

## **Negotiating for Part-time Faculty – A Report from the Trenches**

*For this issue, CPFA News decided to interview several experienced part-time faculty members of negotiating teams on their successes, failures, and strategies at the bargaining table. - Ed.*

*For which district's unions are you now or have you recently served on negotiating teams? Please include with which statewide organization your local is affiliated.*

**Julie Ivey** - Palomar Faculty Federation—Local 6161/ CFT/AFT

**Pamela Highet** - Shasta College CTA/NEA

**Bob Fey** - North Orange County CFT/AFT, PT only; Coast CTA/NEA, PT under 50% of FT load; South Orange County; CTA/NEA PT/FT

**Gus Goldstein** - City College of San Francisco; Local 2121 CFT/AFT

*How effectively do you feel your district has been in closing the salary parity gap between part-time and full-time faculty?*

**Ivey** - The gap has widened between ft and pt salaries.

**Highet** - They are working, but there is still a significant gap. On occasion, FT has asked for a double percentage increase for PT, in an effort to bring them closer to parity.

**Fey** - Not very, for all.

**Goldstein** - Quite effective. We are at 85% pro-rata now, with some subsets already getting 100% through some sort of inadvertence in the past.

*Did part-timers share in ALL salary increases to fulltimers, or were part-timer increases funded solely by the part-time parity fund?*

**Ivey** - Besides the parity funds, the district agreed to make up for the difference between parity money received during the first year and the 100K less it received during each of the second two years. The district also kicked in an extra 2% on top of the \$4.28 in equity money on each adjunct cell. An indirect raise is tied to quicker salary advancement; instead of the old 920 semester hours to advance a step, it is now 450 hours. This resulted in twice as many part-timers advancing a salary step as usual, increasing the district's contribution about 500K more than it had expected to do.

**Highet** - PT shared in salary increases apart from the parity fund.

**Fey** - Coast and South Orange: PT got same % increase as FT plus application of parity \$. North Orange: PT got same % increase as FT, period.

**Goldstein** - Part-timers in our district will get any %-age raise that fters get because our salary schedule is tied to theirs, though it's true that we don't have as many steps yet. (Those pters already getting 100% may not get the annual increases until their pay is at 85% pro-rata.)

*What percentage has your district identified as the parttimer pro-rata percentage of full-time workload - i.e. what is your district's parity goal?*

**Ivey** - Our contract defines the parity goal as 87%.

**Highet** - It is defined right now as 75%, but we plan to revise that higher.

**Fey** - Coast: 75% of FT avg., then office hours must be addressed before district can dip into funds. South Orange: 83% of FT average. North Orange: no parity agreement.  
**Goldstein** - Our district's parity goal is 100%.

*How effective have your efforts been at establishing health insurance for part-timers who want it? What have been the biggest obstacles?*

**Ivey** - We plan to push for benefits during spring 2005 re-openers. The loss this time around is partly due to the district saying it did not have the money, combined with the extra money it had to pay to sustain the full-timer health benefits at their current "cost free" (to faculty) status. We plan to show the district how having a minimal benefit premium pool would not cost much, since many adjuncts have coverage elsewhere and would not use the pool.

**Highet** - We have not established health insurance at this time. It is on our list, and we've given the district notice that we'll be working on that next.

**Fey** - All offer some type of reimbursement or matching payment schemes for those at 40-50% (or higher) of FT load.

**Goldstein** - Pters in the district have the same health benefits as fters, including summer benefits if teaching spring semester. Of course we have the problem with disability that it appears all pters have.

*Does your district participate in the office hour program, utilizing state funds for that purpose?*

**Ivey** - We plan to push for paid office hours during re-openers. The state office hour fund is over-extended, with almost negligible funds available. We plan to do a cost analysis and show the district how little it costs them to help insure that half of Palomar's students have access to an instructor. We plan to make office hours voluntary, as is the case with Mira Costa.

**Highet** - Yes. After some hedging and whining, they have participated, and last year doubled their contribution to the office hour fund. We also now have one office hour per lecture class taught, even if only one class is taught.

**Fey** - North Orange, yes. Coast and South Orange, no.

**Goldstein** - Pters in credit do have the choice of working office hours.

*What choice of retirement plans are currently available to part-timers? Do you feel this is adequate?*

**Ivey** - Right now, all we have is STRS DB (defined benefit) or APPLE. We also are working to obtain STRS CB (cash balance). We'd like other options, although from what I've heard, finding companies to offer retirement options for "temporary" workers is almost impossible.

**Highet** - STRS or Social Security.

**Fey** - Not sure what this means, but all offer 457(b) payroll deduction options in addition to STRS.

**Goldstein** - STRS DB and CB. It will be adequate when WEP and GPO have been cancelled.

*Has job security been a problem for part-timers in your district and if so, how have you addressed that?*

**Ivey** - Palomar has always had a de facto seniority system for part-timers who do well on evaluations. With ratification of the contract (on March 8), pters who have had two sets of good evaluations will need to be offered the same number of classes and choice of sections before a new pter is hired. Getting on this “preference list” will take 3 years—a mandatory student survey + faculty observation during the first year of teaching, and another dual evaluation in 3 years. Long-term pt’s will be “grandfathered in”; good student surveys will be counted as an “evaluation” for the purposes of the preference list.

**Highet** – We are negotiating seniority right now. Many are reasonably secure, but their schedules can be arbitrarily changed. One Phd. is currently supplementing his income at Petco, now that his load has been dropped from 9 to 6 units.

**Fey** - Generally no in the past year-and-a-half, though I was not contacted for rehire at Irvine Valley College (South Orange) where I had worked for five years after I got on the negotiating team. Five classes were offered to two other PT instructors, so classes were available. South Orange has a reputation of retaliation against radicals like me who believe in things like collective bargaining rights.

**Goldstein** - We have a seniority list that seems to work pretty well.

*What have been the biggest challenges facing your union in improving salary and working conditions for part-time faculty?*

**Ivey** - Besides our being a “poor” district, our biggest obstacles are that full-timers are on campus 8 hours a day, while pt’s are in-and-out. Most pters cannot commit themselves to sustaining a long-term fight for equity. Over half don’t depend on teaching income to live and thus don’t get too upset over unequal pay for equal work. Working conditions are so dismal that there is a 30% turnover in adjuncts each year, while full-timers are here “for life.” All this leads to a general shyness, lack of self-respect, and unwillingness for pters to speak up and assert their priorities among confident, tenured full-timers. As co-president, my biggest struggle has been getting part-timers to speak up at e-board meetings and during negotiations. There are signs, however, that pters at Palomar will not settle for crumbs in future negotiations.

**Highet** – Getting the district to take PT faculty seriously. Sometimes they don’t even respond to PT issues on their response to “openers.” Our team expressed our dissatisfaction with this practice this year. I’m wondering if they will try it again next year.

**Fey** - Low priority for administration and FT faculty, many of whom I think are (secretly) quite tickled with a two-tiered system and have no qualm about throwing PT under the bus.

**Goldstein** - Lack of the 2nd and 3rd equity fund payments.

*If your negotiating team represents both part and full-time faculty, what have been your most successful strategies in dealing with potential conflicts of interest between them?*

**Ivey** - The part-timers have had so little to “negotiate,” compared to the hundreds of items being re-entered (wer’e bargaining from scratch/zero) into full-timer working conditions, that we haven’t had a true test of conflict. However, the tightening budget may prompt the district to again employ divide-and-conquer strategies, such as leveraging items the fters have always had against any gains other than equity money for pters. ‘Generally, working together on contract

proposals for the last 4 years has laid the groundwork for some respect of full-timers for part-timers. The re-openers will determine how solid this respect actually is.

**Highet** – I think our most successful strategy is presenting a united front to the district, even if we disagree about some things behind the scenes. Also, PT negotiators have not tried to build Rome in a day. We've worked hard at winning very small victories. The FT negotiators have come more and more firmly behind us every year. This year I believe they will support our position on seniority as passionately as we will. We have also made an effort to show an interest in and support for the FT issues we don't share. We can't expect them to support us on matters that don't concern them, if we don't do the same.

**Fey** - I got on the wall-to-wall team very late in negotiations and am not qualified to answer this.

**Goldstein** - Having union leadership that spent years as pters before becoming fulltime, as well as having a few vocal enlightened activist full-timers, seems to be the major factor in our gains. Our executive director, Chris Hanzo, never forgets pt interests at the table.

*What have been your most successful strategies in dealing with intransigent administrators?*

**Ivey** - Electing a faculty-friendly majority on our governing board was crucial. Our being a wall-to-wall unit, with very outspoken full-timers, has also proven to be an asset.

**Highet** - Documentation from other districts. Lists ranking how miserably our district performs compared to other districts. Examples showing what other PT faculty have at other districts. Document, document, research, research. Then let them know we're sticking together. We've started a negotiations website, wherein we report about our sessions and then seek feedback from unit members. The district is aware of this site and I'm sure they monitor it. Sometimes they respond at the table to remarks we've posted there. Because we're communicating more with unit members, the district is more cognizant of the potential power a slumbering faculty actually has.

**Fey** - Declaring impasse.

**Goldstein** - Our union president and exec director have repeatedly had meetings with our chancellor to clarify issues and expedite work at the table. Even then we sometimes find the district's reps to be overly cautious.... We have gone to the governing board, at times, too. It helps to have a history of interest-based bargaining training in common, and it helps very much to have established a formula by which is calculated the exact amount of money available to the union to spend on members' various interests. This does put the ball in our court when it comes to distribution of the money — and we have to balance the interests of pters, fters, credit, non-credit, lab-load, overload, and across-the-board increases. But the district cannot fudge about what money is available; we know how much is coming from the state and how much of it is ours.

*How could your part-time constituency help give you more strength at the bargaining table?*

**Ivey** - They can make their presence known at the faculty senate, governing board meetings, and other meetings full-timers sit in on. They can attend—and speak out—at eboard and pt council meetings. Increasing membership helps; both pt and ft members get an equal vote. We now have 100 more pt than ft members. If pt's don't speak up and defend their right to equal pay for equal work, they deserve what they won't get.

**Highet** - More of them could communicate with us and show their support. This is a somewhat thankless job, so I appreciate every kind remark I get from part AND full time faculty. If 80% of

the people we represent really don't care what happens (or don't want to be involved), the DISTRICT is empowered. If a majority of the pt faculty support us (even if they don't come to meetings and get involved), WE have power to move forward for those who need our help – even if they are a minority.

**Fey** - Lose their fear, apathy, and ignorance. At a recent Executive Board meeting one of our members attended to express shock and dismay that a FT position being offered in her discipline paid more than twice what she earned. She has worked in this district for 18 years.

Our first question was “Do you read our newsletter?”

The answer, of course, was “No, I just throw them away.”

**Goldstein** - The help I most need is just in making sure all issues are addressed, which means pters need to bring up their issues — to me, to other union leadership, at the delegate assembly. I have often felt that my grasp of pter issues has been colored greatly by my also being ESL non-credit. Credit pters and pters in other departments may have problems I am not aware of.