PONDERINGS OF THE PRESIDENT
By Laurie Ordin

I’ve been thinking a lot about the word “labor” and its various meanings these days. During the run-up to the last weeks of school my job presiding over our “labor” union kept me on my toes, while at the same time, I anticipated participating in the “labor” of love that my daughter (and tangentially, my son-in-law) were about to embark upon as they worked to bring my new little grandson, David, into the world.

I was so pleased when my daughter announced about 8 months ago that she was expecting her first child on May 24. What timing, I thought! Graduation was May 23 and I could just slip from my roles at CoM into my role as “labor” coach and then grandmother (or Lolly as my older grandsons call me.) By the beginning of May my daughter started showing early signs of labor and I enlisted some of my devoted colleagues to cover my classes at a moment’s notice for me. After all, if a woman is 30% dilated and 75% effaced for several weeks before her due date, doesn’t it follow that “labor” would just fly by and the baby might even be born in the car on the way to the hospital? Well, it turns out that that is definitely not the case. May 24 came and went and no baby. He was in a somewhat difficult sideways position and my daughter was convinced that he was lost and couldn’t find his way out. Finally, 11 days fashionably late, David decided enough was enough and put his mom through 33 hours of labor.

During those hours I watched as the women and men at the Kaiser Birthing Center labored with my daughter as she, with their help, overcame one complication after another. Nurses, midwives, ob/gyns, pharmacists and anesthesiologists were all there at a moment’s notice as the careful monitoring she received showed that she needed them. How grateful I was that she and her husband had good hospitalization through his job. It’s approximately the same plan that most of us have if we are fortunate enough to have a large enough teaching load.

I was also reminded of the many frenzied calls, emails, and visits to my office that I received during the last >>
few weeks of school, as those of us lucky enough to have coverage were asked to sign up for open enrollment, as the District is attempting to join a new group in order to try to keep the District's health care costs down. Many of us were so concerned about what was becoming of this valued benefit. Our health care is a negotiable item and nothing is set in stone about our new health care carriers until the negotiations on this article are completed. Our collective bargaining team is hard at work and hopes to deliver a satisfactory result so that as many of our members as possible will have the peace of mind of good coverage when health issues inevitably come up for ourselves and our families.

On another front, as I was writing this article, news came in on the Vergara decision. To summarize, Vergara is a case brought to the court by two young woman, challenging tenure in the California K-12 system. Their claim was that tenure deprives students of educational opportunities and negatively impacts poor and minority student in a disproportionate manner. A Superior Court judge in L.A ruled that tenure as structured in the CA K-12 system is unconstitutional. This ruling will, of course, be appealed.

I was thinking of ditching the “labor” article that I had nearly completed and writing about Vergara, but then thought that it might be interesting to solicit your thoughts on tenure and this decision and write about this next month. So if you have any thoughts about tenure, pro/con/mixed, please email them to me and perhaps we can have a forum in next month’s newsletter.

In the meantime, you might be wondering how Vergara will impact tenure at the community college. Here is a note that our UPM attorney, Bob Bezemek, wrote to the colleges he represents:

Re: Vergara Decision holding tenure, due process, seniority and layoff laws for K-12 teachers to be unconstitutional. The decision issued by a L.A. Superior Court judge in Vergara v. State of California, striking down California’s tenure, layoff, due process and seniority laws for K-12 teachers will not stand.

"BE ADVISED THAT [THE VERGARA DECISION] HAS NO PRECEDENTIAL VALUE AND THUS SHOULD NOT IMPACT THE COMMUNITY COLLEGES."

- Bob Bezemek

It is a product of right-wing ideology, rather than Constitutional law and reasoning. The decision ignores the facts proved in the case, and disregards governing law. We will be issuing an analysis of the case and the decision sometime in the next 10 days. We have been aware of the case since it was filed, and participated in some of the early planning of the defense. We have monitored the progress of the case. Over the last 6 months it became clear that 1) the case was totally without merit and 2) the judge was going to find in favor of the plaintiff students, despite the lack of factual or legal reasoning supporting such a decision. The case is limited to K-12 public schools. Both the CTA and the CFT intervened in the case, and were active participants in a joint effort with the Governor and Attorney General. The court’s injunction, holding these important and longstanding State laws unconstitutional, has been stayed pending appeal. It is certain that the CTA and CFT will file an appeal. Be advised that a state superior court decision has no precedential value and thus should not impact the community colleges. In addition, the tenure and due process laws for community colleges are significantly different than the K-12 statutes. We look forward to providing a more detailed explanation of the case and decision.

[B. Bezemek]  

So stay informed, stay in touch and stay involved. And enjoy Summer. ☀️
EDITORIAL

UPM CONGRATULATES DR. COON on his reappointment as Superintendent/President of our college. Our CoM Board of Trustees has unanimously rewarded and extended his employment contract for another four years.

His rewards include: a 20 percent wage increase (up from $215,000, to $255,000/yr.); a $750 monthly travel stipend; a potential additional yearly bonus of 5 percent; 22 vacation days per year; a 3 month sabbatical during the 2015-16 school year; and paid medical benefits.

[Marin IJ 5/31/14]

Clearly our board was highly satisfied with Dr. Coon’s performance.

Apparently they were also highly satisfied with the performance of our three vice-presidents, because the Board rewarded them with a 30 percent wage increase.

Sadly, however, they must have been dissatisfied with the performance of our faculty, because they have offered us only a 1 percent wage increase.

(Sort of like leaving a penny tip in a restaurant.)

So what is our faculty doing wrong? What is it that makes our contributions to the college 30 times LESS VALUABLE than the contributions of our 3 vice-presidents? Why are we only worth a penny?

Is it that our faculty is not providing students with a commendable educational experience?

Yet according to our Administration’s own website:

“College of Marin has been providing exceptional educational opportunities since 1926. The College has earned a reputation as a quality educational institution ...”

Is it because our Board thinks that our faculty have inferior credentials and therefore are not worth more than a penny?

Yet the college’s own website says:

“College of Marin faculty are recognized for their excellence... Our instructors have degrees from such institutions as Stanford, Harvard, Yale, Columbia, UC Berkeley, California College of Arts & Crafts, SFSU, Royal College of Music, London and many other top educational institutions.”

Or is it that our Board is displeased with the CoM transfer rate, and holds our faculty culpable?

But the StudyUSA.com website says:

“College of Marin has one of the highest rates of transfer to UC-Berkeley in California because of the overall excellence of instruction...”

Given all of the above, it’s difficult to understand why our faculty is so disdained and disrespected as to be offered a penny-ante wage increase of only 1 percent.

Could it be that the real reason for our Board’s penny-pinching penury is that they are attempting to balance their generosity to their administrators... on the backs of our faculty? □

“WHEN WORKERS FEEL THAT ‘THE COMPANY IS DOING FINE, BUT SOMEHOW I’M DOING WORSE,’ AT SOME POINT THERE’S GOING TO BE SOME DISSATISFACTION’— A GENERAL FEELING OF, ‘THIS SYSTEM IS RIGGED FOR YOU AND NOT IN MY FAVOR’.”

ADAM COBB
Wharton School of Management
**COLLECTIVE BARGAINING UPDATE**

John Sutherland  
UPM Chief Negotiator

**MUCH ADO ABOUT...**

**CONTRACT NEGOTIATIONS HAVE SLOWED** since the end of the spring semester but will resume soon and continue over the summer months. Not much news to report. In recent months, however, UPM has heard many unit member questions about health care and the District’s directives to sign up for alternative health care plans.

The response to these questions is that we currently have a Contract, and we are in the midst of NEGOTIATING a new one. Until we finalize the new Contract, the old one guides both UPM’s and the District’s obligations.

Our UPMs attorney has assured us that any changes in health care must be negotiated; therefore, before the District can mandate changes in our obligations and/or coverage, it must formalize them through the bargaining process. UPM has already made an opening demand on health-care, and soon the District will respond. If the District needs to adhere to any timelines outside the Contract, it will, we hope, counter UPM’s demand in a timely and agreeable manner.

We will let you know the District’s formal response on health care as soon as we receive it. 

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**UPM STAFF AND COMMITTEES 2013 - 2014**

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| PResident | Laurie Ordin  
| --- | ---  
| UPM Executive Council | Bonnie Borenstein, Kenny Buquen, John Erdmann (for John Marrynsz, who is on sabbatical), Deborah Graham, Arthur Lutz, Michele Martinini, Laurie Ordin, Nadia Sanko, John Sutherland  
| Grievance Officer | John Sutherland  
| Treasurer | Michele Martinini  
| Budget Monitor | Deborah Graham  
| Workload Committee | Bonnie Borenstein, Michele Martinini  
| North Bay Labor Council | Christine Li  
| Part-Timer Representative | Kenny Buquen  

**UPM**

**United Professors of Marin local 1610**

**Professional Affairs Committee**

Rinetta Early, Toni Yoshioka-Wittenmeier  

**Sabbatical Leave Committee**

Paul da Silva, Nadia Sanko, Walter Turner  

**Professional Standards Committee**

George Adams, Scott Serafin  

**Bargaining Team**

John Sutherland (Chief Negotiator), Bonnie Borenstein, Deborah Graham, Arthur Lutz, Michele Martinini, Byron Ramey  

**Bay 10 Representative**

Paul da Silva  

**UPMPAC**

Arthur Lutz, Paul da Silva  

**CRA Trust**

Ira Lansing (Chair), Sarah Brewster, Judy Coombes, Bruce Furuya, Laurie Ordin  

**Health and Safety Committee**

George Adams, Paul da Silva  

**Social Committee**

Radica Portello, Vaughan Ariano, Tom Bohl, Caitlin Escobar, David Patterson  

**UPM Executive Secretaries**

Nancy Fau, Josette Lambert  

**Web Master**

Derek Wilson  

**Newsletter Editor**

Arthur Lutz
UPMPAC and the “GOOD FIGHT”

THE ESSENCE OF TRADE-UNIONISM is not merely to fight for higher wages and improved working conditions. At their best, trade unions embrace a grander vision – the struggle for the betterment of all people.

Great trade-union leaders like Cesar Chavez and A. Philip Randolph understood this.

"The essence of trade unionism is social uplift." - A. Philip Randolph

Most progressive unions agree with Randolph and are involved in public affairs, supporting legislation and candidates who support progressive agendas in their communities. Unions do this mostly through their Political Action Committees.

Our union also believes that we should be involved in public affairs, supporting worthy candidates and legislation that will improve our community, especially in those areas relating to education.

To this end, we, like many other progressive unions, have established a UPM Political Action Committee (UPMPAC) to support measures and candidates whom we believe are working for the best interests of our students, our college, our faculty, our community, and society at large.

None of our UPMPAC funds come from union dues; they are all free-will contributions from our faculty. We currently have over 50 faculty who contribute monthly to our UPMPAC fund through payroll deduction. The average monthly contribution is about ten dollars.

If you would like to help support the goals and activities of our Political Action Committee, please contribute using the payroll deduction form below. Be part of our union’s “grander vision” and help fight the good fight for the ‘betterment of all people.’

Arthur Lutz, Paul da Silva; Co-Chairs, UPMPAC

“The fight is never about grapes or lettuce, ... it is always about people” - Cesar Chavez

United Professors of Marin
UPM-PAC Payroll Deduction Form

The UPM-PAC (Political Action Committee) provides financial support to candidates and measures that support or benefit education in Marin County and the College of Marin in particular. If you would like to support the UPM-PAC with a monthly contribution, small or large, please fill out the form below and send it to the Payroll Office. Or you may deliver it to the UPM office and we will route it.

To: Payroll, College of Marin
Date: __________________

I hereby authorize the Marin Community College to deduct from my earnings the sum of ________________ beginning in the month of ________________ (year), and each month thereafter, and to remit this sum to the United Professors of Marin PAC #990958 until I revoke this authorization in writing.

Signature: ____________________________
Print Name: ___________________________
Address: _____________________________
City: _________________________________
Zip: _________________________________
SSN: ________________________________
ON JUNE 10th 1963, President John F. Kennedy signed into law the Equal Pay Act. It prohibited wage discrimination based on gender.

Fifty one years later, however, women are still earning just 77 cents for every dollar that men earn doing the same work.

The greatest gender pay disparity appears in high-paying occupations. Female financial advisors earn just 41.6% of what male financial advisors earn. And the pay gap for female physicians/surgeons is even greater. They earn just 29% of what male physicians with equal qualifications and experience, earn.

The smallest pay gap is in those occupations where women are members of labor unions.

It’s an example of how the labor movement is in the forefront of progressive social policy, and gives reason to echo the mantra:

ONE OF THE EARLY UNIONS where women were most welcome was the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW), the Wobblies. The Wobblies were founded in June, 1905 in Chicago and resolved to be “One Big Union for All Workers,” which meant ALL workers, regardless of creed, color, nationality or gender. It was a union where women were at the forefront of organizing.

One of those women was Helen Keller.

MANY PEOPLE ARE NOT AWARE that Helen Keller was a member of the IWW and was also a member of the American Socialist Party and supported socialist Eugene Debs in each of his presidential campaigns.

When she was asked why she was a Socialist and joined the IWW, she explained:

“When I was appointed on a commission to investigate the conditions of the blind, I first thought that blindness was a misfortune beyond human control. But I found that much of it was traceable to terrible industrial conditions caused by the selfishness and greed of employers, causing poverty, which often drove women to a life of prostitution resulting in syphilis and ending in blindness.”

She wrote:

“This country is governed for the richest, for the corporations, the bankers, the land speculators, and for the exploiters of labor. The majority of mankind are working people, and so long as their fair demands—the ownership and control of their livelihoods—are set at nought, we can have neither men’s rights nor women’s rights. The majority of mankind is ground down by industrial oppression in order that the small remnant may live in ease.” [From her autobiography].

It’s interesting that when her radical views became known, many of those same people who had extolled her exceptional intelligence suddenly claimed that when it came to her activist politics and her membership in the IWW, she must be addled-brained because of her disability.

Regardless, many of the egalitarian ideals of Helen Keller and the IWW were later adopted by the C.I.O and remain part of the canon of today’s most progressive labor unions.

Helen Keller died in 1968, but her passion for social and economic justice, and her visionary ideal of “One Big Union for All Workers,” lives on. □
2014 IS THE EIGHTIETH ANNIVERSARY of the 1934 General Strike in San Francisco. It was a landmark event in West Coast Labor History that changed the face of labor throughout the country.

On July 5th, 1934 (“Bloody Thursday,”) the police and National Guard, on orders from local politicians, attempted to break a strike by San Francisco Longshoremen fighting for union recognition. The attack resulted in numerous injuries and the death of two workers by police gunfire.

Public outrage over the police behavior of local officials was so great that it triggered a General Strike in support of the strikers that shut down the city completely for four days until a pro-labor agreement was reached between the ship owners and Bay Area Longshoremen.

**LABOR HUMOR**

JOE HAD BEEN AN ADJUNCT faculty member all his life and a member of the teacher’s union — every month he paid his dues and attended union meetings. And when he suffered a heart attack the union president visited him in the hospital and was there as Joe spoke his final words to his family:

"Junior," he said, “I want you to take the Tiburon houses.”

"And Alice, you take the condos over in Belvedere."

"Tom, the office building in Sausalito is yours."

The union president was amazed at Joe’s words and said to Joe’s wife:

“On Joe’s part-time wages how on earth could he accumulate all those properties?”


**SOLICITING YOUR INPUT**

WE WOULD LIKE OUR NEWSLETTER to be of interest to our faculty. We encourage you to submit your comments or opinions on articles that you see in these pages, or pass on any news that you think would be of interest to our membership. Send your submissions to: Arthur@unitedprofessorsofmarin.org

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**FOR THE GOOD OF THE ORDER** (2)

**“BLOODY THURSDAY”**

THE 1934 GENERAL STRIKE

**BLOOD RAN RED IN THE STREETS YESTERDAY.**

SAN FRANCISCO’S BROAD EMBARCADERO RAN RED WITH BLOOD YESTERDAY.

THE COLOR STAINED CLOTHING, SHEETS, FLESH.

DRIPPING.

HUMAN BLOOD, BRIGHT AS RED BEGONIAS IN THE SUN.

A RUN OF CRIMSON CRAWLED TOWARD THE CURB.

MOST OF US CAME TO HATE THE SIGHT OF RED.

THERE WAS SO MUCH OF IT.

-Anonymous witness to “Bloody Thursday,” July 5, 1934.