



Adjunct News

January 2015

Barbara Dayton, President

Jaleh Sherbini,

VP and Grievance Chair

Cindy DelMedico, Treasurer

Donna Ryan,

Secretary

Cheryl Thayer, AFA Ofc. Mgr.

Room 2470 DP

Voicemail at

(847) 635- 2193

Linda Berendsen,

Newsletter editor

Visit our web site at

www.oaktonafa.org

Email: info@oaktonafa.org

The AFA

What is the AFA? The AFA is your union, protecting and fighting for the rights of all adjuncts covered under the bargaining agreement between the college and the AFA (anyone teaching at least six LHE's in any three previous terms).

To refresh your memory:

Senator Biss' legislation limited the amount of money a retired teacher can earn if they return to work. The college would incur a fine if this amount were exceeded. The burden of keeping track of was placed on the teachers. Three people exceeded their limit; a fine was incurred. Oakton responded by announcing none of these 50 teachers would be rehired as of July 1 – and none would be hired in the future.

Your Presence is Required at the January 20 Board of Trustees Meeting

As of now, the administration still intends to not re-hire the 50 adjunct faculty who are affected annuitants - as of July 1, 2015. We have spoken out at the November and December Board of Trustees meetings. Let's not give the impression that we are content to just sit and let happen what may! Why should you care? Why should you come?

The human factor: Adjuncts don't earn much. Those who have retired from Oakton and return to teach a few classes (becoming "affected annuitants") have often counted on this small added income to manage retirement. After retirement is not the time to pull out the rug.

You too will someday retire. You might want to return to teach a few courses; many of us got into this profession because we love it. Just never ever retire or kiss it totally goodbye.

The student factor: These teachers have decades of experience and are valued teachers. Oakton more or less said the same when they were hired back. Has their value diminished?

These teachers often have reputations for interesting classes and stimulating teaching. Education is Oakton's mission. Why would Oakton not rehire these teachers?

The Oakton factor: Oakton has protested that it does this regretfully but does not want to burden the taxpayer with potential future fines. Fines will not be incurred if the administration simply keeps track of the numbers it already has at hand. Perhaps this is not as simple as it seems, but surely it can be done.

These teachers return to teach at the bottom tier of the pay scale. They are a bargain. Experienced teaching at the lowest rate!

Fifty teachers might be gone. What is the cost in time and money to search for, interview, and train replacement teachers?

The union factor: Losing these adjuncts will drastically reduce union strength. The more members, the better our bargaining position. If the union doesn't negotiate for you, who will?

Come early to the Board meeting in Room 1506 Tuesday Jan. 20. The meeting starts at 7:30; latecomers have been shunted to an overflow room out of sight.

How OCC Reports to SURS

There has been a question as to how Oakton reports faculty hours to SURS; this has a direct impact on future pension amount. Exactly how this is done will be reported in the next newsletter. In the meantime, Mum Martens, head of HR, assures us that "we will work with employees to do what is best given SURS' processes and procedures."

Join the AFA

There is strength in numbers – the more members the AFA has, the more power the union has. Because *all* adjuncts benefit from the gains the AFA has made in negotiations (from guaranteed pay raises, free classes for faculty and family, to having adjunct faculty offices and file drawers), everyone pays a "fair share" amount which is deducted from pay checks. Members pay an extra \$15 each spring and fall semester. (That's 3 lattes at Starbucks. How can you not join?) This semester dues will be taken out of the March 27 and April 10 paychecks. Did I mention the roomy black tote with the AFA logo that new members receive?

Save at tax time!

AFA membership has other benefits that affect our

pocketbooks. NEA (the National Education Association) offers many consumer benefits. Get discounts on H & R Block tax preparation services, software and on-line tax programs with your membership.

Having a Superbowl Party?

NEA also offers discounts for new members at Costco and additional savings for current members. Of course, you have to join the AFA....

What's the Union Doing?

Keep abreast of what is happening by going on the AFA website, www.oaktonafa.org. The recent articles that have appeared both in print and on-line regarding the affected annuitant issue are all there.

The Power of Unionizing

According to an article in the November 25, 2015, issue of Inside Higher Ed, even trying to unionize and failing often yields good results in the form of "pressure on institutions to improve faculty working conditions." Even when an SEIU attempt to unionize at the University of St. Thomas in Minnesota failed, the school still provided added benefits to faculty. When the affirmative vote to unionize

at Pittsburgh's Duquesne University was put on hold, the faculty still got a raise. A faculty member stated that "one group of workers organizing a union raises standards for everyone even if workers aren't in the union."

Those Administrators...

The American Association of University Professors (AAUP) published their annual survey in April (available at AdjunctNation.com). They found that adjuncts make \$18,000 to \$30,000 for equivalent full-time work with tenure track professors, who earn \$68,000 - \$116,000 plus benefits. However, even full-time professors' pay raises pale compared with that of senior administrators and athletic leaders. Saranna Thompson from the AAUP stated that "the educational mission of institutions is becoming less and less important with athletics and administrators getting increasing shares of budgets."

Not getting AFA emails?

If you think that you are not getting emails from the union and would like to, email oaktonafa@gmail.com. In the subject line, write "add me to the email list."