

THE FUSA INFORMANT

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Your FUSA Officers

FUSA Council President – Sheryl Sippel

FUSA Council Vice-President – Jeremy Bullian

FUSA Council Treasurer – Wendy Pogoda

FUSA Council Secretary - Janet Willman

FUSA Council Grievances Chair: Tom Tankersley

WATCH FOR FUTURE ISSUES TO BE PUBLISHED!

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A BIG THANK YOU FOR READING!

**JOIN THE UNION AND GET A
\$100.00 REBATE ON YOUR
FIRST YEAR'S DUES!!**

fusahcc.org



WELCOME TO FALL IN-SERVICE AT HILLSBOROUGH COMMUNITY COLLEGE!

As the new Editor of The FUSA Informant, I invite you to enjoy our first issue of Fall 2024. My name is Ken McCullough, and I teach Government & History on the Dale Mabry Campus. My goal is to make this newsletter more informative and beneficial to FUSA and our members. In this debut issue, you can find articles by members of the Council, but I invite other members of the faculty to submit articles for publications in the future. If there is something that you think your colleagues should be aware of, let me know. You will find my email and phone number below. If there is a question about FUSA or the contract, let me know. If I do not know, I will direct it to someone that does. The anonymous question and answer will come in the next issue to benefit others who might have a similar question. If you need a faster answer, we can arrange that, also. Thank you. And a Big Thank you for reading!

In Solidarity! Ken McCullough, Dale Mabry Campus

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THE PRESIDENT'S STATE OF THE UNION

Welcome to the new academic year, to both new and returning faculty!

This is the final year of our 2022 – 2025 contract. Another step and pay scale increase goes into effect this month, along with labs and clinicals increasing to ten points to be equitable with lectures. Overall, faculty received an average of a 21% increase in base salary over this 3-year contract, which was a great achievement! In October, we will begin bargaining the next 3-year contract, so watch for emails soliciting your input.

Last year also had UFF and FEA combating legislative and curriculum changes. While many proposals did not pass, SB 266 banned using state funds to advocate for DEI programs, and the Board of Governors removed sociology as a core gen-ed course. In an effort to bust teacher unions (police and firefighter unions were exempt), SB 256 eliminated payroll dues deductions and then threatened union decertification if unions did not meet the increased threshold of 60% participation. The result to date is that UFF has attained its highest membership level ever. However, while HCC-FUSA is well over the 60% threshold, PERC is still going to expend funds to conduct a recertification election for us sometime this year and then hopefully we will be done with this nonsense. UFF and your senators will continue to battle and keep us apprised of what this year's legislative session brings.

A couple of weeks ago, UFF leadership asked us if we would pass along any wisdom on how HCC-FUSA has maintained the highest level of membership in the state year after year. I have been a part of FUSA for over 20 years and noted these common threads: strong leadership, a great bargaining team, an influx of new members each year, one of the best contracts in the Florida College System, and above all, a supportive membership that we fight to serve and is always there when we need them. There is strength in numbers!

To learn more about the union, discuss your concerns, or just have a chat, see your campus FUSA Council representative or senator.

In Solidarity, FUSA President Sherry Sippel, Dale Mabry Campus

THE UNION PROMOTES EFFORTS TO "GOTV" THIS FALL

In the 2024-25 academic year, the Government Relations Committee will focus largely on Get Out the Vote (GOTV) efforts for the General Election in the Fall and the Florida legislative session in the Spring (March 4 - May 2).

United Faculty of Florida (UFF) will make a big GOTV push ahead of the November election. Specific initiatives are still in the planning stages but will likely include voter registration/updating and organizing around issues important to higher education and

Floridians. UFF does not make endorsements in the National races but does for Florida races and issues that affect education. UFF is officially non-partisan, choosing instead to back candidates and issues that support our faculty and education regardless of party affiliation.

There is no better proof of this than during the regular session of the Florida Legislature. As in previous years, UFF will work with legislators on both sides of the aisle to shape policy and, frankly, to water down bad bills that are often agenda-driven attacks on faculty, tenure, our hard-earned rights. The work we do in the Fall, supporting candidates friendly to higher education, will directly impact the legislative session in the Spring. We need more legislators that value the work we do. Allies who will protect academic and intellectual freedom and our rights to collectively bargain.

Keep an eye out for messages from UFF & FUSA regarding both the upcoming elections this Fall, and then in the Spring, during the legislative session. Our state (FEA) and national affiliates (NEA & AFT) will be active as well. Your help this coming year will go a long way toward ensuring candidates are elected that embrace and commit to the same values that we hold true as a union of higher education professionals: truth, democracy, solidarity, freedom, and responsibility. We are always looking for assistance in the fight to uphold these values. If you are interested in getting involved, contact Jeremy Bullian: jbullian@hccfl.edu.

In Solidarity, FUSA Vice President Jeremy Bullian, Plant City Campus



L-R: John Hardin, Ken McCullough, Elizabeth Key-Raimer, and Eric Fiske at the NEA RA in Philly.

Image Source:
Personal
Collection

A TALE OF TWO CONVENTIONS

Our Union was represented at two national conventions this summer. We attended the NEA Representative Assembly in Philadelphia and the AFT Convention in Houston. If you hadn't heard, the NEA was interrupted by a strike of the NEASO, the staff of the NEA. Negotiations broke down and the Convention was stopped because our members would not cross a picket line, understandably. It was inconvenient, but strikes are supposed to be inconvenient. Protest is as American as apple pie. And can be dangerous, the Texas Governor Gregg Abbott just pardoned a man who was convicted of murder for running over a protester. The murderer sent out a tweet the night before, saying he wanted to kill a protester. Both Texas and Florida have made it easier to commit attacks on protests. The NEA may have been cut short, but the work continued.

We attended the American Federation of Teachers Convention in Houston. The newly minted Democratic Presidential Candidate spoke to the attendees. Vice-President Kamala Harris thanked us for the AFT's endorsement. The AFT was one of the first organizations to endorse Harris for President. The NEA was the first union to endorse Vice-President Harris.

I would like to thank my union siblings for electing me to represent them at these conventions. It was an eye-opening experience. It was my first AFT Convention and my second NEA Representative Assembly. I am grateful and proud for the honor of representing you. And my fellow Delegates, I am sure, share this sentiment. Thank you.

In Solidarity, Ken McCullough, Dale Mabry Campus

WHERE WERE YOU IN 1975?

Walt Ellis is a Sociology Professor and the most senior faculty member at Hillsborough Community College. I asked him to reflect on his many years of experience with the Union. Our younger members may not realize how far we have come because of collective bargaining. He started in 1975, what were you doing in 1975? I was in Junior High. The following is Professor Ellis's response.

My upbringing was not particularly supportive of unions, and I grew up in a small southern town where there were no unions. However, as a student of sociology, I learned of the struggles of factory workers and others and what the unions had done for them.

When I interviewed for the sociology position in August of 1975, I was interviewed by the HCC Vice President. I thought it odd, if not illegal, to be asked what I thought about unions in colleges. I did not even know there were faculty unions. I guess my ignorance was a blessing, as that is what I answered. I was hired, and when I attended the first day of In-Service, the union made a presentation. I literally wrote out a check for the full academic year at that meeting before ever entering a classroom. As a product of the 60s, I was very impressed by the union's insistence on maintaining academic freedom more than anything else they said.

“Only a fool would try to deprive working men and working women of their right to join the union of their choice.”

Dwight D. Eisenhower

DID YOU KNOW?

Faculty & Staff get a discount at the B&N Bookstores on Campus. We get 10% on everything and 20% if it for class or office!
I sure didn't know it!

“You're either at the table, or you're on the menu.”

Ann Richards, Past Gov. of Texas



Eugene Dalton, the messenger.



Rosy, the oyster shucker on left.



Cigar-rolling boys in Ybor City.

All images are from The Library of Congress.

I have never regretted my decision to join the union. Yes, there have been times when I disagreed with certain union positions. However, I thought that was the time when my input was most needed. So, I just worked harder.

What has the union done for me all these years? Well, it has certainly maintained my academic freedom, and that freedom has been challenged at times by administrative attempts to change the contract. Over the years, I have attended conventions and meetings and chatted with faculty from colleges that did not have unions. HCC faculty always seemed to be better off. And then, there is the matter of faculty pay. I am totally convinced we would not have had the pay raises we have had without the union.

In closing, I will just say that I am proud to be a union member for my entire career at HCC. I would not have remained a member all these years if I did not feel that it not only benefited the faculty, but also the students. A happy, motivated, and self-fulfilled faculty is critically important to student success!!

In Solidarity, Walt Ellis, Dale Mabry Campus

IN LABOR HISTORY

See what happens.... You give a history teacher a platform, you get a history lesson!

I would like to begin my story with the tale of Eugene Dalton. In 1913, he worked in an area of downtown Ft. Worth, Texas that was called “Hell’s Half Acre,” infamous for its saloons and brothels. For nine years, this sixteen-year-old boy was a newsboy and a messenger for drug stores and telegraph companies. He was brought before the Judge of the Juvenile Court for incorrigibility at home. After getting out on parole, he started working again for the drug company and got an additional job carrying grips in the Union Depot. He worked from 6:00 A.M. to 11:00 P.M. (seventeen hours a day) seven days a week. His mother and the judge thought he used cocaine (17-hour days! I wonder why he might be using cocaine.), and yet they let him put in these long hours every day. He was only six when he started his “career.” However, Eugene was not an exception. In 1911, Rosy, who started shucking oysters as soon as she could handle a knife at age six, worked steadily from 3:00 A.M. to about 5 P.M. in the Dunbar Cannery in Dunbar, Louisiana. Tampa was no stranger to exploitive child labor. Young boys worked long days hand rolling cigars for Englehardt & Co. in Ybor City.

At the turn of the last century, children worked in dangerous jobs, and they worked long days, as most workers did. Childhood employment peaked at 18% in 1900. One supervisor, testifying before a Congressional Committee, said he had to throw water in the faces of his young workers, because they kept falling asleep standing up at their stations. Asked why he didn't just yell at them, he said, “I had grown hoarse from yelling.”

Life for the worker was grim during the Industrial Revolution of the 19th Century. Ten or twelve-hour days were the norm but taking a closer look at a typical steel worker's schedule allows us to see the even more horrible reality. For example, most steel workers endured those shifts seven days a week. Their only day off would be when the shifts switched. One shift of workers got their day-off, while the other shift worked for 24 hours. Another worker from the era recounted working 6 am to 6 pm, stating that he might only see the sun on a Sunday. Working conditions were also not a concern of the bosses of the era. After examining workers in a textile factory, one doctor reported that with all the cotton fibers in the air, his patients coughed up cotton balls, like a cat hacking up a hairball.

With the Progressive Movement of the early 20th Century, things began to change for the worker. In the Coal Strike of 1902, Teddy Roosevelt was the first President to settle a strike rather than break it using Federal troops. This was as much a historic moment for Labor, as when President Biden walked a picket line with autoworkers. The first child labor laws were passed during the Progressive Era. Labor won victories with minimum wage laws, overtime pay and workplace safety laws. After the General Motors sit-down strikes, Congress passed, and Teddy's cousin Franklin signed the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) of 1938. The FLSA implemented many regulations that govern how businesses can treat their workers in the modern era.

Shockingly, “In the last few years, twenty-six state legislatures (Florida included) have passed laws that loosened child labor regulations.” * These reversals have led to children working dangerous jobs in meat-packing plants and other assembly line work. “Since 2019, there has been an 88 percent increase in cases where children were found to be employed in violation of child labor laws.” * Recently, two teenage boys were killed in separate accidents while working at lumber mills in Pennsylvania and Wisconsin.

This dangerous trend is part of the Heritage Foundation's Project 2025. The reasoning being that such regulations and laws are hampering business. Business leaders see children as an opportunity for inexpensive labor that would benefit corporations. Project 2025 would amplify such opportunities. There is a lot on the line in the Fall election. Workers' protections and other Union victories like overtime pay and 40-hour weeks will be endangered if Project 2025 is implemented.

*US Department of Labor

In solidarity, Ken McCullough, Dale Mabry Campus

LEAD BY EXAMPLE

"You should run for Union Council," a colleague said.

Running for Union Council never crossed my mind before that statement was uttered to me one afternoon while sitting in my office. Faculty, from time to time, come talk to me. I have been told my office is quiet, sunny, and welcoming. It is in the Plant City campus library after all. Union membership and representation is not in my background, but since I became a full-time faculty member at HCC, I saw the benefit of becoming a member of FUSA and signed up at my first In-Service nine years ago. Becoming a Union Representative for my campus was a completely different idea.

At first, the thought was a little intimidating, placing my name on a "ballot" for an "election." However, the more I realized that as a faculty librarian, I was reliable and a good listener, running for Union Council filled the need for greater involvement that was more than just joining another committee. Being a Union Council Representative for my campus broadened my perspective and has been an eye-opening experience.

My first year on the Council representing the Plant City campus happened to be during a bargaining year. The time, effort, adrenaline, compassion, and commitment that I witnessed from the bargaining team, council members and union members was intense, focused, organized, grueling, professional, thankful, determined, respectful and more. If I was not a Union Council member, I would not have the same perspective and appreciation for our Union Council and our faculty contract that I do now.

But Union Council members are not the only ones able to participate in the work of FUSA and UFF. Every faculty member has a voice and a part to play. There are several committees within the Union such as Membership, Government Relations, and Communications. We welcome any proud Union member to participate and get involved. Be on the lookout for ways to contribute. Or come to one of our monthly meetings and raise your hand.

In Solidarity, Karen Dufraigne, Plant City Campus

THE FUSA CREW!



YOUR FUSA REPRESENTATIVES:

Brandon FUSA Council – David Flanigan, John Hardin, Janet Willman

Dale Mabry FUSA Council – Tony Buonaquisti, Walt Ellis, Elizabeth Key-Raimer, April Muchmore-Vokoun, Ken McCullough, Jeffrey Rubinstein, Janet Sibol, Kathryn Smith, John Whitlock.

Plant City FUSA Council –Karen Dufraigne (1st position). Peter Sleszynski

South Shore FUSA Council – Denise Bristol, Wendy Pogoda

Ybor FUSA Council – Myrah Dijamco, Rick Gaspar, Judith Nolasco, Tom Tankersley

UFF Senators – Charlene Bell, Denise Bristol, Jeremy Bullian, TaMetryce Collins, Myrah Dijamco, Charity Freeman, John Hardin, Elizabeth Key-Raimer, Ken McCullough, Wendy Pogoda.

Alternate Senators: Lorenzo Carswell, Bryan Shuler

FEA Delegates – Charlene Bell, Jeremy Bullian, Elizabeth Key-Raimer, Ken McCullough, Tom Tankersley.

Alternate Delegates: Lorenzo Carswell, John Hardin, Bryan Shuler

Membership is key to our success as a union. We can do together what you cannot do alone.

For more information about the union or membership, talk to a FUSA representative or go to fusahcc.org.