



**Still Still  
Here & Growing**

**72<sup>nd</sup> Annual Business Convention  
May 18, 2019**

Aqua Turf Club  
Plantsville, Connecticut

# REPORTS

# PRESIDENT'S REPORT

## 72<sup>nd</sup> ANNUAL AFT CONNECTICUT BUSINESS CONVENTION

I love the theme of this year's convention – Still Here and Still Growing. If we look back to this time last year, many critics believed we were at the end of the union era. They believed by the end of the summer, with the Janus case decided, that members would drop in droves and render our union bankrupt. Well, we are still here. And because of the thousands of discussions in the workplace among our members about the importance and power of belonging to a union, not only are we still here, we are still growing. I am proud to announce that today, despite the right wing's belief that the stacked Supreme Court had rung our death knell, AFT CT and AFT National today have more members than we did last year at this time. Mark Twain once said, "the reports of my death have been greatly exaggerated." For labor, the reports of our death have inspired us to health.

We have thrived despite challenges in every direction. Austerity budgets at both the state and municipal level – some proposed by political leaders we have considered friends – are little more than attacks on working people to preserve the entitlements of the wealthy and corporations. They have sought to do this, both in Connecticut and nationally, by de-professionalizing educators, healthcare workers, and State workers. The recent comment that nurses "spend all day playing cards" came from a State legislator in Washington but would we have been shocked if had been made by the Minority Leader in Connecticut? Of course not. The best we can say about some Connecticut politicians is that they at least know to be hypocrites. Republicans and far too many Democrats speak on the floor of the legislature about how they "support" our Assistant Attorneys General, our tax attorneys, our judicial wardens, and others, but they can't support giving them a raise after years of zeroes because, "We just can't afford it." Meanwhile, they work to repeal the Estate Tax, which affects those families with \$3 million + homes, because – who knows? I guess they feel the rich don't have enough advantages, so they need to have free inheritance as well.

I know it feels sometimes we are fighting against huge forces for a community, a state, and a country that puts people – all people – first. We see national and state leaders passing policies and making statements designed to divide us. We see anti-women, anti-immigrant, anti-LGBTQ, and anti-worker policies being promoted in State Houses, the White House, and the Supreme Court. It's easy to get discouraged. But labor, both in Connecticut and throughout, has shown that hard work and moral righteousness beat despair. Here at home, AFT CT led the way to ensure that candidates who support our values would prevail. We were told by the "experts" that in 2018, the Senate was lost, the Constitutional Officers were lost, and the House was a coin flip. Our members and our political staff – Teri Mersiotis, Jim Vigue, refused to accept that. Our LPAC Committee interviewed scores of candidates and did not give anyone a free pass just because of party affiliation. We knocked more doors than ever. We showed up at rallies. We worked for people who promised to work for us. Because of our efforts, we ended up with a solid majority in the Senate, a larger majority in the House, and all the Constitutional officers, including the Governor. Now we are holding these politicians accountable. The experts were wrong, because they did not understand the commitment our members have to our values and the labor movement. They did not realize this was a new day. We did. That realization provides our roadmap for this year's municipal elections and our efforts in 2020. Politicians from either

party who want to work against us or take us for granted need to know: we're still here and we're still growing.

It is not only in the political realm where we have seen that labor is stronger than ever. Last year we saw educators walk out in West Virginia, Oklahoma, Colorado, and Arizona walk out in "red state revolutions" to demand a living wage and commitment to investment in public education. This year, teachers in Los Angeles walked out to protest public money being diverted into private charter schools, and Chicago walked out to protest private charter companies' refusal to acknowledge the right to organize. Every strike was successful. More recently and closer to home, we saw our AFL-CIO sisters and brothers bring Stop and Shop to its knees by standing together to refuse to allow a company that made a \$2 billion profit last year from cutting their pay, pension, and healthcare. As I said at a rally at the Stop and Shop in Hamden, they were not 30,000 UFCW workers, they were more than 100,000 members from AFT CT, AFSCME, and the rest of the AFL-CIO. Stop and Shop learned what Boards of Education, hospitals, and bad bosses everywhere are going to learn – we're still here, and we're still growing.

None of this happens without effort. Our staff has worked hard with local leadership, local executive boards, activists and members to build the structures and provide the professional development needed to build our union. Our organizers are not only working to build internal structures, but the Rockville Healthcare Workers, the Assistant Attorneys General, and dozens of state workers have felt the power of being in a union for the first time. None of this work is done alone; it is the hard work of our outstanding staff, our Executive Committee, and 30,000 members who understand the value and power of standing together. We were not waiting for legal permission to break apart. We are not waiting for permission to fight for our values. This past year has proven that no matter the Supreme Court decision, no matter the obstacles, we are still here and we are still growing. This year was only the beginning.

Respectfully submitted in solidarity,

Jan Hochadel  
*President, AFT Connecticut*

# **EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT'S REPORT**

## **72<sup>nd</sup> ANNUAL AFT CONNECTICUT BUSINESS CONVENTION**

Sisters and brothers,

As this year comes to a close, I am more sure than ever that leadership development and member engagement are what will make us a stronger and stronger union. It is a commitment to this philosophy that has led to a very low drop rate of membership in this post-Janus world.

This year we expanded our member organizing program to Healthcare Workers and had members in Manchester/Rockville help in the organizing of a new group of members from Rockville Hospital.

The re-boot of our HOPE coalition of Hartford Healthcare System members (Backus, Natchaug, Windham) has led to increased internal strength in these unions and exciting new opportunities in organizing healthcare professions. In the years to come, healthcare represents the potential growth of thousands of new AFT members. Additionally, we added to existing locals, such as JPE and A&R. That success will be built on the strength of existing locals and is fostered through trainings and actions such as the Ansonia Rally for Education.

Our members are more engaged than ever and this trend must continue to be expanded. Whether it is being representatives at the state Democratic Convention, working on political campaigns, attending our many regional legislative breakfasts or Legislative Conference, serving on committees like LPAC, Social Justice, Divisional Councils, Town Committees, elective office, representing AFT on various PPCs, at Public Service International, or the many other ways our members are engaged, and we are stronger because of it.

This year our Statewide Retiree Local was launched. I am proud to say I was a charter member and my wife, Michelle, joined just recently. They are doing great things.

This year I also became an "official" member of the Healthcare PPC and assumed a lead role nationally with AFT on the issues of Safe Staffing, Workplace Violence, and our relationship with the American Nurses Association. Currently, we are pushing for passage on a bill that calls for an OSHA Standard to prevent violence against Healthcare and Social Workers and commonsense Safe Staffing in hospitals and Universal Healthcare. I am also participating in a statewide forum on the Opioid Crisis and how it effects our schools at Quinnipiac University and serve on the Anthem Labor Advisory and Trust Council.

Our work with other Labor Unions expanded this year. We held joint rallies with CEA for Jahana Hayes, with AFSCME for Get Out the Vote, multiple debate rallies, and with Massachusetts Nurses Association on their ballot campaign for safe staffing. We also walked with and supported UFCW members at Stop & Shop and were honored to be guests at AFSCME Council 4's Convention.

Jan launched telephone town halls, podcasts, and Hustle (text messaging) to reach out to our members.

I am working on a possible Associate Member Program with AFT, focusing on nursing students first. I was honored to be on a panel to speak to seniors at Three Rivers Community College, my alma mater, and will be visiting with their student nurse association and speaking at their Pinning Ceremony in late May. I gave testimony several times to the legislature, most personally, on Captive Audience meetings, something I was a victim of in the Backus organizing campaign. I am now Chair of my DTC and Jan and I attended the Governor's Ball. Jan also served on the Lamont Transition team and continues to meet with him and other labor leaders. As we say, if you're not at the table.....

Connecticut hosted the National Indian Education Association Conference this year and we played host to Mary Catherine Ricker and several AFT members from around the nation. It was an opportunity to see things from a different perspective, that of our sister and brother Native Americans.

Speaking of a new experience and a chance to be engaged, Jan and I were Jailed for Justice for the first time, along with 5 other AFT members and staff as part of the Moral Mondays Campaign. No worries, our record is clean after the community service. Truly though, if we can't walk the walk, we can't talk the talk.

On the opposite end of the spectrum, we read to second graders as part of the United Way Reading program.

This year we held a 3-state field rep training, with AFT Rhode Island and AFT Massachusetts, which was not only a learning opportunity, but a chance for reps and leadership to interact with colleagues from other states.

Our members assisted our sisters and brothers in Montana in a week-long public employee blitz, in Massachusetts on a ballot initiative, in New Jersey on hospital staffing, and in the Virgin Islands to assist with the ongoing school nurse shortage after the hurricanes.

Such work builds coalitions that make us all stronger.

The year ahead will provide new challenges, but also opportunities.

It is an honor to serve as your Executive Vice President.

Respectively submitted in solidarity,

John Brady  
*Executive Vice President, AFT Connecticut*

# PSRP: ANNUAL DIVISIONAL REPORT

MAY 2019

**"At the core, labor unions(we) are working men and women, unified as one force. Despite any personal differences that may exist between us, we have banded together to protect and improve the lives of workers. We rise up together for the greater good."** - Sue Carney

This year has been busy since the Janus decision. We've continued to have our PSRP members sign membership cards and we are strengthening our members with continuous one-on-one conversations. We are engaged in reaching our PSRP members and addressing their needs. The U and I in Union is not a campaign, it is a movement as we are united with our values. Collective bargaining is an absolute must and we will continue that fight. Our PSRPs are telling their stories - we are each other's strength. We have ice breakers and conversations that are taking us to another level of engagement, to have others stand up and use their voice, and become active members in this fight forward.

We chose to continue to not only make a difference, but to be the difference. On the legislative front, we are meeting our legislators, having conversations, giving written and personal testimony at the State Capital. We have testified on paid FLMA and promoting an equitable living wage for paraeducators.

Jennifer Benevento, Professional Development Coordinator at AFT CT, has continued to meet the needs of PSRPs with professional development. We are grateful for the opportunities for all our members.

I remain an active participant in the PSRP, PPC of AFT, and I will continue to stand up and speak up and out for our PSRPs. Moving forward, our goals continue: active engagement, increase our activism and continue our journey ahead.

I want to give a heartfelt thank you to the AFT CT staff, for all that they do!

It is my humble honor to serve as PSRP Divisional Vice President.

Respectfully submitted in Solidarity,

Shellye Davis

*Divisional Vice President for Paraprofessionals & School-Related Personnel*

# NURSES & HEALTH PROFESSIONALS: ANNUAL DIVISIONAL REPORT

## MAY 2019

Over the course of the year, Healthcare Council has been working on our strategic plan. We have specifically broken our plans down into four categories: Contracts, Education, Organizing, and Politics. Each category gives a little more specific information.

### Contracts:

Contracts ratified this year include Manchester Techs, Manchester Service and Maintenance and Manchester RNs. Rockville RNs, Backus Hospital RNs and all locals at Lawrence & Memorial (to include the VNA) ratified agreements as well.

In the short term, we are looking to institute strategic bargaining/best practice contract language in all locals. In the long term, we are looking to align contracts to a common expiration date.

A contract is only as good as those who police it. Therefore, some locals are looking into a computer program that would be able to track grievances and sort them by using a variety of different factors.

### Education:

Healthcare has been working closely with Jenn Benevento to plan out professional development opportunities. We are still struggling to be able to give CEU's, but we have a new contact at AFT National who may be able to help us with this endeavor.

We had our annual Healthcare Council Education Day in March, and it was moderately well attended. We plan on continuing the trend next year.

We are also looking to create a comprehensive education and orientation program for new members. The L&M locals have already implemented this program. AFT-CT is working to streamline the process for other locals.

### Organizing:

Over the past year, we organized Rockville Service and Maintenance. They recently ratified their first contract!

We look forward to organizing other institutions in the future.

### Politics:

The legislative session continues at the time of this report. Aside from AFT-CT's general legislative agenda, we have a few healthcare specific issues. We are focused on adding Respiratory Therapists and OR Techs to the ban that currently exists for RNs on mandatory overtime. We are also looking to implement nurse staffing bills. There was an RN staffing subcommittee formed over the last year. Through our discussions, we were able to craft some language that we would like to see implemented. We are not hopeful for this legislation to pass in 2019, but we are hopeful for the 2020 session. Our plan is to continue to advocate for the healthcare constituency at the capitol.

We continue to "grow our own" and recruit our members to run for public office. Several members of AFT Healthcare have stepped up and ran for office. One of our members, Martha Marx did an amazing job in the East Lyme/Waterford area. Although she did not unseat the incumbent, the margin was very close. Martha has expressed interest in running again, and we are confident that she will take the position during the next election.

Many locals have crafted a plan to work on specific election campaigns. Locals that have not come up with a plan have been encouraged to do so.

Respectfully submitted,

Lisa D'Abrosca  
*Divisional Vice President for Nurses & Health Professionals*

# **PUBLIC EMPLOYEES: ANNUAL DIVISIONAL REPORT**

## **MAY 2019**

The Assistant Attorney Generals (AAGS) have organized and, as a result of their recent election, Attorney Christine Jean-Louis was elected as their President for a two-year term. Out of 188 members, 130 are currently full dues paying members. The Board is setting up their infrastructure and learning about negotiations.

The State Vocational Federation of Teachers (SVFT) had their election on May 8<sup>th</sup> and Ed Leavy was re-elected for a new two-year term. VP Paul Angelucci continues to be the point person for signing up new teachers at the beginning of the school year and they have been successful at maintaining membership. President Leavy recently attended the PPC in New Mexico and encouraged the Public Employee locals to each work on a succession plan and to focus on diversity when doing so.

Administration and Residuals (A&R) President John DiSette and his board had victories this year in the scaling back of the Kronos system and now 30 out of 36 agencies will not be using it. Also, a telecommuting plan agreement should be signed soon. The A&R team has added 75 new members in 11 job titles in the past year, and DOT will have a vote soon to add 18 additional members. Attorney Ally Sexton continues in her role as AFT LPAC Co-Chair. In the coming year, A&R will be training their 65 stewards on internal organizing on approaching new members who will be the future of the union.

UCONN (UCPEA) recently had their annual meeting and over 350 members were in attendance. President Mike White addressed the membership and gave his state of the union address. Proposed amendments to their constitution are going to be voted on in their upcoming election. The union has three new members to their board including a 1st Vice President for collective bargaining. As usual, UCPEA is planning a large presence at the Legislative Office Building, this time for the Moral State Budget Rally on 05/20.

UCONN Health (UHP) and President Bill Garrity and VP Ivonne Hamm continue with their anti-privatization lobbying efforts. The Board is getting members to contact their legislators to have them support keeping UCONN Health a fully public institution and are involved in a joint labor movement with six other unions. They recently hired an advocate to work full-time on this campaign and they have strong support from their membership in these efforts.

Judicial Professionals (JPE) added new members in the job classes covering Information Technology, Accounting, Legal Services and Permanent Clerks. Their ranks have increased over 150 members in 2018-2019. The Executive Board, led by President Deborah Kern, has expanded by six new members due to the increase in job classes. JPE has also added two new subcommittees in the past year: An Ethics Committee and a Diversity & Equity Committee.

The Federation of Technical Colleges, led by 39-year veteran, the President Dennis Bogusky have successfully kept their campuses open. All full-time staff are full members and organizing efforts continue to sign up part-time staff who are at almost 100%. These efforts will continue in the coming year.

It has been a pleasure to serve with these Public Employee Presidents and Leaders over the past two years.

Respectfully Submitted,

Michael Barry  
*Divisional Vice President for Public Employees*



# HIGHER EDUCATION: ANNUAL DIVISIONAL REPORT

## MAY 2019

The Higher Education Council has continued to meet and has combined its meetings with the monthly State Employee Council meetings. This allows issues that concern both councils to be more completely addressed.

The issues we are dealing with currently come with a somewhat long-standing history:

1. Privatization
2. College and System reorganization's (disorganizations)
3. Funding, Funding and Funding
4. Affordable Tuition, textbook costs, free tuition
5. Academic freedom
6. Sanctuary campuses
7. Student debt

As the saying goes, "same issues different day." These issues are neither new nor novel. We must continue our attempts to move our addenda forward and make progress on these and all other issues we face. Lastly, we must continue our efforts to reach out and organize our members by informing and seeking partnership with them to continue and expand our efforts in each of these and the multitude of other issues that confronts Higher Education.

Respectfully Submitted,

Dennis Bogusky  
*Divisional Vice President for Higher Education*

## **AFT-CT STATEWIDE RETIREE DIVISION ANNUAL REPORT**

### **MAY 2019**

The Retiree Division members finally received the long sought after charter for the new At-Large Retiree Chapter, Local 8006-R. This new local will be the home for retiree members whose active/in-service locals do not have a retiree local which they can join. In addition to retired AFT members, the At-Large local welcomes any retiree of a state sponsored retirement system, and any person who retired from a private sector healthcare organization. As such, the Division meetings have grown to include the At-Large members. Currently, the At-Large local's membership has grown to approximately 25 retirees.

Many retirees remain active and serve on AFT Connecticut's LPAC. We worked in our local communities during the elections to ensure that candidates supporting union principles were elected in November 2018. AFT retirees continue to lobby, phone bank, and door knock for these candidates.

Two members of the Division attended the AFT national Retiree Committee meeting. This is a meeting of retiree union leaders across the country. The meeting focused on AFT convention debriefing and discussions of the importance of retiree involvement in the labor movement. President Weingarten spoke to the group regarding her vision of the future of retirees. This discussion included elevating the status of the national Retiree Committee to Program and Policy Council (PPC) status. To that end, the national retiree committee is currently working with AFT staff on what steps are necessary to follow for the establishment of a Retiree PPC. This status change for the Committee requires an amendment to the AFT Constitution and the Retiree Council is working on this with President Weingarten's support.

AFT Connecticut was a leader in including a retiree representative on the Executive Committee. The Division seeks to encourage AFT Connecticut active/in-service locals to include retiree representation on their executive boards. This will facilitate the flow of information from retirees (who have had years of experience in the labor movement) to both active/in-service members and vice versa. Doing so will enable retirees to assist active/in-service membership in meeting their goals and objectives. To that end, a resolution was submitted to this Convention to encourage such inclusion.

As we move forward in 2019, our goals include growing our retiree contingent by actively engaging active/in-service union members who are close to retirement, increasing retiree activism, and increasing education of our members on the importance of being actively involved in working with the union to protect our pensions and healthcare. We also are mindful of working with active/in-service members to ensure pay, pension, healthcare, and workplace safety are preserved.

Respectfully submitted,

Laila Mandour, Chair  
AFT Connecticut Retiree Division

# SOCIAL JUSTICE COMMITTEE REPORT

MAY 2019

The Social Justice Committee has had a good first year. We have supported families that were going to be separated by ICE, as well as have been involved with, and supportive of, raising the minimum wage.

Members of the committee have been arrested while participating in last year's Moral Monday. We have had many speakers that have come to our committee looking for support of their issues in many communities.

We are looking to do more and are available to help locals with issues in their workplace or community.

Our meetings are the 4<sup>th</sup> Wednesday of every month at AFT Connecticut in Rocky Hill and are looking for members to join this important committee. Stop by our table at the Annual Business Convention to find out more.

Respectfully submitted in Solidarity,

Stephanie Johnson, RPSGT  
*Chair, AFTCT Social Justice Committee*  
*Local President, L&M Federation of Technologist #5051*

# **FERGUSON, DOYLE & CHESTER ANNUAL REPORT**

## **MAY 2019**

The numbers shown in this document highlight some of the areas that this firm provided legal services to AFT Connecticut. From May, 2018 to May, 2019 we were involved in at least 165 DCF Investigations, as well as several police investigations. We have defended 11 members in DCF Substantiation Appeal Hearings and we have 5 more awaiting hearing dates.

During the last year this firm provided defense to 20 tenured teachers who were being considered for termination. This number includes those cases that were settled prior to, or during, the statutory hearing process as well as those that went through the hearing process to a decision. Additionally, we provided legal assistance and/or met with several non-renewed teachers.

We represent AFT-CT Locals' members for Workers' Compensation claims. We have attended and advocated at well over 125 Workers' Compensation Hearings from the Informal to the Pre-Formal and Formal Administrative Trial Hearings.

Our firm has also defended 12 members for Unemployment Appeal Hearings before the State Labor Department Trial Referee.

During the last year we have defended Duty of Fair Representation claims brought against AFT-CT Locals at the State Board of Labor Relations or Connecticut Superior Courts. Additionally, we have represented AFT-CT Locals at numerous State Labor Board Hearings throughout the last year. We have been involved in several Teacher Certification issues with the State Department of Education, as well as CHRO complaints and hearings.

We were involved with the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) regarding litigation with AFT-CT Locals and their employers.

In addition, we have presented workshops on legal issues for constituent Locals and have acted as Parliamentarians for AFT-CT Locals.

We also provided formal and informal legal opinions to numerous AFT-CT Locals. We have been involved with legislative matters during the 2018-2019 session of the General Assembly.