

FEDERATION

February 2015


**On
Strike!**

 *A Union of Professionals*
AFT-Oregon
AFL-CIO

**How UO graduate workers fought
and won a fair contract**

PAGES 4-5

Federation News Feb. 2015

AFT-Oregon, AFT, AFL-CIO
10228 SW Capitol Hwy.
Portland, Oregon 97219

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| Devin Hunter | Secretary |
| Steve McAllister | Treasurer |
| Jaime Rodriguez | VP Political Action |

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AFT-Oregon Liasons (without vote)

| | |
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| Tim Stoelb | Local 6732, Oregon School Employees Association |
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A word from the President



Rives

As you'll see in this newsletter, there's a lot to celebrate in AFT-Oregon. But we in the union movement are still in perilous times. The anti-union forces in this country have ramped up their attacks on collective bargaining and organizing. Several states have enacted anti-union laws or regulations to strip the collective power of union members.

Anti-worker interests are being funded with millions of dollars from the wealthy in order to challenge long-held union rights in the nation's courts.

One case coming before the Supreme Court, *Friedrichs v. California Teachers Association*, seeks to overturn the right for public employee unions to collect fees from non-members for collective bargaining—to prevent what the Court has called “free-riding.” These fair-share dues ensure that unions can negotiate and enforce fair contracts for all workers.

What really is at stake here is a challenge to all we stand for: fair wages, healthcare for all, respect for our work, a voice in the

From the Chief of Staff



James

I'm going to be honest with you folks, it's pretty hard to believe it is 2015. It seems like it was just last month I was driving across the country with my partner, our two children, a dog, and a U-Haul filled with our life to move to this wonderful state.

Enough about me though, I'm here to celebrate you!

2014 could not have ended any better. I spent two weeks in Eugene supporting GTFs as they fought for what is right, and at the end of those

workplace, and a fair and just society for all.

I'm excited to see the members of AFT-Oregon stepping up to make their unions more visible to members and the public so all can see the benefits that unions bring. The Graduate Teaching Fellows Federation, Local 3544, went on strike to successfully fight for a salary minimum in line with the cost of living in Eugene and for parental and sick-leave. Several locals have partnered with community organizations to provide low-income children with books or help stock local food banks.

At our last meeting, the Executive Council of AFT-Oregon joined the Fair Shot for All Coalition. This group of over sixteen labor and community organizations is fighting for economic justice issues that our members have long supported: minimum wage, sick leave, retirement security, ending racism, and providing a chance for ex-convicts to re-enter the workplace.

I was reminded that unions are also civil rights organizations. From the days of banning child labor and instituting the forty-hour workweek, we have fought for equality and justice for all members of society, not just our local members. I'm proud that AFT-Oregon members support the economic justice and racial equity issues that make for a better society.

two weeks they won!

It was truly impressive work the GTFs did. Every day they got up early and were out there fighting for their beliefs.

Congratulations, GTFF Local 3544! You did some truly incredible things. You're another shining example of why AFT-Oregon is strong.

In the upcoming year, it's my goal to strengthen the federation's outreach to all of our locals. 2014 was just a mere taste of what I believe we can accomplish together.

This year we'll be tackling the topics of raising the minimum wage, securing better healthcare for all workers, and paid sick leave.

I believe that 2015 will be a fantastic year for labor and a fantastic year for AFT-Oregon.

AFT-Oregon welcomes new Communications Coordinator Justin Buchanan



Buchanan

Hello, everyone! My name is Justin Buchanan. I'm very excited to be here at AFT-Oregon.

The staff here is incredibly knowledgeable about every single facet of labor. In just a few months I feel like I've learned so much.

Here at AFT-Oregon I'll be doing a little bit of everything. I'll be AFT-Oregon's go to person for design, photography, word-smithing, website design, social media support and so much more.

I'm excited to work with our members and help bring these skills to our locals. Just to warn you though, I love taking photos. My camera will probably be coming with me.

I graduated from Pacific Lutheran University a few years ago. This is the second labor union I've worked for. Before AFT-Oregon, I used to work for PSE/SEIU 1948 up in Seattle, WA, and before that I was a recreation coordinator at the Boys and Girls Club.

When I'm not working, you can probably find me at a local music venue listening or playing. Or just wandering around, snapping photos. If you want to check out any of my photos you can always visit my site: justinbuchananphotography.wordpress.com

Local 2277 gives back

The members of Portland Community College Federation of Faculty and Academic Professionals Local 2277 are preparing to bargain this spring.

Despite this, their minds are still with the greater Portland community, so they spent one Saturday in early November packing rice for the Oregon Food Bank.

"It's part of the mission of our organization to be involved in our community," PCC Professor and PCCFFAP Officer Mino Marashi said.

Not only did their families and students join the rice packing squad, AFT-Oregon President David Rives also volunteered his time.

"This experience has been very interesting and overwhelming to hear all the statistics like 270,000 families in Oregon a year need these services," PCC student Heather Ellison said. "It puts things into perspective and you get a reality check."

By the end of the shift the crew managed

to package more than 16,000 pounds of rice.

"It was really great to have the PCC group here today," Oregon Food Bank Volunteer Coordinator Katie Dvorsky said. "They all worked really hard and were really helpful jumping into different jobs, and we appreciate all the time they have committed."



Local 2277 PCCFFAP rice packing crew poses. Photo by Justin Buchanan

Legislative session 2015 preview

State Budget

AFT-Oregon supports fully funding K-12 and higher education funding. Our schools' classes have become too large and employee hours have been cut back. This needs to stop. Higher education costs are on the rise while funding has declined. AFT-Oregon supports public policies that provide sufficient funding so post-secondary education remains accessible to all.

Higher Education Funding

AFT-Oregon believes that we must ensure parity by establishing equitable salary and benefits for all community college and university faculty. Faculty working conditions are student learning conditions and the key to student success. AFT-Oregon is supporting legislation to enable adjunct faculty to

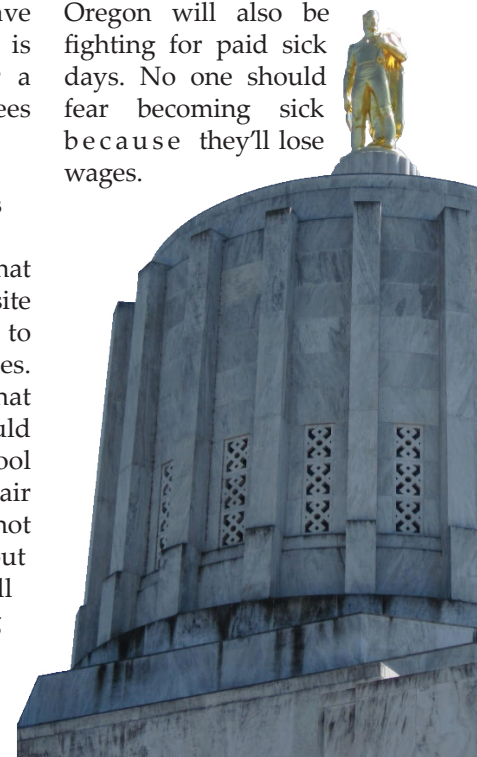
count all their workload at multiple public institutions to gain access to employer provided healthcare. AFT-Oregon believes that all workers at universities should be represented on university boards and have full voting rights, and is supporting legislation for a seat for graduate employees on institutional boards.

Classified Staff Priorities

AFT-Oregon believes that we need to provide on-site nursing staff in all schools to safely provide health services. AFT-Oregon believes that school services should be performed by school employees who receive fair wages and benefits, not privately contracted out workers. AFT-Oregon will push for legislative limiting the use of contracted out services.

Other Goals

We'll be fighting for a raise in the minimum wage. No one who works should live in poverty. Oregon needs \$15 an hour now. AFT-Oregon will also be fighting for paid sick days. No one should fear becoming sick because they'll lose wages.



GTFF 3544 On Strike!

University of Oregon Graduate Teaching Fellows fought for what's right for the university and other workers

It's Thursday, December 5th in Eugene a phone alarm buzzes on a University of Oregon's graduate teaching fellow's night stand.

It's 6 a.m. again, time for him or her to slip on muddy pants, thick wool socks, a winter jacket, and boots, all of which are damp. Once dressed, the half mile trek to Espresso Roma next to the University of Oregon campus begins.

If someone walked into Espresso Roma that Thursday, he or she would notice the coffee shop's clientele is a bit split at the moment. Half are there to grab their morning bagel, a cup of coffee and maybe a brief reflective moment to themselves at a table before their day begins. The other half are soggy, whispering loudly, and preparing for what seems like a battle.

This quietly rowdy half of the café are graduate teaching fellows from the University of Oregon. They've gathered at Espresso Roma once again because they're no longer working. They're on strike for fair pay and paid medical leave, two fair and humane

requests.

"We did everything in our power to avoid going to strike," GTFF Local 3544 President Joe Henry said. "We truly hoped that the administration would work with us to avoid a strike. The admin clearly showed they prioritized money and power over the quality of education."

GTF's would gather in their strike headquarters, Espresso Roma, daily to organize another day on the picket line.

The picketing would begin around 6:30 a.m.

every morning. Their first daily targets would be the construction sites, garbage pick-up routes, and mail drop off points.

After the early morning disruptions the real picketing began.

Picketers gathered in front of high foot traffic areas and in front of the Johnson Hall Administration Building.

Picket lines were not quiet spectacles. While marching they chanted songs and union rallying cries.

"G - T! F-F! We are! U-O!" and many other chants could be heard across the campus. Not only did the lines have chants, many also had their own drum lines. Drummers pounded their hodgepodge bucket and garbage barrel drum sets with wooden cooking utensils and mallets.

While GTFs were busy on the lines, many students were rallying to support them. Members of University of Oregon's Student Labor Action Project (UOSLAP) hosted

study sit ins inside Johnson Hall. SLAP members and supporters simply gathered inside the lobby of Johnson Hall to study peacefully and quietly. However, they brought with them signs supporting GTFs and calling out the university administration.

Actions like these ran throughout the day. Then about 4:30 p.m. the picket lines would form a super line and march around campus chanting at the top of their lungs to the rhythmic pounding of the drums. After the march, the crowd would gather in front of Johnson Hall for a rally to recap the action at the bargaining table.

After rallying the GTFs would disperse and head home to do their own homework and be with their families momentarily, all

before starting it again.

Marching and chanting were just one element of this action, while the membership at large was outside demonstrating. GTFF's bargaining team was at the table fighting for what they needed and for what was right.

Day after day the bargaining team sat in a quiet conference room reviewing contract proposals and proposing contracts to the administration.

"What we did at the bargaining table wouldn't have been possible without members' tireless efforts on the picket lines," GTFF Local

3544 Bargaining Team member and Vice President of External Relations Jon LaRoche said. "They demonstrated what is possible when we stand together and fight for rights and recognition as workers."

A big contract breakthrough happened Dec. 9, seven days into the strike. University of Oregon administration began to feel the strain of the loss of the GTFs. Professors had to make drastic changes to their courses right before finals because GTFs were no longer available, and undergrad students began to feel lost without their teachers.

University of Oregon was failing their students.

Administration finally began working with the GTFF bargaining team. Proposals began moving back and forth between rooms. Finally, after 23 hours of negotiations a collective bargaining agreement was reached.

GTF's finally had won fair pay and a medical leave program. It took 10 days, but they had won.

"It was exhausting. It was hard to sit in a mediation room while our friends, family, and coworkers marched and sang in the rain and the cold," GTFF Local 3544 Bargaining Team member Steve McAllister said. "It was their energy and their support that got us through. They never gave up so we couldn't either. That's why we won."

"They demonstrated what is possible when they stand together and fight for their rights and recognition as workers."

**Jon LaRoche
GTFF local 3544
Bargaining Team
Member**



PAGE 4 - GTFs and their supporters end a day of striking by marching around the University of Oregon campus singing chants while a drum line plays. TOP LEFT - GTFs and their supporters march in front of a UO building. TOP RIGHT CENTER - Ayele Forde UO student and football player creates the UO "O" with GTF Zeina Salame. TOP LEFT CENTER - GTFs and their supporters march in front of a UO building. TOP RIGHT - GTFF President Joe Henry speaks to a crowd of GTFs and their supporters the night before their strike began Dec. 1. BOTTOM - GTFs march in front of campus building as a drumline plays. Photos by Justin Buchanan

Sunny Winter School refection

AFT-Oregon leaders gather in Newport to learn new skills

A record setting 100 plus AFT-Oregon local leaders traveled to Oregon's coast for a weekend of training, team building, and worker empowerment at AFT-Oregon's Winter School Jan. 23-25.

The weekend was unofficially kicked off with an Executive Council meeting Friday afternoon. Council members took this opportunity to discuss AFT-Oregon's plans for 2015.

The Executive Council also discussed the upcoming legislative session. Some of AFT-Oregon's top priorities this year will be to raise the minimum wage, secure better health care, securing paid sick days, and to strengthen retirement security.

"It was a highly productive board meeting," AFT-Oregon President David Rives said. "It was wonderful to see everyone again and to begin making serious progress on our 2015 goals."

As the Executive Council met Friday afternoon, local leaders began gathering at the Hallmark Resort for registration at 6 p.m.

President Rives officially kicked off Winter School by welcoming everyone to Newport and thanking them for their dedication to their



AFT-Oregon Winter School attendees listen to a presenter. Photo by Justin Buchanan

locals.

President Rives spoke about the monumental achievements of the GTFF strike, work that has been done in Salem and how it will carry into 2015.

"We ended 2014 with many great achievements," President Rives said. "With your help and passion we'll make 2015 a great year for labor."

After President Rives spoke he introduced Anne McDonnell, a Fight for \$15 Now representative.

McDonnell informed the

crowd of the importance of raising the minimum wage to \$15 an hour across the nation. "No one who works should live in poverty," McDonnell said. "We need a \$15 minimum wage now."

After McDonnell spoke, Laurie Trieger, Regional Outreach Director from Family Forward Oregon, took to the podium.

Trieger detailed the goals of the Fair Shot for All Coalition this upcoming session: raise the minimum wage, secure paid sick days, ensure everyone has

retirement security, and put a stop to racial profiling.

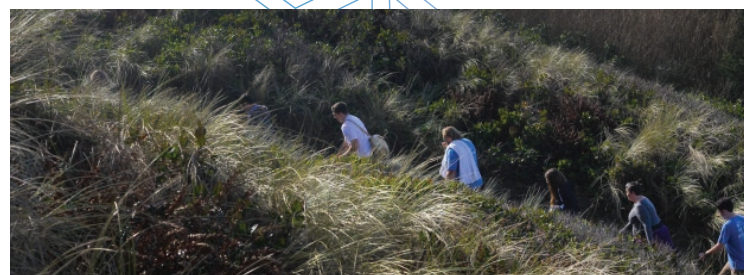
Classes kicked off bright and early Saturday morning with a variety of topics ranging from: communication, financial best practices, running a meeting, bargaining & contract campaigns, issues organizing, power mapping, bullying, and much more.

After the first round of classes, attendees enjoyed lunch and many others took

Winter School continued on pg 7



LEFT - Elaine Carty of Local 5017 OFNHP presents the tip jar to Winter School attendees and the wait staff. More than \$470 was raised in tips for the wait staff. RIGHT - Winter School attendees walk back from the beach to their next class. Photos by Justin Buchanan



Winter School continued from pg 6

advantage of their free time and weather and went for a stroll on the beach.

Classes resumed Saturday afternoon, but only with more sand on the soles of shoes.

The weekend was not all work though. Attendees also

scurried off to enjoy the city of Newport. The faces of AFT-Oregon could be found in many of the local shops and restaurants.

Classes would resume early Sunday morning and would run until 11:30 a.m.

Before the official closing the Issues Organizing class had a gift to give.

The class put their new

skills to work right away and organized a tipping campaign for the wait staff at the Hallmark. From Saturday afternoon until 11:30 a.m. Sunday morning, members of the class gathered tips and thank you notes, ultimately collecting \$470 dollars for the wait staff.

"This is a labor to labor action, you all deserve it

because you did a wonderful job," Elaine Carty, Local 5017 OFNHP said.

President Rives took a moment to thank all the instructors, AFT-Oregon staff and all the locals for their hard work over the weekend.

"AFT-Oregon is strong because of leaders like you," President Rives said.

Get ready to bargain

AFT-Oregon leaders give you their top five tricks before you go to the table

1 MEMBERSHIP TURNOUT AT EVENTS

Membership turnout and participation during bargaining can make the difference between a bad contract and a good contract. Don't limit bargaining by having closed bargaining. After that, make sure you have a member outreach tool that has a clear message why it's important to be involved. This could be face to face meetings, a blog, or newsletter. Then organize and get members to show up to bargaining.

2 PROPOSE A SOLUTION TO THE PROBLEM

Know what the problem is, the goal you want to achieve, the rationale for the proposal. Make the proposal precise and concise to facilitate comprehension. Avoid imprecise, vague or ambiguous language. Have a fall-back proposal. Don't propose your own restrictions unless it's a fall-back proposal to address a concern articulated by management. Avoid legal jargon. You want language your members can easily understand.

3 RESPECT AT THE TABLE

Respect is key at the bargaining table. Make sure the bargaining chair is the primary spokesperson. Don't overtly agree or disagree with any proposal. Always say "the team will consider this." Remember even if things get tough, stay calm and watch your tone and body language. Avoid the term "last, best, offer" unless you really are at the end of negotiations.

4 COLLECT GOOD DATA

In any negotiation year, having accurate data is crucial to negotiating, action campaigns and engaging members in the process. It's important for the bargaining team to have data regarding any issues that occurred in the previous contract year; like grievances, group issues, labor management committee concerns and the like. Data collection is an on-going consistent process, but accurate data can be invaluable when it comes to negotiating a new contract.

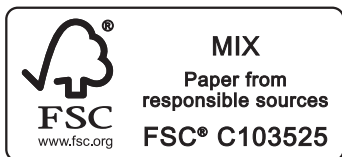
5 REVIEW THE BUDGET AND ITS IMPACTS

Reviewing your employer's budget should be routine in the negotiation year. Prior to placing any economic proposals on the table, review and be familiar with the pieces of the budget that have impact on employees. Research: funds spent on benefits, leave time, employer reserves, and what other groups on campus got that budget cycle. Understanding the components of the budget is important when addressing the economic impacts of proposals

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Moved?

Member address information changes should be made with the local union office or officers responsible for membership records.

Locals are responsible for reporting and updating membership information directly with the national office. AFT-Oregon uses address information provided by locals to AFT for printing and labeling newsletters and member information. Prompt changes are important.



AFT-Oregon Member Benefits

Being a union member just doesn't provide you benefits from your employer. There are numerous organizations providing discounted and sometimes free services to union members!

Learn about all the AFT-Oregon benefits by calling Susan Miller, AFT-Oregon Member Benefits Director at 971-888-5665

Save 15% off your monthly AT&T wireless service and up to \$400 in rebates

AFT-Oregon members receive a 15% discount on wireless plans with AT&T.

- AFT+ Credit Card holders who pay with their card when switching to AT&T wireless or who buy a new smartphone can save up to \$250!
- Members who switch carriers and buy a new smartphone get an additional \$150 credit from AT&T!

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AFT-Oregon members receive unlimited 1.5% cash back!

Choose from three card options, all with competitive rates, U.S.-based customer service, and more. Plus, hardship grants for eligible cardholders.

Learn more at: www.aftcard.com or call 1-800-522-4000

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Learn more at: www.unionplus.org/healthclubs or call 1-800-294-1500

Remember

In addition to the 30+ member benefits members can access through AFT, members in Oregon also have several local benefits like OMSI, Portland Art Museum and Park-N-Fly.

Check out more benefits and see how new members receive free Life Insurance at: www.aft-oregon.org.