

Local 2398

Staff & Clerical Federation, AFT, AFT-Wisconsin, AFL-CIO
Chippewa Valley Technical College, Eau Claire

Sept/Oct
2008

<http://wi.aft.org/CVTC2398/>

From the President

I watched the speech given by Barak Obama at the Democratic National Convention on August 28th. What struck a cord with me was the message of being my “sister and brothers keeper”. Why? Because as your president I feel compelled to be my union sisters & brothers’ keeper. I want to make sure that we have a voice at the table. I want each and every one of you to be recognized and appreciated for your hard work. I want to keep sending the message to administration that we are the best at what we do.

I need to ask each and every one of you to do the same. I ask you to look at the people you work with and know that we are all in this together. We are connected by many things, mainly CVTC. United we stand, divided we fall rings true not only as union members, but members of this community.

We need to support and stand up for each other. If we are not each others “keeper”, we will certainly fall. These are tough times at CVTC; we can’t just look out for ourselves. We must be there for one another.

Solidarity Forever,
Lisa

Labor Relations

Labor Relations Update

The responsibility of the Labor Relations Chair is interpretation and enforcement of our contract. The integrity of our contract **must** be preserved. I cannot stress enough, how important it is that members know and understand the contract. We work vigilantly to assure that leadership is following our contract language. Lisa and I cannot do this without your help. Please notify us about contract violations you are aware of or hear about. If you are unsure, bring the issue to our attention and we will follow-up. These contractual violations are addressed in the labor-management meetings, with the hopes of avoiding a grievance. If that cannot be done, we proceed to the grievance process. We are here to protect the members’ rights and enforce our contract.

Overtime issues: (see Article VIII, Hours of Work). We have several members working overtime with no compensation. It is unfair that some areas have money for overtime, and others do not. The bottom line-- if you are not getting compensated you should not be working overtime. This hurts the membership as a whole. If we continue to donate our time to get work done, management will never comprehend the impact of their decisions to continually cut or reduce support staff positions.

Continued

Banking overtime issues: It has come to our attention that some members were asked to work overtime, and to 'bank' the hours. According to our contract, employees required to work beyond the regular work day/work week "may elect" to take compensatory time off, have the option of being paid, or bank for future use. There are a number of reasons why a member would rather be paid, or take compensatory time rather than bank the hours. Regardless, these hours must be recorded on your time sheet in the pay period in which they occurred, at the rate of time and one-half.

Grievance update: I am happy to announce that the grievance regarding temporary bargaining unit work has been settled in our favor. We also have two grievances that are in abeyance, and one that is in the process of being settled. Thank you to all the members who have brought workplace issues to our attention.

In Solidarity,
Kathy Goodman
Labor Relations Chair

Member News

Congratulations Marcia and Della!



Marcia Finseth and Della Schindler graduated in July from the CVTC Administrative Assistant Career Connect program.

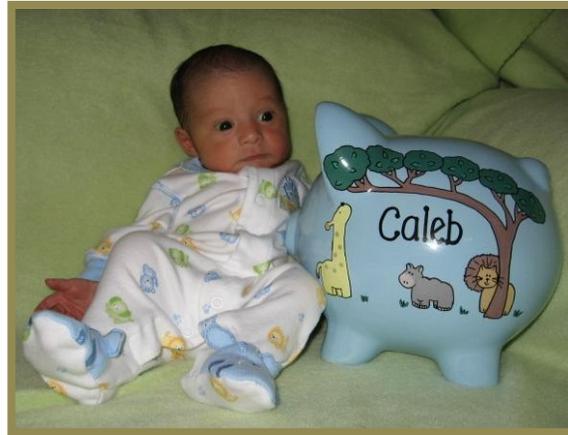
Good and Welfare Reminder

Please contact our Membership Chair, Raeann Hutchinson rhutchinson@cvtc.edu, to benefit from the Good and Welfare Committee. We want to congratulate you in times of happiness and support you in times of need, but need to be informed in able to that. Thanks!

Char Drescher welcomed two new grandsons this year!



Carter Daniel Drescher
January 25, 2008
6 lb 9 oz - 20 ½ inches long
Eau Claire, WI



Caleb Mario Flores
August 14, 2008
6 lb 5 oz - 19 inches long
St. Louis, MO

AFT State Employees Appreciation Happy Hour

Thursday, September 18th

4:00-6:30 pm

Mogie's Pub and Restaurant

436 Water St., Eau Claire

Special guests: AFL-CIO endorsed Assembly candidates

Kristen Dexter and Jeff Smith

Appetizers, pop, and beer sponsored by AFT-W

**Locals 2398 and 4018, and UWEC-TAUWP and WPEC
members, friends and family welcome!**

*** * ***

For more information, contact Janet at 715-308-17445 or polansky@aft-wisconsin.org

New Members

Local 2398 would like to welcome Sara Nichols!

Sara started as the Student Retention Assistant on August 25, 2008. Sara and her husband, Bill Nichols II, enjoy spending time with their three year old daughter Lydia. Sara and her family reside in Chippewa Falls but she is originally from Cedar Rapids, IA. Sara has a Bachelor Degree in Sociology from the University of Northern Iowa. She enjoys gardening, keeping up with current events and politics, watching sports of all kinds and quilting.



Member Contributions

From the AFT Convention

By Deb Ausman

An important resolution for us as PSRPs is below. It calls on calls on government at all levels to collect adequate data reflecting the true work of service staff, using benchmarks ensuring that the data will reflect employees' changing roles in coming years. It also directs the AFT to educate members on best practices in school support, and to work with affiliates and other organizations to raise public awareness about the nature of support staff work in schools and colleges. "For too long, the essential work of our support staff has been invisible to administrators and legislators," said Jackie Ervolina, president of the school secretaries chapter of the United Federation of Teach

FUNDAMENTAL SUPPORT SERVICES IN EDUCATION

WHEREAS, many services performed by AFT members in our schools and colleges, currently referred to by many as support services, include the work of custodians, child nutrition staff, secretaries and clerks, maintenance and skilled crafts, health services, transportation, technology specialists, paraprofessionals, security officers and thousands of other job titles; and

WHEREAS, these services, are, in fact, so absolutely fundamental to the operation of these institutions that they could be termed "core" or "essential" services; and

WHEREAS, the nature of the work and responsibilities that fall under the category of support services continually evolves and expands due to the dynamic forces that shape our education institutions and characterize the services these institutions must provide to meet the ever changing needs of students and our society; and

WHEREAS, the people who provide these services and are on the front lines to address these changing needs and priorities have long been expected, either by the culture of a school or college site or out of sheer necessity, to perform work that has evolved out of their original job descriptions, either because the work is 1) a new requirement; 2) an expanded service due to advancing technology and/or changes in the workplace or student population; or 3) is work that was performed by staff whose jobs have been eliminated; and

WHEREAS, continuing to ignore the impact core services have on the overall mission of our education institutions and relying on a method of identifying and organizing the work required to keep schools and colleges running that leads to an inefficient and piecemeal approach rather than to a thoughtful systematic process that maximizes improvements and creates a synergy such that the whole system is improved rather than the individual parts; and

WHEREAS, as this practice of ignoring core services escalates and is exacerbated by shortfalls in funding, these added responsibilities become silently assimilated by current employees to the point where much of the work—and the workers—is "shadowed" or worse—totally invisible to the policymakers and administrators who control the design of education systems and the resources devoted to those systems; and

WHEREAS, without the consistent and uniform collection of accurate data and information related to the provision of core services it will be difficult to accurately predict trends and develop effective plans related to the operation of our schools and colleges; and

WHEREAS, one lesson school and college administrations can take from the research on effective organizational models is the need to undertake systematic and systemic reviews of the mission, the work, the workforces and productivity to ensure they are functioning at their most efficient and working in coordination to support and achieve the overall mission:

RESOLVED, that the American Federation of Teachers call upon government at all levels—federal, state and local—to 1) correct current practices of data collection to ensure they properly and fully report the true and accurate nature of the work of core service staff; and 2) implement standards or benchmarks to ensure that data collection and analysis will continue to reflect changing roles and responsibilities in the future; and

RESOLVED, that the American Federation of Teachers educate our affiliates on best practices they should establish (through negotiations where possible and/or labor management committees) to ensure changing roles and responsibilities are accurately reflected and compensated (regular job audits, for example); and

RESOLVED, that the American Federation of Teachers work with other organizations (labor unions, policy groups, community and parent groups, employer organizations) to draw attention to this problem and identify opportunities to foster cooperation and mutual support for strategies and activities to address this issue that affects all AFT members either on their job, as parents or as taxpayers; and

RESOLVED, that the American Federation of Teachers work with our affiliates to better prepare members to educate the public and policymakers about the true nature of their work in schools and colleges. This should include the collection of real examples of how the "shadow" over their work negatively affects the mission of our institutions and the ability of schools and colleges to make the best use of education resources and deliver effective education.

6 Tips for Reducing Stress

If you are feeling stressed out and overwhelmed, it's time to take action. There are several simple steps you can take to battle the fatigue and anxiety caused by stress. Start by adding activities into your schedule that help you relax. Then try these six suggestions:

Get moving. Believe it or not, exercise not only helps relieve your tense muscles, but helps your mood too! Before and after your workout your body makes certain chemicals, called endorphins, which relieve stress and improve your mood.

Talk to friends. Talking to a friend can help you work through your stress. Find someone who will let you talk freely about your problems and feelings — it can do a world of good. It also helps to hear a different point of view, if your friend has one. And friends will remind you that you're not alone.

Talk to a therapist. A therapist can help you work through stress and find better ways to deal with problems. For more serious stress related disorders, like post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), therapy can be helpful. There also are medications that can help ease symptoms of depression and anxiety and help you sleep better (poor sleep can be a contributor to stress or a side effect of it).

Compromise. Sometimes, it's not worth the stress to stand your ground in an argument. Give in once in awhile.

Write down your thoughts. Have you ever typed an email to a friend about your lousy day and felt better afterward? Writing is a good way to organize your thoughts and relieve anxiety. Grab a pen and paper (or sit at your keyboard) and write down what's going on in your life! Keeping a journal can be a great way to get things off your chest and work through issues.

Set limits. When it comes to the never-ending list of tasks you need to accomplish for your work and family, it's easy to feel overwhelmed. Don't just race through the list as fast as you can. Instead, figure out how much you can realistically accomplish. There are only so many hours in the day. Set limits with yourself and others. Don't be afraid to say "No" to requests for your time and energy.

Submitted by Lisa Storms

CANNIBALS

A large corporation recently hired several cannibals. "You are all part of our team now", said the HR rep during the welcoming briefing. "You get all the usual benefits and you can go to the cafeteria for something to eat, but please don't eat any of the other employees".

The cannibals promised they would not.

Four weeks later their boss remarked, "You're all working very hard and I'm satisfied with your work. However, one of our support staff has disappeared. Do any of you know what happened to her?"

The cannibals all shook their heads "No".

After the boss had left, the leader of the cannibals said to the others, "Which one of you idiots ate the support staff?" A hand rose hesitantly.

"You fool!" the leader continued. "For four weeks we've been eating managers and no one noticed anything. But NOOOooo, you had to go and eat someone who actually does something!!! "

Submitted by Lisa Storms