



THE ADVOCATE



Volume 1 Issue 6

Employee Federation of NHMCCD

June 1998

AFT SPOTLIGHT



Each of us has joined AFT for his or her own reasons: to improve the quality of teaching, to protect oneself from an unwieldy administration, to stretch those paychecks with AFT benefits, to be able to raise questions about conditions at school without threat of reprisal—and the list goes on. Ted C. Daniel, one of our newest AFT members, joined because of his concern for and commitment to quality education for ALL.

When I asked Ted why he joined our local affiliate, he said, "Because I have always believed in integration." Now, that answer took me aback. Sure, we all believe in integration, but what does that have to do with the AFT at NHMCCD? Simply and profoundly, he told me it was the opening of the Carver Center and AFT President Alan Hall's deep involvement in it that got him ruminating about joining the AFT.

Growing up in Texas and New Mexico, Ted and his family always believed in integration. It was a heart-felt cause for his parents and his three brothers, also. At 16, Ted attempted to integrate his church. As a result, his family was no longer well received there, and they eventually felt they had to leave. During high school, he was the head of his church youth group in New Mexico. Not treating others as he would like to be treated was a clear violation of a seminal Christian principle—a clear-cut wrong in society. "We can drive down Scott Street or through Acres Homes today," Ted said, "and see that those kids are going to be different [from white suburban kids]. The word 'disadvantaged' still applies," he continued. "Racism is alive and well in this country—especially in Houston," asserted Ted. "We need to be diligent." Alan Hall and other NHMCCD employees—union members or

not—recognize that the Carver Center is an honorable way to help people make a difference in their own lives, giving people an opportunity to make it on their own.

One memory Ted has of his days as a student at TCU in Fort Worth is of coaching a softball team. A brick wall separated a black neighborhood from a white neighborhood not far from the playing field— "like the Berlin Wall." Putting an end to discrimination became a "kind of a mission" for Ted not only in high school but also in college.

Ted graduated from TCU with a double major in English and Religion. After TCU, he attended Brite College of the Bible with the intention of becoming a minister. But the "women in the front row wearing their minks, sleeping" while he preached made Ted decide there was a better place for his idealism. He was accepted to the University of Arkansas's writing program where he received an MFA in English and Creative Writing. Where do frustrated idealists often end up? The classroom!

From Arkansas, Ted went to the Valley and taught in Edinberg for nine years (where he initially made \$200 more a month than he had as a graduate assistant). When Pan-American University sought to become part of the UT system, Ted went to Austin with then President Schilling and lobbied for admission. While at Pan-Am, Ted was in charge of the creative writers series and brought such notables as James Dickey and W. D. Snodgrass to campus.

In This Issue	
AFT Spotlight	Teresa James
Benefits of Membership	Alan Hall
Faculty Salaries	Alan Hall
Famous Union Members	Nell Newsom
Employee Excellence Awards	

Ted characterizes himself as a "failed minister, married to a 'totem pole Indian,' who [his wife] has rioted in the streets." Today, he declared, "I don't march around so much." But he has spent the last sixteen years raising two kids who

"didn't fit in"—children from his wife Christina's first marriage. Christina Lidot, half Filipino and half Tlingit (Alaskan tribe of Totem makers), and Ted met while they were both in law school at Thurgood Marshall ("needed more money"—don't all teachers?)—the next chapter in Ted's engaging life. Eventually they married, went into law practice together, and raised her two children from a previous marriage (The children's father is African-American). Ted's older stepchild, Nigel, has graduated from UT where he was student president of Plan II, an honors program. Nigel was also president of the Honors Society in high school, president of his junior and senior classes, and valedictorian. Nigel has been accepted to Harvard, Princeton, and Yale, but has chosen the UT Honors program. Jamil, Ted's stepdaughter, was salutatorian of her high school graduating class and has completed her first year at Rice. (Ted has two other children: Cameron works at the University of Arizona at Tucson as a systems administrator for computer graphics in the chemistry department; and daughter Gina went to NHC for two years, is married, teaches at a daycare school, and is expecting the first grandchild!

Together Ted and Christina practice family law, primarily. But Ted has never gotten far from the classroom. He has been an adjunct English instructor at NHC for six years. He "gets inspired" to write when teaching literature. Recently, Ted has ventured into Cyberspace with his classes. He is excited about the new technology and is beginning to have a vision for Shakespeare and Cyberland. This summer he plans to spend time creating new assignments and teaching modules that incorporate more computers into the classroom.

Ted continues to write poetry and short stories as he has done since high school. His work has been published in various small presses. Among the files, letters, and petitions he works on every day at the office, occasionally he finds a free moment to write a poem or polish a short story. His poetry is mostly free verse on a miscellany of topics. "How Rain Leads to Mating" is one of Ted's favorites. (See below.)

Ted Daniel is an instructor who makes a difference in NHMCCD. His love for his students, his love for teaching, and his love for literature set him apart as a special man. We're proud to have him as a fellow AFT member!

How Rain Leads to Mating

rainy weather

wears well at first,
like old slippers,
overstuffed chairs
long, quiet, cool,
gray afternoons,
drenched windows,
solitude
and slumber....
cleansing a world of sins,
water slips umbrellas,
shivers down the backs of shirts,
clings to the pleats in wool skirts,
brings forgiveness to polluted streets,
weighs down car fumes and yellow smog,

nourishes grasses in graveyards
where pale, sheltering mushrooms
rise!

worms, frogs, snails and dull slugs
survive and the awful owls hide; the
swans the ducks, the loons and geese
delight!

the roofs and pipes, streams and rivers
fill like veins; lakes swell toward us.
wild surfaces soften.
beaten paths slip away.

then begins the deluge:
lost lovers, or friends who died too
soon,
before the gentle bath, before us,
fade like old ink in wet sympathy cards
when there's water standing in our
closets.
clouds close the horizon, the moon
and sun do without us.

like relatives out of work and visiting,
rain stays longer than hospitality
affords.
infiltrates our neighborhoods, fills our
homes;
saturates mattresses, comforters,
floats sofas and beds out garage
doors,
takes us, too,

by two's and two's.

Ted C. Daniel

Teresa James
Professor of English
NHC

BENEFITS OF MEMBERSHIP

Several times over the last two years, employees who suddenly found themselves in serious trouble have contacted me. These employees were not union members but knew the union's reputation for protecting employee rights.

One question these employees asked was, "Can I join now and get some help?" My answer was, of course, no. The union does not provide assistance, legal, representative, or any other kind, for events that pre-date membership. The next question asked was, "What do you think I should do?" Even though these were non-members, I was sympathetic to their situation and tried to be helpful. If the problem did not require legal assistance, I recommended that the employee review policies and procedures and take whatever steps seemed appropriate to the situation. Had the employee been a union member, I would have been able to take a different approach. The employee would have been provided a representative familiar with policies and procedures to guide the employee through the process and to attend meetings with supervisors. If the problem did require legal assistance, I recommended that the non-member contact an attorney.

I typically recommend the union's local attorney, with the understanding that all costs are the responsibility of the employee. Had this person been a union member, I would have been able to refer him to this same attorney, at no cost to the member, for a consultation. If additional legal assistance were required, I would have initiated the process to seek additional assistance from the union's legal defense fund.

Experience has shown that when a non-member engages an attorney, the employee usually has to put a retainer of at least \$2,500. For more difficult situations, the retainer may be significantly higher.

Often the non-members who call me have been college employees for several years, a fact which prompts a question from me: "Why have you chosen not to join the union?" I get

two answers. One is, "I never thought I needed to join. I never thought I would have a problem. I thought if I did, I could handle it." I point out to these folks that the majority of our members join not because they fear something will happen to them personally but because they are committed to supporting collectively the rights of employees and they are committed to other stances of the union. I also point out, as politely as possible, that I long ago lost track of the number of employees who felt nothing would ever happen to them.

The second answer I get to the question of why they have not joined is they feel that the membership dues are too expensive. The union does all within its power to hold down costs. A quality program, however, does require funding. Currently, full-time faculty dues are \$22.20 per month, full-time staff dues are \$15.05 per month, and part-time faculty and staff dues are \$11.95 per month. Let's use the highest dues rate for an example. That minimum \$2,500 minimum retainer required to secure legal services for just one event equals nine years and three months of current membership dues, almost a decade's worth of dues to seek assistance for one event. Monthly dues provide continuous legal protection as well as other benefits, including a number of discount programs which help offset the cost of dues.

I am as concerned about costs as the next person. Every month when I send in my own membership dues to our treasurer, I remind myself of two things. First, the cost of union membership is a bargain for the benefits it affords. Second, if I never used any of the benefits, or needed the protection, I have paid a small price to help an important cause.

Alan Hall
President

FACULTY SALARIES

The union has recently highlighted the low salaries of staff, and we anticipate that the Board will take action to remedy this significant problem. As the administration and Board move toward finalizing the 1998-99 budget, they must also be mindful of faculty salaries. The April 10, 1998 issue of

The Chronicle of Higher Education includes the following significant data on faculty salaries provided by the American Association of University Professors. All figures are average salaries for full-time faculty adjusted to nine months.

NHMCCD

Professor:	\$39,300
Associate Professor:	35,600
Assistant Professor:	33,000

Two-Year Public Institutions with Faculty Rank

Professor:	\$53,024
Associate Professor:	44,567
Assistant Professor:	38,574

NHMCCD's average salaries fall behind the national averages as follows.

Professor:	- \$13,724
Associate Professor:	- 8,967
Assistant Professor:	- 5,575

Two-year Public Institutions Without Faculty Rank

\$40,793

NHMCCD's average salaries fall behind the national average salaries for unranked faculty as follows.

Professor:	- 1,493
Associate Professor:	- 5,193
Assistant Professor:	- 7,793

Other Texas Two-Year Public Institutions With Rank

Professor	Associate Professor	Assistant Professor
College of the Mainland 41,900	37,300	33,000
Del Mar 49,400	42,600	36,900
Galveston 46,100	40,600	38,100
NHMCCD 39,300	35,600	33,000

Tarrant County

45,600 43,800 42,100

Our assistant professors are even with College of the Mainland but fall behind all other reported institutions by as much as \$9,100. Our associate professors fall behind all others reported by as much as \$8,200. Our Professors fall behind all others reported by as much as \$10,100.

It may be objected that these comparisons are faulty, inasmuch as salaries at some of these other colleges are tied to rank, and NHMCCD salaries are not. At such institutions the percentage of faculty at the professor level would be lower than the percentage in our district, where all full-time faculty make professor after their three-year probationary period. We reply first that something is amiss when our highest-paid faculty category still lags \$1,493 behind the national average for unranked faculty. Secondly, we meet the percentage problem by noting that our professor average is \$4,267 lower than the national average for associate professor.

We are often reminded that our summer salaries are among the best. Most community colleges pay full-time faculty at the adjunct rate for summer courses, while NHMCCD pays a pro-rated salary based upon our nine month salary. We have always been grateful for the summer rate. Typically faculty are able to earn between \$10,000 and \$15,000 for both summer sessions.

However, as one of our colleagues put it, we have to work another quarter of a year just to get up to the national average for nine months.

Alan Hall
Olin Joynton



FAMOUS UNION MEMBERS



Samuel Gompers was one of the founders of the American Federation of Labor in 1886. He was elected president and held that position except for one year until his death 38 years later. Gompers was born in London and immigrated to America in 1863. He was first a shoemaker, at the age of 10, but soon changed trades to become a cigar maker. Much of the work of cigar making was done in sweatshops and factories where thousands of little children worked. By 1885, Gompers had become highly skilled at his trade and was employed by one of the larger shops where his co-workers respected him enough to elect him president of Cigar Makers Union Local 144. He and the other officers were unpaid and worked diligently to keep the union together in the face of mechanization and the flooding labor market. In 1881 Gompers was sent as a delegate to a conference of various unions which created a loose confederation to be called the Federation of Organized Trades and Labor Councils. He became the leader, although he was not officially given the title of president. This weak beginning was fairly ineffective and poorly structured, but in 1886 the organization was reconstituted as the American Federation of Labor. At this time he was elected president of the AFL. His office was an 8 x 10 room in a shed, and his son was the office boy. There was \$160 in the treasure and Gompers said at this time that there was "much work, little pay, and very little honor." Four years later, however, the AFL represented 250,000 workers. In two more years, the number had grown to over one million. Under Gompers, the guiding principle was to concentrate on collective bargaining with employers, and on legislative issues directly affecting the job. Broad social goals and political entanglements were left to others.

One of those "others" was Emma Goldman, who was less than satisfied with Gompers' leadership. Her hope was for a larger social revolution, one which would build a bridge across the "abyss which separates labor from its masters, an abyss," Goldman felt, which could "never be bridged by the struggle for mere immediate material gains" (from Goldman's published Essays and Pamphlets, published in *The Road to Freedom*, Vol. L, March 1925.) Goldman had nothing against the material gains that the workers were fighting for; she supported a "higher standard of living and saner conditions of work," but was certain that "without an ultimate goal of complete industrial and social

emancipation, labor would achieve only as much as was in keeping with the interests of the privileged class, and hence would remain dependent always on that class." Goldman wanted a social revolution, and she was bitterly disappointed in Gompers, who "would have none of a liberating social idea." "Samuel Gompers was no fool," Goldman writes, "he knew the causes underlying the social struggle, yet he set his face sternly against them."

Given the climate of the times in which Gompers worked for the improvement of the conditions of the workers, it is perhaps surprising that he did not become a follower of Lenin, as was Emma Goldman.

And having the retrospective knowledge that we have, we are grateful that Gompers' struggle for the betterment of the working man and woman remained free from the social revolution that Goldman and others saw as necessary. Today, we have seen not only the collapse of communism but also the many dreary years of its attempts to make the ideal work.

Samuel Gompers worked all of his life as leader of the American Federation of Labor to take the employee from the sweatshops to the collective bargaining tables across America. We owe much to his efforts.

Nell Newsom
Editor

Employee Excellence

The union enthusiastically promotes excellence among faculty and staff. In keeping with that tradition, we join the entire college community in recognizing the recipients of this year's excellence awards. As always, we are particularly proud of our members in these groups. Congratulations to all of the recipients.

Faculty Excellence Awards

Douglas Boyd	Marc Nekhom
Carol Goldsby	William Norwood
Debra Harper	Edward Peniche
Wade Hescht	Adrian Rapp
Tom Hobbs	Sondra Whitlow
Oya McDaniel	David Wickham*
Theresa McGinley	Pamela Womack

Support Staff Excellence Awards

D. J. Bell	Barbara Mooney
Kathy Bible	Brenda Niekamp
Louise Casey-Clukey	Ginny Patten
Dorothy Cunningham	Dawn Pickett-Baxley*
Florence Gutierrez	Marie Ristroph
Connie Hicks	Roy Rogers
Kathryn Johanson	Shannon Stephens
Butch Juelg	Velma Trammell*
Frances Kaough	

WELCOME TO THE AFT !

Miami-Dade Community College, the largest community college in the state of Florida, has succeeded in their fourth attempt to unionize. By a large majority, the faculty voted to be represented by the United Faculty of Miami-Dade Community College/AFT. With a new administration's "unwillingness to allow faculty participation in shared governance," the faculty decided to "take the high road, focusing on issues like quality, opportunity and accountability, the themes of AFT's *First Principles* campaign," says Mark Richard, president of the United Faculty.

Miami-Dade Community College is acclaimed as "one of the most prestigious urban community colleges in the nation," so their decision to unionize will affect all other community colleges in Florida and the U.S. Richards feels positive about the faculty having "a professional union to help faculty secure adequate representation both at the college through the collective bargaining process and in the Florida Legislature."

Giving assistance to their campaign, union leaders like Norman Swenson, AFT vice president and president of the Cook County College Teachers Union, made it a point to visit faculty on every campus of the college.

We join Sandra Feldman, national president of the American Federation of Teachers, in congratulating this fine community college, and welcoming them to our Union.

Members of the Employee Federation, NHMCCD

CALL FOR ARTICLES

We invite you to send us your opinions, your news, your questions and so forth. The Advocate is a forum for information and free interchange of ideas. Send your articles to Nell Newsom, Editor, ACAD 217, NHC, (e-mail at Ira N. Newsom@NHMCCD.edu), or submit to any of the following officers: Alan Hall, President, ACAD 217, NHC, Rich Almstedt, KC, Tim Howard, NHC, Donald James, MC, Allen Vogt, NHC, Mel McFadden, NHC.

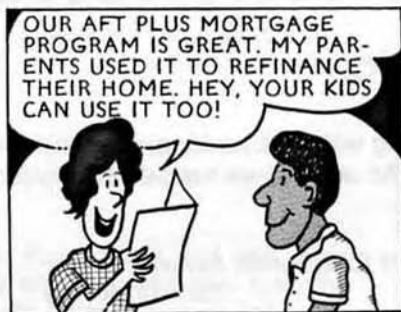
Join the AFT

The Advocate is a publication of the Employee Federation of North Harris Montgomery Community College District.

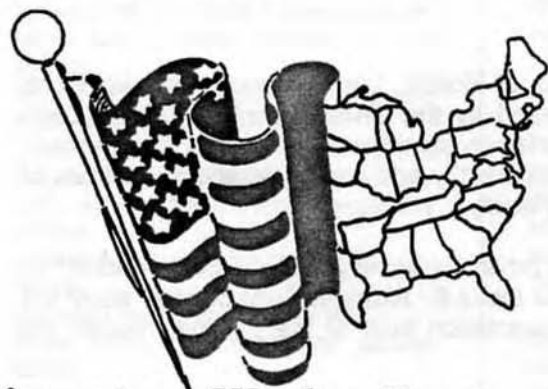
2700 W. W. Thorne Dr. - Suite A 217 - Houston, TX 77073

CURRENT DUES:

Full-time faculty . \$22.20 per month Full-time staff . \$15.05 per month
Adjunct Faculty and Part-time staff . \$11.95 per month



VALID UNTIL 7/98



America Works Best When You Vote!

STOP! SHOP!



UL&STD. AFL-CIO

BUY UNION-MADE