Contradictions in College Teaching

The special salary issue is here: Are you fairly paid?

CA faculty strike averted with 10.5 percent pay raises.

A supreme decision about union rights, our attorney explains.

An open letter to white colleagues about racism. SEE BACK COVER
U.S. Supreme Court reaﬃrms collective bargaining

IN A HIGHLY ANTICIPATED DECISION, the Supreme Court on March 29 released its verdict in the Friedrichs v. California Teachers Association (CTA) reaﬃrming that both public employees and public employers have a compelling interest in having strong and eﬀective collective bargaining. The 4-4 ruling leaves intact the precedent established by Abood v. Detroit Board of Education, the 1977 case in which the court upheld the fair share fees that support collective bargaining. Fair share fees, sometimes called agency fees, are part of tens of thousands of public sector collective bargaining relationships. “In Friedrichs, the court saw through the political attacks on the workplace rights of teachers, educators and other public employees,” NEA President Lily Eskelsen Garcia said. “This decision recognizes that stripping public employees of their voices in the workplace is not what our country needs.” (For more about the case, see NEA Office of General Counsel attorney Jason Walta’s column on pg. 15.)

Unemployment beneﬁts for contingent faculty

UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE FOR CONTINGENT FACULTY is an issue that NEA Higher Ed leaders and staﬀ will not allow to fade. In March, U.S. Rep. Suzanne Bonamici (D-OR) helped keep it in the forefront by asking Department of Labor (DOL) Secretary Thomas Perez, during a House committee hearing, how the DOL will help contingent faculty from across the U.S. to access unemployment insurance. In answering, Perez noted the eligibility guidelines that govern how states provide access to unemployment beneﬁts are 30 years old. He told Bonamici that DOL has “been doing a series of listening sessions to ﬁgure out what the 21st century guidance looks like. We’ve spoken to folks in higher ed, and across the spectrum, and we’ve heard from a lot of people like yourself.” Those sessions include meetings with NEA policy specialists. Meanwhile NEA President Lily Eskelsen Garcia wrote to Perez in 2015 urging quick action, and NEA Higher Ed members also spoke to the importance of the issue during Campus Equity Week 2015. “We are committed to coming to a workable solution,” he promised.

Get the new NEA 2016 Almanac of Higher Education

WONDERING HOW MUCH MONEY your state legislature provided to public higher ed this year? Or maybe how to negotiate for better working conditions for contingent faculty? Or perhaps how so-called “Right to Work” laws aﬀect higher education? The latest NEA Almanac of Higher Education has articles on these topics, and more. Go to www.nea.org/almanac.
I fit the description...

This is what I wore to work today.

On my way to get a burrito before work, I was detained by the police. I noticed the police car in a lot behind Centre Street. As I was walking away from my car, it followed me. As I was about to cross over to the burrito place, the officer got out of the car.

“Hey my man,” he said.
He unsnapped the holster of his gun.
I took my hands out of my pockets.
“Yes?” I said.
He was next to me now. Two other police cars pulled up. There were cops all around me.

I said nothing. I looked at the officer who addressed me. He was white, stocky, bearded.

“We had someone matching your description just try to break into a woman’s house.”

A second police officer stood next to me; white, tall, bearded. Two police cruisers passed and would continue to circle the block for the 35 minutes I was standing across the street from the burrito place.

“You fit the description,” the officer said. “Black male, knit hat, puffy coat. Do you have identification?”

“It’s in my wallet. May I reach into my pocket and get my wallet?”

“Yes.”

A friend knitted my cap in pinks and browns and blues and oranges and lime green. It doesn’t fit any description that anyone would have. I clapsed my hands in front of me to stop them from shaking.

“For the record,” I said to the second cop, “I’m not a criminal. I’m a college professor.” I was wearing my faculty ID around my neck, clearly visible with my photo.

“You fit the description so we just have to check it out.” The first cop returned and handed me my license.

“We have the victim and we need her to take a look at you to see if you are the person.”

It was at this moment that I knew I was probably going to die. I am not being dramatic when I say this. I was not going to get into a police car. I was not going to present myself to some victim. I was not going let someone tell the cops that I was not guilty when I already told them that I had nothing to do with any robbery. I was not going to let them take me anywhere because if they did, the chance I was going to be accused of something I did not do rose exponentially. I knew this in my heart.

If you are wondering why people don’t go with the police, I hope this explains it for you.

...Something weird happens when you are on the street being detained by the police. People look at you like you are a criminal. No one made eye contact with me. I was hoping someone I knew would walk by or get off the 39 bus and say to these cops, “That’s Steve Locke. What the fuck are you detaining him for?”

The cops decided they would bring the victim to view me on the street. They asked me to wait. I said nothing. I stood still.

“Thanks for cooperating,” the second cop said. “This is probably nothing, but it’s our job and you do fit the description.”

An older white woman walked up. She looked at me and then at the second cop. “You guys sure are busy today.”

I noticed a black woman further down the block. She was small and concerned. She was watching what was going on. I focused on her red coat. I slowed my breathing. I looked at her. I thought: Don’t leave, sister. Please don’t leave.

The first cop said, “Where do you teach?”

“Massachusetts College of Art and Design.” I tugged at the lanyard that had my ID.

“How long you been teaching there?”

“Thirteen years.”

We stood in silence for 10 more minutes. An unmarked police car pulled up. The driver looked at me as the first cop spoke to him. I looked directly at the driver. He got out of the car. “Okay,” the detective said. “We’re going to let you go.”

“Sorry for screwing up your lunch break,” the second cop said.

I walked back toward my car, away from the burrito place. I saw the woman in red.

“Thank you,” I said to her. “Thank you for staying.”

This excerpt from NEA Higher Ed member Steve Locke’s personal blog is reprinted with his permission. See more at: artandeverythingafter.com

NEA has committed to ending institutional racism. To get involved with this work on your own campus, take a look at NEA’s “Putting Our Values to Work,” a resource guide for social justice activists and organizers, at bit.ly/1RNw47R.
The 2016 Special Salary Issue of the NEA Advocate is now available online at nea.org/advocate. This annual issue includes up-to-date information about state funding for higher education (up 7 percent over the past five years), and faculty salaries (down 1 percent over the same years.) It also includes average salary data from every public institution in the nation. Want to know where faculty are best paid? Hint: It’s in California, but it’s not in the Cal State system, where NEA-affiliated faculty are fighting hard this spring for fair wages…

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>State</th>
<th>Percent Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NV</td>
<td>-2.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CA</td>
<td>+19.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AZ</td>
<td>-27.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NM</td>
<td>+9.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TX</td>
<td>+18.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LA</td>
<td>-25.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AK</td>
<td>3.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HI</td>
<td>+14.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WA</td>
<td>+11.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OR</td>
<td>+19.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ID</td>
<td>+20.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MT</td>
<td>+19.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NE</td>
<td>+43.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SD</td>
<td>+12.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ND</td>
<td>+10.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WI</td>
<td>+10.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IA</td>
<td>+11.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IL</td>
<td>+13.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MO</td>
<td>+3.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OK</td>
<td>-10.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AR</td>
<td>-2.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MS</td>
<td>+1.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AL</td>
<td>-3.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GA</td>
<td>+1.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SC</td>
<td>+10.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NC</td>
<td>+1.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OH</td>
<td>-2.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MI</td>
<td>-2.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WI</td>
<td>+10.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MI</td>
<td>-2.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IN</td>
<td>+13.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OH</td>
<td>-2.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KY</td>
<td>-8.4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TN</td>
<td>-1.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NC</td>
<td>-3.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VT</td>
<td>-3.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ME</td>
<td>+3.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NH</td>
<td>-9.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NY</td>
<td>+6.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CT</td>
<td>+11.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RI</td>
<td>+9.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NJ</td>
<td>+0.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MD</td>
<td>+14.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DE</td>
<td>+8.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MA</td>
<td>+23.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>+7.4%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**State Funding, FY 2011-16, percentage change**
Average Faculty Pay, FY 2011-16, percentage change

See more!
The special salary issue, available now at nea.org/advocate, has much more detailed information about salary and funding trends at every institution. Check it out now. (And share a copy with your union’s bargaining team!)


*FY2016 figures on state support for higher education represent initial allocations and estimates reported by the states from September through December 2015 and are subject to change. FY 16 data for Illinois and Pennsylvania are not yet available. Data for FY11, FY14, and FY15 may have been revised from figures reported previously in Grapevine.

*Beginning in 2013, CA data also include appropriations for California State University health care costs for retired annuitants. (Prior to 2013, these appropriations were not disaggregated from appropriations for the health care costs of state annuitants generally.)

*FY 16 state budget not yet enacted. The relatively large increases in previous fiscal years reflect rapidly increasing appropriations made to the State Universities Retirement System (SURS) to address the historical underfunding of pension programs.

*FY16 budget has not yet been finalized in PA.

*The relatively large increase in state support from FY14 to FY15 reflects the allocation of $406 million in property tax relief monies to the Wisconsin Technical College System. These state monies substitute for reductions in local property tax revenues to the colleges.
Paradox Power

So you see yourself as a learner-centered teacher. It’s not about you; it’s about the students. You get it. But still you have to grade; you have to cover the material. You feel conflicted a lot. How do you turn that troublesome conflict into something positive for both you and your students?

Some college teachers see their work as knowing the content and delivering that content to students. Others see their responsibility as facilitating learning, not merely disseminating content. Still others—probably the most effective ones—see themselves as doing all of the above and, in addition, creating learning systems in which they are an important part. They see themselves and their students as unique, fully human individuals who occupy the social roles of teacher and student, who view the world (and the class) subjectively, and who interact intersubjectively. This perspective means that as a teacher, I accept that I have feelings, and that I am a complicated human being just like my students. For well over 20 years now, I have looked carefully at the data about how faculty see their work as teachers, and it seems clear to me that these three perspectives are part of a potential developmental sequence—teacher-centered (egocentrism), learner-centered (aliocentrism), and teacher/learner-centered (systemocentrism) (Robertson, 1996, 1997, 1999a, 1999b, 2000a, 2000b, 2001, 2001-2002, 2002, 2003, 2005). What I have also observed is that fundamental contradictions exist in the role of college teachers who see themselves as more than mere disseminators of knowledge. Here’s how to make these contradictions work for you rather than against you.
Generative Paradox

When faced with a contradiction, we can treat it as a battle of opposites with winners and losers, or we can integrate the opposites to create a “generative paradox,” in which both sides are true simultaneously and feed each other synergistically. Let me illustrate how this works with the six contradictions that are fundamental to learner-centered teaching.

Control/Flow

Learning doesn’t always follow a direct route. You need to go with the flow. But a semester has 16 weeks, and student financial aid and other bureaucratic necessities depend on timely grades. Future courses also depend on pre-requisite knowledge. Control and flow, both are necessary.

We have eight grandchildren, six under age 4. So I watch a lot of kid’s movies. When I think of this contradiction of control/flow, I think of “Polar Express,” and the conductor charged with getting a train of children to the North Pole for Christmas. Events occur that relate to each child solving their own special developmental koan, or puzzle. The conductor always waits for the event to play out so the child reaps maximal learning, and ultimately, the train does arrive on time. Of course, magic is involved.

A similar magic occurs for learner-centered teachers who have the big picture locked in their heads—that is, they have a vision of what is truly important in the course and how those truly important things relate to each other. Chaos theory does not teach us that chaos prevails; it says order exists

I was fortunate to begin my college teaching career as an undergraduate with my very own discussion section of twenty students. I was terrified. It was 1970, when there wasn’t a whole lot of respect for authority going around, much less for college professors, unless they were hip. I tried to be hip. Fast forward to 1978 after I earned my Ph.D.: I was still terrified that my students would ask me something I didn’t know. Eventually, I learned that my real job as a teacher was to help students learn, not to know everything. I got pretty good at that. But I did notice a pattern every semester that just seemed to take the wind out of my sails, and the students’ too. No matter how long I put it off, nor how deep and trusting my relationship with students, when I became a judge of students, someone who represented external constituents (standards), rather than their developmental helper who took them as they were and worked with them to get better no matter where they started, when I graded them, when I turned on them, the dynamics of the class and my relationships with the students changed in way that just felt sad. This article is about how I found a way to make these contradictory roles—developer and evaluator—work together and make the class sing.

Meet Douglas L. Robertson

Douglas L. Robertson is dean of Undergraduate Education and professor of Higher Education at Florida International University, the public, research university in Miami, Florida (56,000 students, 4th largest public nationally). Dr. Robertson has started or transformed five university teaching centers and has served as director of three. He has written or co-edited seven books on change and faculty development, most recently co-editing with Kay Gillespie, A Guide to Faculty Development, 2nd ed. He has served on editorial boards of numerous scholarly journals related to college teaching. He taught his first college course in 1971, and has received several teaching awards along the way.
ultimately even if it is difficult to see. Using chaos theory to manage a course is useful. I know where I need to get. But how I get there is another matter. With this flexibility comes the ability to integrate control and flow. If a particularly productive discussion develops that is not exactly on today’s topic but is definitely contributing to my overall objectives for the course, I go with it. Voilà, generative paradox.

Facilitator/Evaluator

So you have a great relationship with a student, and then you give him a C- on a paper. Your relationship changes for the worse. If you are trying to facilitate insight in your students, something beyond just the facts, students need to trust that the disruption you introduce into their worldview is for something good. Trust is critical. Grades can interfere with that trust.

I talk about the elephant in the room from the start, as we discuss the syllabus. I point out the facilitator/evaluator contradiction, and invite comment on my solution, my grading system. The students find out how I think, which is a relief to them. Guessing what an evaluator values not only inhibits their development as self-directed learners. Talking about the evaluation system and inviting them into it facilitates their development as self-directed learners. Voilà, generative paradox.

Loving the Subject/Loving the Students

I decided to become a professor because I loved to learn, to create new knowledge, and to write and talk about it. Then when I began teaching, I realized I needed also to focus on helping my students to learn. Several ways to bring my learning and theirs together exist. Of course, I can work into my courses what I am learning. But I also can share my process of doing scholarship to further develop students’ skills as lifelong, self-directed learners. Much has been made of Carol Dweck’s “fixed mindset/growth mindset” research, and deservedly so. But it primarily points out that if people do not see themselves as capable of learning and getting better at it, they perform more poorly in learning than people who do see themselves as capable of learning and getting better at it. It is that simple. As the teacher, I can make improving at self-directed learning a course objective, and I can model how to do it as well as help students’ find their own particular approach. Voilà, generative paradox.

Subject Expert/Teaching and Learning Expert

I received a Ph.D. because I could do independent research in my scholarly specialty. I received no training in how to teach that subject to students. But as a teacher, I came to see myself as learner-centered. I became fascinated by the learning process and how to facilitate it. How do I simultaneously pursue my expertise in my subject and in teaching and learning? In others words, how do I add another subject expertise (essentially educational psychology) to my current subject expertise? In the 1990s, Ernest Boyer, Patricia Cross, and Lee Shulman created the field of Scholarship of Teaching and Learning, which invites college teachers to use their research expertise—no matter the discipline—to study teaching and learning in their courses and share that research. So every course enables me to practice my research expertise with students, with three positive outcomes. First, I get better at teaching my subject. Second, I produce scholarly results to share with my colleagues and possibly publish. And third, as I bring my students into what I am doing, they learn to do research and to become better self-directed learners. Voilà, generative paradox.


I commend to you the work of Dr. Harriet Schwartz, associate professor in the department of Psychology and Counseling at Carlow University and lead scholar for Education as Relational Practice at the Jean Baker Miller Training Institute, and Dr. Jennifer Snyder-Duch, associate professor of Communication at Carlow University. Drs. Schwartz and Snyder-Duch are new edited book in the New Directions in Teaching and Learning Series, edited by Catherine Wehlburg, that will explore emotion in college teaching. Contributed chapters will deal with empathy, anger, joy, assessment, intersubjectivity, online environments, women faculty of color, organizational trauma, and ambition. As you can see in what I have written here, I believe that emotion plays a central part in so many aspects of the teaching and learning system and that the most effective college teachers (and advisors) need to be aware of their own and their students’ emotional lives and how they interact. What we are doing here in talking about generative paradox and emotion in college teaching is to further elaborate the most effective teaching perspective—systemocentrism, or teacher/learner-centeredness.
Caring for Students/ Caring for Self

I don’t want to sound like a Hallmark card, but learner-centered teaching involves caring for students, which means trying to help each individual develop to the fullest extent possible. (Army version: “Be all you can be.”) That is a tall order for the teacher, especially in large classes.

That is where caring for the self comes in. You need to do it. Actually, you need to do both: care for students and care for the self. Carol Gilligan (In a Different Voice, 1982) reported on a study of women deciding to abort their pregnancies, and her results led to a developmental model regarding a person’s capacity to care. First stage, we focus on ourselves; second, we focus on the other; and third, we integrate our care for self and other, and do both at the same time. That is what the teacher needs to do. Voilà, generative paradox. I wrote a book on how to do that, Making Time, Making Change: Avoiding Overload in College Teaching.


SOREN KIERKEGAARD

Individual Mentor/Group Learning Leader

We need to facilitate the learning of individual students who learn at different rates and in different ways. But also, we have a responsibility to keep the herd moving. To get this done we can create group work where meaningful incentives exist for students to teach each other. To teach is to learn twice, and tremendous development can come to both students—the learner and the teacher—from peer-led instruction. Voilà, generative paradox.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES


Robertson, D. Transformative Learning and Transition Theory: Toward Developing the Ability to Facilitate Insight. Journal on Excellence in College Teaching, 1997, 8(1), 105-125.


This spring two NEA Higher Ed members testified in different hearings about college affordability and Higher Education Act reauthorization.

**Mecheline Farhat Roldan**  
BERGEN COMMUNITY COLLEGE, NEW JERSEY

In February, Senate Democrats heard from New Jersey community college professor Mecheline Farhat Roldan, who with her husband owes an incredible $170,000 in student loans. This student loan debt has become such a weight in her life that Farhat Roldan skipped two maternity leaves so as not to lose any income, and greeted students online from her hospital bed two days after giving birth. “I worked hard. I did everything by the rules. And I’m giving back to my community,” said Farhat Roldan. “Honestly, it makes me feel as if I were deceived by this ‘land of opportunity.’” Senate Democrats have an answer: The new RED Act, introduced by Sen. Tammy Baldwin (D-WI) in March, has NEA’s strong support. It would increase Pell Grants; allow borrowers to refinance their loans at lower interest rates; reward states with free community college; and close corporate tax loopholes. Support the RED Act!

**Jim Grimes**  
JOLIET JUNIOR COLLEGE, ILLINOIS

As a contingent professor who works at two Chicagoland community colleges, Grimes earns $2,000 or less per semester per class, he told members of the U.S. House Committee on Education and the Workforce in March. Even with a full-time teaching load, that adds up to less than $20,000 a year. “If I weren’t a retired teacher and a retired soldier, with modest pensions, I couldn’t even afford to travel to these colleges to teach,” he said. And yet, these underpaid faculty members, who often are denied health benefits and professional development, are 1.3 million of the U.S.’s 1.8 million faculty. Lawmakers should use the reauthorization of the Higher Education Act to focus on the needs of students and faculty, whose working conditions are students’ learning conditions. You can help, too: Ask Congress to restore the original promise of HEA to provide an affordable and high-quality public higher education.

**TAKE ACTION!**
**TELL SENATORS TO SUPPORT THE RED ACT**
Go to: bit.ly/1QVBPhA

**ASK CONGRESS TO RESTORE THE ORIGINAL PROMISE OF HEA**
Go to: bit.ly/1ReDoF9
The Disappearing College Major: Where are the Future Teachers?

When Theresa Montaño first joined the faculty at CSU Northridge as a professor of bilingual education, her classes were packed with future teachers. “I had to turn students away,” she said. Now, a little more than a decade later, “I’m actually having a hard time enrolling students in my undergrad education classes. And it’s not just my classes, or my campus — this is true across the CSU system.” In fact, it’s true across the nation.

According to a 2016 national survey of college freshmen, the number of students who say they will major in education has reached its lowest point in 45 years:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1973</td>
<td>13.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1975</td>
<td>11.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980</td>
<td>8.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1985</td>
<td>6.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>10.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1995</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2000</td>
<td>11%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>9.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2010</td>
<td>7.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>4.2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Cooperative Institutional Research Program, Higher Education Research Institute, University of California at Los Angeles

What are the solutions?

- Increase pay for teachers. In 2012-13, the average new teacher salary was $36,141. Meanwhile, a quarter of student loan borrowers with graduate degrees owe more than $100,000!
- Make college affordable and broaden access to federal loan forgiveness programs for educators. Senate Democrats’ RED Act would do this: Encourage your Senator to support it.
- Faculty should revamp undergraduate programs so that students get skills and experiences in K12 classrooms as early as possible. NEA is especially a proponent of teacher residency programs.
- Help connect future teachers to a teachers’ union. “Once we expose them to the K12 classroom, where they actually work with teachers and develop ethnic studies lessons, and once we expose them to the union, it seals it for us. They want to be teachers and union activists,” says Montaño.

“There’s no question that something must change—and quickly. Baby Boomers are retiring and the candidates who could fill their jobs are simply not there.”
— NEA President Lily Eskelsen García
Congratulations!

DURING THE 2016 NEA HIGHER EDUCATION CONFERENCE, FACULTY WHO HAVE CONTRIBUTED TO THE ACADEMY GENERALLY, AND TO NEA HIGHER ED SPECIFICALLY, WERE HONORED BY THEIR COLLEAGUES.

MICHAEL RYAN, Ferris State University, received the James Davenport award from the National Council for Higher Education for his 37 years of service to his union. His “compelling intellect” is matched by an “infectious sense of humor,” said MAHE President Alec Thomson.

THERESA MONTANO, CSU Northridge, a former NCHE president and current California Teachers’ Association vice president, also received the James Davenport award from NCHE for her decades of unparalleled service to the union.

CATHERINE LEISEK, Broward College, an internationally exhibited artist, who also has served as an NEA Board of Directors member, an NCHE director-at-large, president of her faculty senate and campus union, and much more, received the NEA Friend of Higher Education Award.

PHU PHAN, CSU East Bay, is the co-winner of the NEA Art of Teaching Prize, along with co-authors Terry Jones and Holly Vugia, for their 2015 Thought & Action article on teaching about race and racism in higher education classrooms.

DANA STACHOWIAK, University of Louisiana at Lafayette, took home the NEA Democracy in Higher Education Prize for her 2015 Thought & Action article on diversity on campuses. “Raising awareness is not enough; we must also raise critical consciousness,” she wrote. (See more from Stachowiak on page 16.)

LISSA STAPLETON, CSU Northridge, is the recipient of the New Scholar Prize from Thought & Action’s review panel for her article on the experiences of Deaf faculty. “The goal is not to privilege a few,” she wrote, “but rather to create a space that does not favor one way of seeing and negotiating the world.”

SUMMER READING

Thought & Action focuses on equity

“W”hile Alex may never hold a job, or raise a family, or even be able to live fully independently, he still has a deep and abiding love of learning,” writes Diane Zeeuw, of her son, a young man with schizophrenia. In Zeeuw’s Thought & Action article, she explores how common metrics of “success” in public higher education often exclude the psychologically fragile. Other articles in this issue tackle current issues of race and racism, and what it means to be a faculty member who is Deaf. Order a paper copy at www.subscribenea.org — please use the code NEAHIGHERED for free delivery — or download at nea.org/thoughtandaction. Also check out the latest call for papers on the website.
Making noise in Chicago: Part-time faculty speak up

For more than four years, members of CCCLOC (the City Colleges of Chicago Organizing Committee, an NEA-affiliated union of part-time faculty) have been working without a contract. In late March, CCCLOC members joined forces with members of the eight other unions on campus to hold an electric town hall meeting that brought out students and community members, including Chicago aldermen and Illinois state representatives. Members, as well as students, talked about the need to invest in adjunct faculty, who teach 70 percent of the classes, as well as stop tuition hikes and program consolidation plans, which will require students to travel hours to get from one side of the city to the other. “Community colleges are supposed to provide a nurturing environment for students. But they’re changing the City Colleges into a corporate model for those who can afford to pay, and those who have the time to attend full-time,” said CCCLOC President Loretta Ragsdell. “And down here, you’ve got all the adjuncts holding it up. They’re really making a living off our backs.”

New unions among Florida faculty: Welcome to NEA!

The United Faculty of Florida is on the move! This spring, UFF filed petitions with the state labor commission for union elections at two institutions: Florida Polytechnic University and State College of Florida. At each, full-time faculty members are seeking a union affiliated with UFF. “As our institution grows, we have a great deal to do... to hire qualified faculty, expand research infrastructure, and attract the best and brightest students from across the state and nation. With a strong, collective voice for faculty, we feel confident we can accomplish these goals,” wrote Florida Poly assistant professors Jessica Zbeida and Patrick Luck, in a recent statement. Poly opened in 2014. Meanwhile, faculty at the State College of Florida (SCF) have recently faced efforts to erode tenure and their participation in shared governance. “The basis of our drive for unionization is to protect the current quality of our institution at SCF,” wrote Professor Courtney Ruffner. With a collective voice, SCF faculty can maintain an academic community where students can expect critical thought and constructive discourse, she added.

Illinois budget crisis drives faculty unionizing

Illinois public colleges and universities were cut off from state funds in July 2015—more than nine months ago. Now, low-income students are losing state scholarships, and faculty and staff are getting laid off by the hundreds. “It’s obvious the quote ‘education’ governor doesn’t care about education or about governing,” said Beverly Stewart, higher-education chair of the Illinois Education Association (IEA) board of directors. The problem started last year with a state budget proposal by Republican Gov. Bruce Rauner designed to break the state’s unions and also to drastically cut funding for higher education. Lawmakers have refused to go along, and so there is no budget. “The state budget is being held hostage in Springfield,” said Charles Berger, a professor at Southern Illinois University Edwardsville (SIUE), where fed-up tenure-line faculty are organizing a union. “Political pressure in Springfield, and binding provisions of a union contract at SIUE will guarantee that faculty will have a voice in the future of SIUE,” said Berger. The new union would represent more than 400 faculty members.

On April 8, five days before the more than 26,000 members of the California Faculty Association (CFA) were to embark on a massive five-day strike on all 23 campuses of the California State University, CFA President Jennifer Eagan and CSU Chancellor Timothy White announced a tentative agreement in negotiations on the reopened contract between the CFA and CSU.

“This year the faculty rose up and organized like no other year before it. Their tireless activism, humor and courage inspired me every day,” said CFA President Jennifer Eagan.

As a result, the tentative agreement includes 10.5 percent pay raises; 5 percent to be implemented on June 30, plus 2 percent more on July 1, plus an additional 3.5 percent on July 1, 2017.

The agreement requires CFA board and member approval. Then, CSU trustees will vote at their May 24-25 meeting.

The issue driving faculty to strike was the CSU’s persistent lack of investment in their working conditions. The CSU has nearly 500,000 students, including many first-generation college students and students of color. Their ability to access the American Dream depends on faculty. But those faculty have been overlooked for years. Their pay was frozen for five years, then cut during the recession.

Fifty percent earn less than $40,000 a year. More than 70 percent have taken on additional jobs to pay their bills. In late March, an independent fact-finder found that 5 percent raises for faculty were affordable, justifiable, fair, and necessary.

“As we invest in faculty, we invest in students’ learning environment and their success. It also allows us to hire and recruit and retain the very best faculty members,” said White.
# NEA Members Insurance Trust® and Plan
## 2014 SUMMARY ANNUAL REPORT
(Plan Year Beginning September 1, 2014)

The following is the summary annual report for the NEA Members Insurance Trust® and Plan (collectively Trust), Employer Identification Number 53-0115260, providing information on the insurance programs sponsored by the National Education Association (NEA) including the NEA Life Insurance® Program, NEA Accidental Death & Dismemberment Insurance Program, and NEA Complimentary Life® Program for the period beginning September 1, 2014, and ending August 31, 2015. The annual report has been filed with the Employee Benefits Security Administration, as required under the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 (ERISA).

### BASIC NEA MEMBERS INSURANCE TRUST FINANCIAL INFORMATION

The value of Trust assets, after subtracting liabilities of the Trust, was **$134,858,655** as of August 31, 2015, compared to **$138,313,816** as of September 1, 2014. During the Trust year, the Trust experienced a decrease in its net assets of **$3,455,161**. During the Trust year, the Trust had total income of **$103,661,792** including participant contributions of **$105,566,540**, a net depreciation in the market value of investments of **$6,382,672**, and earnings from investments of **$4,477,924**. Trust expenses were **$109,951,147**. These expenses included benefits paid to participants and beneficiaries, administrative and other expenses.

### INFORMATION FOR NEA LIFE INSURANCE PROGRAM

The Trust has a contract with Minnesota Life Insurance Company to pay all NEA Preferred Term Life Insurance claims and The Prudential Insurance Company of America to pay all other NEA Life Insurance claims incurred under the terms of this program. Because it is a so called “experienced rated” contract, the premium costs are affected by, among other things, the number and size of claims. The total premiums for the Trust plan year beginning September 1, 2014, and ending August 31, 2015, made under such “experienced-rated” contract were **$3,748,222** and the total of all benefit claims paid under the contract during the Trust year was **$52,250,236**. The total number of participants was **516,113**.

### INFORMATION FOR NEA ACCIDENTAL DEATH & DISMEMBERMENT (AD&D) PROGRAMS

The Trust has a contract with The Prudential Insurance Company of America to pay all NEA AD&D and NEA AD&D Plus claims incurred under the terms of the Trust. Because it is a so called “experienced rated” contract, the premium costs are affected by, among other things, the number and size of claims. The total premiums for the Trust plan year beginning September 1, 2014, and ending August 31, 2015, made under such “experienced-rated” contract were **$3,640,830** and the total of all benefit claims paid under the contract during the Trust year was **$16,677**. The total number of participants was **191,220** in all AD&D Programs.

### INFORMATION FOR NEA COMPLIMENTARY LIFE INSURANCE PROGRAM

The Trust has a contract with The Prudential Insurance Company of America to pay all NEA Complimentary Life Insurance claims incurred under the terms of the Trust. The NEA Complimentary Life Insurance Program is self-supporting and paid by premiums from the NEA Members Insurance Trust funds rather than from Member contributions. Because it is a so called “experienced rated” contract, the premium costs are affected by, among other things, the number and size of claims. The total premiums for the Trust plan year beginning September 1, 2014, and ending August 31, 2015, were **$1,385,244** and the total of all benefit claims paid under the contract during the Trust year was **$1,195,137**. The total number of participants was **3,156,823**.

### YOUR RIGHTS TO ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

As a participant, you have the legally protected right to receive a copy of the full annual report, or any part thereof for a reasonable charge or you may inspect the Annual Report without charge at the office of NEA Members Insurance Trust, Attn: NEA Member Benefits, 1201 Sixteenth Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036 or at the U.S. Department of Labor in Washington, D.C. upon payment of copying costs. Requests to the Department should be addressed to: Public Disclosure Room, Room N–1513, Employee Benefits Security Administration, U.S. Department of Labor, 200 Constitution Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20210. You also have the right to receive from the Trust Administrator, on request and at no charge, a statement of the assets and liabilities of the Trust and accompanying notes, or a statement of income and expenses of the Trust and accompanying notes, or both. If you request a copy of the full annual report from the plan administrator, these two statements and accompanying notes will be included as part of that report. The charge to cover copying costs given above does not include a charge for the copying of these portions of the report because these portions are furnished without charge.

---

**INFORMATION FOR NEA ACCIDENTAL DEATH & DISMEMBERMENT (AD&D) PROGRAMS**

The Trust has a contract with The Prudential Insurance Company of America which allocates funds toward group insurance certificates for the NEA AD&D Advantage Program. The total premiums for the Trust plan year beginning September 1, 2014, and ending August 31, 2015, was **$16,677**. The total number of participants was **191,220** in all AD&D Programs.

**INFORMATION FOR NEA COMPLIMENTARY LIFE INSURANCE PROGRAM**

The Trust has a contract with The Prudential Insurance Company of America to pay all NEA Complimentary Life Insurance claims incurred under the terms of the Trust. The NEA Complimentary Life Insurance Program is self-supporting and paid by premiums from the NEA Members Insurance Trust funds rather than from Member contributions. Because it is a so called “experienced rated” contract, the premium costs are affected by, among other things, the number and size of claims. The total premiums for the Trust plan year beginning September 1, 2014, and ending August 31, 2015, were **$1,385,244** and the total of all benefit claims paid under the contract during the Trust year was **$1,195,137**. The total number of participants was **3,156,823**.

**YOUR RIGHTS TO ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

As a participant, you have the legally protected right to receive a copy of the full annual report, or any part thereof for a reasonable charge or you may inspect the Annual Report without charge at the office of NEA Members Insurance Trust, Attn: NEA Member Benefits, 1201 Sixteenth Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036 or at the U.S. Department of Labor in Washington, D.C. upon payment of copying costs. Requests to the Department should be addressed to: Public Disclosure Room, Room N–1513, Employee Benefits Security Administration, U.S. Department of Labor, 200 Constitution Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20210. You also have the right to receive from the Trust Administrator, on request and at no charge, a statement of the assets and liabilities of the Trust and accompanying notes, or a statement of income and expenses of the Trust and accompanying notes, or both. If you request a copy of the full annual report from the plan administrator, these two statements and accompanying notes will be included as part of that report. The charge to cover copying costs given above does not include a charge for the copying of these portions of the report because these portions are furnished without charge.
With Friedrichs settled, what’s next?

BY JASON WALTA

ON THE MORNING OF MARCH 29, you may have felt something unmistakably powerful ripple across the land. What you felt was a massive sigh of collective relief by working people. And what prompted it was nine simple words—“The judgment is affirmed by an equally divided Court”—that made up the entirety of the Supreme Court’s decision in Friedrichs v. California Teachers Association.

Friedrichs, you may recall, involved a lawsuit brought by a conservative advocacy group arguing that union fair-share fee arrangements are unconstitutional in public-sector employment. In other words, these ideological crusaders sought a ruling that would create a constitutionally-enshrined nationwide “Right to Work” law in the public sector. Standing in the way of this radical result was Abood v. Detroit Board of Education, a unanimous 1977 Supreme Court decision that upheld the constitutionality of fair-share arrangements as an integral component of public-sector collective bargaining. For nearly 40 years, Abood has been the cornerstone of productive collective bargaining relationships that have enhanced the lives of millions by creating good middle-class jobs and improving the delivery of public services to everyone.

The Friedrichs challengers sought to have all of that swept away with the stroke of a pen. But things didn’t turn out as they had hoped. While the case was pending, the conservative firebrand Justice Antonin Scalia passed away, leaving the remaining justices deadlocked. When such a tie occurs, the decision that has been appealed—in this case, a decision of the Ninth Circuit Court of Appeals rejecting the challenge—is automatically affirmed. So, at least for now, Abood remains the law of the land.

President Obama has already named a successor to Justice Scalia’s seat, the widely respected appellate judge Merrick Garland. In ordinary times, Garland would be a shoo-in: in addition to his sterling credentials and experience, he has long record of cautious, moderate judicial decision-making. But these are not ordinary times. Senate Republicans have taken the unprecedented step of vowing to leave the seat vacant and deny Garland even the courtesy of a fair confirmation hearing. Their stated reason is that the voters in November’s presidential election should have the final say on who makes the nomination. Lost in their argument is the fact that voters did have a say: they re-elected President Obama in 2012 to serve a four-year term, and entrusted him with all the powers of the president to nominate Supreme Court justices.

It remains unclear whether Senate Republicans will succeed in obstructing the nomination. But a great deal hangs in the balance. For starters, the issue in Friedrichs could come back again soon, with literally dozens of fair-share fee cases percolating through the lower courts. On top of which, there are countless other issues of importance on which the Court has divided 5-to-4 in recent years. To sample just a few, there’s the 2013 decision in Holder v. Shelby County that gutted the Voting Rights Act. There’s the 2010 decision in Citizens United v. FEC and the 2014 decision in McCutcheon v. FEC that opened the floodgates allowing wealthy individuals and corporations even more leverage in the political system. And there’s the series of decisions beginning with Garcetti v. Ceballos in 2006 that have whittled away at the First Amendment right of public employees.

Placing a moderate-to-liberal justice in a seat held for decades by a staunch conservative would shift the balance of the Court dramatically. But to make that happen, public pressure needs to force Senate Republicans to end their obstruction. Or, barring that, voters need to take Senate obstructionists up on their offer and show them at the ballot box what kind of justice—and what kind of future—we want the next president to champion.

Jason Walta is an attorney in the NEA Office of General Counsel and an adjunct faculty member at American University’s Washington College of Law.
An Open Letter to my White Colleagues

I recently sat on an anti-racism panel at the NEA Higher Ed Conference with some amazing scholars, including Dr. Terry Jones. I applaud conference organizers for making “Racial Justice in Education” a conversation throughout the weekend. This work, especially in higher ed, is much needed, and it is both right on time and long overdue. Of course, conversations about institutional racism have been happening for years, mostly by people of color and some anti-racist whites. Dr. Jones reminded us of this when he said he has been doing this work for 50 years.

This is not to say that the many years of pushing for racial justice haven’t led to changes or that efforts have been frivolous. But naming the fact that this work is decades old creates opportunity to put some responsibility where it belongs: on us, white people. Let’s face it, we have not done enough sustainable anti-racist work.

It’s time to be real: White racism is our problem, not the problem of people of color, and we need to take responsibility for it and move into action to dismantle it. Some important ways that we can do sustainable anti-racist work follow.

1) Be critically self-reflexive about your own positionality, particularly your white privilege. And then own ALL of the ways you play a role in systemic and institutional racism just by being white.

2) Build critical consciousness about how privilege, power, and oppression operate. Center your understanding on equity and intersectionality, and then question every narrative you hear, read, or see about racism and white privilege. It is YOUR job to educate yourself on institutional racism, not the job of your colleague or friend of color.

3) Listen to people of color and their realities of racism and white privilege. Stop trying to understand how it feels or relate to it with a personal anecdote. You are white; you will never ever know what it feels like to experience racism. And, most importantly, IT’S NOT ABOUT YOU. You are not the center of this reality; you are a creator of it.

4) When white guilt, fatigue, fragility, and/or resistance set in, push past it. Nothing positive happens if you stay here.

5) Follow the airport rule: “See something, say something.” As white people, we need to move from being anti-racist allies to being anti-racist accomplices. We need to say something. Do something. WE. Not them.

These five actions (meaning you do something) are by no means exhaustive or the answer to ending institutional racism, but they are a guide. I often say, “Social justice work is never done,” and the truth is that anti-racist work of white people is ongoing, for life. This isn’t a burden; it’s an obligation, and it’s time white people step up.

Stay in touch with current legislation, developing trends in higher education, and more through the NEA eAdvocate, a monthly enewsletter.

To subscribe, visit pages.email.nea.org/EnewslettersSubscription/

Dana Stachowiak is assistant professor of diversity/multicultural education at the University of Louisiana at Lafayette. She also is the winner of NEA’s Democracy in Higher Education Prize for her article at nea.org/thoughtandaction.