



The Advocate

**We Care.
We Show Up.
We Advocate Together.**
AFT-Lone Star College



Whether you have been at LSC for a long time or are just beginning your career, joining AFT-Lone Star is the best way to ensure your voice at work on issues that matter to you.

Our Union has a solid history of going to bat for our members when they need help, and speaking up on issues that concern our members system-wide.

- ☒ If you believe faculty and staff should have a voice in educational issues, you should join.
- ☒ If you believe employees should have a voice in the political process, you should join.
- ☒ If you believe in the value of employees helping out each other, you should join.
- ☒ If you believe employees should be treated with dignity, fairness, and respect, you should join.

Joining AFT-Lone Star is the best thing you can do to ensure that you have a voice on work-related issues that matter to you!

Your dues help support these values.

Membership should not be thought of as only for "protection," but if you need help in a conflict, we will be there for you.

Don't join because you think you might get into trouble, join because you embrace the values we embrace.

**Join AFT-Lone Star
TODAY!**

<http://join.aft.org>

More details on membership benefits and how to join are on pages 2-3



Inside this issue:

Be a Part of AFT-Lone Star	1
AFT-Lone Star Benefits	2
How to Join the AFT	3
Texas AFT "March to the Capitol" event info	4
What Does AFT Do for Students?	5-8
Transgender Awareness	8-10
Living as Charlie Brown in a Lucy World	10-11
Tales from the Unionside	11-12
AFT PLUS Savings and discounts	13-15
AFT Officers	16

Join Today!

<https://join.aft.org>



We're on theWeb!

www.aftlonestar.org

E-mail:

aftlonestar@yahoo.com

**AFT-Lone Star invites you to our
SPRING 2019 Celebration
at Pappasito's Cantina**

Friday May 3rd from 4:00 –7:00pm!

Come celebrate the warmer weather – enjoy your union colleagues, meet some new friends, relax and catch up. Legendary Tex-Mex food & a beverage will be provided. Please bring a colleague with you!

Pappasito's Cantina

7050 FM 1960 West, Houston, TX 77069

(near Willowbrook Mall, east of 249)

281-893-5030

**Join AFT Lone Star
Call: 281-889-1009**



AFT-Lone Star College

AFT Local Union # 4518

GOALS

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

Membership provides
professional career
protection and a united
voice at work.

Join us today!

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 \$5,000 term life insurance policy for first year of membership

Monthly AFT Dues

Full-time Faculty	\$42.50
Full-time Professional Staff	\$31.10
Full-time Support Staff	\$28.38
Adjunct Faculty	\$16.50
Part-time Staff	\$16.50

Membership Eligibility

Membership in the American Federation of Teachers (AFT) is open to full-time 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 the back of this newsletter, or check out our online information and application at:

www.aftlonestar.org



American Federation of Teachers

Lone Star College



Directions: How to Join the AFT

AFT-Lone Star has a new online form that makes it easy for new members to join or for current members to switch to our new system.

Here's the best way to sign up:

1. Go to <https://join.aft.org>. From the pull-down menu in the box under "FIND A LOCAL," choose "Texas." Click "search" and then scroll down to find "AFT Lone Star College, Local 4518."
2. Fill out the form that appears; you're asked to provide your name, address and so on. Toward the bottom of the page, a question asks, "Are you an AFT member transitioning from payroll deduction to e-bank transfer system?" Check "yes" if you have previously been a member and are transitioning to the new payment system.
3. You're then asked to identify your membership category: Full-time faculty, Full-time professional staff, etc.
4. You're then asked to provide your bank name, routing number and account number, check boxes authorizing the semi-monthly deductions for dues, and type your name. Then, press "SUBMIT." **YOU'RE DONE!** (in minutes!)

Our new system:

- Is PCI Level I Compliant and adheres to all payment card industry standards and best practices for the utmost security.
- Includes multiple secure layers of hardware, software and processes to ensure safety & security of valuable information.
- Uses industry-leading firewall technology and software. All critical customer data is transmitted and stored using high-grade encryption, and its leading technology monitors data 24/7 from multiple sources, ensuring protection against security breaches and reducing vulnerability.

JOIN AFT - LONE STAR TODAY!



<https://join.aft.org>



Contact us at aftlonestar@yahoo.com or visit our webpage: www.aftlonestar.org



If you are interested in membership, benefits, or would like to discuss a work-related issue, our AFT Faculty and Staff Vice-Presidents are here to assist. Please don't hesitate to contact them. See the back page of this publication for contact information.



MARCH TO THE CAPITOL

MONDAY, MARCH 11, 2019

TEXAS STATE CAPITOL BUILDING

1100 CONGRESS AVENUE - AUSTIN, TX

RALLY FOR PUBLIC EDUCATION

12:00 P.M. - SOUTH STEPS OF CAPITOL

Speak with your elected state lawmakers and demand they support our public schools and community colleges. Now is the time to speak out and stand together for Texas students. Attend the largest education rally in Texas on March 11, 2019

REGISTER AT

www.tinyurl.com/aftlonestar-capitolmarch-2019

Ride a free chartered bus to Austin with AFT-Lone Star to attend the largest education rally in Texas!



A Union of Professionals

Texas AFT



TexasAFT

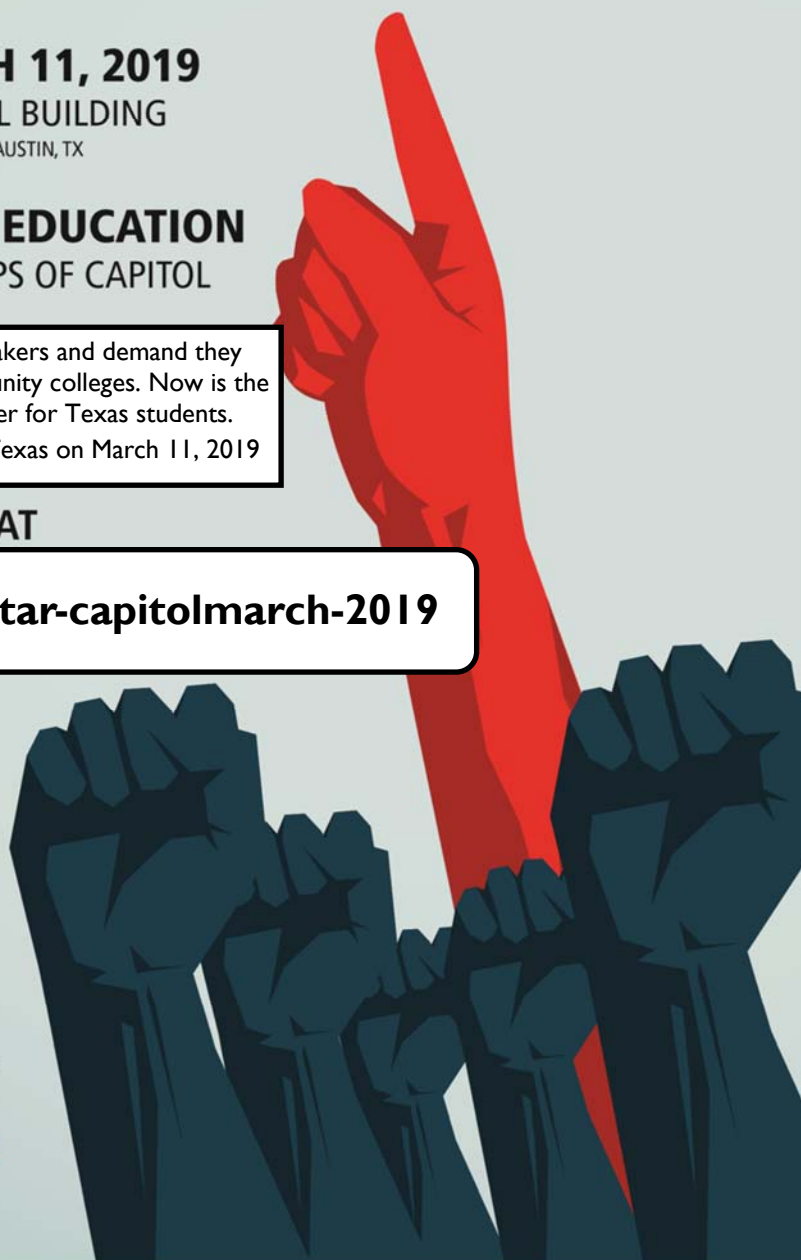


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What Does AFT Do for Students?

When you think about AFT-Lone Star College, you think about the positive value it brings to Lone Star employees. The union provides a unified voice to advocate for improvements in pay, due process, and working conditions both within the institution and at the state and national level. The union helps employees when they encounter a tough situation at work, including a conflict with a supervisor. The union provides a supportive fellowship that is open to all employees—faculty and staff, full-time and part-time.

What you might not think about is what the union does to help our students. Wait! AFT-Lone Star helps students? Absolutely!

Indirectly, it makes sense that when faculty and staff feel safe and respected in their employment, they will feel more free to give of themselves to students, which will have a positive effect on learning, retention and all other measures of success. The people who work most directly with students know what the real issues are—in the classrooms, in the library, in the cafeteria, in the student service offices, out on campus facilities, and everywhere else. If these people have a strong voice in leading the decision-making processes in the college, the students will get better service. These assertions are both common sense and supported by scholarly research, and these are the values that the AFT promotes.

However, in addition, AFT-Lone Star College currently has specific programs and historically has supported specific initiatives that benefit our students in direct and concrete ways. Did you know that? We have tended to do these things quietly and behind the scenes, but we think you need to know. So let us tell you about it!

In this article, we first list some of those specific activities that AFT-Lone Star College has done and continues to do that directly affect and benefit Lone

Star students. Second, we focus on activities and events that affect both employees and students. Third, we talk about specific ways in which the union provides resources to college employees that have an immediate positive pass-through impact on students. It might be a good dissertation topic for someone, someday, to quantify the impact that union programs for students have in helping them meet their goals. In the meantime, there has been research at the national and international level that shows that unions affect student learning in a positive way. The fourth thing we do in this article is share some of these results to help you see that supporting your union is a good thing because we help students succeed.

AFT activities directly affecting and benefitting students

AFT was approached a couple of years ago about a retreat planned for a group of students who had never been out of the city. After the sponsors had everything arranged, they were told that there was not enough money to fund transportation. The sponsors asked if AFT could help fund the transportation, and we provided \$500 to cover all the transportation cost.



In 2016, AFT created an endowed scholarship for students through the Foundation. Established in the name of AFT-Lone Star College, the scholarship provides the recipient \$1,000 annually. So far, two students have received the scholarship. The \$1,000 annually will continue through perpetuity.

We have lobbied for equal rights for transgender students. We have written articles in *The Advocate* and spoken to the Board of Trustees regarding college policy, and policy is now in place.

AFT activities directly affecting and benefitting employees and students

In the mid 1980s, we worked with the Texas AFT to bring Lt. Governor Bill Hobby to North Harris to receive AFT's award for his support for higher



education in Texas. We approached the administration about inviting him and were told that the consortium of community college presidents in the Gulf Coast had been trying to get the Lt. Governor to come to any community college in the area and had not been successful. Three days later, we notified the administration that Hobby would be coming. We were asked if the union could arrange a lunch with the college's administration. The union made the arrangements. It was a spirited lunch, followed by a ceremony honoring Hobby. The house was full of faculty, staff, administrators, and students. We all benefited from that experience.

A couple of year later, the union brought State Senator Carl Parker to North Harris to receive AFT's award for support for higher education in Texas. The event also involved a lunch with the administration that we organized and another exciting ceremony honoring Senator Parker.

About fifteen years ago, we were asked about contributing funds to support a visit to LSC-North Harris by Lech Walesa (former leader of the Solidarity movement in Poland and later President of Poland). We did so and are proud to have been a part of bringing such a magnificent event to the college. Students and employees benefitted greatly in attending.

A major issue for students and part-time employees has long been health insurance. Two years ago, AFT LSC offered clinics on several of LSC's campuses about the Affordable Care Act. These presentations were well attended and showed employees a path to get decent health care.

Last semester, Cy-Fair College employees wanted to host a presentation by a history professor discussing immigration in the 1930s. Unfortunately, the college did not have the budget to pay for the presentation, and AFT-Lone Star was asked by a Cy-Fair faculty member to help with the cost. We provided \$500 and wound up being a co-sponsor with Mario Castillo, General Counsel for LSC. If you doubt us, take a look at the program. There are two sponsors recognized on it. The program was informative and received compliments from employees and students.

AFT activities directly affecting and benefitting employees by freeing them from worries (allowing them to serve students better)

In 2012, AFT-Lone Star College offered seminars on civil rights in the work place. We have a good friend in Joe Bontke, an EEOC employee who makes these presentations. Witty, insightful, and full of pertinent knowledge, Joe brought the house down at every presentation across the college system.

At about the same time that we offered clinics on the Affordable Care Act, the AFT offered student debt clinics for college employees. After the presentations, employees gathered around our presenters, thanking them for the information on how to reduce their student debt. In one presentation, we had a married couple who had \$100,000 each in student debt. Their gratitude was immeasurable.

Last year, AFT contributed several thousand dollars in partnership with the Texas AFT to college employees who are AFT members to assist with damage and stress from Hurricane Harvey. We would make contact with the affected members offering this assistance, and we were always close to tears as we listened to their stories and they offered their gratitude for our being there to help them after that devastating event.

Initially, Lone Star College did not have a link on the college system website to offer assistance to adjuncts who were affected by Harvey. AFT questioned the lack of support, and the college created a link. Immediately, AFT contributed \$1,000 to assist adjunct faculty, regardless of AFT affiliation, with the damage and stress from Hurricane Harvey. Once again, the adjuncts' gratitude was profound.

The Texas AFL-CIO annually offers college scholarships to college-bound children of union members. For a number of years, AFT-Lone Star has provided our members with information on applying for these scholarships.

Research on the Impact of Unions on Student Success

In the September-October and November-December 2015 editions of *The Advocate*, we published two articles on the impact of collective bargaining on school employees, the community, and students.¹ Because there are so many variables at play, it is always difficult to draw a causal relationship between any particular program or institution and the success of students. It is clear that the programs we've out-



lined so far provide concrete benefits to students, and we would strongly conjecture that those programs encourage them to persist in college and excel in their classes. Like we said before, this could be a good dissertation. There is also little in the literature studying the direct impact of unions on college students across the country. Data is more plentiful for K-12 education, where there is solid evidence that the types of activities and support that AFT-Lone Star provides do impact student learning in substantial, positive ways. Some of this research can be found in the previous articles we've published and some is new.

First, readily available data easily refutes negative claims about unions and student performance. It is a mantra among anti-union advocates that teachers' unions are the primary cause of poor student performance in U.S. schools. This premise is easy to test. In the U.S., there are states where teachers have strong collective bargaining rights, states where collective bargaining is weak, and states (like Texas) where collective bargaining is forbidden. If anti-union claims are correct, we should see significantly better student performance on standard measures in states where unions are banned or restricted versus states where unions are active.

In fact, the reverse is true.

Matthew Di Carlo, senior fellow at the Albert Shanker institute, examined state average scores on the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP). He identified ten states in which collective bargaining is either banned or restricted. He wrote, "out of [these] ten states only one (Virginia) has an average rank above the median, while four are in the bottom ten and seven in the bottom fifteen. . . . [States] without binding teacher contracts are not doing better, and the majority are among the lowest performers in the nation."²

There are five states in which collective bargaining for teachers is expressly banned. Based on a composite of SAT/ACT rankings, those states rank as follows based on 2007 scores:

Virginia, 25th
 Georgia, 26th
 South Carolina, 39th
 Texas, 45th
 North Carolina, 47th

This is not the stunning success we would expect to see in non-union states if anti-union advocates were correct. In contrast, Wisconsin, where collective bargaining rights for teachers were well protected in 2007, ranked 2nd.³

Wisconsin, in particular, is a crucial case study. Although Wisconsin public schools were performing near the top of the nation at the time, former Governor Scott Walker was militantly opposed to collective bargain rights for teachers. In 2011, the Wisconsin Legislature passed Act 10, which drastically limits the rights of state employees, including public school teachers, to bargain collectively. In a 2017 article, E. Jason Baron compared student scores on standardized tests prior to Act 10 going into effect and after and found that test scores fell dramatically in schools that were already low-performing. Although high-performing schools were more resilient, showing no measurable decrease in scores, student performance did not increase either.⁴

Public schools in California have been largely unionized since the 1960s and 1970s, and data does not exist prior to that to explore the impact of unionization on student success in that state. However, between 2003 and 2013, approximately one quarter of all charter schools in California have become unionized, allowing researchers to compare scores on the California Standards Test before and after those schools instituted union rights. They reported in a 2018 study that student scores on the English portion of CST increased some but that scores on the math portion increased by an amount that is statistically significant after teachers' unions became established. Positive effects were more pronounced among low-performing students and in smaller school districts.⁵

Looking beyond the boundaries of our own country, if anti-union claims are correct, we should see poorer student performance in countries where collective bargaining is strong. In Finland, which is consistently ranked near the top on most international measures of student success, 95% of teachers are unionized. According to Pasi Sahlberg, a director at the Finnish Ministry of Education and Culture, "Without the union, we really cannot implement anything. . . . It's a very important part of the system."²

Although data clearly refutes the allegation that



strong unions stand in the way of student success, drawing strong causal relationships between collective bargaining and high student performance is more challenging. Professor Robert M. Carini, a researcher at Indiana University, Bloomington, conducted a longitudinal review of 17 prominent studies and was able to reach the following statistically significant conclusions:

- 1) Unionism can be directly linked to higher overall achievement for most students in public schools.
- 2) Students in schools with collective bargaining agreements perform higher on math and verbal standardized tests.
- 3) Unionism is likely linked to higher high-school graduation rates

Professor Carini summarizes, “The overall pattern in the research is increasingly clear; teacher unionism favorably influences achievement for most students in public schools.” He includes the following recommendations in his paper:

- “Policy makers should view teacher unions more as collaborators than as adversaries.”
- “Policy makers and school districts should reconsider current union proposals for educational improvement. Given the empirical evidence, unions have a solid track record of supporting policies that boost achievement for most students.”⁶

Writing with Brian Powell and Lala Carr Steelman in the Harvard Educational Review (Winter 2000), Professor Carini also states “Excluding teachers from policy-making is dangerous because teachers have vital experience and knowledge and should play a prominent role in policy-making. Teachers are also essential advocates for their students because their needs are bound up with the needs of their students to the extent that concessions for teachers benefit students and enhance teacher quality and student achievement.”²

We believe that what appears to be true in K-12 is true in higher education as well. Perhaps one day, as our state continues to become younger, more diverse, and more progressive, Texas school and college employees will enjoy the benefits of collective bargaining, and we will see the positive impacts on student success that are demonstrated elsewhere.

In the meantime, we in AFT-Lone Star College are proud of what we have already done and what we continue to do that positively affects the lives of our students directly and indirectly. AFT-Lone Star helps students? Absolutely!

Alan Hall
Professor of English, LSC-North Harris

John Burghduff,
Professor of Math, LSC-CyFair

Endnotes

1. Past editions of *The Advocate* may be found on our website, www.aftlonestar.org. Select the News tab.
2. Ravani, Gary; “Why public education needs teachers unions”; EdSource; July 27, 2014
3. Lubin, Gus; “The five states where teachers unions are illegal have the lowest test scores in America”; Business Insider; February 23, 2011
4. Baron, E. Jason; “The Effect of Teachers’ Unions on Student Achievement: Evidence from Wisconsin’s Act 10”; Social Science Research Network; July 18, 2017; <https://ssrn.com/abstract=3001417>
5. Wydra, Abigail; “Teachers’ Unions Improve Student Achievement: Insights from California Charter Schools”; Chicago Policy Review; January 20, 2018; <http://chicagopolicyreview.org/2018/01/20/teachers-unions-improve-student-achievement-insights-from-california-charter-schools/>
6. Carini, Robert M.; “Teacher Unions and Student Achievement”; internal research paper; Indiana University Bloomington; October 12, 2010

Transgender Awareness

Many things possibly come to mind when you hear the word transgender. Perhaps you think of a man or woman to whom doctors assigned the opposite gender at birth; however, there are actually a number of other terms that fall under the umbrella term “transgender.” Before we get to that, we need to talk about the gender spectrum. You can think of it as a line with female at one end and male at the other, yet there are many other points in between of people who do not identify as simply male or female.

The term “transgender” is an umbrella term used to encompass all the different gender identities that exist along the spectrum. Some of the more common identities that exist are male to female (MTF), female to male (FTM), transsexual, androgynous,



agender, bigender, ambigender, gender fluid, gender non-conforming, drag king, drag queen, and gender queer.¹ I will not go into details and definitions but there is one important term worth noting: cisgender. "Cisgender" does not fall under the transgender umbrella as it refers to people who identify with the gender assigned them at birth, or who are gender conforming. A majority of trans people have encountered some form of discrimination by a cisgender person. This discrimination occurs whether a person is visibly trans or not, and can be found in legal and health care issues.

Three years ago, same-sex marriage became legal in all 50 states. Sadly, people, businesses, and even states still discriminate against the gay and lesbian communities and the transgender community. In fact, 31 states have specific laws that actually allow discrimination; Texas is on that list.² Luckily, many business, and cities too, have begun adopting policies against these forms of discrimination.

Recently, after two years of work by the local AFT, Lone Star College administration agreed to include language in the policy manual supporting non-discrimination of transgender individuals. The College administration has added terms such as *gender identity* and *gender expression* to the policy, the language that the Human Rights Campaign recommends, and applies these terms to employees and students alike.³ Those of us who identify or express our gender differently may now breathe a sigh of relief. Furthermore, LSC is adding gender-neutral restrooms to facilities across the system. They are an option, not a requirement, for transgender people. Due to the non-discrimination clause, employees and students have the right to use the facility that is consistent with their identity or expression. While this is a heated topic, one that resulted in the failure to pass of the Houston Equal Rights Ordinance, no correlation between transgender bathroom access and increased sexual predation has been shown. Transgender people simply want to use the bathroom in peace and safety just like their cisgender counterparts.

I applaud the work that AFT has done for transgender equity, but there is still another cause and one that I need to publicize. It concerns the medical insurance plan that is in place. The benefit plan has its own non-discrimination clause but this still falls short when it comes to transgender individuals. The plan does not include gender identity or expression; indeed, the policy specifically excludes gender reassignment surgery (GRS) and related services. While not all trans people seek to undergo GRS, or need other related services, there are some for whom these services are medically necessary. Rates for depression, anxiety, and suicide are extremely high for trans people and must be taken very seriously. According to the Williams

Institute, there are an estimated 125,350 transgender individuals in the state of Texas, and an estimated 41% have attempted suicide.^{4,5} Getting the insurance company to change its policy would be a monumental task, but one that could lead to a reduction in suicide rates. In addition, I understand changing to another plan is something that would be

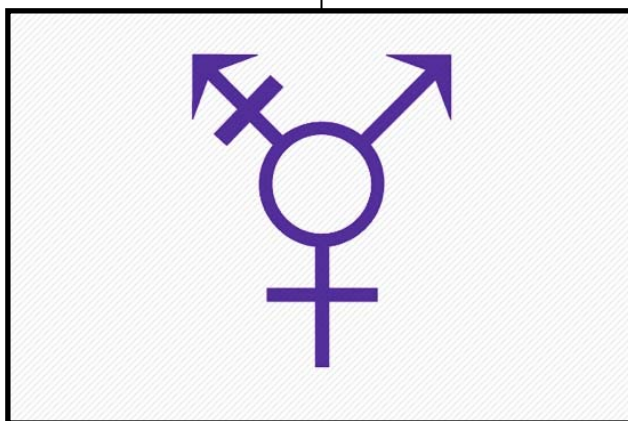
extremely difficult as well. Nevertheless, I still need to speak up for the benefit of the trans community. I hope those who can help make a difference for a marginalized community will hear this message.

November is Transgender Awareness Month. Transgender Day of Remembrance, which memorializes victims of transphobic violence, occurs on the 20th.

Catherine Valle
Center Technology Supervisor, LSC-Atascocita

Endnotes

1. Mell Reiff Hill, Jay Mayes. *The Gender Book*. Marshall House Press 2013
2. Nicole Ortiz. "New Campaign Puts a Spotlight on 31 States Where LGBT Discrimination Remains the Law." April 19, 2018. <https://www.adweek.com/creativity/new-campaign-puts-a-spotlight-on-31-states-where-lgbt-discrimination-remains-the-law/>





3. Human Rights Campaign. "Is Gender Identity or Expression preferred over Gender Identity in employment policies?" <https://www.hrc.org/resources/is-gender-identity-or-expression-preferred-over-gender-identity-in-employment>
4. Andrew R. Lores, Jody L. Herman, Gary J. Gates, and Taylor N. T. Brown. "How Many Adults Identify as Transgender in the United States." Williams Institute, UCLA School of Law. June 2016. <https://williamsinstitute.law.ucla.edu/wp-content/uploads/How-Many-Adults-Identify-as-Transgender-in-the-United-States.pdf>
5. Ann P. Haas, Ph.D. and Phillip L. Rogers, Ph.D., Jody L. Herman, Ph.D. "Suicide Attempts among Transgender and Gender Non-Conforming Adults." American Foundation for Suicide Prevention. Williams Institute, UCLA School of Law. January 2014. <https://williamsinstitute.law.ucla.edu/wp-content/uploads/AFSP-Williams-Suicide-Report-Final.pdf>

Editor's note: The following is an article by Earl Brewer, a long-time AFT-Lone Star member, a good guy, currently retired. Long live Charlie Brown—and don't kick that football, Earl.

FYI: A new Faculty Workload Guidelines Task-force is currently being assembled by the college.

Living as Charlie Brown in a Lucy World Earl J. Brewer III (Retired)

I retired December 31st, 2018, one year earlier than planned. Prior to retirement, I provided my Exit Monologue to the Lone Star College Board of Trustees on 12/6/2018—a monologue because LSC, as a matter of practice, does not care why employees leave employment at "one of the "Great Colleges to Work For." ¹ In presenting my reason for leaving, which was that Lone Star College broke me as a person, I spoke about the failure of the two Compensation and Classification Studies to correct inequities in staff job descriptions, job titles, and actual duties performed.

The first study, begun in 2013, did nothing to correct job inequity for most employees. We all went through the process of filling out the Job Assessment Tool (JAT). Many of us also went through the exercise of describing our actual job duties in contrast with our job descriptions. Chancellor Carpen-

ter said "hundreds" of full-time faculty & non-faculty employees would receive "grade salary increases" depending on the budget,² but this has not been independently verified. All employees received a 4% COLA increase effective 9/1/2013.

The fact of the matter is, there was no difference after the study for most of us. As for the many for which there was no change, we were left with a sense of demoralization, the effect of a disappointed hope. Our morale was worse than before. Many thought it was a waste of their time. Then again, in December of 2016, a new initiative was announced by the current chancellor, called a "Position Classification Study," which only wrapped up in 2018. In my case and many other cases, it was a further disappointment.

In my case, it is clear there was no attempt to reconcile what actual work I did with my job description, because the new job description did not remotely describe the work I performed until October 1st, 2018. The new job description was one that described a Lead Custodian, rather than a Facilities Manager, or one who works with 480-volt electricity. I have a Certificate in Facilities Management, but there was not a job title that recognized, or compensated for that education, or skillset, in the Technician Bands.³

But I'm retired, right? Why am I writing this article? If my job had been right-sized in 2013, then my pension would have been adjusted significantly upward, since the minimum estimated salary adjustment with a right-sized title, using conservative estimates (entry level for the pay band), would have increased my monthly pension by \$247 per month, and I would have earned an additional \$43,275 over a six-year period. Lone Star College's negligence in following through with their stated goal caused harm and injury, not only to me, but to all whose positions were not right-sized in these two studies. So, why care?

This is not only about doing the right thing. It also directly affects every staff employee's pension. It is in the interest of union members and non-union members to unite and continue pressing the Board of Trustees to correct this inequity and own up to the promises of the 2013 & 2017 studies. It is in the interest of Lone Star College to listen and correct these job descriptions and titles; otherwise,



there may be another exodus of talent and institutional knowledge from the College due to employees not wanting to play Lucy's game anymore.

Endnotes

1. Lone Star College designated 2018 Great Colleges To Work For®, <http://www.lonestar.edu/news/31514.htm>
2. Chancellor Richard Carpenter, Compensation and Job Analysis Study, email of 8/8/2013
3. Maintenance Specialist III vs. Maintenance Technician III

Tales from the Unionside

"Teaching Trump" to college students is a difficult assignment for political science and history professors. Since the Donald shocked the academic world on 11/9, I have wrestled with the dilemma of how to present to students a reasonable portrait of a president who is a bully, a bigot, and a blowhard without appearing to be a part of the anti-Trump MSNBC chorus.

My answer has been to draw upon what I learned from past academic association with presidential scholar Louis W. Koenig. He was the director of a National Endowment for the Humanities seminar entitled "Presidential Power and Democratic Constraints." After attending Professor Koenig's summer seminar at New York University, I wrote an article that was published in *Presidential Studies Quarterly* on the president, the press, and the public in their democratic, realistic, and authoritarian styles.

"Of all American chief executives," I said, "Richard Nixon best represents the authoritarian president. His crimes are well known and need not be restated at this time. An authoritarian president is willing to use anti-democratic means to achieve personal ends he often views as democratic." In such an authoritarian, anti-democratic presidency, political scientists need to pull no punches in telling today's students how dangerous Trump is to democracy in America.

We cannot allow our students to believe that the

forty-fifth president represents the new normal in American politics, for the "strong man" leader is normal in Russia and China but not in the United States. Trump is an aberration who small "d" democrats should hope is a "one and done" executive whose type shall not disgrace the Oval Office again.

In his excellent book, *The Chief Executive*, Dr. Koenig lays out five democratic ground rules for presidents, which are important to underscore in these turbulent Trumpian times. First, presidents must wield power using constitutional means, observe civil liberties, and respect the legislative and judicial branches of government. President Trump fails in all these areas of his presidency. The most dramatic moment of the 2016 presidential nominating conventions occurred when Khizr Khan, an American Muslim father who had lost his U.S. Army captain son in the Iraq War, asked Mr. Trump if he had ever read the U.S. Constitution and offered to give him a copy. I am certain that Trump has read the Constitution, but just refuses to observe it. With little regard for the American system of government, the president refers to the press as the enemy of the people and the purveyor of "fake"

news. His attitude toward the Courts and the Congress is contemptuous as he mocks legislative leaders of both parties and refers to federal judges as Mexican and Obama judges. This criticism of U.S. judges brought a rebuke from Chief Justice John Roberts, who informed the president that there are no Obama judges or Bush judges, just federal judges.

We cannot allow our students to believe that the forty-fifth president represents the new normal in American politics....

Second, Koenig indicates that a democratic presidency must respect public judgments and temper its own vision with the collective wisdom of others. At times, the man in the White House needs to look in the mirror and face reality. It is clear that officeholder Trump has no intention of doing so and holds no respect for opinions other than his own. His love affair with generals did not last two years as H. R. McMaster, John Kelly, and James Mattis all left or were pushed out of the administration. General Mattis' resignation in protest shook up Washington and opinion leaders around the country. Looking back on Mattis, it seemed that the Donald chose this general because he loved the



nickname “Mad Dog.” Trump often repeated the nickname in public—to the chagrin of Mattis. As a man who goes with his gut and not his head, Donald Trump, a non-reader and non-learner, makes policy decisions in important issue areas of national defense, international relations, and domestic matters without a clue to what his choices will do to the nation. This circumstance does not separate the New York narcissist from some other newly-elected presidents, but these know-nothing executives were smart enough to surround themselves with policy experts and not blind loyalists.

According to Koenig’s third democratic guideline, “The presidency must observe the rights of the opposition to criticize, to challenge, and possibly to overthrow its incumbency in a free election.” During his 2016 presidential run, candidate Trump waged ugly and personal attacks against his Republican and Democratic opponents. With demeaning nicknames from “Lyin’ Ted” to “Crooked Hillary,” Trump’s approach of slandering opponents will not end in 2020 as his leading chants of “Lock Her Up” at political rallies continued long after January 20, 2017.

From his past election statements and confused state of mind, I wonder about his willingness to accept a close 2020 defeat, should this be the case. Trump’s belief in mythical voter fraud and Hillary’s “stolen” popular vote victory should trouble not just the League of Women Voters but all of us. We can hope that should Donald Trump lose the next election, he will take the high road as Vice-Presidents Richard Nixon and Al Gore did in their narrow 1960 and 2000 election losses.

The fourth ground rule for anti-authoritarian presidents relates to ethical behavior on which democracy is based. This behavior, according to Koenig, extends to the president himself. “At the very least, he ought to satisfy the obligations of good citizenship and comply with its elementals—pay his taxes and obey the laws,” the professor wrote. It is well known that Trump was the only presidential candidate who refused to release his income tax returns, breaking a 40-year tradition.

This red flag should have alerted citizens that the G.O.P. nominee was a man who believed that rules and laws do not apply to him. The best guesses about “why” there are no Trump tax returns is either

that they would have revealed he is not as rich as he claimed or that he simply has paid next to nothing in taxes over the years. If either situation were true, it would have put this “super-rich guy” or “man of the people” in a most embarrassing position.

It is Koenig’s final presidential rule for democracy that an ethical base must be the foundation stone for government in America. What this stone represents is the recognition of how important societal ethics are to a democratic system. Reading about the fifth ground rule gave me shivers, especially as I read, “Much of the unacceptable behavior of the Nixon presidency has counterparts in the ruthless competition of the private sector—spying on competitors, stretching to one’s advantage the rules of the game, the cold mapping of strategies that allow no compassion to rivals and look only for their destruction.”

What a presidential scholar wrote about private sector ruthlessness years ago is a fair description of Donald Trump—the man, the developer, the promoter, and the president. Does this mean that all who voted for Trump bear some responsibility for the sick condition of the American political system today? I would say “no,” as legitimate grievances about the weaknesses of U.S. democracy were brought out by Democrat Bernie Sanders as well as Republican Trump in 2016. The question for the Trump voter and non-voter alike to answer in 2020 is how much do we as a people value a modern democracy based on the governmental principles of separation of powers, checks and balances, majority rule, minority rights, civil liberties, civil rights, and free elections. Based on his words and deeds, the forty-fifth president has little regard for American democratic principles. For Trump, life has always been about winning by any means necessary.

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Editor’s Note: Locander is a regular political columnist for The Advocate.

Endnote

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