



The Advocate

Freedom of Speech and Bullying at Lone Star College

In our recent meetings with Dr. Carpenter, we have disagreed about the extent of workplace bullying within LSCS, but on several occasions Dr. Carpenter has sincerely and passionately proclaimed that even one case of workplace bullying is too much. We have all agreed on the latter point and that we should strive to create a work environment in which bullying would be unacceptable. We have also agreed that LSCS should begin providing training to supervisors on how to interact more productively with the employees they supervise and their co-workers. We have all expressed hope that such training would reduce the number of grievances filed by employees and promote a healthy work environment that helps us stay focused on our central mission, student success.

To our delight, on October 23rd, Rand Key, LSCS Senior Vice Chancellor and COO, announced via email to all full-time employees a “professional development opportunity” entitled “Lone Star Supervisors: Foundations for Success.” The email stated that the October 30th training would “review key policies and effective practices related to compensation, hiring, discipline, and documentation.” The AFT sees this as a positive step in the right direction. More recently, the Faculty Senate Presidents proposed to Dr. Carpenter that they begin work on conflict resolution guidelines for the

college system. Dr. Carpenter accepted the proposal, another step in the right direction. In an October 5th meeting with AFT officers, Dr. Carpenter asked us to form a committee with employees in LSCS Human Resources to develop a “playbook” for progressive discipline. All of these events suggest to us that, under Dr. Carpenter’s leadership, LSCS is moving forward in a positive manner.

Because the AFT wishes to promote this initiative through other equally positive steps, in early October, AFT leaders began organizing an Equal Employment Opportunity Commission training on civil rights in the workplace. For those unfamiliar with the EEOC, according to their website, it is a federal agency “responsible for enforcing federal laws that make it illegal to discriminate against a job applicant or an employee because of the person’s race, color, religion, sex (including pregnancy), national origin, age (40 or older), disability or genetic information” (<http://www.eeoc.gov/eeoc/index.cfm>). We felt certain that LSCS administration would welcome such an event.

In the January/February 2012 issue of *The Advocate*, Pat Gray reported that, on January 28th, the AFT Lone Star executive committee had the pleasure of participating in a training led by Joe Bontke, Outreach

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Manager and Ombudsman of the EEOC Houston District Office (back issues of *The Advocate* are available here: <http://aftlonestar.tx.aft.org/archives-advocate>).

Bontke is a superb teacher who makes excellent use of humor during presentations and really knows his stuff. He was appointed by Governor Perry to serve as Chair of the Governor's Committee on People with Disabilities, a position he held from December 2006 to February 2011. Bontke has also served as a director of human resources, training coordinator for the American Disabilities Act Technical Assistance Center for Federal Region VI, and is also an assistant professor at Baylor College of Medicine. In his spare time, Bontke cooks holiday meals for the hungry, and in December he plays the part of Santa Claus for the City of Jersey Village and other organizations. In short, Bontke is an all-around nice guy with impeccable credentials. Moreover, Bontke has delivered three trainings at LSCS campuses just this year, including one at North Harris College. In one of our meetings with Dr. Carpenter, we mentioned that the EEOC provides wonderful trainings free of charge, and we thought he was intrigued by the idea.

We contacted Bontke, agreed on a date of November 9th, and formally requested a room at North Harris College. A staff person explained that the request would require approval of a vice-president and then informed us during the last week of October that the room *was* reserved for our event.

We then announced the training in the November issue of *The Advocate* with a full-page advertisement. Much to our surprise, the AFT received an email on November 4th from Johanna Boley, Vice President of Administrative Services at North Harris College, in which she

explained, "we cannot accept your request to use our facility. Unfortunately the person who works with room scheduling did not understand the full extent of the presentation." We were puzzled right away because we thought we had been very clear about the presentation.

We were even more puzzled by the second paragraph of Boley's email:

As all legal opinions, advice, information or legal services in the form of seminars regarding state and/or federal laws must be directed to and presented by the Office of the General Counsel through the request of the President, a presentation on Civil Rights in the Workplace will be considered by the Lone Star College-North Harris President, Dr. Head, and discussed with the LSCS General Counsel, Brian Nelson, as a future topic.

Having already downloaded a pdf version of the LSCS Board Policy Manual, we searched for policy to explain Boley's email. Unable to find such a policy, the AFT quickly requested clarification from Boley. To date, we have not received a reply to that request.



L to R: Hall, Bontke, Shaw

Upon further reflection, it seemed that Boley might have overstated her case, but we noticed that she had carbon copied LSCS General Counsel, Brian Nelson. We knew for certain that many faculty have organized seminars and presentations that focused on legal issues throughout the system, with no requirement for approval from General Counsel.

Therefore it seemed incorrect for Boley and Nelson to claim that only General Counsel can make presentations on legal issues. In addition to Bontke's previous three trainings this year, in recent memory, there have been presentations provided by attorneys from Lone



Star Legal Aid, presentations on immigration law, presentations on legal services for veterans, and a host of other presentations regarding legal issues.

In fact, Monty and Ramirez, a law firm LSCS frequently uses to assist with the termination of employees, did a presentation on the DREAM Act on October 13th and an Immigration Seminar on Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals on November 10th, both at North Harris College. Although in September several LSCS employees complained in writing to the Board of

Trustees that the firm of Monty and Ramirez has conducted profoundly flawed investigations of employees, demonstrating little regard for normal standards of evidence, logic, LSCS policy, and the law, the AFT has never objected to the fact that Monty and Ramirez is allowed to present legal issues to the North Harris College community. It seems to us that in an institution of higher education, we should all be tolerant of speakers with whom we may disagree on certain issues. In fact, we believe that sort of tolerance is the antidote to bullying at LSCS.

The more we thought about the wording of Boley's November 4th email, the more it seemed that it must have been mistaken. On the basis of that wording, one might ask if criminal justice professors, paralegal professors, government professors, history professors, business professors, etc. are still allowed to talk about the law in their classes. It boggles the mind to think that only General Counsel (an office with two attorneys), can do all of the presentations on legal issues in all of the classes and seminars offered throughout LSCS.

As November 9th approached, it seemed the AFT had little choice but to use the hand dealt to it by Boley and General Counsel. The AFT worked diligently to inform each person who RSVP'd that the training had been cancelled. On November 9th, Joe Bontke arrived at North Harris College and was

met by Richard Shaw, Secretary - Treasurer of the Harris County AFL-CIO Labor Council, and L.M. Sixel, a business reporter for the *Houston Chronicle*. Sixel interviewed Bontke, Shaw, and Alan Hall, President of AFT Lone Star, and took pictures of the men standing in front of the room previously

...rather than a consistent position, we believe this is an abrupt reversal of North Harris policy on AFT meetings.

reserved with a sign that said "Access Denied." On Saturday, November 10th, Sixel published "Speech on Workplace Rights not welcome at LSCS" in the *Chronicle* (p. D1). Before publishing her article, Sixel contacted Jed Young, LSCS Executive Director of Communication Services.

According to Sixel's article, Young stated that "the school's policy is that only the general counsel's office can make presentations about subjects that involve state and federal laws. Any requests for a seminar must also come from a campus president..." Apparently, Young was unable to specify where Sixel could find the policy or if it was a new policy. We encourage *Advocate* readers to read that article for themselves on the *Chronicle* website (<http://www.chron.com/default/article/Speech-on-workplace-rights-not-welcome-4025266.php>).

This incident may have taken on a life of its own. On Monday, November 12th, Peter Bonilla of the Foundation for Individual Rights in Education (FIRE) contacted AFT Lone Star about the article in the *Houston Chronicle*. FIRE is a non-partisan, national watchdog organization founded in 1999 by conservative historian Alan Kors and civil liberties attorney Harvey Silvergate. Bonilla is Associate Director of FIRE's Individual Rights Defense Program. He pointed out that he had already begun blogging about the November 9 incident at North Harris College (<http://thefire.org/article/15115.html>) and explained that FIRE would "like to see if we can be of assistance here." Readers might remember FIRE from the January/February 2012 issue of *The Advocate*. The organization was involved in a free speech controversy at Tomball College in 2008 and another one at Kingwood College in 2011.



Some people began to speculate that LSCS administrators blocked the EEOC training solely because the AFT had organized it. According to this interpretation, administrators were engaging in a knee-jerk, emotional response to the last issue of *The Advocate*, which we distributed throughout LSCS on October 31st and November 1st. We decided to test that theory by trying to schedule an information session at North Harris College that would educate AFT members about their benefits. Our thinking was that this would eliminate administrators' objection to holding seminars on legal topics. This time, Boley responded in a November 13th email, "...we will not be able to accommodate this room request. Any AFT meetings need to be scheduled off campus." In a November 15th email, Dr. Steve Head, President of North Harris College, reiterated Boley's stance: "Our position on this has been consistent for at least three years. These types of activities should occur off campus." We are not entirely sure what Head means by "these types of activities," but the AFT holds at least one meeting on the North Harris campus every long semester. When we do, we always reserve a room in the name of the AFT. For that reason, rather than a consistent position, we believe this is an abrupt reversal of North Harris policy on AFT meetings.

We hate to think that decisions to block AFT events are entirely arbitrary, but it is tempt-

ing to conclude that some upper administrators are so intolerant of the AFT that they are willing to stop civil rights training and to risk antagonizing the EEOC through heavy-handed actions. Our concern is that the EEOC will view administrators' arbitrary approach to the only truly independent voice within LSCS as evidence that we do in fact have a bullying problem at LSCS. One can only hope that the handling of this event will not enter into the EEOC's investigation of four EEOC complaints that Montgomery College employees filed against LSCS approximately two months ago and a request from the

When bullying is eliminated from the workplace, everybody wins. When it isn't, everybody loses.

Hispanic Executive Society International for an EEOC investigation of LSCS (see <http://www.ourtribune.com/article.php?id=14345>). When bullying is eliminated from the workplace, everybody wins. When it isn't, everybody loses.

Staff

These Tensions Will Pass

Currently, tensions across the system are palpable, especially at LSCS-Montgomery and LSCS-North Harris, but they exist on other campuses as well. Recent events have caused a systemic climate of fear, and the AFT is involved in working for resolution. The AFT will always speak up in situations where there is tension and conflict. The administration has taken actions against the union, the only independent voice in the system, an important balance to administrative power. We are fully prepared and will address these actions.

A number of employees have approached AFT officers across the system expressing concerns about the security of their jobs in what they perceive as a vindictive environment. If you feel this way, the AFT understands and offers some advice: do your job well, avoid conflicts with supervisors, and you will likely be fine. Remember, there are many reasonable administrators of goodwill. If you follow AFT's advice, you should not have a problem. Sooner or later, these tensions will pass, and we all can focus more fully on the reason we all got into this business as faculty and staff: educating and working with students.

A little historical perspective: a decade ago, the relationship with the then brand-new chancellor, Dr. Pickelman, began with a rocky start. We persevered, and over time, developed a fine working relationship that benefitted everyone. We continue to hold this goal of establishing a positive working relationship with the current administration.

Alan Hall, President



Time and Labor

“Rank and Yank”—The Enron Model

“Rank and yank” refers to a practice at the Texas-based energy giant Enron, wherein groups of workers were forced to rank each other, according to their sales output, into three groups that ranged from “superior” to “needs improvement.” A worker labeled “needs improvement” had six months to achieve a better ranking or be fired. “Rank and yank” has become infamous because of the predatory culture the system helped spawn, one that included traders manipulating markets to strangle California consumers for greater revenue yields and then shouting “Burn, baby, burn!” while destructive wildfires drove energy prices even higher. Few people call it “rank and yank” anymore, but the practice—also known as “forced ranking” or “stacked ranking”—is widespread among major corporations. This practice is part of the Microsoft culture, and it is credited with strangling creativity at Microsoft, causing the software giant to miss the boat on handheld devices. Apple’s iPhone now generates more revenue than all of Microsoft’s products combined. Research shows that “stacked ranking” created a cannibalistic culture that caused workers to compete with each other rather than cooperate. Ironically, competition with each other for favored positions within the stacked ranking made Microsoft less competitive among other companies.

Carried into public education by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, along with other players in the reform-assessment complex, No Child Left Behind and Race To The Top are eerily reminiscent of “rank and yank.” Schools are labeled high- or low-performing according to their students’ test scores, and those schools designated as low-performing are then subject to reorganization, mass teacher firings, and privatization through charter schools or other means. As with Microsoft, teachers and parents agree that these initiatives have stifled creativity in the classroom. In addition, teachers have been held accountable for the low test scores of impoverished students in splendid isolation from the social fac-

tors—poverty, urban decline, and institutionalized racism—that actually cause these low test scores. Sometimes referred to as “the completion agenda,” the college and university system is also undergoing a series of initiatives based on quantified measures of student success. Learning outcomes have been standardized across the state, and curriculum teams are busily devising instruments for measuring how well these learning outcomes are being met in the classroom. The next Texas legislature is expected to consider “outcomes-based funding,” which would make ten percent of a community college’s funding based on quantitative evidence of students passing certain milestones. As funding becomes attached to such measures, the stakes grow higher, and the pressure to produce evidence of improved performance increases. Outcomes-based funding will produce winners and losers.

While these instruments for measuring mileposts and learning outcomes are being designed and implemented, we must exert extra caution that the dynamics of “rank and yank” do not stifle creativity in the college classroom, as has

happened in K-12. To do this, it will be necessary for faculty to assert their proper role in the process. “Faculty buy-in” is a key phrase in the literature surrounding the completion agenda. “Without meaningful involvement by the faculty, efforts to assess student learning are close to meaningless,” says Doug Lederman, writing in *Inside Higher Ed*. To measure student success is to define it, and in defining student success, we are redefining the mission of the community college. Differing visions of the community college mission will compete in the marketplace of ideas. The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, the Walton Foundation, and the Lumina Foundation envision a mission focused around increased production of college graduates for the purpose of workforce fulfillment. A competing vision of the commu-





nity college mission is one of molding our students into self-directed agents of social change for the purpose of building a more democratic society. There are other visions, as well. Sometimes, faculty and administration will disagree on the meaning of student success. That is okay. The academy is a place where reasonable people of goodwill can disagree in an environment of civility, mutual respect, and even genuine friendship.

David Davis, Professor, LSCS-NH



1 John Greenwald, "Rank and Fire," *Time* (June 11, 2001, <http://www.time.com/time/business/article/0,8599,129988,00.html>, accessed Nov. 17, 2012).

2 Kristen Hays, "Ex-Enron Trader Gets Probation," *Houston Chronicle* (March 23, 2007, <http://www.chron.com/business/enron/article/Ex-Enron-trader-gets-probation-1545060.php>, accessed Nov. 23, 2012).

3 "Microsoft's Downfall: Inside the Executive Emails and Cannibalistic Culture that Felled a Tech Giant," *Vanity Fair*, (<http://www.vanityfair.com/online/daily/2012/07/microsoft-downfall-emails-steve-ballmer>, accessed November 17, 2012).

4 David L. Davis, "Waiting for Privatization," *The Advocate* (Jan./Feb. 2012, 6-8).

5 David Moltz, "Push for Performance," *Inside Higher Ed* (Nov. 2, 2010, <http://www.insidehighered.com/news/2010/11/02/texas>).

6 Doug Lederman, "The Faculty Role in Assessment," *Inside Higher Ed* (May. 28, 2012, <http://www.insidehighered.com/news/2010/05/28/assess>. Accessed Nov. 21, 2012).

7 Denise Kersten Wils, "Lumina Foundation for Education," *Philanthropy* (Winter, 2011, <http://www.philanthropyroundtable.org/article.asp?article=1579&paper=0&cat=141>, accessed May 8, 2011).

Letters to the Editor

Lone Star College Tramples Constitutional Rights

People ask me why I resigned as an adjunct at Lone Star College to fight for professors Gordon Carruth and Larry Loomis-Price. I did so for four reasons: One, when you work for or with Chief Justice Warren Burger for nine years, as I did, you develop an intense disposition to defend constitutional rights—denied to Carruth and Loomis-Price.

Two, it bothers me to the bone's marrow to see abusive power triumph with impunity. Here I am guided by C. S. Lewis's imperative that we should seek what is right and oppose what is wrong. Three, I do it for the same reason George Mallory gave when asked why he climbed Mt. Everest: "Because it is there." Abusive power is there. Four, Lord Acton put it brilliantly. In a letter to a bishop he wrote: "I cannot accept your canon that we are to judge Pope and King unlike other men, with a favourable presumption that they did no wrong. If there is a presumption it is the other way, against holders of power . . . Great men are almost always bad men [especially] when you superadd the tendency or the certainty of corruption by authority. There is no worse heresy than that the office sanctifies the holder of it."

We are not talking at Lone Star College about abusive power on the grand scale of, say, the federal government. But the lives of two men have been unfairly ruined.

On November 10, the *Houston Chronicle* published a devastating piece on Lone Star College entitled, "Speech about workplace rights not welcome at college." Joe Bontke, Outreach Manager of the U. S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, was scheduled to speak on November 9 at LSC-North Harris. The college administration disinvited him. Disinviting a speaker who wants to discuss workplace rights shows precisely why such a speaker is needed. This suppression of free speech and other



violations of constitutional rights have become characteristic of the college system.

Lone Star College recently violated three constitutional rights: free speech, breach of contract (property), and denial of due process. We recall on September 20 in the President's Open Forum that President Austin Lane strongly admonished a professor, "Don't spread your criticisms among others." We also recall that after this forum he warned Carruth and Loomis-Price never again to mention on campus the Faculty Senate's strong majority vote of no confidence in his VP appointee Ann Kirch. Then came the firing of Carruth on October 8 and the punitive banishment of Loomis-Price to a distant college branch.

We recall that when Lane fired Carruth, he gave him precisely 30 minutes to clean out his office and was warned to never again set foot on campus. What I emphasize here is that once Carruth was fired, he was a private citizen—and Lane has no authority whatsoever to deny a private citizen access to a public campus. Lane seems to think that he *owns* the campus, that it is his private property. He seems not to know the difference between public and private property.

When Lane abruptly fired Carruth and gave him 30 minutes to get off campus, a second constitutional right was violated. Article 1, Section 10 of the Constitution protects "the obligation of contracts." Carruth had signed in August a two-year contract with Lone Star College—a contract that was summarily breached in an instant on the spot in Lane's office. This denial of a contract relates to a third constitutional violation. A contract—that is, one's earnings—is property. And the 5th Amendment reads, in part, that no individual may "be deprived of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law." Carruth was denied due process. He was allowed no hearing, nor permitted to have an attorney present, nor allowed to present any witnesses in his defense. Texas law here was also violated because it mandates "due course of law."

The punitive actions against Carruth and Loomis-Price were based on an investigative report by the

law firm Monty & Ramirez. That report is fatally flawed. I cite five areas.

One, I have already written on Carruth's alleged gender discrimination in mentioning to Kirch, which he denies, that he prefers women who wear a size 6 dress, and that for one of their weekly meetings a scheduling conflict necessitated a meeting after 5:00 in her office.

Two, I have also already cited that the investigative report is at key times speculative. The most outrageous speculation in the field of adjudication is this one: "It is highly probable that Carruth harassed Kirch on the basis of gender." Well, did he or didn't he? They don't know for sure, and they can't prove it—yet Carruth is fired, as though speculation is sound proof of guilt.

Three, the Faculty Senate voted by a wide margin for no-confidence in Ann Kirch. Yet nowhere in the investigative report is there any explanation of why Kirch was rejected by such a wide margin. Still, at the beginning of the investigative report, attorney Jacob Monty states that Lone Star College retained his services to conduct "a fact-finding mission." But his fact-finding impartiality seems by dint of the report itself to be only one-sided. The report is silent on whether there were legitimate reasons for the Faculty Senate to reject Kirch. Yet Monty reports that Kirch "is prominently disdained." Why, Mr. Monty, why?

Four, the most far-fetched, specious argument in the investigative report is this: "Kirch stated that her workplace has become an environment permeated with intimidation. Kirch also stated that she is in fear of her safety due to an active 'Second Amendment Club' on campus. . . . Kirch stated that some individuals who are active in voicing their issues with her are either friendly with members of the Second Amendment Club or actively involved with the Second Amendment Club." Guilty by association! If I am friendly with a student who belongs to the campus Second Amendment Club, does that pretty strongly indicate that I'm going to have someone shot?



Five, much of the language and charges in the investigative report are skewed and unfair. Look, for example, at how Monty's bullet entry is loaded: "Carruth's attempt to spend time alone with Kirch." No, that's his spin or Kirch's. Or, "W___ observed that Carruth treats E___ and H___ as subordinate because they are female." That's W's speculation. Or, "One female provided multiple instances in which Carruth positioned himself physically over women in a way to overpower them." Carruth overpowers me and I'm 6'3" tall. He's a huge guy, built like a Houston Texans' linebacker. Or, Carruth "flirts"—what's the demonstrable connection with Kirch? Or this, the investigative report says that a certain professor was interviewed for the investigation—but that interview never took place.

On November 8, I hand-delivered to the proper authority at Lone Star College a Texas Open Records Act request for information. Mr. Carruth is also represented by David Minces, of the firm Mize, Minces, & Clark—experts in employer/employee law. Depositions, some embarrassing, will take place under oath. I believe the chances are good that Carruth will be reinstated or gain a financial settlement. Another option could be "trial by jury" enumerated in the 7th Amendment.

David's slingshot against the abusive power of Goliath will be the Constitution.

I have no good explanation as to why these community-college administrators believe that there are no or few limitations of their power on a public campus. They do not own the place. Now I understand fully the wisdom of the Founding Fathers in constitutionally protecting "the right of the people peaceably to assemble"—and with this 1st Amendment right to unionize also comes the right to free speech and protest.

Ron Trowbridge

Editor's Note:

*The following letter to the editor was submitted by John Barr, Faculty Senate President as LSCS-Kingwood responding to an article in the Oct/Nov. 2012 Advocate. The part of the article which mentioned Kingwood was based on an eye-witness account and minutes of the senate meeting. John has a different view of the events of the meeting in question. **The Advocate** is happy to print his letter. We do point out, however, that the focus of the article was the System Office's not participating in governance with the faculty senates rather than shared governance within any individual college.*

The November article in *The Advocate* on "The Decline of Shared Governance" elicited a strong response here at LSC-Kingwood. I received immediate emails and phone calls from both AFT members and non-members concerning the piece. Most of the respondents were concerned with the paragraph referring to the August, 2012, Kingwood Faculty Senate meeting. The article was accurate in that some committees were disbanded, or for the time being would not report to Faculty Senate, because they had not met or had anything to report in some time, but there was never any talk of a decline in shared governance that day, and it was specifically stated that the committees would be reconstituted if the need arose. This was specifically done as a means of streamlining our monthly meetings and allowing for more time to address items on an already full agenda. As a result, it was a misrepresentation or distortion of what occurred that day to place that paragraph in an article entitled "The Decline of Shared Governance."

I would like to point out, furthermore, that when it comes to local shared governance the LSC-Kingwood Administration always includes faculty and staff on issues. Deans, Department Chairs, and Directors meet with Dr. Rebecca Riley on a monthly basis. She is always open to issues being brought forward by anyone attending. Dr. Persson typically asks for faculty and staff to talk with or email her on



Letters to the Editor, cont'd

any major issues affecting LSC-Kingwood. She also appoints or asks for volunteers to serve on committees when any major changes are on the horizon. Faculty Senate and The Professional and Support Staff Association (PSSA) also meet on a monthly basis. The Faculty Senate President and Vice-President meet with Dr. Persson after each meeting. The Faculty Senate President and PSSA President sit on Dr. Persson's President's Council. I want to make it clear that we have a spirit of cooperation and shared governance at LSC-Kingwood.

I want to wish everyone a happy and safe Holiday Season!

Campus Updates

No Campus Reports at this time.

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!



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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
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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:

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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.

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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	<small>(Initials)</small>	<input type="text"/>	NOTES:	<input type="text"/>
Dues Class: FTF	AF	FTPS	FTSS	PTS	C



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

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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.

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
Louise Casey-Clukey	Montgomery	B 100-G	936-273-7394
John Burghduff	Cy-Fair	HSC 250-G	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 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

