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California Associate Staff

Your Bargaining Voice

CAS Bargaining Team 2008-09
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“Our Contract... Our Future”

Mark Your Calendars!
CAS Bargaining begins on March 16, 2009!
Contract Expiration Date: 8/31/09

Don't Miss Out!

2009 CAS General Membership Meeting
March 28-29, 2009
Westin SFO – Burlingame

Do you want... more information about our Retirement Trust benefits and what is being discussed at the bargaining table?

Are you interested... in our CAS contract and learning more about the bargaining proposals made by CTA and CAS?

Are you willing... to help CAS secure a fair settlement and defend our working conditions and contractual benefits?

If your answer is “Yes” to any of these questions, you must not miss this year’s CAS General Membership Meeting!

On Sunday morning at the CAS General Membership Meeting, the CAS Bargaining Team will host a Bargaining Town Hall Discussion Forum, where you can get the latest information on the status of CAS bargaining, including negotiating our Retirement Trust benefits. We'll review all the proposals on the table (both CTA and CAS) and their implications. It promises to be a great interactive session where you will get lots of information and have the opportunity to share your ideas and ask questions about the critical contract issues we face at the bargaining table this year. Member solidarity and education on the issues will be essential to our success at the table. In unity there is strength! We will see you at the 2009 CAS General Membership Meeting!

Be sure to register today! Deadline for hotel reservations is tomorrow, Thursday, March 5th! Contact Katie Howard at khoward@cta.org to register for the meeting and for more information. See attached for detailed registration information. There are also so many other great sessions planned -- it will be the best GMM ever!

Membership Unity + Organizing Efforts = A FAIR CONTRACT &
**CAS Bargaining Team Attends NSO Training & Facilitates House Meeting Campaign**

The CAS Bargaining Team attended the NSO Winter Advocacy Retreat in Garden Grove on January 16-17, participating in a variety of training sessions including bargaining health insurance, defined benefit retirement plans, salary schedule design, workplace privacy, rankism, 401(k) plans, bargaining under the NLRA, writing good contract language and planning strategies at the bargaining table. While in Southern California, we also met at the Orange RRC with the Grievance Committee to review grievance and arbitration history. And together with the CAS Organizing Committee, the Bargaining Team conducted a series of house meetings throughout the state that focused on gaining additional member input on bargaining priorities, explaining the implications of the Retirement Trust funding shortfall to members, and discussing how member unity builds leverage and power at the bargaining table. The house meetings were well attended, with over 100 CAS members joining a house meeting near them.

**Bargaining Update: Initial Proposal Finalized**

The CAS Bargaining Team met again on January 30-31 and on February 26-28 in Sacramento to continue bargaining preparation and to craft an initial proposal that reflects continued improvements in current contract language and member priorities identified by the responses to our bargaining survey and through conversations at recent house meetings. Next week, the Bargaining Team will submit to the CAS Executive Board and Representative Council the final version of our initial proposal for review before we exchange initial proposals with CTA on the first day of bargaining – Monday, March 16, 2009. At the end of that day, we will send you copies of both the CAS and CTA initial proposals along with a report on what happened in our first day of bargaining.

**Retirement Trust Update: CTA Rejects Union Proposal to Freeze Green**

As we reported to you last week, the Retirement Trust funding issue is emerging as the predominant issue at the bargaining table. The Trust funding issue and any possible benefit cuts will all be addressed in bargaining. At the February 17th Trust meeting, CSO and CAS proposed that the Trust freeze in the Green Zone as recommended by the actuary. This would have allowed the bargaining parties to negotiate a financially-sound solution that would respect the service credit promises made by CTA and earned by its dedicated staff. CTA rejected this proposal, which is forcing the Trust into the Red Zone. This gives CTA more options at the bargaining table to address the Trust funding issue by making benefit cuts instead of increasing CTA contributions to help cover the shortfall.

We believe that by rejecting Labor’s proposal to freeze Green Zone, CTA is causing unnecessary fear and panic in every member of the Retirement Trust in an obvious effort to gain bargaining leverage.

**This is just plain wrong!** Retirement is a significant life decision. Many of us have dedicated our careers to CTA. This is about real lives, about real people, and about security in retirement for every single CAS and CSO member in our ranks! Nobody should feel forced to retire before they are ready simply to retain benefits they have already earned or to avoid being the victim of a broken promise by CTA Management.

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CAS and CSO fully appreciate the gravity of the situation and we know it will take commitment by all parties to ensure the long-term financial stability of our Retirement Trust. CTA’s refusal to freeze Green is a huge disappointment, but more importantly, it is a threat. As a member of the “CTA Family” we expect better than this. We expect CTA to act thoughtfully, reasonably, responsibly and most significantly – to act in line with core union values! We expect CTA to sit down with the unions and bargain an effective solution.

We know it is possible to resolve the trust funding issue with minimal impact to the hard-working employees of CTA, who deserve no less, by taking advantage of NEA-sponsored legislation that allows pension trusts to freeze in the Green Zone. We wonder...if our national affiliate, NEA, thinks ‘Green is Good,’ why is CTA determined to go Red??

We promise to keep you updated on any new developments on this and other critical bargaining issues. There is a lot at stake this year, so please plan to attend the CAS General Membership Meeting on March 28-29 and get involved and engaged in supporting your CAS Bargaining Team. Proudly wear your CAS T-shirts and pins on bargaining days, hang your CAS balloons and post flyers in your workspace, and Stand United!

This is Our Contract...Our Future!

Got Questions, Concerns or Input to Share? We’d like to hear from you!
Email: CASBargaining@yahoo.com (from your home/personal computer)

CAS Bargaining Dates

- March 16
- March 23 (Tripartite)
- March 26
- April 3
- April 9 (Tripartite)
- April 17
- April 28 (Tripartite)
- May 7
- May 11
- June 1, 3, 4, 8 & 10 (CAS or Tripartite if needed)
- August 31, 2009 - CONTRACT EXPIRATION!

Involvement = Commitment = Success!