



# The Advocate

## LSCS Ranks with the Best in "Great Colleges to Work For"



Last summer The Chronicle for Higher Education surveyed nearly 41,000 administrators and staff at 247 institutions of higher learning, including four-year colleges and universities and community colleges. The institutions were organized in groups according to enrollment, and then judged in 15 different categories such as collaborative governance, compensation and benefits, work/life balance, internal communications.

Our very own LSCS was recognized in three of these categories among community colleges in the United States with student enrollments over 10,000: Professional/Career Development Programs, Facilities, Security and Workplace, and Supervisor/Department Chair Relationship.

The Atascocita Observer reported:  
 "As part of the category-specific best prac-

*tices, LSCS was noted for giving employees 'the opportunity to develop skills and understand requirements to advance in their careers' along with its supervisors 'making expectations clear and soliciting ideas.' LSCS also 'takes steps to provide a secure environment' while 'the appearance of the campus is pleasing.'"*  
 (Observer, 07.08.09)

The quality of LSCS has been known to thousands of us, both student and employee, for many years. The decades-long loyalty of faculty, staff, and administration and the ever increasing enrollment of the student body within our system are testimonies to the quality we all strive to attain with each passing year. Kudos, friends and colleagues, from The Chronicle of Higher Education and the AFT. Recognition for hard work is wonderful.

For the full list and all the rankings, go to:  
<http://chroniclegreatcolleges.com>

I think most of you will be interested in the full listing of categories.



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## Celebration of a Life in Education

The August 6, 2009 Board of Trustees meeting offered those of us in attendance a rare treat. Wayne Hemingway, adjunct math professor at Tomball College, was introduced and recognized for celebration of his 90<sup>th</sup> birthday. Hemingway, recently featured in an article in the Houston Chronicle article, has had a long career in education which includes serving as superintendent for a private school and teaching math and science for 66 years. After the Board recognized and thanked him for his service, Hemingway spoke briefly, offering a few tidbits of wisdom. Dr. Susan Karr, President of Tomball College, then presented him with a resolution offered by Representative Debbie Riddle, Distr.

150, and passed by the Texas Legislature honoring Hemingway on his birthday.

Lone Star College speaks often about embracing lifelong learning. It was heartwarming to see such recognition also offered to lifelong teaching. It is worth noting that no one on the Board was more enthusiastic about this presentation than Dr. Richard Campbell, who has had several conversations with the AFT about his personally embracing these same values. Congratulations, Professor Hemingway.

Alan Hall



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## Reflections on “Teaching for a Change”

Glenda Williams and I travelled to Flagstaff, Arizona for the Teaching for a Change conference. This is the third year I’ve attended, and as I tell people, this is the only conference that has caused me to laugh and cry. It focuses on involving students in the classroom and stimulating change through what we teach. It is not discipline specific, but oriented towards teaching in general.

The conference began with a presentation by Sharon Bowman, Teaching from the Back of the Room. She focused upon ways to involve students through interaction, movement, music, student relevance, and collaboration. We were active and involved, and the time passed quickly. She recommended two books: Training from the BACK of the Room! 65 Ways to Step Aside and Let Them Learn (Sharon Bowman), and Brain Rules by John Medina. Both books focus on the application of teaching principles based on current brain research.

I also attended a session on Respecting All Voices: Campus Climate and the GLBTQ College Student presented by a dean and an adjunct faculty member from Richland College in Dallas. Only three of us showed up for this session, a fact which didn’t surprise me. The focus was on diversity and minorities and the need for a “human safe-zone” where “minority” students feel safe and respected. They pointed out that a GLBT suicide occurs every five hours. Fifty percent of transgendered individuals have been homeless. Sexual minorities are four times more likely to be victimized than other minorities. I feel the need for a “safe space” is important in that it communicates understanding and caring.

On Tuesday our Keynote Session was presented by Jake Norton, who has climbed Mount Everest six times (not all climbs were successful) and has turned his mountaineering experiences into a motivational presentation entitled Getting FITT: Climb Your Everest and Enjoy the Journey. In 1999, he was a member of the party who discovered the body of George Mallory, who had disappeared on Mt. Everest in 1924. He showed a very moving video of the discovery. His FITT model involves facing the Fear, following your Instincts, the use of Teamwork, and Tenacity to reach one’s goals. We could all identify with this quest, as can our students. Passion towards what we do helps us to weather the storms that we face in our jobs and in our lives. He also pointed out that it isn’t reaching the goal that brings satisfaction, but overcoming the obstacles encountered on the journey.

Earlier, the president of Northern Illinois University (Dr. John Haeger) talked with us about the current economic

challenges he was facing. He stated that he wouldn’t accept a raise until he could bring one to all faculty and staff at the university. With respect to those budget challenges, he stated that “we will have faculty in the classroom to meet the needs of students. Everything else is on the table.” He received a standing ovation from those attending the conference.

In another presentation on diversity, I was given some interesting information. 100 years ago the blonde, blue-eyed individuals made up 14% of the world population. Today they make up 3%. The “minority” at LSC-North Harris is those of us who have been at the college for 25-35 years. Interesting to think about. Also, the speaker pointed out that “race” is not genetic; there is no “race” gene. Race is not tangible or measurable. At most, all humans differ genetically by .1% of their DNA. It reminded me again that we are all human and journeying along the same path. As one of my students once said in a paper, “We all bleed red.”

The overall theme of the conference was summed up by Gillaume Apollinaire who stated:

*“Come to the edge,” he said.*

*They said, “We are Afraid.”*

*“Come to the edge,” he said.*

*They came. He pushed them...*

*And they flew.”*

This is a wonderful metaphor describing the possibilities that lie within the classroom. I felt fortunate to be teaching and to have the opportunity to push students to achieve goals they didn’t believe possible.

If you’re looking for a worthwhile conference relevant to teaching and education, I highly recommend this organization. I always bring back some valuable tools and a feeling of revitalization for being in the classroom, which to those of us in the teaching field, is the place to be.



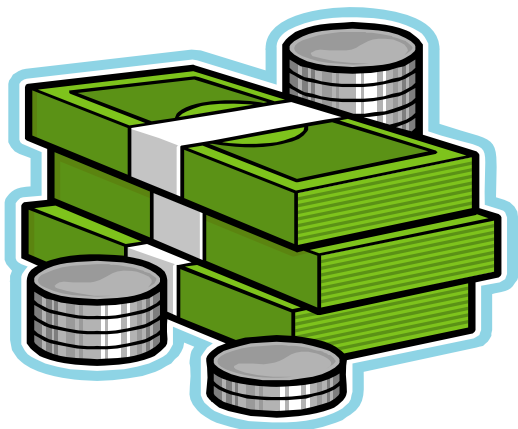
Don Stanley  
Professor of Psychology, LS-NH



## Salaries

At the August 6, 2009 Board of Trustees meeting, Vice Chancellor Cindy Gilliam's presentation on the 09/10 budget included an announcement of a 4% raise for LSCS employees. At the Fall Convocation, Dr. Richard Carpenter elaborated on salary adjustments beyond the 4% which include a one-time award to staff employees completing a degree. The stipend of \$500 is awarded for each degree earned while working full-time and is retroactive for qualified employees who have already completed degrees. The AFT is gratified to see the college celebrate the value of lifelong learning in a meaningful, tangible way. Additionally, adjunct music professors' pay increased 14% due to market competition. Part-time advisors have been being paid \$14.20/hour. This year, some of their salaries were adjusted based on education:

Associate's—No change  
 Bachelor's—\$15.75/hour  
 Master's— \$19.20/hour  
 Phd—\$22.05/hour



Some of the best news regarding salary adjustments is an increase of 18 to 21% for our police officers, also based on a competitive market. Our police officers have been paid under the local market for quite some time. This adjustment is long overdue and deserved. Congratulations to Richard Gregory and his officers.

All other employees who have not topped out in their pay categories received 4% with a \$1,200 minimum.

The union has always supported a minimum when a percentage increase is given. Percentage increases result in significant gains for upper administration but do not offer much help to low-end salaries. A minimum helps with that problem. The \$1,200 minimum was also given as a one-time stipend to employees who have reached the top of their pay category.



In this economy, 4% is a good raise. Notably, this is the first time in recent memory that the AFT can call the increase a raise. Previous increases have typically been Cost of Living Adjustments (COLAS). Such an adjustment merely keeps employees even with inflation rather than actually increasing purchasing power. With an inflation rate of -.6%, 4% puts us 4.4% ahead of 08/09 and finally makes employees .4% ahead of inflation after losing ground in 2003/04 when the college only offered a one-time stipend when inflation was 4%.

With this raise, most college employees' economic well-being is at last heading in the right direction. However, there are issues remaining. Two years ago (2007/08), the Board addressed the needs of the upper administration by adjusting the salary for their positions by 14 – 29%. At that time, I pointed out to Dr. Carpenter that employee morale certainly would be affected when the rest of us only received 5%. He acknowledged the concern and committed to addressing it the next year. However, last year (08/09), the Board only made a significant adjustment to entry level faculty salaries, again based on competitive market. The remainder of employees received 4%. When Dr. Carpenter and I discussed this scenario and his previous commitment, he used a chess analogy, saying, "You can't move all the chess pieces at one time." He committed to addressing this year the problem of the remaining employees who did not experience the significant increases enjoyed by upper administration and new faculty in the last two years. That commitment was not kept in the current salary adjustment. Other chess pieces were moved instead. The AFT recognizes the value of moving those particular pieces, However, those employees who for three years now have not experienced a significant adjustment should not remain evermore pawns in the game.

Alan Hall



## Contract Confusion

The delivery of the 2009/10 contract caused quite the reaction among many faculty members across the system. Allegedly rewritten to provide better clarity, the new language was perceived by many faculty as not employee friendly and, in fact, threatening. Concerns expressed to the AFT included what appeared to be contradictory language between the contract and Board Policy. Many faculty were concerned that the term "Multi-year" was removed from the new contract. The administration responded that the new contract is a two-year contract just like previous years and is, therefore, still a multi-year contract. One wonders, then, why the language was changed if there is no change in the term of the contract. It is pretty obvious that the administrative change did not contribute to clarity.



The addition of "*Employee . . . agrees not to engage in any enterprise or activity that may, in the judgment of the System, interfere with the performance of duties to the System, and agrees to act otherwise in the accordance with the mission of the System*" seemed vague and potentially hostile and threatening to many faculty, and they wondered why it was added and if it offered some new threat to their rights and privileges. For a full picture of the concerns that were brought to us, you may read the Administrative Appeal /Grievance on the homepage of our website: [www.aftlonestar.org](http://www.aftlonestar.org)

Informally, administrators were saying that the contract language had not been changed in 18 years. Further, they insisted that the new language in no way diminished faculty rights and privileges. However, in the last two years the administration has with some consistency rolled out new proposed policies, new online programs, a new type of faculty position (70% Adjunct), and other often controversial items with no discussion with faculty leaders in the senates and the union. Each time we would get a promise of better communication in the future, but it would happen again. Against that background, faculty all across the system were alarmed to see this new contract language simply appear with no warning, no explanation, nothing. It is no wonder that the lan-

guage would cause them concern that their rights and privileges might be impacted.

On Friday, September 11, 2009, the AFT filed for an Administrative Review/Grievance to secure clarification on the new contract language. We are happy to report that we received the clarification we sought via a response from outside system counsel Lisa McBride. Her response addressed each concern the AFT raised regarding the relationship between the new contract language and policy. She offers assurances that the new language does not pose a threat because Board Policy has not changed. The protections policy affords are still in place.

The legal opinion from outside counsel was the clarification the union was seeking. Contract language and its effect on faculty are too important to rely on an "All is well" tied to a verbal promise or a wink and a nod. The union wanted, on behalf of all faculty, assurances that are more substantial. The college attorney's written opinion achieved our goal.

At a forum on September 24, 2009 at North Harris, Dr. Carpenter brought up the contract controversy. He indicated that he had wanted some additional language in this year's contract to provide better tracking of MOAs (Memorandum of Assignment). He asked Brian Nelson and Rand Key to work on the language. Dr. Carpenter pointed out that when one asks lawyers to work on language they sometimes go further than one requests of them. He indicated that he reviewed the new contract language "along with a hundred other documents that day" and looked specifically only at the MOA language he had requested. He indicated that, in hindsight, it would have been helpful to have communicated in advance regarding language changes. He went on record to say that the Board will continue to review and renew contracts annually, that rolling contracts will not end.

Employees have heard accusations that the AFT was trying to alarm faculty and was spreading misinformation. In fact, we were responding to an outcry from faculty---AFT and not---across the system. Let's be sure to understand that the AFT's goal in this process was clarification. We followed a process provided by policy. Curiously, the administration has even criticized us for using this policy, saying that all we had to do was ask for clarification. Again, we sought substantive clarification, not a wink and a nod, and we secured it from both legal counsel and the chancellor.



## Contracting out

Kingwood College recently followed North Harris College's lead by contracting out their food service operation. The AFT's position has always been that the LSCS should utilize our own employees rather than contract out. In instances where contracting out does occur, the union has urged the administration to find positions for affected employees within the college system. When the system Help Desk was contracted out, Dr. Carpenter worked hard to make sure all Help Desk employees who wanted to remain employed with the system found positions internally, an effort the union was careful to recognize and applaud.

We are happy to report that Kingwood has followed Dr. Carpenter's lead and not North Harris's on this point. All Kingwood food service employees have been placed in other college positions.

The union believes in giving credit where it is due. This attention by Kingwood to its affected employees is admirable. Of the three instances of contracting out, the system Help Desk and Kingwood administration recognized the value of college employees.

Alan Hall

## Representation Rights

For years, very few grievances have been filed in the college system. This low number is due, in part, to the fact that the AFT has provided representation to solve problems at the lowest possible level of employee and supervisor. Although Board Policy does not require it, historically the administration has encouraged supervisors to allow representation in an informal setting as an effective means of problem solving and conflict resolution. Policy does not prohibit a supervisor from allowing a representative in an informal situation.

Board Policy specifically allows representation when an employee has filed an administrative review or grievance. The language is as follows:

F.10.06 – Representation. *An employee filing an administrative*

*complaint or grievance, or an employee who is the subject of a complaint may be assisted by a person or organization of his or her choice.*

A supervisor may, therefore, deny representation in a conflict or problem when a formal complaint has not been filed. Such a denial creates a more hostile situation, and it is the AFT's desire to solve problems as amicably and cooperatively as possible. We encourage supervisors to take advantage of informal resolution, generally through guided conversation among the principals, to avoid the need for the more formal grievance approach. The AFT is willing to, and fully capable of, filing grievances, but our goal is not to be filing grievances against supervisors. The approach we take is often determined by supervisors.

# AFT Fall Celebration

Everyone is invited to celebrate the beginning of another successful semester with good friends and good food. A fajita plate and one beverage will be provided.

**Hope to see you there!**



**DATE:** October 16, 2009

**TIME:** 4:00-7:00pm

**LOCATION:** La Cabana Restaurant & Cantina

3390 FM 1960W Humble, TX. 281-209-1585

(Approximately 1/2 mile East of Aldine-Westfield)



### Notes from the Editor:

- 1) There are no VP reports this issue due to time limitations.
- 2) You may have noticed some changes in the format of The Advocate. These changes are the result of administrative limitations by which we must abide.

**We hope you enjoy the issue and find it worthwhile. PG**



# AFT-Lone Star College

## GOALS

- To promote academic excellence
- To protect academic freedom in higher education
- To preserve and protect the integrity and unique identity of each of the institutions of higher education in Texas
- To protect the dignity and rights of faculty against discrimination
- To ensure that faculty have an effective voice on all matters pertaining to their welfare
- To secure for all members the rights to which they are entitled
- To raise the standards of the profession by establishing professional working conditions
- To encourage democratization of higher education
- To promote the welfare of the citizens of Texas by providing better educational opportunities for all
- To initiate and support state legislation which will benefit the students and faculty of Texas
- To promote and assist the formation and growth of Texas United Faculty chapters throughout Texas
- To maintain and promote the aims of the American Federation of Texas and other affiliated labor bodies



## BENEFITS

- \$8,000,000 Occupational Liability Insurance
  - provides security while teaching
  - protection against litigation
  - malpractice protection
- \$25,000 Accidental Death Insurance
- Legal Assistance
  - Free consultation and representation on grievances and job related problems
  - Services of leading labor attorneys
  - Legal Defense Fund protection
- Political Power
  - Texas AFT lobbyists in Austin
  - AFT lobbyists in Washington
  - Representation at the Coordinating Board
  - Support for local electoral work
- Affiliations
  - Affiliated with the Texas AFL-CIO
  - Affiliated with the American Federation of Teachers and Texas AFT
- Staff Services
  - Professional representatives to assist and advise in processing grievances
  - AFT research facilities
  - Leadership Training
- Savings and discounts on goods and services with AFT PLUS Benefits
- Free \$12,000 term life insurance policy for first year of membership

Professional career protection  
and a united voice at work.

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[www.aftlonestar.org](http://www.aftlonestar.org)

# American Federation of Teachers -Lone Star College Membership Application

AFT-Lone Star College is an affiliate of the American Federation of Teachers and the Texas AFT and accepts membership from all non-supervisory employees of the LoneStar College System. Indicate below whether you are a new member or a current member wishing to update your contact information. Membership with AFT-Lone Star College provides each member with an \$8 million Professional Occupational Liability coverage policy, legal defense coverage and access to representation for work-related issues. In addition, AFT-Lone Star College members are entitled to special savings and discounts through our AFT PLUS benefits program. **If you have questions about joining, please call AFT- Lone Star College President, Alan Hall @ 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



A Union of Professionals

**Monthly Membership Dues rates:**  
*Based on your position with the LoneStar College System, please select your appropriate dues rate.*

Full-time Faculty \$31.30/mo. or \$373.60/yr.

Full-time Professional Staff \$26.75/mo. or \$320.50/y.r

Full-time Support Staff \$23.15/mo. or \$277.30/yr.

Adjunct Faculty \$11.25/mo. or \$134.50/yr.

Part-time Staff \$11.25/mo. or \$134.50/yr.



A Union of Professionals

**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 in one payment. Exceptions to the rule apply for Part-time Staff and Adjunct Faculty only.

<b>First Name:</b>	<input type="text"/>	<b>Middle Initial:</b>	<input type="text"/>	<b>Last Name:</b>	<input type="text"/>
<b>Home Address:</b>	<input type="text"/>				
<b>City:</b>	<input type="text"/>	<b>State:</b>	<input type="text"/>	<b>Zip code:</b>	<input type="text"/>
<b>Home Phone:</b>	<input type="text"/>	<b>Email Address:</b>	<input type="text"/>		
<b>Employee ID #:</b>	<input type="text"/>	<b>Campus:</b>	<input type="text"/>		
<b>Position:</b>	<input type="text"/>	<b>Room #:</b>	<input type="text"/>	<b>Referred by:</b>	<input type="text"/>
<b>I am paid:</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Bi-weekly <input type="checkbox"/> Semi-monthly		<b>Paid over:</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> 9 months <input type="checkbox"/> 9.5 months <input type="checkbox"/> 12 months	
<b>Are you a current or new member?</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Current member <i>(Updating information and/or payment method)</i>			<input type="checkbox"/> New Member	
<b>Choose method of payment:</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Payroll Deduction <i>(Complete the union dues agreement below)</i>		<input type="checkbox"/> Cash/Check <i>(Make full yearly payment payable to AFT-LSC)</i>		

## Union Dues Deduction Agreement

"I hereby authorize Lone Star College System to deduct each pay period an amount equal to the dues in the amounts fixed in accordance with the Bylaws of AFT including any increase in dues in future years and pay same to said Union in accordance with the terms of the agreement between Lone Star College System and American Federation of Teachers. This agreement will remain in effect until Lone Star College System receives a written notice of cancellation from me, AFT or at the time of my termination, whichever occurs first. This authorization is subject to sufficient wages being available to comply with all other required deductions and existing federal and state laws."

**Signature:** *(Print this form and sign here)* \_\_\_\_\_

**Date** \_\_\_\_\_

[Click here to print form](#)

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

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



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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 articles to **Pat Gray, Editor**, NHC, ext. 5545 or e-mail: [patsy.gray@lonestar.edu](mailto:patsy.gray@lonestar.edu), or submit to any of the other following officers:

Alan Hall, President	North Harris College	ACAD 217-G	ext.5544
Linda Dirzanowski	North Harris College	WNSP 180	ext. 7760
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
Magali Reyes	North Harris College	CEI02	ext. 3157
Rich Almstedt	Kingwood College	FTC 100-G	ext. 1656
Laura Codner	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	E 205- E	ext. 7241
Cheri Barlow	Montgomery College	C 100-C	ext. 7370
John Burghduff	Cy-Fair College	HSC 117R	ext. 3915
Brenda Rivera	Fairbanks Center	119	ext. 5068
Earl Brewer	Fairbanks Center	S-13	ext. 5029
Deidre Darnell	Greenspoint Center	109-A	ext. 3506

**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

