



September-October 2026 Edition



On behalf of AFT Lone Star College, let me take this opportunity to welcome all Lone Star College employees to the 2026-2027 school year. I am also pleased to present to you our first edition of our union newsletter *The Advocate* for this year.

The last several years have presented enormous challenges to higher education across the country in general, and in Texas in particular. We have written previously about the dismantling of programs for underserved and underrepresented employees and students, and the frontal attack on academic freedom and accurate teaching.

Unfortunately, a significant part of this new edition of *The Advocate* focuses on what else has happened over the summer and what current leaders in Austin are proposing for the next legislative session in the spring. This summer saw massive unforeseen cuts in funding for community colleges which are leaving schools across the state reeling. Some community college systems are facing layoffs. Lone Star is not, but the cuts have had an impact on what salary increases the college could afford this year.

Early reports on the agenda for the next legislative session suggest new sweeping restrictions may be coming including the possibility of cutting bachelor's degrees from four years to three, reducing the number of courses students take from the core curriculum from 42 hours to 30, further cuts in investment in higher education, and possible additional impacts on foreign students.

In this edition of *The Advocate*, over the course of several articles we explain everything we know about all of these present and possible future threats. We also include a report on the 2026 AAUP Survey of Faculty in Southern States which reflects grave concerns about how past and possible future changes have impacted morale problems at Texas colleges and universities in particular, and the danger of a brain drain from Texas schools as faculty look for a way out.

If that all sounds depressing, we remind everyone that the future does not have to be this grim. The elections in November could change everything, polls are very close, and the future is in our hands if we participate and VOTE! We include an article on getting ready for the election given that, thanks to our state government, access to voting is also being restricted.

Also included in this issue is an op-ed piece by a Lone Star faculty member with new perspectives on the impact of AI on integrity in classes. We include the next episode of Steve Davis's excellent column Dispatches from the Front. I offer some new perspective on the college's grievance and progressive discipline policies in my own column Know Your Rights. AND we finish off with our newest column Good and Welfare with personal victories and challenges Lone Star employees wanted to share with their colleagues.

Using the format we introduced last year, you can jump to each individual article from the links below. We hope that you'll read every article. Every one of them contains information you need to know to weather the storm going on in higher education around us.

Before we let you go to explore, let me share three important announcements.

1. **[AFT Lone Star College Fall Survey \(Coming soon!\)](#)** – Watch your email in the next few weeks to a link to our OWN survey of all LSC employees – faculty, staff, AND administrators. We want to monitor what pleases and concerns you about life at our college and working in education in general. The greater the response rate we can get, the more valid the results will be. We want to hear from you because we are YOUR union and we want to champion the causes that matter most to you.
2. **[AFT Fall Celebration](#)** – It's not all struggle! Come kick back with us at our annual Fall Celebration. We'll have great food, live music, good fellowship, and, of course, prizes. Mark your calendar for Saturday, November 7 at Swanny's and check out the advertisement below.
3. **[Join the Union!!](#)** – These times are too challenging to try to make it on your own. We are better together, and we can make more of a difference working in solidarity. The name of this newsletter tells you what we do. We ADVOCATE. We advocate for policy changes both within the college and in the halls of Austin and Washington. AND we advocate for individual people in their lives at Lone Star College so they can weather whatever storms may come their way. Please check out the links below to learn more and to sign up!!

[CLICK HERE TO DOWNLOAD ALL ARTICLES IN PDF FORMAT](#)

Table of Contents in this edition:

(Click each article to read individually)

What Else Could they Possibly Do?- The 2027 Texas Legislature and Higher Education
On Employee Pay Increases for the 2026-2027 School Year
An Open Letter from Texas Educators to Our Elected Officials
2026 Texas Faculty Survey: Academic freedom and political interference are greatest concerns
Election 2026-What You Need to Know to Vote
On Not Doing a Thing: LSC's Inadequate Response to Humanizers, Autotypers, and Bots
Dispatches from the Front #19---"How I Spent My Summer Vacation"
Know Your Rights: Progressive Discipline, Grievance, Restorative Justice, and Reconciliation
Good and Welfare
Union Membership & Benefits, Information and Discounts

Check out union events, benefits/discounts, & membership information below!

UPCOMING EVENTS

AFT BENEFIT SPOTLIGHT

MEMBERSHIP



RSVP NOW!

AFT Lone Star's
FALL Celebration!



Holidays are Coming!

We've got savings on car rentals, hotels, (B+B's or vacation home rentals), travel experiences & tours to your bucket list destinations. Roam, reset and reconnect with real travel savings from Union Plus!



AFT Lone Star is for YOU!

Whether you are a new LSC employee or a seasoned one, we encourage you to join the union!

Learn more here:

[Join AFT Lone Star College](#) |
[AFT Lone Star College](#)

CLICK HERE TO
RSVP!

CLICK HERE TO
LEARN MORE!

CLICK HERE TO
JOIN AFT!



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 or 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	Cyfair
Alan	Hall	President Emeritus	At- Large
Earl	Brewer	Secretary	At-Large
Erik	Oslund	Treasurer	Montgomery

Travis	Scott	North Harris Faculty Vice President	North Harris
Mickey	Robinson	North Harris Staff Vice President	North Harris
Krystal	Archie	Kingwood Staff Vice President	Kingwood
Gloria	Kessler	Montgomery Faculty Vice President	Montgomery
Martha	Neely	Montgomery Staff Vice President	Montgomery
Adrienne	Patton	Cyfair Faculty Vice President	Cyfair
Cindy	Hoffart-Watson	Cyfair Staff Vice President	Cyfair
Van	Piercy	Tomball Faculty Vice President	Tomball
Dierdre	Hayes-Cootz	Tomball Staff Vice President	Tomball
Cathleen	Quayle	System Office, Staff Vice President	System Office
Kahlilah	Moore	University Park, Staff Vice President	University Park
Katie	Truax	University Park Faculty Vice President	University Park
Chris	Davis	Online College Faculty Vice President	Online College

[CLICK HERE TO READ PAST ISSUES OF THE ADVOCATE!](#)

AFT Lone Star, Local Union #4518



AFT-Lone Star | P.O. Box 310404 | Houston, TX 77231 US

[Unsubscribe](#) | [Update Profile](#) | [Constant Contact Data Notice](#)



Try email & social marketing for free!