutions, LLC, "Richland Two School District, Organization Effectiveness and Efficiency Study," April 1, 2011, 2:22.

⁹*ibid.*, 2:54.

¹⁰*ibid.*, 5:32.

¹¹*ibid.*, 9:15.

¹²*ibid.*, 3:24-29.

¹³Educating South Carolina. "Why are working retirees disappearing at Spring Valley High School?" Friday, June 17, 2011 <http://educatingsouthcarolina.blogspot.com/2011/06/why-are-working-retirees-disappearing.html>. Quote from *ibid.*, "Company's Recommended Job Cuts Causing Fallout in Richland 2," Sunday, June 19, 2011 <http://educatingsouthcarolina.blogspot.com/2011/06/companys-recommended-job-cuts-causing.html>. Richland District Two: Excellence in Education, "Evergreen Effectiveness and Efficiency Study Timeline," <http://esb.richland2.org/content.aspx?id=33529>.

Time and Labor

Performance-Based Funding

The Texas legislature is working on a formula for funding community colleges that will likely include some form of "performance-based" funding. The formula the Senate will most likely adopt will make ten percent of the portion of our funding that comes from the state (22 percent of our total funding) contingent on meeting certain benchmarks of student persistence. For instance, the percentage of students that move from developmental studies to 1301-level (freshman) gateway courses, such as English, History and Government, might be required to show improvement over the past year. Similarly, the percentage of students moving from 1301 to 1302 courses might be used as a measure of performance. Although it could be worse—our funding could be made contingent on graduation rates—this is still the wrong direction for community college funding.

In the first place, there is no problem with community college performance. We do a great job, and no



one is claiming otherwise. The number of college graduates in the U.S. has increased two-and-a-half times since 1965, and community colleges have played a major role in this increase. With our open admissions policies, anyone with a high school diploma or equivalent can get a great start to a college education. The United States provides higher education opportunities to a larger share of the public than any country in the world. One fourth of adults over the age of 25 have a four-year degree or more. We are already accountable to the U.S. Department of Education, our accrediting agencies, the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, our professional associations, our communities, and to the market. We do not have a performance problem or an accountability problem. We have a political problem.

The percentage of community college funding that comes from the state has gone steadily downward over the past 30 years. In each legislative session, conservatives in the legislature reduce college funding even more. With “performance-based” funding, the legislature can claim to be improving college education in Texas at no cost. Presumably, student success will improve as faculty and staff put their noses to the grindstone in order to net that ten percent of college funding that is based on performance. The legislature can dodge its responsibility to education by waving the magic wand of greater college accountability and be applauded for it. It is a win-win solution for everyone except faculty and staff who are expected to do more with less, the students who lose services and pay higher fees, the community whose greatest asset (the community college) is devalued, the state's business community that will suffer the consequences of educational underinvestment, and the people of Texas whose educational attainment slips further and further behind.

Performance based funding is a simplistic solution to a misunderstood problem that oversimplifies the needs of community college students. Students come to community colleges from a wide diversity of backgrounds. Some have better financial support than others. Some are better prepared academically. Some have greater English proficiency. Some are older and already have families and careers. Some

students come to college to get started on a four-year degree. Some come to learn particular skills to improve their chances in the job market. Some students come to college during economic downturns to use jobless time to good purpose by picking up some credits until the market improves and they are able to land a new, perhaps better, job. Likewise, students have many reasons for ceasing their college enrollment. Some get full-time jobs and stop going to college for a while, or altogether. Some have to take on greater responsibility in their households, which reduces or eliminates the time they have for college. Some run out of money and stop studying, for a time at least, to work and pay bills. “Performance-based” funding will not change any of these factors, but it will make some things worse.

If our funding requires that we move students out of developmental studies and into freshman-level gateway courses before the students are ready, we will do that. If our funding requires that we move students out of English-as-a-Second-Language classes before they are ready, we will do that. This will, in turn, generate tremendous pressure on the teachers of freshman gateway courses (1301 courses in History, English, Math, and Science) who find their classrooms filled with scores of students without the basic skills needed to succeed in those courses. Nevertheless, if our funding is contingent on those students passing with a C or better, they will get a C or better. Performance-based funding is not a magic wand that will replace legislative responsibility to adequately fund higher education. Rather, it is an incentive for corruption and lower academic standards.

The AFT is an organization of student success experts. In addition to the extensive research we have done in student success at the national, state and local level, we are experienced professionals with real hands-on knowledge about what student success is and how it is achieved. For our latest publications, see www.whatshouldcount.org. The AFT has identified a number of ways college persistence can be improved. The most common factors that influence student persistence are income, academic preparation, race and ethnicity, and age. If a student works more than 25 hours per week, she is less likely to



remain in class. Increased financial support from the federal and state governments is necessary to help these students stay in class. Magic wands will neither pay their rent nor fill their bellies. Expanded access to childcare will immediately improve persistence among college parents. Improving access to counseling will immediately improve persistence, as will greater access to tutoring, increased federal commitments to TRIO programs for at-risk students, and expanded Pell Grant funding.

Finally, any accurate gauge of student success must begin by asking students what their goals are. Today's measures of success are based on the flawed statistics and erroneous assumptions of dangerous dilettantes in Washington think tanks. It requires political will to move past magic wands and get down to the hard work of investing in our students and the communities we serve. It requires grass roots organizing, along with building coalitions with existing community groups and putting constant pressure on Austin and Washington. This is what the AFT does, but we cannot do it alone. Help us put the community back in community colleges.

David Davis, Professor of History, LSC-NH

Shared Governance Revisited

In the November 2012 issue of *The Advocate*, the AFT documented an alarming decline of shared governance in recent years, culminating in LSCS administration ignoring a vote of no confidence by the Montgomery College Faculty Senate in their Vice President of Instruction and the firing of their Faculty Senate President. The article seems to have struck a nerve because we received a lot of feedback about it.

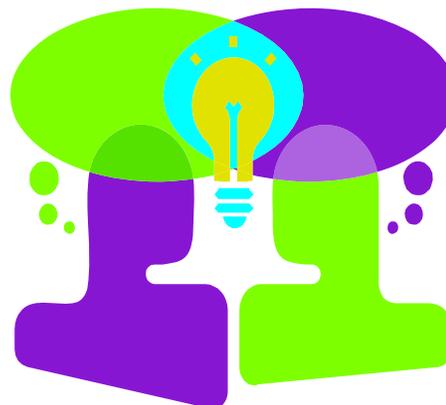
Thanks to the LSCS Faculty Senate Presidents, the faculty recently made incremental progress on shared governance. At the February board meeting, administration proposed a new policy to the board that would have created a new category of workforce faculty without first seeking faculty input. The Faculty Senate Presidents presented the new policy

to the faculty at their respective colleges, solicited feedback, and forwarded that feedback to the Chancellor. To his credit, the Chancellor withdrew the policy change from Board consideration on the basis of that feedback. It is unfortunate that the process worked backward, but at least it worked. The AFT believes everyone's time could be used better in the future by bringing the faculty into discussion of this sort of policy change from the beginning.

The Faculty Senate Presidents also took the lead on the Evergreen Solutions Classification and Compensation Study, which the Chancellor announced in an email to all employees on January 25. As faculty attended the orientation sessions, it became obvious that Evergreen Solutions' Job Assessment Tool was not designed for teachers and could not possibly gather accurate data on faculty workloads. On March 6, the Tomball College and North Harris College Faculty Senate Presidents met with the LSCS Chief Human Resources Officer to present the faculty's concerns about the survey. She agreed that faculty should be removed from the survey and made that recommendation to the Chancellor. When all of the Faculty Senate Presidents met with the Chancellor on the following day, he also agreed. It is difficult to understand how Evergreen Solutions was vetted before they were retained by LSCS. Faculty input in that process could have saved many people a lot of consternation and time.

The AFT applauds the LSCS Faculty Senate Presidents for both of these accomplishments.

Staff





Campus Updates



Long-time readers of *The Advocate* (and *The Advocate* has been around for a long time) may have noticed in this space, in contrast to the reports from other campuses, the absence of stories about successful union interventions in the disputes that inevitably arise at any large workplace. The reason is that over the last few years, the administration of LSC-North Harris has not allowed union officers to intervene directly in such disputes despite a substantial institutional history of union assistance in such matters. Under Presidents Sam and Shugart, at least, as well as Chancellor Picklemann, the union was not only allowed but expected to provide this service to union members and the departments and divisions they serve.

It is likely that, although past administrations had their differences with union leadership—and sometimes quite strong differences, they recognized the value of a loyal opposition within the district. Most importantly, they recognized that the union's very *independence* is what made its participation so valuable in such disputes. It is this independence that frequently led to a union member's acceptance of union advice saying that, in his or her particular case, *he or she was wrong* and needed to try harder to recognize the points an administrator had made about job performance. On the other hand, the willingness of those administrators to listen to a union officer's advocacy for an employee and even abide by decisions that found in the employee's favor garnered employee respect for those administrators, respect founded in the belief that the administrators were committed to fairness and mutual respect in employee relations; that administrators recognized that they were not infallible; that administrators recognized that criticism or disagreement was not subversion or some sort of power grab; and that administrators recognized that any dispute resolution proc-

likely be regarded as a sham.

The union, of course, would welcome renewed opportunities to serve the college in the same way it has in the past to help resolve conflicts at the lowest levels in ways that reflect well on everyone involved.

In the meantime, we will continue to do what we can to improve morale on campus. To that purpose, I'll report that LSC-NH union members had a very nice time at the union's spring celebration at Pappasito's last week. Along with our other fellow members from the other colleges, we filled every seat, put away lots of excellent Tex-Mex, and learned about the upcoming bond and board elections. A vibrant, convivial atmosphere filled the room. We'd like to continue the discussion and the good times at our next two union Fridays at La Cabaña:

Friday, April 19, at noon.

Friday, April 26, at 4:30.

Join us if you can.

Steve King, AFT - Faculty VP



There's still quite a bit going on "behind the scenes" at LSC Montgomery and no real change in some quarters. AFT continues its role as "sounding board" and support system to its members. Our next monthly social will be on Wednesday, April 10, from 5 to 7 p.m., and everyone is invited. The location, as usual, is Wings N More, 16580 Interstate 45 S, in the Walmart Shopping Center, across from Burlington Coat Factory. Please join us.

Martina Kusi-Mensah, AFT - Faculty VP



Ahoy Maties,

Tis that time of year where we are on the long cruise to Port Finals after having docked and resupplied at Port Spring Break for a week of fun in the sun. The HCS LSC-Tomball seems to be fit and sail-steady as we plow our way through the waters of Chancellory Sea (located southeast of Education Ocean). The quiet aboard the ship is almost eerie. While there be always a ruffle or two to smooth out during any cruise schedule, there be nothin serious afoot that requires attention.

(Thet dusint mean thet tha command staff aint a bit edgy and fidgity bout getting alla tha big report in-fermashun together – tha Safe Access Crossing Seas report. Tis hoped that when tis all sed an dun thet meybee they kin relax jus a bit. We do hope so fer their sakes.)

We did manage to put a small feast together at a small island we passed (known to the commoners as Rancho Isle) and while we invited one and all to come there were about 20 or so souls that gathered round for friendly fellowship and good food. Next time we pass the island we hope to have a few more jump in a skip and row over. With that in mind, keep an eye out fer eny notis uf tha next time we spot a small isle suitable fer food and refreshments.

So, til next report, keep tha sails mended, tha holy-stones a polishin, tha fruit high and dry and tha water barrels full.

Richard Becker
Cap'n of the Watch

LSC-CyFair continues to work through its time of transitions with searches underway for new deans and the vice president of student services. On the union front, we are advising several employees on situations of concern. Please contact me or one of the Fairbanks representatives if we can be of assistance. Our email addresses and phone numbers are listed elsewhere in this issue.

For our last AFT Happy Hour of the semester, let's try out a different night so some employees who have had conflicts on our usual day can have a chance to come. All employees are invited to come to Husky's on West Road at Telge on MONDAY, April 29, from 5:00 – 7:00 PM for food, drinks and discussion about matters of interest to us all!

John Burghduff, AFT - Faculty VP



No report at this time.

Richard H. Almstedt, AFT - Faculty VP

If you are interested in Membership or would like to discuss a work-related issue, our AFT Faculty and Staff Vice-Presidents are here to assist! Please don't hesitate to contact them! See the back page of this publication for contact information.



AFT-Lone Star College

AFT Local Union # 4518

GOALS

- To promote academic excellence
- To protect academic freedom in higher education
- To preserve and protect the integrity and unique identity of each of the institutions of higher education in Texas
- To protect the dignity and rights of faculty against discrimination
- To ensure that faculty have an effective voice on all matters pertaining to their welfare
- To secure for all members the rights to which they are entitled
- To raise the standards of the profession by establishing professional working conditions
- To encourage democratization of higher education
- To promote the welfare of the citizens of Texas by providing better educational opportunities for all
- To initiate and support state legislation which will benefit the students and faculty of Texas
- To promote and assist the formation and growth of Texas United Faculty chapters throughout Texas
- To maintain and promote the aims of the American Federation of Teachers and other affiliated labor bodies

Professional career
protection and a
united voice at work
Join us today!

BENEFITS

- \$8,000,000 Occupational Liability Insurance
 - provides security while teaching
 - protection against litigation
 - malpractice protection
- \$25,000 Accidental Death Insurance
- Legal Assistance
 - Free consultation and representation on grievances and job related problems
 - Services of leading labor attorneys
 - Legal Defense Fund protection
- Political Power
 - Texas AFT lobbyists in Austin
 - AFT lobbyists in Washington
 - Representation at the Coordinating Board
 - Support for local electoral work
- Affiliations
 - Affiliated with the Texas AFL-CIO
 - Affiliated with the American Federation of Teachers and Texas AFT
- Staff Services
 - Professional representatives to assist and advise in processing grievances
 - AFT research facilities
 - Leadership Training
- Savings and discounts on goods and services with AFT PLUS Benefits
- Free \$10,000 term life insurance policy for first year of membership

Monthly AFT Dues

Full-time Faculty	\$34.15
Full-time Professional Staff	\$27.81
Full-time Support Staff	\$24.35
Adjunct Faculty & Staff	\$12.10

Membership Eligibility

Membership in the American Federation of Teachers (AFT) is open to full and part-time faculty and staff up through the dean level. If you would like to join or find out more information about membership, please contact any of the officers listed on page 20 of this newsletter, or check out our online information and application at:

www.aftlonestar.org



www.texasaft.org

American Federation of Teachers

Texas AFT

AFL-CIO



www.aft.org

American Federation of Teachers -Lone Star College Membership Application

AFT-Lone Star College is an affiliate of the American Federation of Teachers and the Texas AFT and accepts membership from all non-supervisory employees of the Lonestar College System. Indicate below whether you are a new member or a current member wishing to update your contact information. Membership with AFT-Lone Star College provides each member with an \$8 million Professional Occupational Liability coverage policy, legal defense coverage and access to representation for work-related issues. In addition, AFT-Lone Star College members are entitled to special savings and discounts through our AFT PLUS benefits program. **If you have questions about joining, please call AFT- Lone Star College @ 281-889-1009. You may also visit our website: www.aftlonestar.org**

- 1) Fill out the application below and choose your method of payment
- 2) Remit this application to AFT-Lone Star College President, Alan Hall

By US mail: AFT - Lone Star College P.O. Box 788 Spring, Texas 77383-0788 **OR** Interoffice mail: Alan Hall @ A-217, North Harris



2012-2013 Monthly Membership Dues rates:
Based on your position with the Lonestar College System, please select your appropriate dues rate.

Full-time Faculty \$34.15/mo. or \$409.80/yr.

Full-time Professional Staff \$27.81/mo. or \$333.72/yr.

Full-time Support Staff \$24.35/mo. or \$292.20/yr.

Adjunct Faculty \$12.10/mo. or \$145.20/yr.

Part-time Staff \$12.10/mo. or \$145.20/yr.



IMPORTANT NOTICE:

Payroll deduction allows members to pay union dues in monthly installments. If you prefer to write a check to pay for your union dues, be advised that AFT requires the full yearly amount payable in 2 six-month installments. Exceptions to the rule apply for Part-time Staff and Adjunct Faculty only.

First Name:	<input type="text"/>	Middle Initial:	<input type="text"/>	Last Name:	<input type="text"/>
Home Address:	<input type="text"/>				
City:	<input type="text"/>	State:	<input type="text"/>	Zip code:	<input type="text"/>
Home Phone:	<input type="text"/>	Email Address:	<input type="text"/>		
Employee ID #:	<input type="text"/>	Campus:	<input type="text"/>		
Position:	<input type="text"/>	Room #:	<input type="text"/>	Referred by:	<input type="text"/>
I am paid:		<input type="checkbox"/> Bi-weekly		<input type="checkbox"/> Semi-monthly	
		Paid over:		<input type="checkbox"/> 9 months <input type="checkbox"/> 9.5 months <input type="checkbox"/> 12 months	
Are you a current or new member?					
		<input type="checkbox"/> Current member <i>(Updating information and/or payment method)</i>		<input type="checkbox"/> New Member	
Choose method of payment:					
		<input type="checkbox"/> Payroll Deduction <i>(Complete the union dues agreement below)</i>		<input type="checkbox"/> Cash/Check <i>(Two 6 month payments payable to AFT-LSC)</i>	

Union Dues Deduction Agreement

I hereby authorize Lone Star College System to deduct each pay period an amount equal to the dues in the amounts fixed in accordance with the Bylaws of AFT including any increase in dues in future years and pay same to said Union in accordance with the terms of the agreement between Lone Star College System and American Federation of Teachers. This agreement will remain in effect until Lone Star College System receives a written notice of cancellation from me, AFT or at the time of my termination, whichever occurs first. This authorization is subject to sufficient wages being available to comply with all other required deductions and existing federal and state laws.

Signature: *(Print this form and sign here)* _____

Date _____

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For AFT-Lone Star College office use only. Do not write in this box.

Position verified: YES NO *(Initials)* _____ NOTES: _____
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Call for Articles

We invite all employees to send us their opinions, news, questions, and so forth. *The Advocate* is a forum for information and free interchange of ideas. Send your ideas. Send your articles to **Pat Gray**, Editor via e-mail: patsy.gray@lonestar.edu, or submit to any of the following officers.

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Membership Has Its Benefits

The union encourages employees to join because they believe that college employees should have a voice in their professional lives. We don't encourage employees to join because they anticipate conflict or are already engaged in a conflict. In fact, if they are already embroiled in a situation, we are unable to help them. It is all too common for someone to approach the AFT and say something like, "I've been an employee for the district for several years, and I've just recognized the importance of joining." Typically, following that comment is, "I'm in trouble and need help." I finally lost track of how many times in the last year I've had to say, "I'm sorry, but member benefits don't cover anything that pre-dates membership." The individuals to whom I had to give this message were invited to join and provided some advice on how to proceed with their situation, but assistance ended

there. Were they members, a host of benefits would have been available.

The AFT provides its members with advice and guidance as well as representation in conflict resolution and grievances. We have our own local attorney and can seek legal advice and counsel for members. We maintain a local legal defense fund. In addition, membership dues include, at no extra charge, \$8 million in professional liability insurance for claims arising out of professional activities.

Most of our members don't join because they believe that they may need the AFT's help in a conflict. They join because they believe in the values of the AFT— that employees should be treated with dignity and respect, that employees should help each other, that employees should have a

voice in their professional lives, that employees deserve fair pay and good working conditions, and that the district needs a system providing checks and balances. They join because they want to support an organization that helps others in so many ways. A nice benefit is that, if they do need help, it's there for them.

If you believe in these values and are not a member, now is the perfect time to join. The AFT advocated effectively for the raise employees received this year. The annual membership dues are a small percentage of the raise. If you believe in our values, take action now and join the AFT.

—Alan Hall

