



The Advocate

Dear Friends,

We are about two short weeks away from Graduation, my favorite day of the year at Lone Star College. Once again, we will have the chance to celebrate the accomplishments of our students, share in the joy of their families, and remind ourselves how all the blood, sweat, and tears we have shed over the last 9 months are all worth it!

As employees, we have plenty to celebrate this year as well.



This final issue of The Advocate for the 2023-2024 school year begins with an article about the vote earlier this month by

the Board of Trustees to rescind an old policy tying our staff employees to an 8 – 5, Monday – Friday, on site work week, and to authorize the Chancellor to design a flexible work process for staff. Surveys the AFT has conducted show that employees would greatly value flexible work options, and the union has been advocating for policy changes in the pages of The Advocate, in speeches before the Board of Trustees, and privately with the Administration. In this article, I write about how flexible work is a major victory but also puts a major responsibility on all of us to make sure it really works for the sake of our colleagues and our students.

Next in this edition, I write about valuable pay increases for employees planned for the upcoming school year. Another thing to celebrate! As is often the case in life, the sweet comes with the bittersweet. In an article written by AFT President Emeritus Alan Hall, we celebrate the life, and mourn the loss, of retired North Harris English professor and the “mom” of our union for many years, Dr. Pat Gray. “Flights of angels sing thee to thy rest.”

Steve Davis continues his column “Dispatches from the Front” with an entertaining and thought-provoking essay on the place of graphic novels in higher education. English professors Leah Stark and Steve King offer some very important commentary on cultural changes needed at LSC in order to achieve the goals of truly making a difference in our students’ lives.

As usual, I take up the rear, with my ongoing column “Know Your Rights”. In this installment I focus on protections our non-exempt staff employees enjoy under federal law related to hours of work.

As we approach this rather hectic part of the school year heading for our Grand Finale on Graduation Day, please allow yourself some quiet time to reflect and rejuvenate and to enjoy this issue of The Advocate.

AND, if you are not yet a member of AFT Lone Star College please look in-

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side for information on our Free 'Til Fall offer for new members who join between now and May 30th! Come join us in our work to build up Lone Star College as a great place for employees to work and for students to learn!



Welcome to the Future-Flexible Work Options

John Burghduff
LSC - CyFair

In my three years so far serving as president of our AFT local, I have never been more excited about a change at Lone Star College as I have been about the Board of Trustees vote at their April 4 meeting giving the Chancellor the go ahead to develop procedures for flexible work options for our non-faculty staff employees.

We at Lone Star had been handicapped by an outdated college policy that locked staff into a five day, 8 – 5, on site work week. By the time that we had gotten through the Pandemic, that policy was as anachronistic as a horse and buggy on I-45. It made it hard to recruit new employees when other potential employers already had established flex-work policies. It made it hard to retain existing employees since many of these employers also paid more. It caused enormous pain to staff when they were required to return to face to face work months before faculty after the pandemic.

Adopting flexible work options showed up as a priority of the highest order in the all-employee surveys AFT conducted in both Fall, 2022 and Fall, 2023. It also registered high in the all-employee survey Chancellor Castillo conducted himself last fall. Over the past two years, we in the AFT have published four articles related, either completely or partly, to flexible work in The Advocate. (Those are linked at the end of this article in case you'd like to revisit them.)

When we learned that Chancellor Castillo planned to ask the Board of Trustees to approve a change in policy, AFT circulated a letter of support among all Lone Star employees. I am excited to report that 709 employees were willing to sign their name (electronically) to the letter to publicly declare their support for flexible work. I presented that letter to the Board during their April 4 meeting. Eight other members of our union joined me at that meeting to visibly show their support as well. The letter succinctly outlines why we believe instituting flexible work options is a good idea for Lone Star College. Here is the text:

Over time the needs of our students have been changing. The days of assuming that students will take all their classes on campus from 8a-5p are over. The workplace is also changing; other employers are offering hybrid/alternative work hours/ options, making it more challenging to hold onto our talent at LSC.

As you have seen in AFT's recent survey, employees have spoken. Flexible work options are highly important to staff.

We the undersigned support flexible work options that meet the needs of Lone Star College students and employees, and we urge you to vote in favor of authorizing the administration to develop a flexible work policy for staff at LSC.

I am very excited to report that the Board voted UNANIMOUSLY on April 4 to eliminate the outdated



workday policy and to authorize the chancellor to develop flexible work procedures.



This is a huge step forward for Lone Star College and for our valued staff employees. With the advent of flexible work options we have the potential of improving employee productivity and morale, setting a model for greater work/life balance, retaining more of our talented workers, filling open positions that have been sitting empty, taking cars off of crowded roads, reducing the future need for additional brick and mortar facilities, and, most centrally to the mission of our college, serving students at times and in modalities we have not efficiently incorporated so far.

This is cause for celebration and anticipation. This is a game changer for work at Lone Star College. But, as we pop the corks on the champagne bottles, let us also remember the old adage “Be careful what you pray for – God may give it to you.” With this article, I would like to offer some thoughts on realistic expectations, and I would like to present a challenge to all employees who will ultimately have the opportunity to participate in flexible work options.

1) You don’t have to participate

There will be employees who prefer to work a standard Monday – Friday, 8 – 5, on site work week. There are definitely plusses about the traditional model that can matter to some. In the standard model work is work, and home is home. There is no overlap and no ambiguity. If that is the way work works for you, you won’t have to change.

2) The procedures are still under construction.

The Board vote authorizes the Chancellor to explore procedures for flexible work. That doesn’t mean that flexible work options are ready to go today, or

even next week, or next month. Procedures have to be carefully crafted to make sure the transition goes smoothly and that the core business of the college gets done. This is a potentially huge change and it has to be done right. When flexible work will be available is not known. As the plan comes together, I expect there will need to be employee feedback, so be ready to speak up.

3) Flexible work will not look the same for everyone.

As has been shown in our surveys, flexible work can look like lots of things. One of the most popular options according to our surveys is a hybrid model working in the office some days and remotely other days. Another popular option is to work completely on site but to do so four days a week. Flexible work does not necessarily mean work from home exclusively. In fact, a completely remote schedule is far from the most preferred option in our surveys. This is good, actually, because not all job functions are adaptable to a work from home environment. As options are planned for different jobs, the first question will have to be “how do we best get the work done?” That question will inform what options are possible – and not possible – for each individual employee.

4) Employees are responsible for having what they need to work from home.

The college has made it clear that, for employees with flexible work options that include some work from home, there will be a work laptop provided. However, all other resources, including internet access, and a suitable work setting, will be the employee’s responsibility. Employees who live in areas where internet connectivity is poor will have difficulty with this work environment. Also, OTS will not be available in person to troubleshoot technical difficulties like they would at employee offices or cubicles. OTS can’t do house calls.

5) Flexible work will need to be phased in. Who goes first?

Every college I know that has already adopted a



flexible work option has phased it in a little at a time, frequently by department. Again, this is a huge deal, and the functions of the college cannot be interrupted. The question is, which employees transition to a new setting first and which will need to wait. Interestingly, Chancellor Castillo, in his What's Word on the Streets (WWOTS) presentation at LSC-CyFair on April 19, indicated that his preference is that the employees who transition first should be employees with physical and family issues, i.e. employees on ADA accommodations, employees who would otherwise have to take FMLA leave, expectant mothers with complicated pregnancies, and others with similar challenges. This would be a very humane approach and one that the Union would endorse.

6) Flexible work is still work

This one should be obvious but it very important to keep in mind. Ultimately, each employee who ends up with a flexible work option, particularly a remote option, will still have the same tasks to perform and goals to achieve that they had when they were working in the office. Supervisors will, rightfully, be expecting the same efficiency and effectiveness as if the employee was on site. The employee will need to be available at all times during the agreed upon workday whether by phone or by Webex. Emails will need to be answered in as timely a manner as before. Job milestones, target dates, key performance indicators, etc. must be met to the same degree as before so that the work of the department gets done.

7) Expect there to be some evaluation mechanism where individual employees might be asked to return to campus

Every flexible work policy I have seen includes some sort of mechanism for evaluating the effectiveness of each individual employee in the alternative format and, potentially, returning the employee to a traditional work setting. As long as that process is clear, fair, and objective, the union endorses such a mechanism. I would hope that returning to a standard work schedule will not be considered a black

mark on the employee's record. Flexible options are new. Yes, we worked remotely during the pandemic, but a lot of tolerance was built into remote work during those times. Now, remote work will have to be just as effective as face to face work. We are all learning. If a flexible work option (whether remote, alternate schedule, or anything else) doesn't work out for an employee, that doesn't mean the employee is bad or deficient. It simply means this option was not the best choice for that employee. Therefore, I hope that reversals on flexible options will not be considered a negative on annual performance reviews.

8) The needs of the students will and must come first.

Yes, flexible work options are likely to improve work-life balance, help us attract and retain talent, reduce stress, save on transportation costs, reduce the need for future campus construction, etc., and all of that is very, very good. But the ultimate test of flexible work options is whether we serve our students at least as well as before. The fact of the matter is, I think there is real potential that we will serve students better. Alternative work weeks on campus could mean offices staying open later or on weekends. Remote work could improve our availability to serve online students. We will have to see, but this will be the plumb line by which flexible work is judged.

In closing, from what I've heard from around the system, I believe there are basically three groups of Lone Star employees when it comes to opinions about Flexible Work Options:

- Group A) "This is going to be great for others but it's not my thing. Y'all have fun."
- Group B) "People won't do what they are supposed to do, and this is going to be a train wreck."
- Group C) "This is going to be great and I want to do it!"

I have thoughts I'd like to share with all three groups.



Group A, bless your hearts. Keep doing all the great work you do for Lone Star College!

If you are in Group B, I hope you will give this a fair chance. Every new endeavor has hiccups – sometimes great big ones. Think about how many problems NASA had before they landed men on the moon. When things go wrong, let's make every effort to learn and improve the plan. The potential for this being good is so great we should not be swift to give up on it.

If you are in Group C, ESPECIALLY if you are one of the early employees given a chance to try out a flexible work option, you have both a magnificent opportunity and a huge responsibility. You are our pioneers. Others will judge the plan based on what you do. Embrace the goal to serve students even better than before. Prove to Group B that you're not into this to slack off. Things will not always go according to plan. Your willingness to give the plan everything you've got, to work hard, to go the extra mile, and to persevere through the challenges will win over Group B, and make Group A proud to be your colleagues.

Lone Star College is far from the first community college to adopt flexible work options, but we've got the talent and the will to do it best! This is going to be great.

Previous articles in The Advocate addressing flexible work options:

The Cubicle and the Kitchen Table – Reimagining the Workplace in the Community College (John Burghduff), April – May 2022:

https://aftlonestar.tx.aft.org/sites/default/files/article_pdf_files/2022-04/2022_advocate_apr-may_0.pdf

Dallas College Offers Flex Work Options (John Burghduff), November – December 2022:

<https://aftlonestar.tx.aft.org/sites/default/files/>

[article_pdf_files/2022-11/2022_the_advocate_nov-dec_0.pdf](https://aftlonestar.tx.aft.org/sites/default/files/article_pdf_files/2022-11/2022_the_advocate_nov-dec_0.pdf)

A Tale of Two Lone Stars (John Burghduff), January – March 2023:

https://aftlonestar.tx.aft.org/sites/default/files/article_pdf_files/2023-03/2023_advocate_jan-mar.pdf

Four Recommendations for the Improvement of Lone Star College (Aaron Alon), November – December 2023:

<https://aftlonestar.tx.aft.org/sites/default/files/media/documents/2023/2023%20The%20Advocate%20%20November-December.pdf>

Abundance, Not Scarcity– Employee Pay Increases

John Burghduff

Of all the issues that unions advocate for on behalf of their members and other employees, none is more visible than fair pay. If you were to browse the archives of The Advocate all the way back into the 1980s, you would see an article about salaries in every April edition. All of us, when we decided to build careers in education, knew that teaching (along with all the college functions that support teaching) was not going to make us wealthy. The joy of helping others build their futures is the wealth we value. However, we still have to pay our bills, and support our families. We need salaries one can truly live on.

Fortunately, both of our most recent chancellors, Steve Head and Mario Castillo, have needed no convincing on this point. I feel that both of them have done or are doing the best they can to funnel as many resources as possible into employee salaries. For this coming 2024 – 2025 school year, Chancellor Castillo, Chief Financial Officer Kristy Vienne, and her team, are proposing two budget initiatives that address this priority.



1) 4% Cost of Living Adjustment for ALL employees

Underscore the ALL in this section title. The proposed 4% COLA, if approved by the Board of Trustees, would apply to ALL Lone Star employees: faculty, staff, full time, AND part time (including adjunct faculty) – ALL departments. No one is excluded.

For years, AFT Lone Star has urged the administration to match or exceed the Consumer Price Index when deciding on a percent for a COLA. The CPI, reported monthly by the Bureau of Labor Statistics, is the most respected measure of inflation and takes into account all consumer expenses including food and fuel. The most recently released CPI report covering the one-year period March 2023 – March 2024 puts inflation at 3.5% annually. This may come as a surprise given political rhetoric that claims inflation is out of control. Certainly, the union acknowledges that finances can be tight for many of our employees. With all due respect and compassion to them, inflation has been at moderate levels for at least the past two years after a surge as the economy rebounded following Covid.

The great news is that the proposed COLA will keep all employees ahead of inflation.

2) 4% Market Adjustment for Faculty

In addition to the 4% COLA for all employees, if approved, full time faculty will receive an additional 4% increase as an across the board market adjustment. It is important for employers to periodically compare employee salaries with salaries of similar employees at similar employers. If salaries are not competitive, the employer runs the risk of losing some good employees, discouraging others, and not being able to attract new employees.

Lone Star College conducted a market analysis for staff positions that resulted in salary adjustments for staff in 2017. This was an essential step in supporting the well-being of staff and well deserved by them! These adjustments represented a true raise – not just a COLA.

The proposed 4% COLA, if approved by the Board of Trustees, would apply to ALL Lone Star employees: faculty, staff, full time, AND part time (including adjunct faculty) – ALL departments. No one is excluded.

The last market analysis and salary adjustment for full time faculty was conducted in 1998.

Yes, you read that correctly – 1998. Only a handful of us were with the college 26 years ago to remember that. Going through my parchments, I found some documentation related to that adjustment. At the time, AFT

Lone Star College went by the name of the Employee Federation of the North Harris Montgomery Community College District. EFNHMCCD (what an acronym!) leaders at the time Alan Hall and Olin Joynton wrote an article in The Advocate that year comparing our faculty salaries with those of other community colleges. Full professors at our college, on average, earned the stratospheric salary of \$39,300 per year, significantly below the national average of \$53,024 and well below most of our neighboring community college systems. If interested, you can find that article at: https://aftlonestar.tx.aft.org/files/article_assets/70FFB513-FFF8-514D-02F343DCF8A2B7F1.pdf (beginning on page 2.)

John Pickelman, chancellor at the time, responded with a 15% across the board increase in faculty salary. Although that sounds astronomical, the salary increase was tempered by the elimination of a 12 month contract option that used to exist within the college. For many faculty, the resulting increase in pay was somewhat modest. Since that time, although most of the succeeding administrations have faithfully given all employees fair COLAs each year, we have not had another market adjustment. Lone Star faculty salaries have slowly slipped behind sala-



ries at other community colleges as a result. As reported by Chancellor Castillo in his April 19 What’s Word on the Streets (WWOTS) address at LSC – Cy-Fair, our average faculty salary now ranks 10th among the 16 community college systems in the state who responded to an information request from the Texas Community College Teachers’ Association (TCCTA). The proposed 4% salary adjustment, on top of the 4% COLA will bring us up closer to the top of that list.

Since the 4% additional salary adjustment for faculty was announced, a couple (literally two) employees have questioned why the increase does not apply to staff as well. Having spoken with the Chancellor individually and listened to him speak publicly, I believe the reasoning behind the proposal is sound. I say this even as I acknowledge that, as a faculty member, I am approaching this adjustment from a point of privilege. Please hear me out and, by all means, feel free to reach out to me for a conversation if you believe I am wrong.

First, I believe the historical information I have included, about which Chancellor Castillo also spoke, provides important context. It is absolutely the case that, in general, faculty are paid more than staff and this market adjustment will widen that gap. However, it is important to contrast the salaries of all employees with peers at similar colleges. We will lose seasoned faculty, and fail to attract new ones, if there is a significant gap. That gap for faculty has not been addressed in over a quarter of a century. Consider the impact on morale for faculty who choose not to leave if the issue is not addressed now that it has been identified.

I also want to reference a phrase Chancellor Castillo used in his WWOTS of April 19. He spoke of a “culture of abundance rather than a culture of scarcity”. My interpretation of that phrase is that Lone Star College is in a very strong financial position, so

we do not need to see this as a zero-sum game in which, if one group of employees “wins” another group necessarily “loses”. Faculty getting a market adjustment now should not, must not, and will not mean that there won’t be a future chance for staff to get another one, too. However, to quote the title of the award-winning movie, that doesn’t mean Lone Star can afford “Everything, Everywhere, All at Once”. The pay package proposed will be expensive. We can absorb that as revenues grow and we can do something else expensive in the not too distant future.

I solemnly pledge that AFT Lone Star College will always advocate strongly for the wellbeing of all employees, faculty and staff, full time and part time.

Let no one say or think, as someone was quoted in the April 19 WWOTS as saying, that faculty, or any other group of employees, is more worthy than any others. As we have

written in The Advocate many times, we call ourselves the American Federation of Teachers because EVERY employee of Lone Star College, no matter their job title, is a teacher in their own way. All of us are essential. The success of our college and our students is dependent on all of us.

I solemnly pledge that AFT Lone Star College will always advocate strongly for the wellbeing of all employees, faculty and staff, full time and part time. Resources may dictate that our motion forward will look like walking – first the left foot goes forward, then the right, then the left, then the right – but we WILL move forward. The especially good news is that I believe our current administration is fully committed to the same journey.





**In Memory of Pat Gray, PhD, Professor of English,
Lone Star College-North Harris (retired)**

Alan Hall, President Emeritus, AFT Lone Star College

"A woman in harmony with her spirit is like a river flowing. She goes where she will without pretense and arrives at her destination prepared to be herself and only herself."

- Maya Angelou



Pat Gray passed away Thursday morning, April 4, 2024.

She was a mentor and close friend of mine for over 40 years. She was always thoughtful and taught me how to be a good teacher, Union member, and most importantly, she taught me how to be a good friend.

Pat received many recognitions including a Faculty Excellence Award in 1992 and 2007, the North Harris College Star of Excellence for outstanding contributions in the classroom, college, and larger community in 2007, and a 30 Year Faculty Service Award in 2010. She believed wholeheartedly in the Union and worked tirelessly to make it successful. In addition to serving as the editor of this newsletter, she was an organizer from the beginning and one of our most powerful promoters. Not only was she beloved by her students and her fellow teachers, she was well respected and always gracious with the administration. I was often amazed by her ability to navigate complex situations with tact and to influ-

ence even the most challenging individuals. She left an enduring mark on those who had the privilege of working alongside her and all who crossed her path.

After a tremendous contribution to the college and AFT, Pat enjoyed her well-deserved retirement. She was generous with her time helping others and never hesitated to assist her friends, colleagues, and former students.

Pat and I were close companions, and she often guided me as we worked together on behalf of Union members. She was fearless, wise, and never afraid to do the right thing. She was a remarkable individual and deeply cherished by her community. Her dedication to teaching, advocacy for the Union, and genuine friendship have left a lasting impact.

From her achievements to her personal qualities, she exemplified wisdom, kindness and courage. She touched many lives, will be fondly remembered, and greatly missed. We are so grateful to have known her and are better individuals because she was part of our lives.

Alan Hall

"A man's friendships are one of the best measures of his worth."

Charles Darwin

YOU WILL BE
missed.



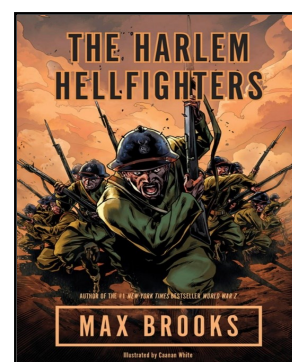
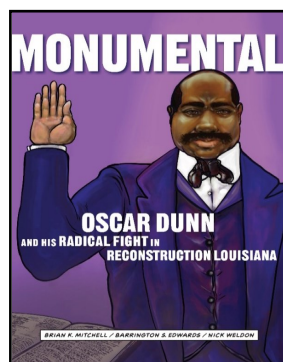
Dispatches from the Front #10 “Getting Graphic”

**Steve Davis, Professor of History, Lone Star College
-Kingwood**

Earlier this month at the conference of the Organization of American Historians in New Orleans, I attended a session on using graphic histories in college classes. The panel included Brian Mitchell, author of *Monumental*, a graphic biography of Oscar Dunn that I am assigning in HIST 1301 this semester. Dunn is today practically forgotten, a Black man who was elected Lt. Governor of Louisiana during Reconstruction and who due to the governor’s illness, became the state’s acting chief executive for a few weeks in 1871. He thereby became technically the first African American governor in history. Not until 1989 did Douglas Wilder become the first Black ever elected to lead a state when he won the governor’s race in Virginia. I am expecting that *Monumental* will be a great way to close this term with my students, that it will inform them in a compelling way about a difficult period in U.S. history, one with disturbing parallels to the present. Brian Mitchell gave me his card at the end of the session and without any prompting, offered to Zoom with my students. Can you imagine how thrilled they will be to directly communicate with a writer whose work they are reading?

Since that experience at the OAH meeting, I’ve been thinking more about graphic novels and histories and their value in our teaching. I have already successfully taught one graphic work this semester. The first supplemental book my students read in HIST 1302 (including one Honors section) this term was *The Harlem Hellfighters*, a graphic telling of the role a famed New York unit played in France during World War I. Some students immediately recognized its author, Max Brooks, as the writer of the zombie novel, *World War Z*. *Harlem Hellfighters* is a great example of the adage that Black history is American history. It was merely coincidental that we read and discussed the book during Black Histo-

ry month---African American history can’t be confined to February. During the pandemic, I had assigned to my online classes, *The Great Hanoi Rat Hunt*, a graphic history from Oxford University Press about the efforts of French colonizers to fight the plague in Vietnam around the turn of the 20th century. This was a great way to study contagions in history (something then much on our minds) as well as to introduce students to a country the U.S. would tragically engage years after France’s departure. Indeed, Michael Vann, the book’s author, visited our campus via Zoom in October 2021 and it was during the Q and A that he recommended *Monumental* as a potential class adoption.



These musings about graphic publications take me way back. As a boy, I devoured comics. I think that between reading what my grandfather called “funny books” and playing vacant lot baseball and football with my friends, there was hardly any free time remaining. Naturally, I read DC superheroes such as Superman and Batman. But when Marvel Comics emerged in the early 1960s, I was captivated by the Fantastic Four, Thor, and Spider-Man. Even at that age, I could tell that the Marvel characters were somehow grittier, more authentic.

The series however that probably more than any other source inspired me to become a historian was one called Classics Illustrated. For a selling price of 15 cents, each title introduced the reader to a classic work of literature in comic form. By no later than third or fourth grade, I had read what we would now call graphic versions of books like *Moby Dick*, *Ivanhoe*, *The Iliad*, and *The Last of the Mohicans*. Plenty of local drug stores or mom and pop



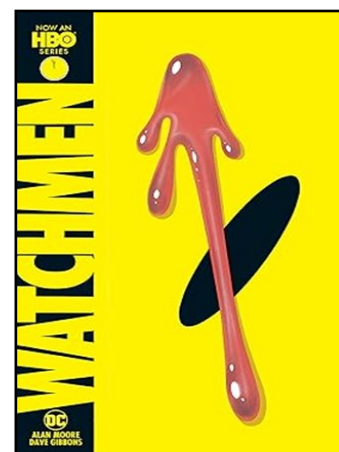
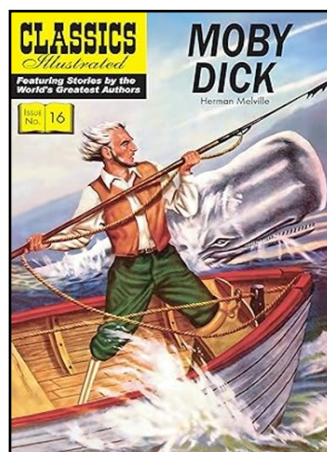
groceries had comic book racks. I would spin them around to see the latest releases. The way I often picked a Classics Illustrated number to buy with my precious coins was to flip through the pages and see which ones had the most war and violence as that is what I found most entertaining.

At that age, I wouldn't have understood the notion of escapist reading, but that's exactly what it was. Entertainment was more limited back then. Houston for example had only four TV channels: 2 (NBC), 8 (public TV), 11 (CBS), and 13 (ABC). They signed off around midnight, leaving a test pattern on the screen. We didn't get major league baseball until the Colts arrived in 1962. I heard almost all their games on the radio (740 AM). The only ones televised were road games on Sundays! I did read a daily newspaper from an early age. Every morning, my grandmother (who had a grade school education), would throw the *Houston Post* onto my bed in an effort to wake me up for school. I read the sports section thoroughly and consumed the latest crime stories. I still remember the garish headlines when Percy Foreman won an acquittal for his client, Candace Mossler, in her sensational sex murder trial in 1966. Only by high school did I pay much attention to politics and other weighty matters.

The point is that however plebian the sources, I acquired the habit of reading for pleasure at an early age. I don't think it's accidental that everyone in the household where this happened was uneducated. My grandfather, our breadwinner, was illiterate, being a Cajun sharecropper from Avoyelles Parish, Louisiana who moved his family to Houston in the late 1920s. I was the first in my family to finish high school, let alone go to college. I think that my folks understood in their bones how important it was for me to get a good education. The fact that I loved to read and that history was so naturally interesting to me from the first exposures in elementary school explains so much of what followed.

So, looking back, comics were my gateway drug to books and all the uplift that resulted. I had acquired a lifelong addiction to reading before even hitting adolescence. Book-worming remains my passion. But those were different times. The challenge of weaning our students from all the electronic noise and other puerile crap that overwhelms us is so much more difficult now. That's where graphic books come in. We have to be willing to use any weapon in the arsenal to hook our students on the joy of reading and learning. If there are professors who sneer at the notion of using high quality comic books in the classroom as one valid approach, that's their problem. Others of us can advance the agenda despite them.

In early May, a book club based at LSC-Kingwood (a group which includes two retired Lone Star presidents!) for the first time in its years of operation will discuss a graphic novel. English professor Mortimer Ennis has selected Alan Moore's *Watchmen*, originally published by DC comics in 1986 and the basis of an acclaimed HBO series from 2019, for our next monthly discussion. At the OAH session, one professor in the audience confessed that despite his interest in the topic, he had never read a graphic publication. That may be true as well for some of the folks in our book group. I'll be interested in everyone's reaction and will be eager to hear what Mortimer thinks of possibly assigning works of fiction like this one in freshman or sophomore English classes.





In these mean and ignorant times, the act of reading books has become practically an act of subversion. For four excruciating years, we lived under the misleadership of a non-reading president. The damage to our culture was deep and enduring. Extensive and serious reading with the knowledge and critical thinking it fosters may yet save us. Everyone in the Lone Star System, from top to base of our organizational structure, needs to encourage this practice by any means---**or in any format**---necessary.

A Different Approach II

Leah Kirell and Steve King, Professors of Developmental English, LSC- North Harris

On March 25, the New York Times reported that Dave Calhoun, Boeing’s chief executive, was stepping down at the end of this year. This follows several years of safety concerns regarding the Boeing 737 Max, from which a “mid cabin exit door plug” fell off the plane, creating a door-sized hole in its side. The inspections that followed this incident found maintenance problems with other aircraft.

Among the responses to these events was an article by James Surowiecki in the Atlantic, in which he answered the question “What went wrong [at Boeing]?”:

“The answer that pretty much everyone arrived at . . . was the same: Boeing’s culture had changed. . . . For most of its history, Boeing had what you might call an engineering-centric culture, with power in the company resting in the hands of engineering and design. But in 1997, Boeing bought another aircraft manufacturer, McDonnell Douglas, in what turned out to be a kind of reverse acquisition—executives from McDonnell Douglas ended up dominating and remaking Boeing. They turned it from a company that relentlessly focused on product to one more focused on profit.” Surowiecki quotes Harry Stonecipher, once

CEO of McDonnell Douglas and then later Boeing, as saying “When people say I changed the culture of Boeing, that was the intent, so that it’s run like a business rather than a great engineering firm.”¹

Boeing is not the only large institution to change its way of doing things. In 2022, the New York Times ran a series on how non-profit hospital administrators began to focus on profit ahead of patient care:

“The Times this year has documented how large chains of nonprofit hospitals have moved away from their charitable missions. Some have [skimped on free care](#) for the poor, illegally saddling tens of thousands of patients with debts. Others have plowed resources into affluent suburbs while [siphoning money](#) from poorer areas. And many have cut staff to skeletal levels, often at the expense of patient safety. . . . Four former executives who joined Ascension from other nonprofit hospital systems said the profit-driven culture surprised them. There were few conversations, they recalled, about how profits could be used to advance Ascension’s charitable mission. The pressure to reach financial targets struck them as more befitting a for-profit company. ‘Their whole approach to the finances was right out of the Wall Street playbook,’ said William Weeks, who until his retirement in 2019 was the chief operating officer of a five-hospital chain that Ascension owns in Oklahoma.”²

Both cases began with institutions that knew who they were and what they did. Then new leadership came in and decided they should be and do something else. They changed organizational culture by redefining the mission of the workers.

For anyone who began teaching at NHMCCD during the years John Pickleman was Chancellor, this



should sound familiar. It's not only the institution's name that has changed; so too has our mission. We moved from being a college focused on students and community service to a quasi-corporate entity focused on growth and centralized control from System Office.

Evidence of these changes are clear in faculty's daily work. We remember the days when, if a question arose, one knew where to go *on campus* for an answer. And the people who provided it were not afraid to give it. They weren't afraid to make decisions because there was shared respect for campus expertise.

We remember the days when, if a student complained about an instructor, the Dean would handle it. Certainly, a student could appeal a Dean's decision, but the Dean herself could determine whether or not the complaint was valid—and both student and instructor would get a resolution relatively quickly. Disagreements between faculty and students about the content of instruction were settled within the division. LSC administration no longer trusts that communally shared expectations about student rights and responsibilities will guide us, nor does it trust, materially or culturally, campus employees' right to and responsibility for creating a positive learning environment on campus.

We remember the days when NHMCCD spent money to support *standards* in our classes, such as when they hired testing experts from a major university to lead a three-day conference for math and English faculty across campuses to come up with exit standards for students going from developmental to credit classes. The resulting tests helped ensure standards were the same across campuses; for English departments, administration agreed to support (through course releases) a committee made up of one representative from each campus each semester to discuss, revise, and organize the test every long semester. This included multiple calibration sessions that all faculty, adjunct and full-time, participated in. This built cohesion and camaraderie as

well as standards. Test results provided validation for instructors whose students did well and a cautionary note for those whose students didn't, resulting in better morale and increased interaction between faculty. Back then, District administration spent money to promote these results.

We remember those days fondly because we were confident that our own priorities and those of our administrators were the same: a focus on a high-quality, supportive education for students. Faculty could show up at work with a shared sense of purpose and efficacy. These days, we have more in common with those Ascension nurses who mounted the largest nursing strike in Texas history because "they are assigned too many patients at a time, causing nurses to burn out and patients to receive a lower standard of care."³

Changes in the work of community college faculty and staff have been, at least in part, a response to changes in national attitudes about the role of schools in our democracy. Partly in consequence, successful teaching today must overcome a brew of challenges that in combination are literally unprecedented. They include the first generations of students who have grown up with digital media, whose effects on attention span and reading ability we still don't fully know but are understood to be detrimental⁴; the still lingering consequences of the pandemic, which not only set students back but adjusted their expectations of how teaching and learning should take place; and the continuing legacy of decades of federally and state mandated teaching "reforms" that have culminated in teacher shortages, chronic student absenteeism, deteriorating infrastructure, and poor mental health for faculty and students. To paper over these endemic problems, K through 12 teachers have been told to simply pass all students, masking the implications of these policies with aggressive grade inflation and, thus, redefining what it means to learn or teach in American public schools.

In this environment, doing the same thing and ex-



pecting better results is indeed insanity, a form of insanity Diane Vaughn explained in her analysis of the organizational culture at NASA before the Challenger disaster (a book, one would assume, would be required reading of Boeing executives and ought to be for educational leadership). She explains how well-meaning people become trapped inside of failing institutions while still believing they are “on mission.” Vaughn writes:

“Worldview is not easily altered or dismantled because individuals tend ultimately to disavow knowledge that contradicts it. They ward off information in order to preserve the status quo, avoid a difficult choice, or avoid a threatening situation. They may puzzle over contradictory evidence but usually succeed in pushing it aside—until they come across a piece of evidence too fascinating to ignore, too clear to misperceive, too painful to deny, which makes vivid still other signals they do not want to see, forcing them to alter and surrender the worldview they have so meticulously constructed” (95).⁵

For those of us in education, the evidence that our current approach is failing is regularly reported in national and state newspapers, in our disciplinary conferences and clearly visible in our classrooms. Our students are academically poorly prepared. They are disengaged. They are hungry. They are homeless. They drop out or fail classes.

Currently, it’s easy for many LSC instructors to feel they have little chance to improve the situations under which they teach. Teaching five courses per long semester with high class caps severely restricts what can happen in the classroom, especially the crucial formative assessment feedback loop through which faculty can monitor student learning and make adjustments as needed for particular classes and students. Such course loads limit the time and energy faculty have left over for professional development, including productive interactions with disciplinary colleagues to mount a response to law-

makers who want to ignore the evidence of their failed policies.

To improve student success, LSCS needs to change the status quo and return to its core mission of serving students. To do this we must create faculty working conditions to truly prioritize that goal. We could do this by reducing course loads—for example to three courses per long semester—and lowering caps. We could institutionalize continuous professional development through, say, twice-monthly mandatory departmental meetings in which faculty present research and teaching suggestions from their professional literature, discuss what’s working (and not) in their own classrooms, and compile feedback from students about the challenges they face in continuing their educations, which can then be shared with administrators for more supportive policies, programs, and advising. We could use such meetings to provide college-to-college disciplinary meetings online, so that the same sort of information can be shared—a way to make “One LSC” mean something more than mere policy and practice conformity across campuses. We could, in other words, provide the nation a model of a community college in which student success comes first in word as well as deed.

The knee-jerk reaction is that all of this is too expensive. But perhaps it’s the case that when people are your “product,” minimizing your cost per “product” simply doesn’t work. Unfortunately, whether they represent widgets or college students, numbers on a balance sheet all look the same. Reducing people to numbers—whether you’re trying to cut costs or maximize enrollment—dehumanizes them and that is the antithesis of education.

¹ Surowiecki, James. “What’s Gone Wrong at Boeing.” *The Atlantic*. January 15, 2024. <https://www.theatlantic.com/ideas/archive/2024/01/boeing-737-max-corporate-culture/677120/>

² <https://www.nytimes.com/2022/12/15/business/hospital-staffing-ascension.html>

³ <https://www.texastribune.org/2023/06/27/texas-nurses-strike/>

⁴ Read neuroscientist Maryann Wolf’s *Proust and the Squid* and *Reader, Come Home* for a sobering take on research into those effects.

⁵ Vaughn, Diane. *The Challenger Launch Decision: Risky Technology, Culture and Deviance at NASA*. U. of Chicago Press, 1997.



Class Caps- We Should Try Again

John Burghduff

Many years ago – I couldn’t tell you when exactly, but Sandy Shugart was president of North Harris at the time – our system was discussing class caps for the first time. By class caps we mean the maximum number of students that can enroll in an individual section of a course. Like now, the general practice was to set all class caps to the same number unless there was an unescapable reason not to do so – mainly if an accrediting board for a workforce program imposed a different number.

Equal is often different from equitable.

Alan Hall, Retired English professor and President Emeritus of AFT Lone Star College wanted to make the point that, for writing intensive classes, the class cap prevalent at the time was unreasonable. So, he saved up all of his composition papers for one semester and took them to a meeting about class caps at North Harris. He brought a wheel-barrow and it was full and overflowing.

There are, in fact, many reasons why equal class caps across all courses in all disciplines are not equitable. The massive writing requirements in English classes is only one such reason. The best judges of equitability are the faculty themselves. Over the last several years, a process has been in place for curriculum teams to go through all the courses in their disciplines and recommend a class cap for each one that could be applied uniformly across the system.

It is my understanding that, after that work was completed at the faculty level, the proposal got set aside at a level of administrative review and the process fell apart. I don’t know why or what objections that level of administration had, but the fact that this process came to naught is disappointing.

This was a worthy cause. It would have been good for the faculty and it would have promoted student success. I hope that the reasons the process failed will be objectively examined and that we will try again.

Help for Gaza

As the war drags painfully on, the destruction and loss of life in Gaza is rapidly approaching the state of famine. A peaceful solution must be found and must be found soon. In the meantime, the suffering continues.

If you are longing for an opportunity to help in your own way and don’t already have an avenue available for doing so, the national office of the American Federation of Teachers recommends the following agency as an NGO operating on the ground in Gaza that has a vetted and proven track record of effectively serving those who suffer.

[Anera \(American Near East Refugee Aid\)](https://www.nera.org/)

<https://www.nera.org/>



Please consider a donation to Anera or the charitable organization of your choice along with your thoughts, prayers, and activism for peace/salam/shalom.


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





WORK HOURS

Know Your Rights



**By: John Burghduff,
Professor of Mathematics. LSC– CyFair**

This edition of Know Your Rights is particularly for the benefit of non-exempt employees and those who supervise them. Non-exempt employees are employees eligible for overtime pay. This would include most of our staff employees. Faculty (including adjunct faculty), administrators, and most staff employees on contracts are exempt – not eligible for overtime pay.

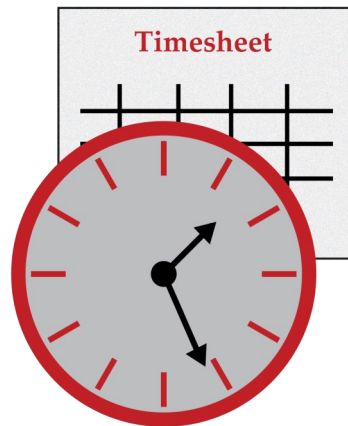
The definition of an exempt employee will change in July, 2024 and again in January, 2025 and could have an impact on some Lone Star employees. We'll explore that question in the fall.

The AFT will occasionally will get questions from non-exempt employees about a variety of issues related to reported work time. Those questions often relate to lunch breaks, other breaks, on-call duty, and travel time. Many of those concerns are addressed in a fact sheet published by the Wages and Hours Division of the U. S. Department of Labor.

To avoid any danger of misinterpretation, I'd like to share that fact sheet with you here in full. Although there are paragraphs that clearly don't apply to Lone Star, I'm going to include the entire document for the possible benefit of employees working part time elsewhere or with friends and family working elsewhere.

If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to reach out to AFT at any time. As flexible

work options come available, we will probably need to revisit this topic to account for remote work hours.



Fact Sheet #22: Hours Worked Under the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA)

(Revised July 2008)

This fact sheet provides general information concerning what constitutes compensable time under the [FLSA](#). The Act requires that employees must receive at least the [minimum wage](#) and may not be employed for more than 40 hours in a week without receiving at least one and one-half times their regular rates of pay for the [overtime](#) hours. The amount employees should receive cannot be determined without knowing the number of hours worked.

Definition of "Employ"

By statutory definition the term "employ" includes "to suffer or permit to work." The workweek ordinarily includes all time during which an employee is necessarily required to be on the employer's premises, on duty or at a prescribed work place.

"Workday", in general, means the period between the time on any particular day when such employee commences his/her "principal activity" and the time on that day at which he/she ceases such principal activity or activities. The workday may therefore be longer than the employee's scheduled shift, hours, tour of duty, or production line time.

Application of Principles

Employees "Suffered or Permitted" to work: Work not requested but suffered or permitted to be performed is work time that must be paid for by the



employer. For example, an employee may voluntarily continue to work at the end of the shift to finish an assigned task or to correct errors. The reason is immaterial. The hours are work time and are compensable.

Waiting Time:

Whether waiting time is hours worked under the Act depends upon the particular circumstances. Generally, the facts may show that the employee was engaged to wait (which is work time) or the facts may show that the employee was waiting to be engaged (which is not work time). For example, a secretary who reads a book while waiting for dictation or a fireman who plays checkers while waiting for an alarm is working during such periods of inactivity. These employees have been "engaged to wait."

On-Call Time:

An employee who is required to remain on call on the employer's premises is working while "on call." An employee who is required to remain on call at home, or who is allowed to leave a message where he/she can be reached, is not working (in most cases) while on call. Additional constraints on the employee's freedom could require this time to be compensated.

Rest and Meal Periods:

Rest periods of short duration, usually 20 minutes or less, are common in industry (and promote the efficiency of the employee) and are customarily paid for as working time. These short periods must be counted as hours worked. Unauthorized extensions of authorized work breaks need not be counted as hours worked when the employer has expressly and unambiguously communicated to the employee that the authorized break may only last for a specific length of time, that any extension of the break is contrary to the employer's rules, and any extension of the break will be punished. Bona fide meal periods (typically 30 minutes or more) generally need not be compensated as work time. The employee must be completely relieved from duty for the purpose of eating regular meals. The employee is not relieved if

he/she is required to perform any duties, whether active or inactive, while eating.

Sleeping Time and Certain Other Activities:

An employee who is required to be on duty for less than 24 hours is working even though he/she is permitted to sleep or engage in other personal activities when not busy. An employee required to be on duty for 24 hours or more may agree with the employer to exclude from hours worked bona fide regularly scheduled sleeping periods of not more than 8 hours, provided adequate sleeping facilities are furnished by the employer and the employee can usually enjoy an uninterrupted night's sleep. No reduction is permitted unless at least 5 hours of sleep is taken.

Lectures, Meetings and Training Programs:

Attendance at lectures, meetings, training programs and similar activities need not be counted as working time only if four criteria are met, namely: it is outside normal hours, it is voluntary, not job related, and no other work is concurrently performed.

Travel Time:

The principles which apply in determining whether time spent in travel is compensable time depends upon the kind of travel involved.

Home to Work Travel:

An employee who travels from home before the regular workday and returns to his/her home at the end of the workday is engaged in ordinary home to work travel, which is not work time.

Home to Work on a Special One Day Assignment in Another City:

An employee who regularly works at a fixed location in one city is given a special one day assignment in another city and returns home the same day. The time spent in traveling to and returning from the other city is work time, except that the employer may deduct/not count that time the employee would normally spend commuting to the regular work site.



Travel That is All in a Day's Work:

Time spent by an employee in travel as part of their principal activity, such as travel from job site to job site during the workday, is work time and must be counted as hours worked.

Travel Away from Home Community:

Travel that keeps an employee away from home overnight is travel away from home. Travel away from home is clearly work time when it cuts across the employee's workday. The time is not only hours worked on regular working days during normal working hours but also during corresponding hours on nonworking days. As an enforcement policy the Division will not consider as work time that time spent in travel away from home outside of regular working hours as a passenger on an airplane, train, boat, bus, or automobile.

Typical Problems

Problems arise when employers fail to recognize and count certain hours worked as compensable hours. For example, an employee who remains at his/her desk while eating lunch and regularly answers the telephone and refers callers is working. This time must be counted and paid as compensable hours worked because the employee has not been completely relieved from duty.



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[Wages and the Fair Labor Standards Act | U.S. Department of Labor \(dol.gov\)](https://www.dol.gov)

[Minimum Wage | U.S. Department of Labor \(dol.gov\)](https://www.dol.gov)

[Overtime Pay | U.S. Department of Labor \(dol.gov\)](https://www.dol.gov)

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DO YOU HAVE HOUSEHOLD DEBT?

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- Loans starting at \$2,000*
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The Texas American Federation of Teachers has partnered with **BMG Money**. Get access to reliable, affordable online installment loans to help you regardless of your credit history.

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app.bmgmoney.com/signup and **TYPE** "Texas American Federation of Teachers" as the name of your employer

DO YOU HAVE STUDENT DEBT?

LOWER MONTHLY PAYMENTS

Enroll in income-driven repayment (IDR): IDR is a free federal program where repayment plans are based on your personal income. Summer helps find the best IDR plan to lower your monthly payments (with possible forgiveness as well).

LOAN FORGIVENESS

Certify for Public Service Loan Forgiveness (PSLF): You may qualify for Public Service Loan Forgiveness (PSLF), a program that will forgive ALL of your remaining loan balance after ten years. In order to enroll in PSLF, you must also be enrolled in an IDR

Summer

- My Plan
- My Student Loans
- Tools ^
- Income-Driven Repayment
- Public Service Loan Forgiveness
- Forgiveness Finder
- Refinancing
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- Resource Center
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This is a FREE benefit for AFT Members!
Join today!



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!

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 advocating for each other, you should join.
- If you believe employees should be treated with dignity, fairness, and respect, you should join.

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
[Click here to Join AFT Lone Star TODAY!](https://bit.ly/AFTLONESTAR-JOIN)
<https://bit.ly/AFTLONESTAR-JOIN>

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A Union of Professionals

AFT-Lone Star College

A union of Professionals

- \$8 million in professional occupational liability insurance (in case you get sued)
- Local staff and leaders ready to assist you when you need help and information
- Legal defense funds (in case you need an attorney)
- \$ 36,250 Accidental Death and Dismemberment policy
- Strong leaders and lobbyists advocating for your rights at the local, state, and national levels
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- AFT PLUS savings and discounts for you and your family
- Educational resources and publications
- No conflict of interest– Administrators cannot join
- Strong. Active. Vocal. When you join AFT-Lone Star, you join the best!
- Pay your dues via bank draft or credit card by signing up online! <https://bit.ly/AFTLONESTAR-JOIN>
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WEB: www.aftlonestar.org

PHONE: 281-889-1009

E-MAIL: aftlonestar@yahoo.com



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 AFT locals throughout Texas

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

BENEFITS

- \$8,000,000 Occupational Liability Insurance provides
 - security while teaching
 - protection against litigation
 - malpractice protection
- \$36,250 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

23-24 Monthly AFT Dues

Full-time Faculty	\$46.02
Full-time Professional Staff	\$29.62
Full-time Support Staff	\$29.62
Adjunct Faculty	\$18.28
Part-time Staff	\$18.28

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
Texas AFT
AFL-CIO



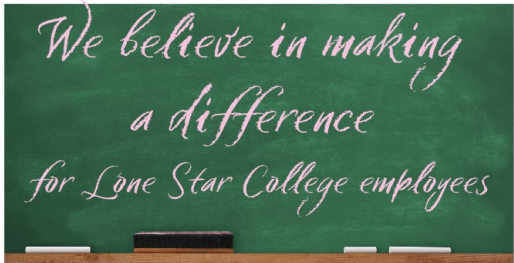


JOIN AFT - LONE STAR TODAY!



www.aftlonestar.org

We are here for YOU!



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 reach out to them!

See back page of this publication for a list of our officers.

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- ◆ Plus much more!

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We invite all employees to send us their opinions, news, questions, and so forth. *The Advocate* is a forum for information and free interchange of ideas. Send your ideas. Send your articles to **John Burghduff** via e-mail: aftlonestar@yahoo.com , or submit to any of the following officers.

First Name	Last Name	Officer title	Campus
John	Burghduff	President	Cy-Fair
Alan	Hall	Secretary	At-Large
Donna	Kroll	Treasurer	Houston North
Leah	Kirrell	North Harris Faculty Vice President	North Harris
Britney	Hall	North Harris Staff Vice President	North Harris
Pat	Chandler	Kingwood Staff Vice President	Kingwood
Cliff	Hudder	Montgomery Faculty Vice President	Montgomery
Martha	Neely	Montgomery Staff Vice President	Montgomery
Adrienne	Patton	Cyfair Faculty Vice President	Cy Fair
Cindy	Hoffart-Watson	Cyfair Staff Vice President	Cy Fair
Van	Piercy	Tomball Faculty Vice President	Tomball
Stephen	Washington	Houston North Faculty Vice President	Houston North
Cathleen	Quayle	System Office, Staff Vice President	System Office
Cassandra	Khatri	University Park Faculty Vice President	University Park

The union encourages employees to join because they believe that college employees should have a voice in their professional lives. We don't encourage employees to join because they anticipate conflict or are already engaged in a conflict. In fact, if they are already embroiled in a situation, we are unable to help them. It is all too common for someone to approach the AFT and say something like, "I've been an employee for the district for several years, and I've just recognized the importance of joining." Typically, following that comment is, "I'm in trouble and need help." I finally lost track of how many times in the last year I've had to say, "I'm sorry, but member benefits don't cover anything that pre-dates membership." The individuals to whom I had to give this message were invited to join and provided some advice on how to proceed with their situation, but assistance

ended there. Were they members, a host of benefits would have been available.

The AFT provides its members with advice and guidance as well as representation in conflict resolution and grievances. We have our own local attorney and can seek legal advice and counsel for members. We maintain a local legal defense fund. In addition, membership dues include, at no extra charge, \$8 million in professional liability insurance for claims arising out of professional activities.

Most of our members don't join because they believe that they may need the AFT's help in a conflict. They join because they believe in the values of the AFT— that employees should be treated with dignity and respect, that employees should help each other, that employees should

have a voice in their professional lives, that employees deserve fair pay and good working conditions, and that the district needs a system providing checks and balances. They join because they want to support an organization that helps others in so many ways. A nice benefit is that, if they do need help, AFT is there for them.

If you believe in these values and are not a member, now is the perfect time to join. If you believe in our values, take action now and join the AFT.

