



The Advocate

Texas Can (Still) Do Better: Thoughts on the 2012 Elections

As November approaches, the thoughts of all Americans are turning more and more to election fever. The breathtakingly expensive battle for the presidency captures the imagination the most (as well as TV ad time and the endless phone calls to our homes at dinner time). In the fervor of the epic battle between President Obama and Governor Romney, and facing a dizzying list of down-ballot races, many voters will pull a blue or red lever based on their opinion of the man at the top. As critical as the choice for president is, it is the dizzying list below that has at least as much impact on our daily lives. Since public education (including community college education) is basically a state affair, it is the down-ballot races that will impact the health of Lone Star College as well as our sister post-secondary and K-12 partners. Trusting that the presidential race will be well covered by others, I'd like to write a few words to raise awareness to the long list that extends below the top.

In the September, 2011, issue of *The Advocate*, I wrote an article on the 2011 Texas Legislative Session entitled "Texas Can Do Better." For anyone who cares about education, social services and, well, everything else, the words that come to mind to describe that session are synonymous with "disastrous." A stubborn

unwillingness on the part of Governor Rick Perry, Lieutenant Governor David Dewhurst, House Speaker Joe Straus, and their followers to address a \$10 billion per biennium "structural deficit" paired with an equally stubborn determination not to tap into the state's Rainy Day Fund set up a 4 billion dollar cut in state support to education.

For a nightmarish trip down memory lane, I invite you to read my article again. It is available online at www.aftlonestar.org. Look for "The Advocate archives" link in the left column, select "2011," and navigate to the September issue. We've seen the impact live and in color with massive teacher layoffs and burgeoning class sizes all across the state. However, a closer look may be useful to remind us of the elimination of state support for full-day pre-K and science lab grants, the large cuts to other programs, the cut in state contributions to employee retirement (which affects us) and, notably, the 10.5% cut in support for instructional costs in community colleges. Texas has fallen from a disappointing ranking of 37th among the states in per student spending on education to a dismal 44th. More insidious changes include new laws making it easier to furlough and lay off school employees and the elimination of the state "salary floor" be-

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yond which school and state employee salaries cannot fall.

I remind you of the bad news of the past in order to warn you that, according to both Republican and Democratic operatives I have talked with, the upcoming session could be even worse. Results of the primaries hint at a legislature that could be even more extreme and unwilling to deal with the issues facing education in Texas than the previous legislature. However, the downward slide is not inevitable. Standing between now and the opening gavel in January are the 2012 elections. As you think about how you plan to vote, I urge you to learn as much as you can about the candidates running for the Texas and U.S. House of Representatives and Senate for whom you are eligible to vote.

An excellent source of information can be found at the Texas AFT website. Visit www.texasaft.org and select the link for "Political Action." From there, visit the link "Election 2012: Get Involved and Vote!" Since most incumbents are running for re-election, also visit the link "We're Watching. We Remember and We Vote!" to learn how your representatives and senators voted on issues important to education in 2011. In accordance with Texas Ethics Commission rules for labor unions, AFT-Lone Star College will not endorse candidates in *The Advocate* because it is a publication distributed beyond our membership rolls. However, we take seriously our role in providing the public with as much information as we can to make their own decisions about who would provide the best support for students in Texas. (AFT endorsements will be made available to union members both through the mail and at www.texasaft.org. A log-



in is required to access the endorsement list online. If you do not yet have a log-in, make sure you have your AFT membership card with you to assist in the process.)

The 2011 Legislature had its heroes who fought hard for Texas students and teachers. My article chronicles the efforts of Rep. Diane Patrick (R-Arlington), Rep. Donna Howard (D-Austin), Rep. Larry Gonzalez (R-Round Rock), and Sen. Judith Zaffirini (D-Laredo), all of whom seek reelection this year. There are other heroes running for reelection both around Houston and across the state. There are also promising future heroes running for the first time. On the other hand, one of the best friends higher education has had in the legislature, Rep. Scott Hochberg (D-Houston), is retiring. In addition, less friendly legislators want to come back, including Sen. Dan Patrick (R-Houston), a strong proponent of eliminating funding based on enrollment growth.

If there is one bright spot, it is that Sen. Jeff Wentworth (R-San Antonio), who fought doggedly through several sessions to open public colleges and universities to guns on campus, was defeated in the primary election. However, gun special interest groups will likely seek new champions.

Beyond the state level, all members of the U.S. House of Representatives are up for reelection as well, and those races require our attention. One race in which all Lone Star employees will be able to vote is the contest for U.S. Senate. Republican Senator Kay Bailey Hutchison, widely respected both by those who agree and those who disagree with her, is retiring. The two men vying for her seat are not well known by most Texans. Again, AFT Lone Star will not endorse either candidate in *The Advocate*, but we can provide information.

As a department chair, I conduct many interviews of potential future teachers. I am never terribly interested in what prospective employees tell me they would do, could do, or should do in some hypothetical situation. What interests me is what they actually have done in the past in situations similar to what they are likely to encounter in the classroom here. In that spirit, I would like to



conclude this article with a chart comparing the resumes of the candidates for U.S. Senate. I trust, if you are not already familiar with the candidates, that this will give you some tools that will help you decide who is most likely to make the best decisions on issues of importance to Lone Star students and employees.

Whomever you choose, I hope you will vote in the November election all the way down the dizzying long ballot. Polls and pundits predict that Texas

education will suffer more in the 2013 legislative session. However, you can prove them wrong if you will actively support candidates who believe that Texas can do better for its students and for all its citizens. Are you looking for a way to support such candidates? Visit the "Political Action" link from www.texasaft.org, and learn about the C.O.P.E. (Committee on Political Education) fund, an easy way to contribute financially to the campaigns of education-friendly candidates from both parties.

John Burghduff, Professor of Math
LSCS-CF

Comparison of U.S. Senate Candidates from Texas

Paul Sadler, Democrat	Ted Cruz, Republican
<p>Political Experience</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1991 – 2003 Texas House of Representatives (D-Henderson) 1995 – 2003 Chairman of the Public Education Committee 1997 Chairman of the Select Committee on State Revenue and Public School Finance 2001 Chairman of the Select Committee on Public School Employee Health Insurance Legislative Budget Board Member 	<p>Political Experience</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 2001 – 2003 Associate Deputy Attorney General, U.S. Justice Department 2003 – 2005 Solicitor General of Texas
<p>Major Legislative Accomplishments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Re-wrote the Education Code in 1995 (the Ratliff-Sadler Act) Enacted public school employee health insurance for the first time in the history of the state Passed a \$3.8 billion education package, which at the time included the largest property tax cut in Texas history Provided teacher pay raises for three consecutive sessions for the first time in Texas history Established critical need programs for prekindergarten and kindergarten Established the 9th grade initiative targeting students at risk of drop-out Increased funding for public school facilities 	<p>Major Legislative Accomplishments</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No legislative experience
<p>Recognition for Political Work</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Named four times (1995, 1997, 1999 and 2001) to the <i>Texas Monthly</i> "Ten Best Legislators" list Named one of three "Outstanding Legislators" during each of his legislative sessions by the <i>Dallas Morning News</i> Received the John B. Connally "Award for Excellence in Education" from the Just for Kids Foundation 	<p>Recognition for Political Work</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Invited to speak at 2012 Republican National Convention
Source: Texas Democratic Party, July 23, 2012	Source: www.tedcruz.org



Time and Labor

The Reform-Assessment Complex

At the end of his presidency, in 1961, Dwight Eisenhower gave a speech in which he warned Americans against the accrual of influence over public policy by “the military-industrial complex.” Subsequently, U.S. commitment to a long dirty war in Vietnam proved this warning to be prophetic. Despite the loss of over 58,000 U.S. soldiers, and at least one million Vietnamese killed, the U.S. government lost the war. Vietnam became a communist nation, and American national life continued as before. Vietnam had never been a serious threat to U.S. national security. The war had been fought under false pretenses, and the only winners were the executive leadership of the military-industrial complex: corporations, such as Boeing and Lockheed, that specialize in war. A generation later, the U.S. government launched a similarly disastrous eight-year war in Iraq based again on fictional threats to U.S. national security. In the war in Iraq, then U.S. Vice President Dick Cheney, a chief architect of the war, was the former CEO and largest shareholder in Haliburton, the company that profited most from that war. U.S. national interests were poorly served in both Vietnam and Iraq. Human rights abuse carried out by U.S. personnel, along with strains on the U.S. economy and armed forces, reduced our international standing. Furthermore, the disinformation and spying carried out by the U.S. government against its own people engendered distrust between the American people and their government.

The reform-assessment complex that is presently gutting the U.S. public education system has a great deal in common with the military-industrial complex. An interlocking directorate of philanthropists, reform specialists, and private corporations is scooping huge chunks of public funds into private bank accounts under the banner of reform. The U.S. public is being alarmed by clamorous warnings

about the dangers presented to American national security by our failing schools, even though the “Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study” indicates that U.S. students are above average in all categories (close to the top, in fact) and have steadily improved since the test began in 1995. Furthermore, since 1940, the number of U.S. adults with at least some college has increased from 10% to 56% even though the overall population has tripled and become extraordinarily diverse.¹ Our elected leaders are marching in lock-step with the reform-assessment complex to carve up the country’s public education system and hand it over to private corporations.

One of these corporations is Pearson Education. Pearson is a British conglomerate that owns, among other things, Penguin, Simon and Schuster, and Pearson Longman publishing houses. In Texas, Pearson holds the contract for testing students in grades K-12. Pearson provides most of the textbooks, remedial content for at-risk students, and has a hand in providing the GED testing for profit. Pearson also designed the STAR exam—student scores on this exam will be used to evaluate teachers. The company employs six paid lobbyists in Austin.²

One of those lobbyists, Sandy Kress, is a former board president of the Dallas Independent School District. He is also a leader in the reform movement, representing several agencies that advocate greater use of standardized testing, standardized curricula, and strict accountability for teachers whose students don’t perform well on those tests. Recently, Kress testified before the Texas House Public Education Committee as an advocate for school reform. Only after being explicitly questioned on the subject did he reveal that he was a paid lobbyist for Pearson, which holds most of the contracts to create the tests, evaluate the results, provide the instructional material, provide online courses, online labs, and preparatory courses for other exams, which they also administer. The bill under discussion, which would have limited the use of standardized tests (about 45 school days per year



are devoted, in one way or another, to standardized testing) did not pass.³ Pearson's profit agenda is further strengthened by their relationship with the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, the world's largest philanthropic organization. Last year, the foundation partnered with Pearson "to create online reading and math courses aligned with the new academic standards that some 40 states have adopted in recent months." The Common Core Standards come with an estimated price tag of up to \$30 billion.⁴

This focus on standardization is not what American parents want for their children. The tests are notoriously inaccurate, and across Texas local school boards are in revolt against the testing obsession. Forty Texas school boards have passed resolutions protesting the over-reliance on standardized testing, which is "strangling our public schools."⁵ Texas Education Commissioner Robert Scott has called high-stakes testing "the heart of the vampire."⁶ A recent study by the University of Texas found that these tests "are virtually useless at measuring the effects of classroom instruction."⁷ Nevertheless, the reform-assessment complex marches on; if these measures do not actually improve learning in public schools, you can always blame the teachers.

David Davis, Professor of History
LSCS-NH



¹Paul Farhi, "Flunking the Test: *American Journalism Review* (April/May 2012), <http://www.ajr.org/Article.asp?id=5280>.

²Abby Rapoport, "Education Inc.: How Private Companies Profit from Public Schools," *Texas Observer*, Thursday, September 8, 2011, <http://www.texasobserver.org/cover-story/the-pearson-graduate>.

³Rapoport, "Education Inc.: How Private Companies Profit from Public Schools."

⁴Sam Dillon, "Foundations Join to Offer Online Courses for Schools," *New York Times*, April 27, 2011, <http://www.nytimes.com/2011/04/28/education/28gates.html>.

⁵Board of Trustees, Clear Creek Independent School District, "Resolution Concerning High Stakes, Standardized Testing of Texas Public School Students," quoted in Monica Rhor, "School Officials: High-stakes tests failing students," *Houston Chronicle Online*, Sunday, March 11, 2012, <http://www.chron.com/default/article/School-officials-High-stakes-tests-failing-3398501.php>.

⁶Rhor, "School Officials: High-stakes Tests Failing Students."

⁷Morgan Smith, "Design Flaw Suspected in Texas Standardized Tests," *The Texas Tribune*, July 30, 2012, <http://www.texastribune.org/texas-education/public-education/pearson-defends-texas-tests-against-claims-flaws/>.



Everyone who knows the American Federation of Teachers is familiar with our strong tradition of advocacy on behalf of the interests of faculty and staff in schools and colleges. What fewer people know about is that, throughout our long history, we have been at the forefront of improving the teaching of students through practical approaches to teacher training and classroom instruction. Eschewing the seemingly endless parade of fads that plague our profession, the AFT has focused on practical ideas that teachers can apply directly to their classrooms in meaningful and realistic ways.

Our latest endeavor, through a partnership with the British online teacher's network TES Connect, is the website ShareMyLesson.com. ShareMyLesson.com is a free website of lesson ideas and resources designed by teachers, for teachers. Any teacher who wants to can upload a lesson idea for others to use. The site is searchable by grade level and subject and is peer reviewed by fellow users so that the best materials filter to the top of the search over time. A social networking feature is built in to allow teachers to collaborate across the country. Lessons are also keyed to the Common Core Curriculum for K-12 that has been adopted by most of the states in the U.S. (but not by Texas).

ShareMyLesson.com is based on the premise that the greatest experts in teaching students are teachers. Commercial products can be very good but are often expensive and ineffective and may be hard to find, especially for new teachers. ShareMyLesson.com gathers classroom-tested materials in one easy to navigate location. ShareMyLesson.com was just launched in June, but it already has over a quarter of a million submissions.





Right now, ShareMyLesson.com is focused on teaching ideas and resources for K-12.



As such, it is an excellent resource for those of us who teach courses designed for future teachers. Having access to these resources can help

them get a head start on preparing for their first classes. I had the opportunity to speak with one of the chief programmers at a conference this summer, and he told me that they wanted college professors contributing ideas too, expanding the scope of the site to post-secondary classes as well.

ShareMyLesson.com is fun to play with. I invite you to take a look, watch the introductory videos posted on the site, and register for free membership. ShareMyLesson.com: By teachers. For Teachers. A service of the American Federation of Teachers.

John Burghduff, Professor of Math
LSCS-CF

Problem Solving

In recent meetings with AFT officers, Dr. Carpenter has committed to help persuade supervisors throughout LSC to allow the AFT to help solve disagreements between supervisors and their supervisees. Several times in these meetings, Dr. Carpenter stated that the AFT has a good record of doing so in a fair manner. In this article, the AFT would like to propose a problem solving method that we have already discussed in our meetings with Dr. Carpenter. Our goal is to reassure LSC supervisors that, if we are allowed to help solve disagreements at the lowest levels, we fully intend to do so in a manner that is fair to both the supervisor and the supervisee. If we determine that an

AFT member is in the wrong or does need to improve performance, we will be happy to make that point clear to the member, something we, in fact, have always done. In circumstances where it is apparent that a supervisor has overstepped, we will work to sort through that situation as well. In our experience, an improved working relationship usually requires a commitment from both parties.

Our proposed method of problem solving is based on the way we believe good department chairs or deans should handle student complaints. When a student brings a complaint about a professor to any administrator, we believe it is important for the administrator to hear the student out. Let the student air the concerns, insisting on a polite and respectful conversation. Sometimes that alone is enough to help the student move beyond the problem. We also believe it is incumbent upon the administrator to ask early in the conversation if the student has discussed the problem with the professor. All too often, the student's answer is no. Unless the student makes a credible case for a very serious allegation, such as sexual harassment or racial discrimination by the professor, we believe a good chair or dean should coach the student on how to raise the issue with the professor in a polite and professional manner. In our experience, the vast majority of faculty respond quite positively when students present problems to them in this way. Not only does this technique encourage a more positive relationship between faculty and their students, it also helps prepare students for professional careers. It also avoids the administrator undermining the authority of the professor by intervening unnecessarily. The best situation is one in which no administrator comes between faculty and their students.

In the same way, when an employee complains to AFT officers about a supervisor, we will hear the employee out. Again, that alone might help the employee understand how to resolve the problem or see that it may not be as big a problem as ini-



tially thought. We will ask the employee if he or she has discussed the problem directly with the supervisor. Unless the employee makes a very serious and credible allegation, such as sexual harassment or racial discrimination, we will coach the employee on how to raise the issue with the supervisor without any intervention from the AFT.

When a chair or dean uses the techniques described above and the problem persists, then a good chair or dean should next be certain that he or she gives both the faculty member and the student the opportunity to tell their side of the story. Anyone who has handled a significant number of student complaints knows that quite often students leave out parts of the story that might not favor them, focusing exclusively on what they believe the professor has done wrong. Out of respect for both parties, a good chair or dean should never take action to resolve the problem until after having heard both sides of the story.

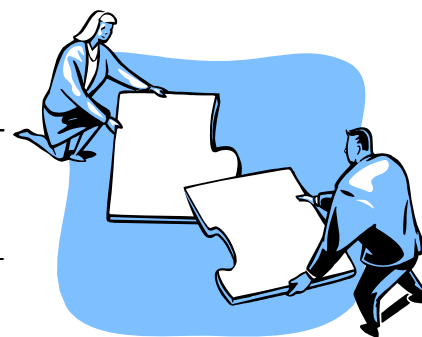
Likewise, when an employee brings complaints about a supervisor to an AFT officer, it is incumbent on that officer to allow both parties ample opportunity to tell their side of the story. Out of respect for both parties, no position should be taken until after the AFT officer has given ample opportunity to both parties to tell their side of the story.

If a problem between a professor and a student is still unresolved, the next step for a good chair or dean is to offer to mediate the disagreement in a meeting. The role of the mediator is to insure that both parties are allowed to speak their mind in a respectful manner. Only after that occurs should the chair or dean propose a solution. When they do propose a solution, they should always think in terms of a win/win situation. A one-sided solution is almost surely doomed to failure. Because of our overriding commitment to student success, we need to look for solutions that affirm the proper role of the professor as the authority in the classroom and that increase the student's chance of success in the class.

We believe this approach will also work when applied to problems between supervisors and their supervisees. Mediation should not be the first step because it is an intervention between the supervisor and supervisee. We all work together best when we develop skills that help us resolve disagreements without mediation. However, when mediation becomes necessary, it is imperative that the mediator treat both parties in a fair and equal manner, with no preconception about who is right and who is wrong. Both parties must be allowed to tell their side of the story in a respectful manner. Moreover, it is incumbent on the mediator to look for a win/win resolution for the same reason a good chair or dean should look for a win/win resolution of a disagreement between student and professor.

All of these steps should take place before anyone files a formal complaint or grievance. If all follow this practice, we believe grievances will be substantially reduced. Just as it is best to resolve a problem between a student and a professor at the lowest level, it is best for problems between supervisors and supervisees to be resolved at the lowest level. When supervisors and supervisees dig in their heels and bring Human Resources or the Office of General Counsel into the dispute, the chance of an equitable solution is greatly reduced.

The AFT applauds Dr. Carpenter's efforts to improve the relationship between the AFT and LSC supervisors. Our hope is that this approach will further that initiative and that supervisors throughout LSC will also embrace Dr. Carpenter's initiative. The AFT is committed to resolving issues at the lowest possible level.



Alan Hall



Congratulations

The Texas AFL-CIO offers a college scholarship program for union members' children. The funds are distributed through central labor councils in various counties. Stella Miller recently was awarded \$1,000 by the Montgomery County Labor Council. Stella is the daughter of Dr. Robert Miller, Professor of English at LSCS-North Harris and longtime AFT member. Stella begins her college career this semester in the School of Natural Sciences at the University of Texas at Austin.



AFT Lone Star congratulates Stella on this award.

Retirements

Of late, I have been finding myself more frequently writing about dear friends who have retired from Lone Star College. I have been asked if I would like to speak at their retirement celebration, but I rarely do. I'm not good at saying goodbye. I have spoken in a number of difficult, sometimes tension filled situations and never hesitated. However, for some retirement celebrations, the words stick in my throat. I do far better writing about the occasion after the fact. Retirements of two of my best friends this past summer prompt me to recognize their outstanding service to the college system.

Don Stanley

Don Stanley's retirement celebration was well-attended by employees from across Lone Star College, a fact which attests to how beloved he is. Speakers at the event spoke of his marvelous talents as a teacher, his gifts of compassion and

understanding, his steady leadership, and his sense of humor. While recognizing these talents, Linda Dodgen honed in on his sense of humor and turned Don's celebration into one of the funniest I've ever attended. You would just have to have been there.

To these well-deserved recognitions of Don's strengths, I would add integrity and honesty, both of which are reflected in articles that he wrote for *The Advocate* over the years. He often wrote about inconsistencies in decision making, contradictions between policy and practice, and numerous injustices. While his articles earned him the label "caustic" in certain circles in the system, the union would get waves of kudos when Don picked up his pen.

To this list of his recognitions I would also add courage. During my time as AFT President, I have encountered many difficult situations, often dealing with folks sitting on the other side of the table who were obstinate, difficult, or openly hostile, and—at times—all three. I've lost track of the times I sought Don's advice in dealing with these circumstances. However, his support wasn't just in the wings. On several occasions, a couple of which were particularly notable, he literally stood right by my side.

We have all had people in our lives who have influenced us in many positive ways. Don Stanley certainly belongs in that group. One of my best friends, Don has surely made a difference in all our lives.

Cher Brock

I met Cher when I was in my early thirties, and we have been close friends ever since. At the time we met, she was looking for an adjunct position teaching English. I introduced her to some people, she interviewed, got the job—and the rest is history. She moved from adjunct to full-time teacher, to dean (a loyal, active AFT member the



whole time), to Vice President of Instruction, and, ultimately, Special Assistant to the President.

Cher was to most minds the best VPI at Lone Star College. With an unmatched work ethic, she managed to do more good work than any two administrators I've ever worked with. Many times I would be out in a hallway between classes and automatically step back when I heard the staccato tapping of those high heels echoing down the hall. I knew who was coming. I would wave at Cher as she flew by, always tickled at the sight of her dashing from one meeting to the next. I ultimately realized that she, defying all laws of physics, was able to be in two places at the same time.

Curiously, her greatest strength is one not always appreciated by some. She was not interested in doing the expedient thing or always focusing on image. She wanted to do the right thing, and she cared about people. In all of my dealings with her while I have served as AFT President, I always knew that she was aware of her administrative responsibilities, the rules, and so on, but ultimately her goal was to do the right thing for the students, the employees, and the college. She helped me solve a number of difficult problems, the outcomes of which were fair and humane. Many of the people who sat across the table from me over the years could learn much from Cher.

When I think of Cher, several words come to mind: dedicated, honest, responsible, goodhearted, and insightful. Above all, she has a deep understanding of the worth of the individual. She has been my friend for decades, and we will listen for her in the halls.

Alan Hall



A Highlight On AFT PLUS BENEFITS

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- 25% off Endless Vacation rentals
- 20% off Extra Holidays resort condos

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- Movie ticket discounts
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AFT + is your advocate. For information on all AFT + programs, call 800-238-1133, ext. 8643, or e-mail aftplus@aft.org. The AFT has an expense reimbursement and/or endorsement arrangement for marketing this program. For more information, please contact AFT Financial Services at 800-238-1133, ext. 4493; send an e-mail to disclosureinfo@aft.org; or visit www.aft.org/benefits/disclosure.

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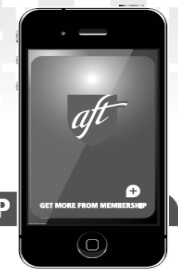
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AFT-Lone Star College

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
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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 12 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 <small>(Updating information and/or payment method)</small>		<input type="checkbox"/> New Member	
Choose method of payment:					
		<input type="checkbox"/> Payroll Deduction <small>(Complete the union dues agreement below)</small>		<input type="checkbox"/> Cash/Check <small>(Two 6 month payments payable to AFT-LSC)</small>	

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

[Click here to print form](#)

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

Position verified: YES NO (Initials) _____ NOTES: _____
 Dues Class: FTF AF FTFS FTSS PTS C _____



P.O. Box 788 Spring, Texas 77383-0788

We're on the Web!

www.aftlonestar.org



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.

Alan Hall, President	North Harris	ACAD 217-G	281-618-5544
David Davis	North Harris	ACAD 264-G	281-618-5543
Linda Dirzanowski	North Harris	Health Professions Red Oak	281-943-6819
Jim Good	North Harris	ACAD 264-F	281-618-5573
Stephen King	North Harris	ACAD 162-H	281-618-5530
Allen Vogt	North Harris	ACAD 264-C	281-618-5583
Rich Almstedt	Kingwood	FTC 100-G	281-312-1656
Laura Codner	Kingwood	CLA 110—D	281-312- 414
Catherine Olson	Tomball	S 153 - H	281-357-3776
Richard Becker	Tomball	E 271-D	281-401-1835
Janet Moore	Tomball	E 210 -E	281-401-1871
Van Piercy	Tomball	S 153-J	281-401-1814
Martina Kusi-Mensah	Montgomery	G 121-J	936-273-7276
John Burghduff	Cy-Fair	HSC 117-R	281-290-3915
Brenda Rivera	Fairbanks	119	832-782-5068
Earl Brewer	Fairbanks	S - 13	832-782-5029

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 pro-

vided 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