

We've had enough, MiraCosta

There comes a time to say "Enough," a time to say that "things must change." That time has come. We've had enough and things must change.

For more than twenty years, your union has fought with and worked with MiraCosta College to improve working conditions for you, our Associate Faculty colleagues. We've made some progress. Your working conditions are better now as a result of the efforts of your union leadership that you have supported. But that incremental improvement has not eliminated the gnawing exploitation of each of us, even as we do our best to serve our students. Things must change.

MiraCosta College exists to offer educational opportunities to everyone in our district. Every board member, every classified staffer, every instructor, every administrator serves that mission. The most important of these groups are the classified staff and the instructors. They provide the front-line service to our students. But our classified colleagues and our Associate Faculty colleagues are openly exploited by District policies. It is not fair. It is not just. It is not moral. Things must change.

Silence in the face of such exploitation must end. This notice to the college community is the beginning of the end of that silence. No longer will we hold fast to the "MiraCozy" way. In a time when the imminent campus climate survey may reveal some unflattering truths about the experiences that you, our colleagues, have had, it is imperative that we, as your union leaders, speak truth to power. The stories of desperation that we have heard, stories that arise because of exploitation, are heart-breaking. You, as professionals, deserve better. Things must change.

It is not fair, just, or moral that you receive significantly less pay than your tenured colleagues for doing the exact same work for your students. It is not fair, just, or moral that bargained-for rehire rights are interpreted by the district in a way that significantly harms long-time Associates. It is not fair, just, or moral that some tenured colleagues view and treat you like fungible goods instead of the caring professional human beings that you are. Such hostility by some tenured faculty, sometimes open but more often surreptitious, is intolerable. Things must change.

The MiraCosta College District is wealthy, in large part because it is a basic aid district that derives most of its operating revenue from property taxes in this wealthy North County region. Building a budget should begin by addressing the pay of classified staff and instructors who directly contact students. These people have the most responsibility for delivering educational services to our students. Accordingly, they should get the most money. But one should not look at this just as a percentage of the budget. One should look at each individual position. Is each position being paid fairly? Equal pay for equal work is essential to such a consideration. Without equal pay, there is exploitation. That is the reality of MiraCosta College when it comes to Associate Faculty. Things must change.

Our full-time colleagues have their own union of sorts. Their demands for pay are in conflict with our own. They don't want to lose pay in order to give us equal pay for equal work. But giving us

equal pay is not their decision anyway. It's the decision of the Board of Trustees. So, our fight for fairness is mostly with them. Yes, we have some antagonists among the tenured faculty, but the decision to treat us fairly lies with the Board. We call on our full-time colleagues to stand with us in our demand that we be treated fairly by getting equal pay for equal work.

Budget-making entails setting priorities. The Board has a moral duty to treat us fairly by giving us equal pay for equal work. As stewards of the college, they owe a duty to the community to make sure that those who teach the community are not being exploited. They have a duty to eliminate administrative bloat by looking closely at the number of administrators actually being hired and by looking closely at what they are paid. The flawed classification and compensation study negatively impacted classified staff and Associate Faculty. The conclusions from that flawed study serve to further exploit both groups. We don't accept them; we never will. We have had enough.

Change requires courage and struggle, unity and strength. Change requires action. Your union has more than 400 members. Your union leadership is grateful for your support. After twenty years, we need you to step up and help us take the actions that will create the change we demand. Initially, we'd like you to:

1. Tell us your stories. Send them to us at our union email addresses. Do not use your MiraCosta email address to send your stories. Use your personal email instead.
2. Contact us about helping to organize our collective efforts to get our message out to those who can influence the policy makers, i.e. the Board of Trustees.
3. When we ask, join us in attending Board meetings. In the recent past, when we've asked, we've had standing room only at the meetings. We want to continue that.
4. Consider becoming part of your union's leadership team. We know our future leaders are out there. Now's the time to come forward with your ideas and your energy.
5. Give us your ideas and advice. We'll maintain your confidentiality. We want to expand our collective mind to address and eliminate our exploitation.

Send your stories and ideas to: secretary@mccaaf.org

Together, we will make the changes that improve our working conditions significantly.

We look forward to hearing from you.

In Unity,

Krista Warren-Yagubyan, President

Al Nyman, Vice President

Joe Chirra, Secretary