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Perception is Reality: A Profile/Interview of Trustee Tony Tartaglia
by Peter Stathis

Just in case, dear reader, you didn’t get a chance to read my profile in the last edition of the Chaparral with Trustee Ann Ransford (or had failed to memorize the important details of it), let me summarize the three points on which all three trustees I interviewed, Ann, Tony Tartaglia and Vahe Peroomian (whose interview is found below in this publication) all concurred:

1. Better relations between the Board of Trustees and the faculty would result if there was more informal exchange between the individual Trustees and individual or groups of faculty outside of Board meetings. On the same subject, all three also agreed relations were not at the lowest ebb between the Board and faculty right now compared to the recent past.

2. All three agreed that the Winter intersession will likely become a thing of the past relatively soon. Trustee Tartaglia was careful to point out, “I am not negotiating here,” because of course, as we all know, the calendar is a matter of negotiation. But either they said so or I inferred from the context, that all three personally felt we were better off (faculty, staff and students) with a shorter gap of time between the new year and the start of the Spring semester and a longer gap of time in the summer between the primary semesters.

3. Lastly, all three of my subjects felt, as a fiscal priority, that our so called ‘Cadillac’ plan health benefits (meaning the Blue Shield PPO) had to be scaled back.

Tony had some interesting takes on the subject of our health benefits. First of all he described our plan as a “defined benefits” plan. I had not associated that term with health benefits but instead with pension benefits. But the term makes sense, as Tony explained to me that, unlike a cafeteria type plan, which Tony advocated we investigate, the district accountant has no way of knowing in advance what form of coverage an individual full time employee will elect. The district is obliged to pay the full cost of that election. Tony felt pretty confident in saying that in the private sector employee annual benefit costs were about $8000 as opposed to estimates he had heard of $16,000 to $20,000 at GCC. “That doesn’t mean we should go to $8K,” Tony cautioned. But we need to “have a serious look” at our approach because, “A yellow light is blinking going to red.” On the subject of the Blue Shield rebate, he expounded, “This is nonsense. That just means you are overcharging me.” He referred to a direction to pursue, “I would be looking for a longer term strategy to reduce the cost of health care. But let me say (again), I am speaking as individual. I am not negotiating here.”

A little about Tony’s background. He has worked for Southern California Gas Company for many years, starting out in energy sales, (which makes sense if you know him) and has a Mechanical Engineering degree. Tony tries to bring a business sense and perspective to his decision making as a Trustee. Tony also has an MBA and had an opportunity to shift to a public affairs district manager position with the Gas company, which, from his description, seems to make him, if not a PPI (power possessing individual), certainly a POSI (person of some importance) in the company. Tony is also an entrepreneur, has a property management company, and owns and manages apartments locally.
On the subject of what decision would he most like to do over, Tony took some time to consider. He chose to answer the question by referring back to the hiring of Dr. Davitt’s replacement, when he was not yet on the Board. After such a long tenure, he felt the “college needed some breathing time” and an Interim Superintendent as we are doing now made more sense. I asked about whether the same thinking applied in hiring Dr. Levy’s replacement to have restricted the interim from applying for the permanent position. “Absolutely,” he replied. “I was the champion of Dawn Lindsay. I do not regret that decision. But in retrospect, the interim should not” be a candidate.

When this article is disseminated, presumably the Board will have selected a new President. Notwithstanding this, it might still be interesting to hear what Tony said when I asked him what qualities he was looking for in the new President. He gave a very expansive answer. We need someone “more seasoned. We could quickly go into decline from outside influences on us.” In elaborating, he was suggesting that there were challenges from the Van de Camp campus and the remodeled LA Valley campus. But more than that, “We have a demoralized group from ten years of budget cutting mode.” “We can’t afford to go in the wrong direction. I hope this is understood from a positive direction.”

We moved on to talk about Dr. Riggs’ initiative to make systemic changes to reflect what the institution can reasonably hope to be in the present reality of State funding. First of all, Tony feels that this kind of self-analysis is healthy. But further, “I’m not the educator. I hire a Superintendent and I expect the superintendent to have a management structure to work within the governance process to make sure you have the resources you need.” Much more was said on this subject, but in the interest of time (mine and yours), let me try to summarize. Tony feels the Board’s approach should be to trust what recommendations are coming to the Board through the Superintendent and make policy decisions and direct the district’s negotiators based on that, consistent with the master plan. Even if it involves difficult decisions such as cutting classified staff from twelve to eleven months and eleven to ten months. Or, for example, Tony’s comment on the question of whether Garfield should have a credit component was as follows: “Garfield was built to be a multi-functional campus and to evolve into credit use. If it is not… then I need to know why as a Trustee, because then I see an asset under-used.”

An aside here, I must comment that I had the impression that Tony had the capacity to shift his views if he could see clear evidence. “Show me,” he said.

As I was interviewing Tony for this profile in the Math division conference room, Liz Russell, who had just been elected Division Chair, came through. I mentioned her election to Tony and naturally he congratulated her. Liz asked (a very good sign for a new chair to seek input) if I thought she should send out an email reaching out to the whole division. Tony, never the shy one, suggested, as he said, from “the schmooze guy” (a little Yiddish goes a long way), that she should. “Perception is reality. If I don’t hear from you, I am going to think whatever I think you think, versus what you really think.” I don’t think Tony was trying to make any deep philosophical point here. I mean, I don’t think he sees himself as Immanuel Kant or anything. My take on what he believes is to get advice from those who should know, take a stand, and then lay your cards on the table. Then you are not dealing in suppositions – a kind of direct, uncluttered style. The old KISS (keep it simple, Solomon) approach.

Then, perception and reality match up.
Board Member, Teacher, Author and Contractor:
An Interview with Trustee Dr. Vahe Peroomian
by Peter Stathis

Dr. Vahe Peroomian, who has been a Glendale resident since 1978, a Board member for eight years, and at UCLA “for most of my adult life”, having done both his undergraduate and graduate studies there and since returning to UCLA in 1997, is conducting research as well as teaching. As I have mentioned, I am not a trained interviewer, but I could really see how useful it is to get background information like this. Vahe’s view of some GCC issues is influenced by his experience at UCLA. Specifically, in two areas, what he has seen at UCLA in the last 15 years is a scaling back of health benefits and a disconnection at UCLA between “soft money” employment (which is how he is employed when it comes to his research) and any permanent position. Vahe also has a contractor’s license although he is not active in that field now.

What is new for Vahe is that he has been contributing as an author to a Physics textbook, which he found was taking a lot of his time, but was “very rewarding.” I couldn’t help but think of our current Title V GAUSS grant because one of the sections of the text to which he had contributed was a contextualized application in bio-medicine, “the fluid dynamics of heart attacks” - just the type of application that Dr. Voden and others who are working on the grant hope to inject into our curriculum. As you can imagine, dear reader, it was easy to get distracted from the prepared questions of the interview when the subject of “spinning red blood cells” and “laminar flow” came up.

But we did come back. On the subject of what decision of the Board could he apply “hindsight” to if he could have a do over, Vahe did not shy away from saying, “the campus was not ready for a permanent Superintendent-President” after John Davitt and what was “needed” was a interim. Does he prefer either of the two models we have employed in hiring an interim, one where the interim person can be a candidate for the permanent position as in Dr. Lindsay’s case and the other where the interim cannot as in Dr. Riggs case? “Dawn had a lot of buy in”, so it was a “completely different entity” than the situation we had this time. If I could be presumptuous in reading between the lines, I think Vahe was perhaps looking ahead after Dr. Levy’s departure and felt we needed some continuity and healing. Dawn “did a lot of good in the three years she was President”.

When our interview took place, Dr. Viar had not yet been selected as the next Superintendent-President, so the question on what qualities he is looking for in that position hopefully match up to what we got. “A high bar was set with Dawn and Jim”, and further, he would like to see “a visionary who has ideas of their own, but is not married to them” and lastly, he is looking for someone “like Dawn, who is willing to be very involved with the community.” Vahe cited a presentation he and Dawn attended on the “state of the city” of Glendale that did not even include a mention of the college. With Dawn on the case, within a short time, the presentation included GCC as the centerpiece.

Vahe also felt relations with faculty could be strengthened by having more “informal” contact. I thought his perspective was interesting in that he wondered if there could be opportunities “to interact with faculty who have done something exceptional”, but that the interaction could be outside of Board meetings or formal presentations. In that way, “if we can get together outside”
of meetings, there will be less of a perception that the Board is “seen as a body that is detached.” Regarding the question of how much hands on involvement (or as it is sometimes said, “micro-managing”) the Board should engage in, Vahe felt that problems in this area in the past occurred when the Board was “given a problem without a solution”. What he feels has been happening more recently is that the Board is presented with a problem, but along with the problem are some possible solutions which have been “vetted and gone through governance” so that the Board could decide among options that the campus community has had a chance to digest.

The most serious fiscal issue that we are facing is our “structural deficit”, according to my interviewee. “We have to cut just to break even,” the last few years. Whatever needs to be done, “must be across the board”, “must be fair and balanced” and “cannot just be layoffs” of staff. I asked all three of the folks I interviewed if they had read Marsden’s report, “Why Are We So Special?” All said they had. What I found interesting, which may just be human nature, is that each focused on one aspect, which in some cases I had not discerned in the report. The report showed, “we need a bigger reserve”, Vahe opined. Without getting into specifics, I can say Vahe and I had a healthy discussion on the need for real structural reform, that is, the need to look at programs. The word ‘downsized’ was not used but it was mentioned that “we have to look at who is that program serving – is it something that the community needs.”

My feeling in speaking with three of our Board members is that they are not hiding their heads in the sand on the difficulties facing the college. They have the stomach to make difficult decisions, but they want to have the knowledge and solid evidence presented to them (through the Superintendent-President) so that they can make wise decisions. Probably, Dr. Riggs will be helping Dr. Viar get up to speed on this.

Let me close by saying that I felt all three Trustees I interviewed were very glad of the opportunity, and not solely for the esteem of being interviewed in the Chaparral. “I do welcome hearing from faculty and meeting faculty,” Vahe said in parting. It was an invitation to know more about those he is serving. Hopefully, the five Trustee interviews in these pages will help us know more about those who are serving us.
An Interview with "Woman of the Year" and Board of Trustees President, Dr. Armine Hacopian
by Mark Maier

When I sat down with Armine in the president’s office, I was nervous. I had never spoken with a
trustee in my 25 years at Glendale and had never operated one of these new digital recorders.
However, Armine was well prepared with pages of single-spaced notes. Clearly, she took this
interview seriously, a sign of her commitment to good terms with staff and faculty, and perhaps
also a sign that such communication was long overdue.

First, we should congratulate Armine on two recent “Woman of the Year” awards, one from the
Commission on the Status of Women in Glendale and another from U.S. Representative Adam
Schiff’s Congressional Office. Armine was quick to point out that this recognition is “all
Glendale College when I get up there… the few minutes I have all […] dedicated to Glendale
College.” She views these awards as an opportunity to showcase not only her service, but also to
highlight all that GCC has to offer. For example, Armine is proud that “I was instrumental in
getting Garfield on the map,” thus the possible funding crisis for offerings at Garfield have
Armine “extremely fearful.” Her recommended solutions include more grants and collaboration
with the K-12 school system.

Armine’s responses to my questions were careful on most matters, pointing out both sides of
each issue. Nonetheless, on a few topics she took positions that may surprise readers. On
distance learning, for example, she would like GCC to take a “global approach,” pursuing out-of-
state and foreign students to “go where the money is.” When I pointed out that this would put us
into competition with the Stanford and MITs of the world, she suggested that we do so on a
“pilot” basis: “If we don’t do it, how are we going to know? We need to try it.”

When Armine used the current “student success” buzzword, suggesting that it should be our
“guiding light,” she distinguished her goals from the State of California’s statistical mandates.
Based on her experience in the classroom, including 15 years as a junior and high school arts
instructor, Armine defined student success in terms of faculty-student interaction. In her view,
we need to know “if that relationship is working.”

When I asked Armine what GCC might do differently, she suggested that we visit and learn from
other community colleges, finding out what they do, in particular with regard to evaluating
program effectiveness, maintaining staff development, obtaining outside funding and achieving
their fundraising goals. Such efforts would require resources, including staff and faculty time
away from campus, scouting what others are doing.

Anyone who attended Board meetings this last year recognizes the challenges Armine faced as
Board president trying keep order during sometimes tumultuous meetings. She called it her
“hardest” year on the Board, in which she felt bombarded from all sides, including colleagues,
who thought she had not been strong enough in maintaining meeting decorum. On the positive
side, Armine thinks that the Board is stronger now so that “animosities will be channeled
differently.” Also, she appreciates improved relationships with the Guild and CSEA that are
“closer together than ever,” attributable in part by the ability of Board members to put behind
them hard feelings about past election battles in which they were not supported. And, Armine wanted to point out that the GCC Board is unusual in sharing its dais with the Guild and CSEA.

Armine gives much credit to Jim Riggs; whereas past administrators had a “destructive role in this process, Dr. Riggs has had a “constructive role.” In the past, “when I came on board, policies were a secret.” she says she “didn’t trust information she was getting,” but now she does, especially with regard to negotiating teams. Nonetheless, Armine feels constrained by the Brown Act: her inability to contact other Board members means that because they don’t interact and “she doesn’t know what the other one is thinking, so I hold back my thoughts because I don’t know if I’ll get support or not.” She takes credit for Board retreats that she feels makes Board policy more transparent because of the opportunity to meet with one another and Guild and CSEA representatives. “Issues have been cleared up before they get to the Board and that’s made our job easier.”

When asked what the Board needs to do, Armine stressed the need to set a vision. We’ve been “too careful.” On issues such as textbooks and distance learning, these are not with the “purview of the board, but the board needs to set a vision. We have successful programs that need to be multiplied and that will come from a vision from the Board. How it is implemented and how implements it is from the bottom up.”

In response to the College’s financial situation, Armine recommended “program evaluation and program effectiveness needs to go on all the time, not just when we’re facing a budget crunch. On a cyclical basis, programs need to be reviewed and their effectiveness established… we need to face the sacred cows.” She wants suggestions to come from “divisions” identifying what can be cut. “It isn’t something we can do alone as the Board; it has to come from the bottom up. We’re going to need help in cutting $3.8 million. How are we going to do that? It is not something that the Board or the superintendent can do alone.”

Two issues required understandably careful responses from Armine. Redistricting, now facing litigation was off the table for discussion. On selection of the new president, proceeding as this article goes to press, Armine stressed that the president needed to balance attention to local needs with representing the college with external groups. We can’t have a president who is “gone every Friday,” while still recognizing the need to work with organizations on the State and national level.

I thank Armine for her openness and willingness to share her perspective based on twelve years of Board service. And, we congratulate her for being “woman of the year”—twice!
Balancing Family Life and Community Service:  
An Interview with Trustee Anita Quinonez Gabrielian

by Mark Maier

Anita was cheerful and upbeat when we met this week. She spoke with pride about her family, including one daughter about to graduate from USC and another recently graduated. But perhaps Anita’s good mood also was the result of the recently cancelled election that would have required time away from her many responsibilities, including work as AT&T’s Los Angeles Executive Director of External Affairs as well as her appointment last year by Mayor Villaraigosa to the City of Los Angeles Workforce Investment Board. Without an election campaign, Anita joked that she had no prepared stump speech, so she talked without notes and our conversation ranged over many topics.

Anita had just returned from Washington, DC where she lobbied with the Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce, advocating for comprehensive immigration reform, including the ‘dreamers,’ among other issues. Anita works closely with the Chamber of Commerce, serving as the team captain for its higher education advisory team. “It’s not your grandfather’s Chamber,” she explained. “We saw the 2010 Census and this is the future of LA and California.”

Like Trustee Armine Hacopian, Anita pointed to the new Garfield campus as a major accomplishment during her past term as trustee. She, too, recognized current threats to Garfield’s funding, and the possible need to require credit courses there. But Anita suggested, “First we need to complete the Garfield campus strategic plan... it has to include the flexibility of for-credit.”

Anita also is proud of the work she put into passing Proposition 30, working “behind the scenes, getting the support of friends, colleagues and from other business organizations. They took positions they normally wouldn’t take in favor of Prop 30.” Although now, Anita points out, we need to make certain that expected allocations are indeed forthcoming from Prop 30 funds by keeping pressure on the governor and his staff. Anita says she can do this best through education, for example by serving on the board at the Pat Brown Institute where discussion panels influence policymakers.

Anita brought up the need to have stronger collaboration with other nearby community colleges, in particular trustee-to-trustee consultation. Anita serves as representative to the San Gabriel Foothill Association of Community Colleges, an organization that has successfully lobbied political representatives about community college needs. However, in addition, she would like to see regional community colleges work together to create new programs while still being respectful of independent governance models at each campus.

A great frustration for Anita in her work as a trustee has been the presidential hiring processes. When asked why, Anita wrung her hands and pondered for a few moments: “That’s a hard question. One of our disappointments was we didn’t realize that we should have an interim after John Davitt. Then, we lost another president who I thought was working out beautifully.” Anita sees the presidential hire as the Board’s “main focus right now” (This was early April.) But Anita finds the task difficult: “I am not an insider... I don’t have all the different contacts.”
Anita joined Trustee Hacopian in praising Jim Riggs: “We’re lucky we found Jim, I think he’s doing a fantastic job.” Anita was especially pleased with Jim’s commitment to help with the transition to a new superintendent/president. That transition is key, “we need to work on a good transition plan ... and give [the new president] a chance.”

Anita “couldn’t agree more” with President Riggs’ assessment that the college has a structural deficit. “We’ve tried many solutions; we’ve cut everything we can cut in the current structure, so we have to make structural changes.” Asked for specifics, Anita didn’t dodge the issues: she was clear on what she believes needs to change: health benefits and pro-rata pay for intersessions. “When you have a benefit it’s hard to give it up... You take a look around and you see how everyone else is dealing with it. We need to have everyone contribute to the health care cost... I’ve never heard of pro-rata anywhere else... It is something we’re hoping to change.”

When asked what GCC might do differently, aside from these budget issues, Anita brought up online education: “We can’t let this go by the wayside.” Anita pointed out that GCC governance and faculty experts appear to favor a hybrid approach, that is courses offered online but with a face-to-face component. “I listen to the experts... I keep hearing the hybrid process works.” Nonetheless, she would like to see more funding for technology to support additional online courses, “allowing our students to make their day more effective and not come down to the college when they don’t have to. If we don’t make that a reality, they will go somewhere else. This is definitely worth a stream of money to make certain we have the technology infrastructure.”

On the issue of trustee-faculty relations, Anita pointed out, “I don’t interact with a lot of faculty. My commitment is to continue to continue and honor the governance process, listening to the experts. We need to make certain that we are transparent in our communications.” Asked what faculty can do, Anita wanted us to realize that trustees are on the outside and often don’t know all the ins and outs of campus affairs. “Respect the fact that there are no stupid questions. Be willing to explain what is the basics. Maybe I’m not understanding it correctly.”

On the issue of the state’s new emphasis on student “success,” Anita pointed out that we could achieve 100% success if we only educated a few, select, most able students while ignoring the larger community. However, she explained, “We have to adhere to the mission when we look at accountability.”

In her own life, Anita clearly adheres to her own mission, balancing family life, corporate responsibilities, community service, and now four more years on the Board of Trustees. How does she find time to do all this? Anita’s answer: “You find the time to read up on these issues.”

Editors’ Note: The first interview with trustee Ann Ransford is published in April 2013 issue of Chaparral. The remaining four interviews published here conclude the five-part series of Board of Trustee interviews conducted by Mark Maier and Peter Stathis.
The last six months have been the most challenging and stressful period in my professional life. As I write this communication, I frankly question whether I have it in me to last another thirteen months in this job. What is crystal clear, however, is that I will not run for a fourth year as Guild president even if a gun were held to my head. In fact, I ran again this year quite reluctantly, mainly because no one from Guild Executive wanted the job, but also to provide continuity with the transition of the next Superintendent/President. The strong desire to flee the Guild’s nest after many years of devotion to its cause makes me question elements of this job that crush most faculty members who have fulfilled the role of president on our campus, and to wonder if there are ways to mitigate this pressure for the next generation of leaders.

In past years, tension between faculty groups and the Board of Trustees was considered to be one of the most stressful components of Guild leadership. However, since the arrival of Dr. Riggs, that pressure has eased a great deal: communication has become more open, and the level of discourse has been elevated from bickering to genuine problem solving. On the other hand, internal pressure and infighting across faculty groups as well as among their representatives has gone through the roof. Although my objective side recognizes that this behavior is due, in large part, to the terrible budget crisis that has gripped us at the national and state levels, my all-too-human emotional side can’t help but be overwhelmed by the amount of accusations and negativity I have either witnessed or received in recent months.

I recognize that human nature—or is it upbringing?—motivates individuals to speak up often when things are not to their liking and to be silent, even complacent, when the sailing is smooth. For instance, the manager of a restaurant is called to a table far more often to handle a customer complaint than to accept a compliment. Similarly, I receive most of my daily input from the same small subset of Guild members who are constantly unhappy, almost always accusatory, and who only see the world through the lens of their own circumstances or benefit. This, in turn, has skewed my perception of leadership and created a level of self-doubt that has been quite detrimental to my personal wellbeing. A few weeks ago, I felt that I had hit rock bottom when I had to brush aside the index finger of an angry male faculty member that was held a mere two inches from my face. More than once, I have felt like a reluctant participant on the set of a Jerry Springer show. As I reflect upon all that I have lost in this job—a close friendship, many hours of sleep, and a peaceful life—I cannot help but wonder whether this is all worth it. Please, readers, do not begin to shower me with emails and phone calls; that is not what I seek, nor is it something that I welcome at this juncture. Honestly, it is too late for that level of feedback. The point that I am trying to make is not about me; rather, my attempt is to smooth the way, maybe clumsily, for my successor, and to find a way to support him/her through our collective efforts.
The concept of fairness, I have come to find out, is defined in a myriad of ways by employees, but all with the common trait that in each and every case, what is “fair” miraculously favors them personally. Full time instructional faculty feel shortchanged by the loss of short session pay in recent years; counselors often speak about their restricted schedule while being bitterly resented by their instructional counterparts for their pay differential; librarians have disliked the fact that unlike instructional faculty, they cannot perform more of their duties off campus; Student Services specialists have felt left out of the allocation of short session assignments; credit adjuncts bemoan their low pay while noncredit part-timers feel like the unwanted stepchildren who have been deemed undeserving of paid office hours; program directors consider their project to be the most crucial and the one that should be preserved at all cost; the hourly overload pay for full-timers is lower than that of adjuncts and therefore unfair. I could go on, and on, and on, but I think you all get the point.

A new set of freshly signed tentative agreements was just posted online for your consideration. As you peruse through this sweeping package, I challenge you to look beyond your own gain and loss, concentrate on the big picture, and question whether you could have found a more equitable outcome, not just for yourself, but for the entirety of the Guild membership. If you do, you should consider it your calling to run for Guild office. Also, next time that you enjoy a fabulous meal at your favorite restaurant, please make a point to see the chef and to give him/her a well-deserved compliment.

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Speaking of the Senate (May 2013)

Speaking of the Senate:
Spring Accomplishments

by Michael Scott

Academic Senate President

As this is the final Chaparral article for the 2012-13 academic year, I would like to thank Dr. Riggs for his service to GCC this past year. His calm handling of the tense situation he faced when he first arrived was admirable. He could have simply babysat the District and moved on, but he didn’t. He took a long look at us and complimented us on the things we did well, but had the courage to tell us what we needed to improve. If the GCC governance process worked faster, I am sure he would have accomplished a lot more things than he did. We wish him well in his future endeavors.
I would also like to congratulate our new Superintendent/President Dr. Viar. The Senate looks forward to meeting and working with him over the next many years. He is well respected at his current college and throughout the state.

The Academic Senate finished a productive spring. Below you will find the most important motions passed by the Senate this semester.

- **Motion 2013-01** The Senate adopts the new discipline of Health Information Technology.
- **Motion 2013-02** The Senate approves the new Committee on Distance Education (CoDE) policies as amended.
- **Motion 2013-TBD** The Senate recommends that Glendale College restore course offerings in short sessions to pre-budget-cut levels.
- **Motion 2013-03** The Senate approves the revision to the Senate IHAC policy.
- **Motion 2013-12** The Senate approves the changes made to the AP chart.
- **Motion 2013-17** The Senate Approves changes to AR 4100 regarding multiple degrees and requests that admission and records provide the Senate with an annual report on numbers of multiple degrees awarded.

**Next Year’s Senate and Senate Executive**

The Senate elected three Senators-At-Large in April: Cameron Hastings, Kevin Meza and Peggy Renner. Cindy Pollack was re-elected as Academic Adjunct Senator. Ramona Barrio-Sotillo and Daphne Dionisio will be new Senators in the fall and two Division Senators were re-elected: Fiona Virani (Allied Health) and Andy Young (Mathematics).

On May 16th, the Senate will elect new officers. Nominees are: Andy Young for President-Elect and 1st Vice President, Cindy Pollack 2nd Vice President, Cameron Hastings Treasurer, and Roger Dickes Secretary.

Visit us on the web: [www.glendale.edu/senate](http://www.glendale.edu/senate)
CSEA Connection: Looking for Answers

by Hoover Zariani
CSEA President

As you may know, we are about to go through reductions of 95 of our fellow coworkers. This has been an extremely long and extremely problematic process. Part of the difficulty has been that our contract doesn't explicitly outline reductions (as opposed to complete layoffs) but the other part (and more important one) has shown a larger crack in our systems. I'd like to take this space to share some of the concerns and thoughts expressed to me on a daily basis.

**Transparency** - when the process began, and still to this day, there are many questions that are still unanswered. These questions have been raised in numerous ways (town hall meetings, board meetings, classified meetings, etc. Yet there is still a cloud of inquiries that have gone unanswered. We should expect more from a public institution. In my opinion, this is about the "why" questions many of our classified staff have been asking. We are told there will be more reorganization but we are not provided with any explanation or information. This does not help in becoming more transparent.

**Accountability** - In any institution, there must be explanations given as to who is responsible for decisions and why they made those specific decisions. Here again, it seems that the person who originally made the decision to make these reductions should give the reasons for the decision and take responsibility for them. Unfortunately, this individual is no longer at GCC so I'm not sure we will ever have an answer. This is the "who" and "why" questions asked throughout this process with little or no response.

**Leadership** - Leaders must make tough decisions but their decisions should be made based on data and they should be explained. When there are so many questions about any decision, it becomes clear that while a tough choice was made, there was no data presented that supported that decision. Many staff went to their supervisors and Vice Presidents and presented data about their work but to no avail. According to many, data was simply ignored.

**Connection** - If I had a penny for each time I heard "...but my supervisor doesn't know what I do..." I would have already been able to retire comfortably! There seems to be disconnectedness among some staff and supervisors that I cannot explain and I don't understand. I hear constant stories of conflict that go unresolved between staff and supervisors for this reason. I think when supervisors have a deeper understanding of the role of their staff, they value the work and contribution of those who report to them. "Supervision" must go beyond, "do what I tell you" which is what I hear constantly.

We must continue to demand and push for a resolution of the above concerns in order to change the process of how decisions are made on campus. This can only come through involvement by us and continued questioning of how we arrive at decisions and offer solutions. It's difficult to analyze something while you are going through it, but it's my hope that we will learn from this process and improve our college-wide systems so staff are not made to suffer in the future and students are served appropriately.
We will celebrate our annual Classified Employees Week this month. I want to thank all of you for your service to our small community and to our students. Regardless of the reductions, you are an important part of this institution. I hope that one day we can realize what has been said by Dr. Riggs many times this past year - that we are all colleagues and equals. While we go through this difficult time, let’s keep our focus on helping our students be successful. Thank you for your hard work. It is deeply appreciated.

“No one who achieves success does so without acknowledging the help of others. The wise and the confident acknowledge this help with gratitude.” - Alfred North Whitehead

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Adjunct Junction (March 2013)

Adjunct Junction:
Understanding the Salary "Ball of Wax" of Negotiations

by Phyllis Eckler
Guild 2nd Vice President

You may have recently heard talk about a “ball of wax” that was being formulated to encompass many of the issues that have been brought to the table as part of the guild and district openers for a new three year contract. As you may suspect many of these issues have a monetary impact. Below I will share with you some of the main points of this salary negotiation package along with some analysis of the “pros and cons”.

Why are full-time faculty receiving a raise in pay?

Full-time instructional faculty will be receiving a 2% raise to their base pay this year and another 2% raise next year to offset the loss of 35 percent salary from future intersessions (formerly known as “pro-rata pay”. See my March 2013 article in the Chaparral at http://campusguides.glendale.edu/chaparral2146 ). Counselors will not have any increase in their annual salary.

What are adjunct faculty receiving?

Adjunct faculty will be getting a promise that the current 5.96% of salary known as the “parity percentage” (see salary schedule B-1), will be included in their hourly rate into the future, and raises will also be based on that money. In the past, this parity percentage often dropped when the State withheld funding and no raises were ever given on that part of salary. Most credit adjunct faculty will be getting a raise in intersession pay while adjuncts in the non-credit area will be kept on the present B-2 schedule. That is because ALL faculty, both full-time and part-time, will be paid a percentage of the full-time salary (schedule A) according to the load determined for their discipline.
The way hourly pay will be calculated will be based on 65% of what a full-time faculty member would get per hour of teaching (based on the subject area’s load) capped at step 8. Hourly pay for full-time faculty and part-time faculty within a particular load area will be equal during intersessions. Adjunct faculty in a low load area such as English Composition (load of 14) will receive around $85 per classroom hour while those adjuncts teaching in high load areas (such as the 24 hour load non-credit area) will be around $65 (see Salary Schedule B-2). All salary schedules (for adjuncts and full-time faculty) can be found at http://glendale.edu/index.aspx?page=1769.

Why are adjuncts getting different hourly pay rates?

Full-time faculty, in fact, get different hourly pay rates for teaching based on how much preparation, assessment, grading time and other work is deemed to be required for their subject area. This is what is known as load. To get a sense of the load for each area you can check out Article VI Section 4 of our Guild contract on page 25. When adjunct pay is tied to the hourly pay rates of full-time faculty, part-timers benefit in a variety of ways. Under a pay scale that is tied to load, when a discipline area reduces their load the hourly pay for adjunct faculty in that discipline area goes up (while their allowable teaching hours may diminish). Adjunct faculty in low load areas, who are restricted in the number of hours they can work under the “67% law”, benefit by being paid more for each of hour of work. Tying part-time wages to the hourly wages of full-time faculty protect adjunct faculty since all groups benefit or are hurt by proposed salary changes. Working together toward salary improvement make us a stronger negotiating body.

What are the other monetary agreements that will be affecting all faculty?

We are also looking at recouping a promised 1% raise from 2008, that will begin on July 1, 2013, for all faculty. At the same that the district is demanding a .25% salary give back for all of 2012-13. This pay cut (equivalent to a 2.5% cut from one month’s check) will be evident on the final check of the semester due at the beginning of July. This cut has been agreed to and implemented for all other employee groups on campus. Given our district’s “me too” standard for raises and pay cuts on campus, it is a salary cut that faculty still owe the district budget for 2012-13.

More intersession courses will be offered this summer and during winter 2014. Future intersessions are promised with a set floor as to the percentage of courses that will be offered (based on the number of courses offered in the previous semester). One needs to keep in mind that the district has the right to choose how these intersession courses will be allocated among all the department areas. It is not something that can be negotiated.

What are the “pros and cons” of this salary agreement?

As with the all negotiations there are areas that win and areas that lose. The district has to give up certain rights and monetary positions, as does the Guild. While many adjunct faculty have been waiting a long time for a new step (a pay increase for years of service) on their salary schedule, that goal alluded us during this round of negotiations. However, it is still very much in the minds of the Guild. Meanwhile the issue of “equal pay for equal work,” that has long been a rallying cry for part-timers, will be achieved with this agreement – at least during intersessions. The availability of more intersession courses may help adjunct faculty and perhaps, the lower
rate of pay that full-time faculty will experience may dissuade them from taking on these assignments (since full-time faculty have first right of refusal during intersessions).

The inclusion of the parity percentage in the base pay will stop the constant threat of pay cuts to adjunct faculty.

Salary negotiations for 2013-14 have not yet begun and the survey that was recently done highlighted several areas for improvement in adjunct salaries. Some of these have already been achieved in this agreement – improved intersession pay (for most adjunct faculty), more course offerings during summer and winter intersessions, and inclusion of the parity percentage in the base. Achieving higher pay for more educational attainment (another column or “class,” or extra pay for a doctorate degree) and getting another step for longevity are still goals that part-time faculty want to see. The union is on board in support of those objectives.
Garfield Gleanings: Goodbye, Goodbye, Goodbye
by Marcia Walerstein-Sibony
Guild Garfield Steward

This is my FAREWELL note.

I’m stepping down from my position as Garfield steward, and this is my farewell note. I’m not leaving because I’m fed up (although that’s happened at times) or because people are fed up with me (that, too, is frequent). I’m not going to advance my career, and I’m not really retiring, although that certainly is in the equation. I just think it’s time for change. I was the first, but I’m sure no one intended that I’d be the last, too.

It all started one day after I shot my mouth off at some meeting, and was encouraged to do it again at another meeting of higher ups, when one, now retired, ESL instructor who had been on the negotiating team, came up to me and said that they have decided to have a Garfield representative on the Guild Executive team, and she thought I should apply.

I certainly had union sentiments, and was of the generation where activism was a given at U.C. Berkeley, but... to tell the truth, I had never been to a Guild meeting at Glendale, nor at Southwest College in the L.A. District where I also taught. I had a fairly good reason though, I was in the classroom teaching at lunchtime.

So I wasn’t picked automatically, and I don’t know what Gordon Alexandre and Mike Allen really thought about me, but about four months later, they decided I would do, and I suddenly had a new title, a small stipend and a “to do” list. I was not on the Guild Exec, I didn’t get a salary, I didn’t have voting rights, but I could and did organize meetings. The first one was quite a shocker, to others and me. Then rallies which were great fun; even our students helped out.

It was after a few years that my position was given a seat on the Guild Exec. Now, not only could I be heard, but I had a vote. As my involvement in the Guild grew, the overriding impression I had was how much I, and my Garfield counterparts, didn’t know about the college as a whole. We went to departmental meetings, and that was about it for participation in the college. We didn’t know anyone in administration. We didn’t know what the policies were towards adjunct, towards non-credit, other than that we seemed to be the last on most lists for improvement. “Down here” there was an overriding impression among those that did know, that we were looked down upon. Despite the fact that we had the same degrees, or higher, our work wasn’t perceived as important. After all, our students didn’t bring the college the same money. Visits to our dilapidated bungalows or to the church didn’t help. Now when people come down, they are ushered into an modern, high-tech, green building with lots of computer rooms and other conveniences. It is hard to look down on the physical plant, but we still have a long ways to go in other areas of equality.

We had our share of fights. Three years ago, an edict to more or less cut out our ability to sub created a sudden loss of income to many and an administrative nightmare. We fought back to restore substitute teaching to the norms that had existed. We had to persuade the Administration that subbing did not bring on a Peralta violation according to the State code of education. There is a sweetness in victory, however it has put other constraints on what we can do in this area.
Another type of memorable victory was working on “Yes on Prop 30” campaign. The voter registration we did on campus - many of the new voters were either new citizens or young people - provided Garfield students the opportunity to give their voice at the ballot. Then, there was the rally with GCC’s student representatives coming down to speak in many languages. We also canvassed neighborhoods where I had the pleasure of working with people from movie electrical technicians union. We believed that we just had to win, or the whole already badly fractured educational system of California would go from bad to dysfunctional, pushed an all-out effort from everyone: faculty, students, staff, administration. That feeling after the victory was great.

On the human side, being a part of Guild Exec was an experience that entirely changed my relationship to GCC. I was now a representative in the “big picture.” People on Guild Exec are some of the brightest, most committed people I’ve ever worked with. They also are the most contentious, and each one is looking out to get the most for their group, myself included. That’s a large part of what I was voted in to do. Representing a pool of now over 130 adjunct from non-credit, I often stood with Phyllis Eckler, 2nd V.P. for adjunct, a phenomenal person, who never stopped fighting for the betterment of adjuncts. Representing non-credit, we had to fight for those with the highest teaching loads and huge numbers of projects to administer. As I write this, I think we have succeeded in doing that. But since we do not bring in as much money from the state, we are often at the bottom of the barrel.

I think there are many areas I should have done more, and I’ll be telling your new representative, Cheryl Johnson, to work on these areas. As usual, more communication is needed between the Guild and departments and between the rep and faculty members, especially at outlying branches who seldom get to any meetings (even department meetings). Adjuncts still badly need increases in steps. We have to see the numbers before we know whether our fights for summer/winter pay actually help many.

It’s been my pleasure to serve Garfield faculty. It’s a big responsibility, and I’m sure it can be done better. Your new rep, Cheryl Johnson, has been on the negotiating team for years. She is not new to the big picture, as I was. Her skills as a lawyer will surely be helpful. Her commitment to the betterment of the worker runs in her blood and has for generations.

With Caroline dePiro as our new Non-credit adjunct rep to the negotiating team, I’m certain we’ll have another strong voice in that area, too.

On the part of the adjunct faculty, I say, you must get involved in more than just your class. For those of you who have the time, you should be on governance committees, run for an office, be involved. Your voice is needed. We still have a long way to go.

So, adieu, farewell, shalom. Old reps never die. They just wander the halls giving advice that no one is listening to any more, and probably isn’t relevant anyway.

That’s exactly the reason I’ll find a new way to direct my passions.

It’s been great….

With solidarity,
Marcia Walerstein-Sibony
GCC Concert Singers Upcoming Prestigious Performances
by Peter Green

GCC Concert Singers to sing VIDEO GAMES LIVE at COMIC CON in San Diego in JULY!

The GCC Concert Singers, under the direction of VPA Division Chair Dr. Peter Green, have been asked back to sing at Video Games Live Concerts this summer. Last year the group performed at Video Games Live at the Nokia Theatre in Downtown LA with the Pasadena Symphony with great success. It was an exciting event, bringing together people of all ages, including many young people who hadn't listened to Classical music before.

This year, the Concert Singers will join the Pacific Symphony on July 17 at the Verizon Amphitheater in Irvine, and with the Pasadena Symphony at the world-renowned Comic-Con in San Diego on July 20 (over 150,000 attendees!).

"Video Games Live" is an international touring production that breathes life to such video games as "Mario," "Zelda" and "Final Fantasy" by playing their soundtracks and displaying their images on a big screen. In each tour stop, local professional musicians play the concert, rehearsing the day before and the day of the show.

The "Video Games Live" tour — created by video-game composers Tallarico and Jack Wall — has been growing since its inauguration in 2005, when it went to just three states. Now it spans the world.

Both events will include a laser show and a costume contest and will debut a brand new work, never before performed at Video Games Live!

"It's all the energy and excitement of a rock concert mixed with the power and emotion of the symphony, combined with the cutting-edge visuals, technology, interactivity and fun video games provide," said co-creator and video-game composer Tommy Tallarico.

PBS Special Trailer:  http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uzHLeDBKprA
DVD/Blu-Ray/CD Trailer:  http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KSE2UzQAgfo
Hollywood Bowl Trailer:  http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DZjv0VcAlzE
VGL Brazil DVD & CD Trailer:  http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GIMFYoQkHvo
Brazil Promo #1 (2007):  http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sqQ6JUffF0
Symphony Trailer:  http://www.videogameslive.com/video/vglsymphony1.wmv
Milestones (May 2013)

Ani Keshishian

Ani Keshishian's (Administration) 12-year old daughter Ariana Keshishian (6th grader at Chamlian Armenian School) was awarded the first place in City of Glendale Neighborhood Services "I Love My Neighborhood" poster contest on April 10, 2013 at the Glendale Civic Auditorium.

There were over 10,000 entries submitted from schools all around the district. As part of her award the City will be planting a tree in her honor at her school on May 21st.

In addition to this great honor, she has consistency placed first the California Math League Contest in her grade level and has also won first place in the Geography Bee for her school (1st - 8th grades).

Laura Matsumoto

Laura Matsumoto (DSPS) welcomed her second child this year. Griffin Kekoa Matsumoto Buchan, joined big sister, Kale’a, on April 27, 2013 - weighing 9 lbs. and measuring at 22”.

Karen McDermott

Karen McDermott (Business) has numerous literary accomplishments this year. Her short story "Goodbye Bobby Sherman" was accepted for publication by The Canary Press; her poem "Picasso, Self Portrait" was accepted for publication in Statement Magazine, (the fourth of her poems to be published in that literary journal), and the essay "The Sublimity of War" was accepted for publication by The Journal of Military Experience.

She was also hired to teach a "Writing and Reading Workshop" this summer for Johns Hopkins' Center for Talented Youth.

Angela Morales

Angela Morales' (English) essay entitled "The Girls in My Town" (originally published in the Southwest Review) has been selected to appear in The Best American Essays 2013, edited by Robert Atwan and Cheryl Strayed (out in October).

Also, her essay "One Small Step" has been published in the current issue of the Harvard Review.

We want your Milestones!

Do you have any milestones to share with us? Send them to: jgamberg@glendale.edu