

Quarterly Report VP for Organizing Mike Rotkin March 5, 2012

Hours Worked:

November 2011: 49

December 2011: 46

January 2012: 52

My Activities:

Bargaining:

While my work on the Unit 18 Bargaining Team during this quarter has been relatively minimal involving a few phone calls and email exchanges with our Chief Negotiator, Alan Karras, my work with the Librarian bargaining (Unit 17) has been fairly extensive. I worked on rebuilding our statewide bargaining committee, helped prepare and analyze a survey concerning the issues our librarians would like us to open in bargaining, prepared our opening comments (with help from Miki Goral and Jeff Narten at UCD and UCM), and selected a negotiating team and made our first presentation to the Administration on our issues for this round of bargaining. I have had several informal conversations with University Administrators, both inside and outside of Labor Relations, to help prepare a strategy for successful bargaining. Our central issue remains compensation, but we have other important issues as well to bargain this time.

I am pleased to report that I think we are in a good position to make some progress on compensation during this round of Unit 17 bargaining and that, most importantly, we have a Bargaining Committee with representatives from most campuses and a Negotiating Team, all of whom share a common perspective on what to prioritize in bargaining. We got a good level of response to our survey and I believe that we will be able to mobilize our librarian members as necessary for support during the bargaining process. As we approach April, both bargaining teams will be increasingly busy and I will be in the thick of that.

Executive Board Work:

Since retiring from both the Santa Cruz City Council – at the end of 2011-- and at the end of December this year from UC, I have had more time to engage in union work. Consequently, my engagement with every aspect of E-Board work has increased. I have played a key role in the development of a new strategic approach to our work in the UC-AFT. I wrote the major document describing our new approach and have worked with other E-Board members and the UC-AFT staff to begin implementing the new approach. I will not try to summarize it here in any detail, since it will soon be available on the UC-AFT website; however, generally, the document calls for more work to activate or mobilize our rank and file members around a series of State-wide and UC-wide Goals, including more political work but also bargaining,

and work that challenges UC priorities. I have also begun to help plan out the staff meetings, trainings, and campaigns that will more concretely move our organization into the implementation of this strategic work. For the first time in our history, the Executive Board has agreed to regularly scheduled conference calls once or twice a month in addition to our more traditional quarterly meetings. All of our E-Board members are very busy these days, and in particular, our President Bob Samuels who is having a growing impact on UC and State policy as well as recently being asked to visit the White House to talk with President Obama about student tuition issues. All E-Board members are going to have to step up our commitment to union work if we are going to make sure that Bob's work is developed into an effective long-term impact on the lives and working conditions of our members.

Also during this quarter, I have increased my writing for our publications, and in emails intended to be supportive of the organizing work our staff and members are doing on local campuses. I wrote the major piece that was used to explain our recent dues increase vote to our members across the State. I have produced several pieces that have been used to help different campuses recruit fee-payers into the organization. We have now achieved over 50% membership on four or five of our ten campuses for the first time in our history.

I have also spend increased time in preparing for quarterly State Council meetings and helping other members of the E-Board and our staff to carry out our programs.

Finally, with respect to E-Board work, along with Axel Borg, VP for Legislation, I have been placed on a CFT committee developing CFT's strategic plan to mobilize members. Axel and I have been appointed by the UC-AFT E-Board to work with CFT organizers to develop coordinated work between the CFT and our organization. We are seriously investigating a new campaign to organize UC Academic Senate units and possibly lecturers in private universities such as USC or Stanford.

Campus Work:

I remain one of the more active members of my local at UCSC. As local President, I am often called on to speak at meetings and rallies, to send regular updates to our members, to offer workshops to prepare our members for academic reviews, to help organize social events, and I attend a wide range of union coalition meetings, local CFT or other higher education events, and informal meetings with leaders of student groups and other unions on campus and in the community. I have reduced my grievance work somewhat as we have now trained a new grievance officer, David Keenan, a language instructor at UCSC. Although, I still spend a great deal of time answering informal questions from our members and from University administrators about our MOU and its interpretation. I continue to see most of my campus work as volunteer activity for which I do not seek any compensation from the UC-AFT.

What's Next?

I believe that my major work over the next quarter or more will be focused on getting the organization, its staff, and members into developing and implementing a new strategic plan. This will not be easy work and it will, no doubt, include organizing trainings, visits to campuses to help recruit activists, and, in general, working to make the UC-AFT into much more of an activist organization. As I explained in my candidate's statement for VP of Organizing, I also am beginning plan on using my organizing work as a way to recruit some new energy for both local and UC-wide union work, since I do not intend to stay in this position for more than a year or, at the most, two since I have retired from UC.