



The Advocate

Nearing the Finish Line, Part Two: the Civil Rights Movement

(Many employees at NHMCCD find themselves staring retirement in the face. Many of us have lived our lives committed to the idea that our generation would make a difference. In the January/February 2007 Advocate, the AFT began a retrospective focused on “our triumphs and defeats, our legacy, for good or ill, we leave our children and grandchildren.” These reflections will continue over several issues, ultimately culminating, as they always do, on a focus with the future. We will be exploring the challenges of reaching our current and future students and how “Achieving the Dream” can help us leave them better prepared to pick up the torch.)

“ No easy walk to Freedom...Keep on walking and you shall be free. That’s how we’re gonna reach victory, you and me”

(Sung by Peter, Paul, and Mary)

The march of civil rights: Perhaps nothing in the second half of the Twentieth Century has been more compelling than the serial waves of people demanding that they be recognized and accepted as

equal participants in American life and enterprise. World War II opened the eyes of all Americans who worked to defeat the Axis Powers, and once they came home, this country was never the same. African Americans, women, homosexuals, and Latinos returned from the war and, over time, refused to return to the back of the line.



The “Jim Crow” mandates which had been in place in southern states since shortly after the Civil War slowly



and stubbornly crumbled under the steady, inexorable march of African Americans and their coalition of like-minded friends from other ethnic backgrounds who demanded that all of us be included in the American dream. *Brown v Board of Education of Topeka* (1954) was the initial legal victory, but there was a decade of wrenching, non-violent, “direct action” efforts before President Johnson signed the Voting Rights Law (1965), giving the vote to the American people of color. I remember the flickering images on tiny, black and white televisions as America watched the

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Montgomery Bus Boycott, begun by Rosa Parks and the nonviolent resistance led by Dr. Martin Luther King. Later, we saw the screaming, hostile crowds that showed up every day during the desegregation of Little Rock Central High School (1957) and Norman Rockwell's heart-stopping painting in Saturday Evening Post of a small, fragile-seeming girl being escorted to school by federal marshals. The 1963 March on Washington was easily one of the most exciting events of my young life, and the old newsreels still send shivers down my spine to this day.

Not one minute of this effort was easy. Racist white resistance turned ugly, violent, and instantaneous. Much of the violence took place in the dark such as the murder of three student Freedom riders, one black and two whites, by the Klan in Mississippi in 1964, and the nighttime assassination of Medgar Evers in his front yard. Fortunately for the movement, some of the most egregious violence took place during the day and in front of television cameras. In fact, I sometimes fret that without television, which served to awaken the conscience of the nation, particularly our generation, the sacrifices made by thousands of African Americans might have been largely unnoticed or ignored. Luckily, the brutal images of "Bull" Connors, the so-called Public Safety Commissioner of Birmingham, meeting the lines of marchers with fire hoses and attack dogs allowed America to see hundreds of elderly women and children, singing hymns, being thrown against the wall by blinding water pressure and then being forced toward police wagons by snarling animals where they were met with blows from billy clubs, racial epithets, and curses. When



one line was smacked down, another line appeared from around the corner, still singing and holding hands, only to meet the same violent response.

Never since the post-war days of Gandhi in India had we felt the impact of such massive nonviolent resistance.



Equally compelling images were given to us by Selma Sheriff Jim Clark who met the marchers on Edmund Pettus Bridge with state troopers who also attacked with billy clubs, tear gas, rubber tubes wrapped in barbed wire and bull whips as they drove the marchers back from the bridge (1964). To this day, the event is annually commemorated at the site of the attack in memory of those who were beaten, maimed, and jailed. Just this spring the media have been full of images of two major democratic candidates for the 2008 presidential election: one black man, Barack Obama, and one white woman, Hillary Clinton, standing in line on that infamous bridge, testament to the horrors of 43 years ago. Politics? Sure. Progress? Without question. Our generation has had a huge part of this effort, and we can be rightfully proud.

The famous, iconic names are in the history books, but these books can't begin to testify to the hundreds of workers, both black and white, who traveled throughout the south, visiting families house by house for years in order to register black Americans who had never even had the hope of voting, much less equal employment. The Jewish legal community, for example, sent hundreds of lawyers to the Deep South to explain the law and process the voter registration papers. Alice Walker, Pulitzer Prize Winner for The Color Purple, writes movingly of her experiences with her white, Jewish husband in Mississippi during these times.

It wasn't long before we were trying to explain to each other what it was we did. You were taking depositions from dispossessed sharecroppers who'd opposed their bosses

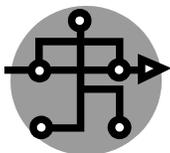


and been thrown off the land. I was doing freelance movement work, but really I was writing a novel that required a closer look at the South. Your work, defending and empowering black people who might have been my parents, my family, endeared you to me, effortlessly.... It really did seem at times as if our love made us bulletproof, or perhaps invisible. When we walked down the street together the bullets that were the glances of the racist onlookers seemed turned back and sent hurling off into outer space. The days passed in a blur of hard work, constant awareness of violence, and unutterable tenderness between ourselves.

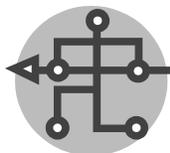


(The Way Forward is with a Broken Heart 24)

Martin Luther King preached, “returning violence for violence multiplies violence, adding a deeper darkness to a night already devoid of stars.” The history of the human race, however, seems to teach that violence invariably begets violence, and as the 1970s closed in, events turned even rougher. Reactions against the Vietnam War became entangled with the Civil Rights Movement since the universal draft sent a disproportionate number of poor men of color to war while many potential white draftees got student deferments or served for a time in the National Guard. The three assassinations within four years of John F. Kennedy, Martin Luther King, and Robert F. Kennedy, seemed to open the door to chaos. 1968 was a seminal year for our generation. Riots had broken out in the early 60s (Harlem, Watts, and Detroit, for example), but on the night of Dr. King’s murder, riots seemed to take place in every major city, a tsunami of tearing rage, fear, hopelessness, impotence, and total frustration.



“Say it Loud: I’m Black and I’m Proud.”
(James Brown)



I believe this line is perhaps the greatest existential statement of self I’ve ever heard, and it voices the posture of the second wave of the civil rights movement, Black Power. Stokely Carmichael of SNCC insisted that the black community assert its own identity and attack violence with violence, meeting the armed Ku Klux Klan with its own weapons and standing them down. Now members of this second movement were called “Afro-Americans” who dressed in dashikis and wore their hair out in a style called “Afro.” Malcolm X and the Nation of Islam, who advocated the attainment of equality “by-any-means-necessary,” followed the Black Panther Party.



It is in the nature of revolution that the action starts in the streets, proclaiming injustice, but eventually moves into the offices, classrooms, boardrooms, and halls of government to force corrective action into law. Rather than go into detail about this next phase, I want to choose one member of our generation who symbolizes all that’s possible when opportunity is offered to everyone. **Barbara Charlene Jordan**, Congresswoman from Texas, hit this country like a thunderbolt during the impeachment hearings of Richard M. Nixon. With her Mt.

Olympus voice, her adamant physical presence, and her towering mind, she captured in a few words all that our generation had



been struggling for over the decades. Regarding the Watergate crimes and their possible impact on American justice, she said, “My faith in the Constitution is whole, it is complete, it is total, and I am not going to sit here and be an idle spectator to the diminution, the subversion, the destruction of the Constitution” (Testimony before the House Judiciary Committee, July 25, 1974). Our generation was glued to the televised committee meetings, and Congresswoman Jordan seemed to speak



for all of us. She seemed to become a hero overnight. My finest memory of her, however, was during her keynote address at the Democratic Convention in 1976. As I sat in my California living room listening to her, her words seemed to come into my ears and burn straight into my brain.

One hundred and forty-four years ago, members of the Democratic Party first met in convention to select a Presidential candidate.... A lot of years passed...and during that time it would have been most unusual for any national political party to ask that a Barbara Jordan deliver a keynote address, but tonight here I am. **And I feel that notwithstanding the past that my presence here is one additional bit of evidence that the American Dream need not forever be deferred.** (Emphasis mine)

I was on my feet with that last clause, and I remained standing as she continued:

We are a people in a quandary about the present. We are a people in search of our future. We are a people in search of a national community.

We are a people trying not only to solve the problems of the present: unemployment, inflation, but we are attempting on a larger scale to fulfill the promise of America.

We are attempting to fulfill our national purpose: to create and sustain a society in which all of us are equal.



As the years have passed, we continue with this struggle, but we now see a growing African American middle class and experience a far more diversified society in every aspect of our nation. The larger inclusion of African Americans is one of our generation's greatest triumphs.



“Well, I’m glad to be a Woman, so glad. And I’m glad to be Alive.”
(Betsy Rose)

Women’s Rights, The Second Wave

When Stokely Carmichael was asked about the position of women in the Black Civil Rights Movement, his infamous answer was “prone.” Man ‘o Man, did he have a thing or two to learn? World War II had a profound effect on the women of this country as they joined forces with the men in the factories, armories, and military services to defeat the Axis Powers. After the war was over, women were encouraged, often forced, to give up their jobs to returning veterans and return to homemaking. The 1950s is considered the “golden age” of the nuclear family, but Bob Miller told us in the last issue of The Advocate that the father/breadwinner, mother/homemaker paradigm lasted only about twenty years. When our generation was in grade school, however, women were forbidden to be school bus drivers, electricians, plumbers, surgeons, professional pilots, Supreme Court judges, and many other jobs that are routinely done by women today. Newspapers ran help wanted ads that were labeled “men only” or “women only.” The gender specific limitations had more to do with tradition than innate abilities. Today, the only highly visible job apparently still limited to





males is the Presidency of the United States. As poet Nikki Giovanni writes,

“Every four years some little white boy moves into the Oval Office” (Quilting the Black-Eyed Pea).

While our mothers may have given up their jobs, at least for a while, their children benefited greatly from their wartime experiences, their sense of a broader, potentially more inclusive world. If Herbert Marcuse is right when he says, “liberation depends on the consciousness of servitude,” then Betty Friedan’s The Feminine Mystique (1963) articulated the frustrations of that narrow servitude. By the late 60s and early 70s many in our generation populated the zeitgeist of revolution and reform. Gail Caldwell’s memoir tells of her radical experience in Austin during this time.



It was impossible to live through the activism of the sixties and seventies without realizing the prisms of light each round of illumination had shed upon the others. You couldn’t hate the war in Vietnam without seeing the racial components of the draft as well as of the war; you couldn’t go on a voter registration drive in Alabama blind to the raw poverty underneath the provincialism of the South. One toppling begat another....

Feminism redirected the narrative. It was when the story, for a million protagonists, stopped being about someone else. (A Strong West Wind 98,104)

Women took to the street on behalf of equality of rights, and they also gathered in homes and community centers to address specific needs. They created battered women’s shelters, rape crisis hotlines, child care centers for women who worked outside the home and needed help with

their children, and opened clinics to provide birth control and family planning. We also had a world of fun, finding joy in our collective new sense of possibility.

The first big legal victory was the passage of Title VII (1964) barring discrimination in employment on the basis of sex, race, religion, and national origin. Ironically, the category of sex was added at the last minute as an attempt to kill the bill, but it passed nonetheless. (A Short History of the Movement, Legacy 98). Title VII was the first major crack in the wall of patriarchal resistance since the 19th Amendment granting women the right to vote in 1920. The second big push was on.

The National Organization of Women was founded in 1966, and in 1967 President Johnson’s Executive Order 11375 was expanded to cover discrimination based on gender. In 1968, the EEOC ruled that sex-segregated want ads in newspapers were illegal (“Women’s Rights Movement.” Timeline).

The American media were also a part of the action. A first sample Ms. Magazine came out in 1971, with a publication of 300,000 copies, all of which sold out in 8 days. I bought one of those copies, read it over and over (so different from Ladies Home Journal, don’t you know), and decided at once to keep it for its historical and political value. After hauling it all over the country for 30 plus years, I recently gave my copy to the NHC Library for its archives.



The following years gave our generation huge victories and major disappointments. For four years in the mid-seventies I worked for The California Commission on the Status of Women as senior research fellow and speechwriter. We largely focused on seeing that California state law complied with the Equal Right Amendment once



the Amendment was nationally ratified. The ERA was originally drafted by Alice Paul in 1923 with a simple statement: "Equality of rights under the law shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of sex." It seems pretty straight forward, and when both houses of Congress passed the amendment(1972), many of us thought its re-quired ratification by the nec-essary 38 states would be no big deal. Boy, did we have some lessons to learn? A fire-storm of opposition, lead by archconservative spokeswoman Phyllis Schlafy, put forward terrifying possibilities such as men abandoning their families, women being drafted, gay marriages, and unisex toilets. The fear mongers out shouted the advocates of equality. Although millions of women became active in their home states in favor of passage of the amendment, the passage fell three states short of the necessary 38 required for passage. To this day the ERA is still just an idea, not a reality, and women remain the only group in American not indi-vidually protected by the Constitution.



All was not lost in those years; other issues had more success. The California Commis-sion worked on the problem of "displaced homemakers," the women who, either wid-owed or divorced, found themselves with no financial identity or any credit possibilities. In 1974, the Equal Credit Opportunity Act prohibited discrimination in consumer prac-tices on the basis of sex, race, marital status, religion, national origin, age, or receipt of public assistance ("Women's Rights": Timeline). Earlier, Title IX of the Education Amendment banned sex discrimination in schools. As a result the en-rollment of women in athletic



programs and professional schools increased dra-matically. A Short History of the Movement says, "One in twenty-seven high school girls par-ticipated in sports twenty five years ago; one in three does today." Just last month Wimbledon Tennis Association announced that, for the first time, women will receive money prizes equal to those of male tennis players. (Thanks, Billy Jean King.) In 1973, the Supreme Court passed Roe v Wade, making abortion legal, and in 1996, in United States v Virginia the Supreme Court ruled that the all-male Virginia Military School had to admit women ("Women's Rights," Timeline).

Today, women are enrolled in all the military academies and are a significant part of our armed forces. More women enroll and are graduated from colleges today than men; this ratio is also true of professional schools such as law and medicine. Harvard College has just named it first female president, Drew Gilpin Faust. Increas-ingly, women are found in both houses of Con-gress, the Supreme Court, and in governors' man-sions. There are still challenges to meet, but our generation has left a great legacy to our children. Alice Paul captures our efforts well. "I always feel the movement is sort of a mosaic. Each of us puts in one little stone, and then you get a great mosaic at the end."

"We're Here. We're Queer. We want to say Hello!"

(Slogan of **Queer Nation**)

Homosexual Rights

The date traditionally given to the mod-ern gay rights movement is 1969 when the Stonewall riots in New York City, lasting three days, expressed the frustra-tion and desire of the lesbian, gay, bi-sexual, and transgender (LGBT) citizens to be allowed equal rights. The riots were the re-sult of





the three previous weeks when five other gay bars had already been raided and the patrons arrested simply for being there in these places as same gender couples (Adam 75). This movement is generally considered one of the last political movements of our generation, but there had been earlier organizations that put forward the idea of equality for homosexuals. The Mattachine Society, formed in 1951, is believed to be the first male gay rights organization in America while The Daughters of Bilitis, established by Phyllis Lyon and Del Martin, was the first lesbian organization (1956). During the youth of our generation, however, the issue of same sex relationships was not a general topic of discussion. As Lily Tomlin once said, "Nobody was gay in the 50s; everybody was just shy."

One of the first and clearest statements of purpose was written by Carl Whitman in 1970.

Liberation for gay people is to define for ourselves how and with whom we live, instead of measuring our relationships by straight values....To be a free territory, we must govern ourselves, set up our own institutions, defend ourselves, and use our own energies to improve our lives. (Qt'd in Adam 75)

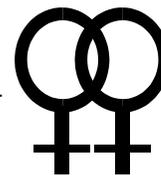
At first, the collective resistance known as gay liberation followed some of the same patterns established by the women's movement: consciousness raising groups, newspapers such as Gay Power, public celebrations, and marching picket lines against newspapers such as

The Village Voice protesting its refusal to print the word gay and at Time magazine and the San Francisco Examiner for their demeaning treatments of gay people....At the end of the first year, two to three thousand marched to Central Park in New York to commemorate the Stonewall Rebellion as did hundreds in Los Angeles and Chicago. (Adam 79)

The Gay Liberation Movement quickly moved to college campuses and, eventually, was estab-

lished as a world wide effort. There were, nonetheless, a number of early schisms within the gay world as gay males sometimes proved reluctant to join with lesbians and as transgender groups were sometimes shunned for what largely seems to be political image issues.

Ironically, some of the old guard feminists, such as Betty Friedan, denounced the inclusion of lesbians in The National Organization of Women. Friedan said the supposed "lavender menace" threatened the credibility of the organizations. Sometime later Gloria Steinem was asked if all feminists were lesbians, and she replied (this is a paraphrase as I remember it) that she knew many feminists who were not lesbians but had never met a lesbian who wasn't a feminist. By 1973, N.O.W. had changed its position, resolving that "N.O.W. acknowledges the oppression of lesbians as a legitimate concern of feminism" (Adam 91).



Even though there was upheaval at the beginning, there was also incredible creativity. Lesbian journals sprang up all over the world: for example, Ain't I a Woman (Iowa City), Lesbian Tide (Lansing, Michigan), Long Time Coming (Montreal), and Sappho (London) (Adam 91). Lesbian novelist Rita Mae Brown wrote a comic bestseller called Rubyfruit Jungle (1973). Perhaps as a celebration of new found freedom and sense of self, new music broke out among lesbians in the middle 70s, with the founding of Olivia Records which produced such international stars as Meg Christian, Chris Williamson, Holly Near, and Margie Adams. At the ten year anniversary of Olivia Records, Meg and Chris gave a concert in Carnegie Hall. With the announcement of their appearance, the concert sold out in less than 24 hours.

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The Community Advantage



“Do all you can with what you have in the time you have in the place you are.”

(Nkosi Johnson*, Qt'd in Wooten, We Are All the Same)

The AIDS crisis in the 1980s galvanized the LGBT community and brought all the groups together in a common effort to spread awareness of the threat and to force governmental action toward help for the rapidly expanding disease. Although scientists had isolated what is believed to be the earliest known case of AIDS in 1954 (“A Brief History of AIDS/HIV.” Timeline), it was not until 1981 that the CDC reported that

5 young men, all active homosexuals, were treated for biopsy-confirmed *Pneumocystis carinii* pneumonia in 3 different hospitals in Los Angeles....[They later reported that year] that during the past 30 months, 26 cases of Kaposi sarcoma [had] been reported among Gay males, and ...eight had died, all within 24 months of diagnosis. (“AIDS/HIV.” Timeline)

The number of known deaths that year was 234, a number that was to grow exponentially in the following years.

Perhaps because early media reports spoke of a rare “gay cancer,” not everyone in our generation was terribly concerned at first. Even after the CDC linked the disease to blood and coined the terms AIDS for “acquired immune deficiency syndrome,” there were many who chose to ignore the issue. According to “AIDS/HIV.” Timeline, Larry Speakes, President Reagan’s press secretary, made jokes about AIDS during a press briefing on October 15, 1982. In fact, President Reagan did not mention the word “AIDS” until September, 1985, in response to a reporter’s question. The gay community went to work, however, founding The Gay Mens Health Crisis in New York in 1982, and these organizations would soon be operating in all the major American cities. Learning of the likelihood of a tainted blood bank supply, our generation realized that others were at risk, particularly hemophili-

acs or those who had recently required blood transfusions during surgeries.

I lost my first dear friend to AIDS in January, 1985, but it was a private, personal loss for me and those who had loved him for years. It was with the sickness and ultimate death of Rock Hudson later in that year that got the world’s attention. Hudson, handsome, manly star of war films, westerns, and romantic comedies with Doris Day, was shown on television in an emaciated, ravaged state, looking as if Ms. Day was holding him up for the cameras. Now there was a face and a name to go with the disease. President Reagan finally mentioned AIDS in his Message to the Congress on America’s Agenda for the Future on February 6, 1986. In 1988, the United States forbade discrimination against federal workers with HIV and mailed 107 million copies of “Understanding AIDS,” a booklet by Surgeon General C. Everett Koop (“AIDS/HIV.” Timeline).



By now famous people were dying every year, but when Ryan White, a teenage hemophiliac, was first banned from school, the public got a larger view of the scope and the prejudice which surrounded this disease. Some people still believed that the disease could be transmitted by air, by saliva, and any number of other erroneous urban myths. Ryan’s mother fought the good fight and got her son into public school; nobody was harmed by his presence. The year after he died, basketball player Magic Johnson announced that he had HIV, and suddenly the possibility, even likelihood, of heterosexual transmission finally got everyone’s attention. At the beginning of the 21st Century, The World Health Organization reported that more than 10 million people world wide were infected by HIV. Now most everyone knows someone with the disease and knows our entire generation and that of our children is at risk.



The health crisis “humanized” a group of people, gay men, in a way nothing else had. Some of our generation called the disease the vengeance of God; others pointed out that lesbians must, therefore, be blessed by God since they weren’t at risk. For the most part our generation has been forced to recognize the LGBT citizens in our society as people of “muscle and blood and skin and bone” just like everyone else.



In general, attitudes have changed although dust-ups still occur. Very recently General Peter Pace, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, called homosexuals “immoral” and said they should be therefore banned from military service. He said, “the U.S. military mission fundamentally rests on the trust, confidence and cooperation amongst its members. And the homosexual lifestyle does not comport with that kind of trust and confidence” (Newsweek 19 March 2007). He made these remarks in response to the earlier Clinton decision to implement the philosophically ambiguous “Don’t Ask/ Don’t Tell” policy in 1993. Pace’s attitude is now contrary to national opinion. A new Newsweek poll shows that “63 percent of Americans believe gays and lesbians should be able to serve openly in the military. When members of the military were asked a similar question [in a Zogby poll], 58 percent either agreed gays should serve openly or were neutral” (Newsweek 19 March 2007). Finally, in the round table discussion of this issue on ABC’s This Week (18 March 2007), erudite conservative columnist George Will said (here I paraphrase) that attitudes have really changed since 1993. Our children think of homosexuality as similar to being left-handed. It’s just the way of things.



“A candle loses nothing by lighting another candle.”

Erin Majors

This change in attitude is seen in both community attitudes and popular culture. An opera was composed and later performed by the Houston Grand Opera in commemoration of Harvey Milk, the gay council member in San Francisco who was murdered in the late 70s. When Mathew Shepard, 21, was savagely beaten in the cold, lonely midnight of Wyoming and left to die on a split rail fence, candle light vigils were held across the country. On a lighter note, openly lesbian Ellen Degeneres just hosted this year’s Academy Awards, what Time calls “one of our last three true mass-media rituals. Its host is the de facto M.C. of mainstream America” (“Yep, She’s Mainstream” 5 March, 2007). Barney Frank, openly gay Congressman from Massachusetts, has been elected and reelected for years.

I don’t mean to suggest that everything has turned out like an old MGM musical comedy where everyone sings and lives happily ever after. There are still issues to be resolved, primary the question of gay marriage or civil union, and the FBI continues to count annual hate crimes against gay males in the thousands, but on the whole our generation has moved light years beyond the attitudes held during our childhood. As the old joke has it, Oscar Wilde’s definition of homosexual love as “the love that dare not speak its name” has changed to the love that will not shut up. The LGBT movement marches on to an up tempo beat.



A final note: All of these efforts toward equality for all citizens have found their way into higher education. Universities and colleges all across American and Western Europe have courses in African-American Studies, Chicano Studies, Women/Gender Studies, and Queer



Studies (this last name was chosen by the homosexual academic community to co-opt the pejorative used against them for centuries). Publications in these fields are a veritable cottage industry, and many young people are choosing to major in these fields. The old patriarchal core canon has been changed by the marches of the Twentieth Century, and those academic changes may be seen as yet another form of inclusion for us all.

Pat Gray, Professor of English, NHC

(Editor's note. I'm acutely aware of all the material I've omitted. Limitations of space have sorely tried my natural long-windedness, but this article is already longer than some entire issues of The Advocate. Please feel free to write me about elements you would like to include. There is space here for you in the next issue if you would like to make a contribution to the conversation about our generation. PG)

Applied Technology Festival a Success

The 2007 Applied Technology Festival at NHC was held at the campus on Saturday, May 31. This festival, now in its 8th year, is a fundraiser for student scholarships. In spite of bad weather, the event was a big success. The number of teams entered in the BBQ Cook-off doubled this year to 50. Support for the event continues to grow each year. The AFT is particularly pleased to report that Dr. Steve Head, Interim NHC President, provided 250 tickets for the Facilities Department and Police Departments.

Staff



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* **Nkosi Johnson** was a Zulu boy born with AIDS. His dying birth mother took him to Johannesburg to find care for him. Gail Johnson, a white South African, adopted him to care for him throughout his brief life. He was a keynote speaker at the International AIDS Conference in Durban in 2000. His speech was entitled "We are all the same." When he died at 12, he was the oldest child with AIDS in South Africa.



“No, no nos moverán, [we shall not be moved]”

**“Those were the days my friend
We thought they'd never end
We'd sing and dance forever and a day
We'd live the life we choose
We'd fight and never lose
For we were young and sure to have our way.”**

(Music and lyrics by Gene Raskin)

For baby boomers, our world was a place of ideals and hope for social justice. And our music paralleled our experiences. I saw myself facing the future like Julie Andrews running with open arms and singing, “The fields are alive with the sound of music.” As a college student I dreamt of challenges before me with the refrains: “Climb every mountain,” or “To dream the impossible dream.”

As Dr. Gray pointed out, having supportive parents who wanted and could provide the best education possible for their kids meant that everything was possible for us. My upbringing was comfortable because my classmates were the same ones from junior high to high school and college. We shared the same ideals, the same dreams, the same vision. When we sat in El Paso - Ciudad Juárez to watch the evening news and saw the marches, riots and burning of distant cities, they were experiences far removed from my day-to-day reality, yet they forged the path for our generation and for those to come.

Throughout the 60s and 70s, all Latinos did not share a history of oppression. Even today, we are not homogeneous; we do not share a single racial or ethnic identity; there are black, Asian and white Latinos. There are families along the U.S./Mexico border whose ancestors came before the American colonies were founded, to cultivate land granted by Spain. There are the recent immigrants, and there are those who have grown up in the barrios of American cities, suffering years

of discrimination. Often, the latter choose not to teach their children Spanish or Latino culture and traditions in an effort to help them blend in, to become a part of the “American dream.” Many of these Latinos are our students today. Because of a lack of opportunities and parental involvement, they have gone through the educational system, having limited knowledge of both Spanish and English. They lack cultural grounding, and they often have limited goals. Connecting with this group is now our challenge as educators.

I would like to focus on four Latino leaders who, I feel, had a direct impact on Latino communities and the country as a whole: Judge James De Anda, César Chávez, Rodolfo Corky Gonzales and Moctesuma Esparza.

Judge James De Anda was best known for his decision in Hernández vs. Texas, pronounced here in Houston in the late 50s, a ruling which was paralleled but overshadowed by Brown vs. the Board of Education. This decision was the first to consider Mexicans as a separate ethnic category and to determine that Mexican Americans were equally protected by law. In education, it was important because it was the catalyst that made the Latino community begin to demand equal rights in other arenas. Hispanic students should not be made to sit at the back of the class, as my father had done in Arizona, or be given demerits for speaking Spanish, as my mother had received, in a predominantly Mexican American High School in El Paso. This case is important because it created an awareness in Latino youth of their rights and made it possible for the Latino community to begin to see itself as a single ethnic identity.



The first time that I actually experienced ethnic differences was in the late 60s or early 70s when I was hired as a bilingual aide by the Sharon



Springs ISD in Kansas. My summer job was to help migrant farm workers' children, mainly coming from Texas, improve their basic reading and math skills. Through these families, I learned first hand why César Chávez and his work mattered. Their health and living conditions were deplorable. Children spent most of the hot summer months on the back of the pickups waiting for their parents to finish working. When they reached the age of 12, they,



too, worked in the fields. Some of my students had learning disabilities; others were extremely bright, yet they lagged behind in basic skills. The parents seemed to age before their time, always exposed to the elements. These children were part of me, part of who I was, making me think that maybe I could make a difference.

Rodolfo Corky Gonzales was a community organizer in the mid-sixties, a time when he fought for equal rights and justice in the cities. He is best remembered for his epic poem, the literary embodiment of the Chicano movement, "I am Joaquín." The poem has inspired many generations, including some of my students. It traces our great Indian heritage, the blending of Indian and Spanish cultures, the cultural values we hold dear:

**I am Joaquin,
Lost in a world of confusion,
Caught up in a whirl of a gringo society,
Confused by the rules, Scorned by attitudes,
Suppressed by manipulations, And destroyed
by modern society.
My fathers have lost the economic battle and
won the struggle of
cultural survival.**

Moctesuma Esparza is now a famous director of documentaries and feature films, including Selena and The Milagro Bean Field War. In the mid-sixties, he was one of the organizers of the brown beret movement, the L.A. school walkouts, and other marches. The brown berets were concerned with public education, health care, equal rights, political involvement, and voting rights. Ironically, Moctesuma Esparza was at University of Houston to premiere his documentary on the 1960's LA school walkouts during the recent school walkouts to bring attention to immigration last spring. At the premiere, it was exciting to feel the energy of the young audience ready to become involved once more.

Growing up, I never considered myself a woman of color. In the late eighties, when a colleague and I were asked to represent our district at a "Women of Color" conference, we were both amused and puzzled by the invitation, having always thought of ourselves as white. I understood that by integrating myself into this new-found identity, I could make a difference for my students, for those generations coming after mine. Latinos need to face society by focusing on our commonalities, not our differences. Our marching chant: "Sí se puede" [Yes we can] echoes the idealism of the sixties. As a united political force we can fight, we can march, we can demonstrate, we can vote, and most importantly we can forge our own destiny. Facing the tremendous challenges of immigration reform, we can sing the refrain:

"In our hearts the dreams are still the same."

**Bertha Ibarra Parle
Professor of Modern Languages NHC
Mónica María Parle
Managing Editor, Feminist Economics**



On Work, And Loss, and Being Human: Grief and the Workplace

Every day, 30 million people grieve in the U.S. Grieving is associated with stress, depression, and reduced productivity. Overall, grief is estimated to result in a 75 billion dollar loss each year within organizations according to the Grief Recovery Institute, a non-profit organization in California. In most organizations, as in most of our society, individuals experience grief alone with little available support.

Many of us have worked within the college district for twenty to thirty years. The people we work with are often more than just “coworkers.” They are friends, confidants, and in many cases are viewed as “family.” What happens when one of these family members dies?

Also, many of us are at the age where we are struggling with aging parents, and many are facing the family deaths that accompany such family positions. Since beginning our careers at North Harris College we’ve observed coworkers struggle with the death of parents, the death of their children, the deaths of friends and coworkers as well as divorce and other personal crises. What resources exist to help those dealing with grief and bereavement? Overall, not much is available.



Considering the social and financial cost of grief, one would think that these issues would be more directly addressed within the college environment. Unfortunately, this is not the case. When one of us asked HR what resources were available to employees experiencing a death, the response received was “that is not an HR issue.” However, the September, 2003 edition of HR Magazine stated “HR’s quick compassionate response to the sudden death of an employee’s loved one can boost worker morale, loyalty, and ultimately, productivity.”

Symptoms of grief include a significant loss of

energy, poor concentration, confusion, disorientation, difficulty in making decisions, and increased alcohol consumption. Emotional reactions include feelings of anger, shock, fear, hostility, depression, and feelings of guilt. All of these characteristics would make it difficult to perform one’s job.

American society does a poor job of dealing with death and loss. We expect grief to pass within a few weeks or months. One employer quoted in Living with Grief at Work, at School, at Worship stated:



Marty is not doing well at all. He still seems distracted and is not as productive as he used to be, even though it’s been three months since his wife died. I sent him to the Employee Assistance Program, and I don’t know what else a supervisor could do. I’m losing patience with him.

The literature indicates clearly that grief is a two to three year process. There are no methods of “fixing” the problem, but there are ways to ease the transition for those who have experienced a significant loss. Acknowledgement and support is important. Ignoring the issue or responding in a way that does not recognize the significance of the loss can be detrimental. We do receive notification of the deaths that occur and impact our coworkers, and we have seen numerous administrators attend the funerals for the family of the employees of the college district, and that is important. However, long term support is absent except for that supplied informally by coworkers.

The September issue of HR Magazine makes some suggestions that might be applied within the college district. They include the following:



- Ensuring that bereavement policies are established.
- Helping the grieving worker communicate with colleagues.
- Helping co-workers express their sympathy.
- Helping the bereaved employee and his or her supervisor deal with any lingering productivity issues.

In addition some companies often establish bereavement leave programs, emergency funds to help employees with funeral expenses, and libraries containing literature providing information on grief and bereavement.

One resource utilized by the District is EAP: the Employee Assistance Program. However, sometime that support is inadequate and ill prepared to deal with grief issues. When Lynda Dodgen experienced the death of her son, she was referred to EAP. The counselor she talked with stated that she didn't know what to tell her because she couldn't imagine losing a child. Needless to say, no support was gained through this process.

In order to meet the needs of college personnel,

Lynda has established a grief support group for people dealing with any type of loss. It meets Thursdays at noon in Library 114. Basically, our group has had to provide our own support through the efforts of staff and faculty. The district needs to take a stronger role in providing such services. We have a group trained to handle environmental disasters but no resources to deal with the psychological aftermath of such experiences. Again, this problem could be addressed by District.

When Don Stanley's father-in law died, he spent a week in Michigan with his wife, attending to the funeral and dealing with other tasks. When Dr. Stanley returned to North Harris, he received a note in interoffice mail informing him that he was only allowed two days of leave for the death of an in-law and that he would have to apply the additional days to his sick leave. We began to wonder how many days he would be allocated when his mother died. Overall, we understand the need for policy and procedure, but this one seemed very impersonal and non-supportive. We urge the college district to address this issue, establish an effective bereavement policy, and communicate this policy to staff and faculty.

Don Stanley, Professor of Psychology, NHC
Linda Dodgen, Professor of Sociology, NHC

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 20 of this newsletter, or check out our online information and application at www.aft-nhmccd.org.

Monthly AFT Dues

Full-time Faculty	\$28.30
Full-time Professional Staff	\$24.50
Full-time Support Staff	\$20.90
Adjunct Faculty & Staff	\$10.00

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AFT A Union of Professionals **AFT+** *The Community Advantage*



Salaries

The District has reached the time of year when attention begins to turn toward next year's budget. In particular, attention will focus on salaries, a significant portion of the budget. Anyone familiar with the District's salary history will know that, with only one exception during Dr. Pickelman's tenure, employees have benefited from his commitment that employees should not lose ground financially.

For 03/04, due to cuts in state funding, the District elected to provide a one-time stipend of \$750 that did not go to base salary. The CPI (Consumer Price Index, basically the rate of inflation) for that year was 3%. The raises since that year have, with a few exceptions, matched the CPI. These raises did not constitute an increase in purchasing power, mind you, but only maintained cost of living. That one year means we all remain 3% behind CPI since 03/04. The effect of that one year is significant in that the salary lost then has also not been calculated in any subsequent raises, a fact which compounds the loss.

Employees have begun to hear early comments about next year's raise from the administration, a hesitant mention of 4% with a hastily added qualification that state funding could reduce that amount (a management technique called

lowering expectations). The AFT will wait until May for a better sense of the inflation rate before recommending a percentage. However, the AFT continues to endorse the past practice of establishing a minimum increase higher than the percentage offered to employees in general, a practice which would create a new minimum salary. This minimum would address a crying need in the District. Our minimum salaries are right at the poverty line (\$20,650 for a family of four according to 2007 Health and Human Services Guidelines), an indefensible situation. Something must be done for employees at this level.



Other factors the District should consider are the District's ranking among other community colleges in Texas, adjunct salaries, and employees who have topped out in their pay categories. The December 2006 TCCTA Messenger reports that NHMCCD's total salary range for faculty ranks 9th out of 50 community colleges in the state, down one position from last year (p. 10). The District adjusted adjunct salaries for this year which raised the ranking by one position to 10th in the state according to the Messenger (p. 12). However, adjunct salaries remain too low. One realizes,

Administrative Compensation Packages

The following chart reflects the current compensation packages for upper administration.

Chancellor

Salary	\$211,229
Deferred Compensation, performance-based	15% (28,167)
Auto Allowance	\$1000/month
Business Expense Stipend	\$1000/month
Total Compensation	\$263,396

Presidents, Vice Chancellors, and Executive Vice Chancellor

Salary	\$133,547
Deferred Compensation, performance-based	10% (13,355)
Auto Allowance	\$800/month
Business Expense Stipend	\$600/month
Total Compensation	\$163,702



of course, that the other community colleges face many of the same financial challenges as we do. Why, then, is our District not in the top five in both categories? Another factor that needs consideration is that, this year, 25 employees have reached the top of their pay category. That number will, no doubt, be higher next year. Attention simply must be paid to their plight. Their loyalty and length of service justify adjusting their salaries.

Certainly, difficult decisions will have to be made, decisions that will be tougher in view of the District's recent experience with the bond election. Employees are constantly told that we are the District's most valuable asset. The value of that asset should be a guiding principle in determining next year's salary increase.

Alan Hall

Good News on Proposed Policy Review

Readers will recall a concern raised by the union regarding the process for reviewing the proposed changes in Board Policy. After employee committees finished their work on the proposed revisions, the administration retained control of the draft for eighteen months and finally dumped the final draft in laps of employees on January 11 with a deadline of only eight weeks for us to review and comment. The union's concern here was twofold. First, the review window was too short. Secondly, there are significant concerns about language in the policy. One area of concern is in regard to a section titled "Change in Contract Status" (see January/February 2007, p. 8 for details). The union suggested that the administration should consider delaying implementation to allow for a thorough review of proposed policy. We are glad to report that at the March 1, 2007 meeting of the board of Trustees, Dr. Pickelman acknowledged that serious concerns regarding the proposed revisions had been raised by the Senates and the AFT. Therefore he proposed delaying

the Board's first reading on the policy (they must have two readings before acting on it) to give everyone more time for adequate review.

The union is also pleased to report that our concern about the contract language in the proposed policy has been met with positive response from the administration.



The AFT has at least two additional concerns. One involves both faculty and staff. Several years ago, if a faculty or staff member had a perceived weakness, the District took a positive approach. The employee's supervisor was charged with meeting with the employee and agreeing on a corrective action plan. That plan needed to have measurable outcomes. In other words, the supervisor could not simply require the employee to "be better." Moreover, the supervisor was charged with actively participating with the employee to improve the perceived weakness. In other words, the supervisor bore some responsibility for the employee's improvement. Over time, new but more negative practices have been adopted. The proposed policy reflects this negative creep in its more adversarial climate regarding corrective action (see Sect. IV, F.11 in the proposed policy for language on corrective action). Both faculty and staff are harmed by this more negative climate.

Another concern of the AFT's is in regard to support staff. If a staff member wishes to appeal an evaluation or termination, the only appeal is an administrative review. An administrative review (Sect. IV, F.10.07 in the proposed policy) is:

the process by which an aggrieved employee requests that the second level supervisor reconsider a decision of the immediate supervisor that affects the employee, and that the employee believes to be unjust or inequitable. This process is available to all full- and part-time employees. This is the only review process available to contest the content of an evaluation, or the dismissal of a full- or part-time non-contractual employee.



This process provides only one level of appeal for a non-contractual employee.

If a faculty member wishes to file a grievance over evaluation or termination, he or she may also use the administrative review. However, if not satisfied, the faculty member may file a grievance with the LEO (Location Executive Officer) and also has the right of appeal all the way to the Board of Trustees.

Now, Texas is not a particularly friendly state regarding laws concerning employees. It is an "at will" state which means that all employees work at the will of their employers unless internal policies provide a contract with property rights which is the case with NHMCCD faculty and contract staff and administration. The District may not terminate contractual employees without cause. The AFT is not suggesting that the District create property rights for non-contractual employees, but why shouldn't those employees have the same due process rights as other employees? We continually hear that we are a family in the District. However, it appears that some of us are "more family" than others of us.

Certainly, state law does not require it, but the proposed policy provides the District with an opportunity to correct this inequity of due process.

Alan Hall

Load Issue

The AFT is looking into an issue that has come up regarding load at Cy-Fair College. In the Fall of 2006, a faculty member there was teaching a load which required overload pay. The member was recently informed that next year the same load will be required with no overload pay. There is, in fact, some confusion over load in a discipline profile describing the contact hours that constitute a full load.



However, the load for the Fall proposed by Cy-Fair has historically been paid as an overload at the four other colleges. It is only Cy-Fair that has proposed that the load be interpreted differently than at any other college in the District.

The union will continue to monitor this situation.

Staff

Social Security Information

The union recently received this update from our state affiliate, the Texas Federation of Teachers.

Social Security Fairness Update:

As of mid-March, the Social Security Fairness Act of 2007 (H.R. 82 by Berman) already had attracted the bipartisan co-sponsorship of 250 members of the U.S. House of Representatives, including 25 of the 32 members of the Texas delegation (including all 13 Democrats and 12 Republicans). The bill would repeal two unfair Social Security offsets that cost Texas school employees billions of dollars of earned benefits.

The only seven Texas House members who so far have failed to support Texas school employees by co-sponsoring this bill are: Republicans Joe Barton of Ennis, Kevin Brady of The Woodlands, John Culberson of Houston, Jeb Hensarling of Dallas, Sam Johnson of Plano, Lamar Smith of San Antonio, and Mac Thornberry of Clarendon.

The Senate companion bill (S. 206 by Feinstein) already had 21 bipartisan cosponsors as of mid-March. Neither Sen. Kay Bailey Hutchison nor Sen. John Cornyn of Texas (both Republicans) was among them.

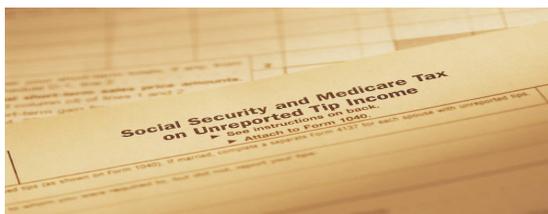
Repeal of the unfair offsets--the Government Pension Offset and Windfall Elimination Provision--is a top priority of both TFT and our national affiliate, the American Federation of Teachers. AFT has provided us with new ammunition for grass-roots lobbying in the form of a letter on the AFT Legislative Action Web site at



<http://www.unionvoice.org/campaign/WEPGPO031307>, on which all of our union's 1.3 million members nationwide are encouraged to send to their senators and representatives in Congress. The AFT letter notes that the offsets "apply only to public pensions not covered under Social Security (recipients of private pensions and other public pensions covered by Social Security are not subject to such penalties)" and "are unfair to individuals who have paid into Social Security (the WEP provision) or whose spouses have paid into Social Security (the GPO provision) by denying full Social Security benefits."

Opponents of the Fairness Act cite its potential cost, which would exceed \$60 billion over ten years. However, the federal government annually fails to collect more than \$300 billion in taxes due. Closing even a tiny fraction of that gap between taxes owed and taxes paid, through better enforcement, would fully cover the cost of the Social Security Fairness Act.

Editor's Note: Just one example of the government's failure to collect taxes was reported in the Tuesday, March 20, 2007 [Houston Chronicle](#):



Thousands of doctors and other health professionals who participate in Medicare are delinquent in paying federal income and payroll taxes, owing more than \$1.3 billion, but continue to get Medicare payments because the government does little to check their background, federal investigators said Monday. . . .

Medicare has no mechanism to prevent doctors who are delinquent on their taxes from receiving the payments, the report said Gregory Kutz, director of forensic audits and special investigations at the GAO



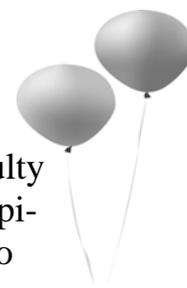
[Government Accountability Office] said, "more than 21,000 health care providers, mostly doctors, had tax debts totaling \$1.3 billion as of last Sept. 30."

District Excellence Winners

In the last edition of the Advocate we recognized this year's Faculty and Staff Excellence Winners. We inadvertently omitted the recipients at DSTC. We thank those employees who brought the fact to our attention and fervently apologize for the error. PG

The following employees are recipients of the Excellence Award at DSTC. The AFT congratulates them.

- **Marylou Amann - Instruction**
- **Natalie Haskell - Information Technology**
- **Patti Syring - Human Resources**





Campus Updates

NORTH HARRIS COLLEGE

It's been a busy month at the North Harris campus. The interim President, Dr. Steve Head, has made himself known on campus by way of landscape improvements and regular reports to faculty and staff about his goals for recruiting and public relations. The AFT has already worked cooperatively and productively with his administration in matters ranging from budgetary planning to personnel management. We are also proud to co-sponsor two productions of Professor Brian Barrows' wonderful one-man performance, "Who Was Martin Luther King Jr." We warmly thank our co-sponsors in this valuable endeavor: at the Parkway Center, the Student Activities Committee; and at North Harris College, the Office of the President.

Bruce Machart, AFT Faculty VP

KINGWOOD COLLEGE

The spring semester is moving rapidly along, and things are going smoothly at Kingwood. Laura Yates has assisted a few members on some minor issues, and we have welcomed several new members. Everyone at Kingwood is looking forward to hosting graduation on campus and praying for a bright sunny day on May 11th.

Rich Almstedt, AFT Faculty VP

MONTGOMERY COLLEGE

Again, we welcome several new members! The Staff VP, Cheri Riggs, has been busy working with members and supervisors. She's happy to report that the concerns were addressed and the situations have worked out well for everyone. The Faculty VP, Julie Alber, has been working with the administration about communication concerns. The administration is responding to these concerns, and plans are in the works for new approaches to communicating with faculty.

Julie Alber, AFT Faculty VP
Cheri Riggs, AFT Staff VP

No report this issue.

Robert McGehee AFT Faculty VP

TOMBALL COLLEGE

Ahoy Maties!

Port Spring Break has come and gone, and so far all is well and seaworthy. We docked the TCS Tomball for a few days to give those sea legs a break and the dockside crew the opportunity to scrub the old Bucket down and clean it up for our next port of call, Port Finals, located on the western shores of Education Island. Concerns about ship operations up to this point have been null with the exception of one Lieutenant's workload assignment pay. The concern centers around whether the Admiralty is talking about the total number of extra hours spent on watch duty or the number of stations (classes) one is assigned to watch during their tour of duty. This operational concern seems to coil itself up on deck each semester, and perhaps it is time to see how the other ships in the Admiral's Navy handle these issues.

I would like to point out that just prior to reaching Port Spring Break; Lieutenant Sherri Ryan White (formerly of TCS North Harris) took her training crew on an excursion to Port Blinn for the annual Below Decks Drama Competition. While there, the whole training crew was awarded medals for performing in a manner "Superior" and above the call of duty for their play, "The Dining Room" and best acting awards for the full cast. Three rounds of hip-hip-hooray for Lt. White.

So, until we next report, keep the decks clean, the water barrels full, the ropes tight, and may a fair wind keep the sails stiff on the Western Seas.

(TCS = The Chancellor's Ship)

Richard Becker, AFT Faculty VP



2700 W. W. Thorne Dr.
Suite A217



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 articles to **Pat Gray, Editor**, NHC, ext. 5545 or e-mail: patsy.gray@nhmccd.edu, or **Heather Mitchell, Assistant Editor**, CFC, ext. 3254, or e-mail: heather.mitchell@nhmccd.edu or submit to any of the other following officers:

Alan Hall, President	North Harris College	ACAD 217-G	ext.5544
Velma Trammell	North Harris College	DTEC 101	ext. 5612
Bruce Machart	North Harris College	ACAD 217-A	ext. 5542
Bob Locander	North Harris College	ACAD 270	ext. 5592
Allen Vogt	North Harris College	ACAD 264-C	ext. 5583
Vivian Brecher	North Harris College	LIBR 114	ext. 5403
Rich Almstedt	Kingwood College	FTC 100-G	ext. 1656
Laura Yates	Kingwood College	SFA 113-D	ext. 1414
Catherine Olson	Tomball College	S - 153 - H	ext. 3776
Richard Becker	Tomball College	E-271-D	ext. 1835
Julie Alber	Montgomery College	SSC 205-A	ext. 7241
Cheri Riggs	Montgomery College	C 100-C	ext. 7370
Robert McGehee	Cy-Fair College	ART 113-H	ext. 3935

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 say that 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