

AFA report to the Board of Trustees, 10/12/21, AFA President

President Battenfeld, Trustees, President Chong, Colleagues and other members of the community--

First, I'd like to welcome our newest Trustee, Michael Valdovinos. SRJC was fortunate to have two highly qualified and experienced candidates compete to fill the open seat on the Board, and we want to congratulate Dr. Valdovinos for his successful bid and thank him for his willingness to serve. It's especially wonderful to have one of our own alumni return to support our District. AFA officers look forward to meeting with our new Trustee and, to that end, will reach out in the near future.

I'm happy to report that negotiations between AFA and the District on numerous fronts are proceeding exceptionally well. Our collaborations on the implementation of protocols related to the COVID pandemic, in particular, have been very encouraging. We want to extend our gratitude to the District team, who have been responsive to faculty concerns and have worked hard to ensure our members and our students will enjoy a safe environment to work and study in.

We also wish to extend our gratitude to all of those District employees (both Management and Classified Professionals) who have been working hard to implement the protocols on the ground. Special thanks are due to the folks in Student Health Services who have met the herculean task of preparing for a robust vaccine verification and testing regime in anticipation of the coming mandate deadline. The faculty appreciate your efforts.

You've heard me say before that Union Work is Equity Work. This is not a public relations slogan, but a core operating principle. Though AFA

has always been committed to the principle that all of our members deserve equal dignity and respect, we are redoubling our efforts to take specific measures to make Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion conscious priorities moving forward. Beginning last spring, and continuing through our bi-annual retreat last month, we have been planning for specific initiatives, including an outreach program to welcome and include diverse voices in our operations, encourage diverse candidates to run for union office, and frequently reach out to faculty to ensure diverse voices are incorporated in our decisions. We also look forward to consulting with our affiliates at CCCI later this month to learn how other unions are addressing these issues.

Further, we have been engaged in an ongoing cooperative effort, along with our District partners, to negotiate terms for the numerous positions proposed to address DEIA values. Negotiations establishing clear contractual parameters for these position, is an essential step in creating robust and sustainable operations while incorporating these positions into the institutional framework of the College. As one example, yesterday I had the honor and pleasure of signing, along with President Chong, an MOU establishing the Native American Center Coordinator position. Further, AFA is working closely with the district and relevant faculty members (many of whom were mentioned in the Academic Senate report) in the development of an Ethnic Studies department. The first step, on which we and the District have made substantial progress, is the development of provisions to establish an Acting Chair position to facilitate the creation of this new department along with its numerous programs. This is the first time the District has created a new department since long before AFA was founded. There are many complicated elements to this process. But this effort is made

far easier by the groundwork, including a positive and collaborative rapport, our two teams have established at the table.

We look forward to continuing this work with our District Partners.

Thank you for your time.