



# **THE HARPER ADJUNCT ADVOCATE**

**HARPER COLLEGE ADJUNCT FACULTY ASSOCIATION  
NEWSLETTER**

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## **FROM THE PRESIDENT**

Welcome to a new year and new semester at Harper! Hope you enjoyed the holidays, relaxed during break, and are now geared up for another busy semester. HCAFA is geared up for our upcoming negotiations for our third contract. We appreciate your filling out our survey on what we should focus on during negotiations. If you would like to help the negotiations team out by doing research, etc., please let us know. We need your help, not tons of time, just whatever you can do. We will keep in touch with you as we progress with Interest-Based Bargaining with the College administration. Here's to another great semester and an even better contract!

Yours, *Charmian Tashjian*, HCAFA President

## **A BRIEF UPDATE OF HCAFA HAPPENINGS**

### **SURVEY FOR CONTRACT NEGOTIATIONS**

HCAFA thanks all those adjuncts who participated in the pre-bargaining email survey sent to HCAFA members. Members were asked to rank the relative importance of compensation/benefits such as salary, health insurance, and professional development money. They were also asked for input on their working conditions at Harper.

The majority of respondents rated increased salary as most essential; however, many others assessed health insurance as most critical. Other issues noted as important were improvement of workspace and accessibility to offices. The results of the survey enabled the negotiating team to determine what members' priorities were in order to prepare for upcoming negotiations and effectively represent HCAFA members.

*Congratulations to Sandra Gebbia who was the lucky winner of the survey raffle gas card!*

### **DUAL UNIT MERGER ELECTION**

In October, HCAFA members voted to authorize a formal merger of adjunct-faculty librarians and counselors with adjunct-teaching faculty. This unification will help in two significant ways:

1. Negotiating our next contract will be easier as HCAFA will bargain one contract, not two.
2. Three other employee groups (Professional-technical employees, custodial-maintenance and buildings/grounds employees, police department and community safety officers) will be eligible for HCAFA membership provided they satisfy the HCAFA bargaining unit eligibility criteria.

### **INTEREST-BASED BARGAINING TRAINING**

On January 17, HCAFA's negotiating team chair Gary Wilson and negotiating team members joined Harper administration members for a day of training in interest-based bargaining. IBB is referred to as *mutual gain* or *win-win* bargaining. The goal of IBB is for both sides to agree on resolutions. The training enabled HCAFA and the administration to practice resolving issues together using IBB techniques. An interest-based attitude requires mutual respect, understanding, and support. Some of the practices that were stressed were listening actively, solving problems, and building consensus. Actual negotiations will begin on January 27 and continue until all issues have been resolved.

### **GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING**

Adjuncts attending the general meeting had the ideal "timeout." In addition to voting to amend HCAFA bylaws, they had a chance to take a break from their normal routine, catch up on their colleagues' goings-on, visit with peers, and enjoy cider and donuts. Special thanks go to interior design specialist Danuta Malczewska, our membership chair, for transforming an ordinary classroom into a welcoming fall setting.

### **ELECTION TO REGION 42**

Congratulations to both Taimi Wilk and Joanne Meyerhoff. Taimi was elected to the IEA Representative Assembly in March. Joanne was voted the HCAFA rep to the region 42 council. We are well represented.

## BYLAW CHANGES

Members of HCAFA were directed to look at proposed changes to HCAFA bylaws online and then vote on whether or not to accept the changes. The modifications to the bylaws were approved unanimously at the general meeting on November 18. To see a copy of the new bylaws, go to the *documents* tab at [www.harperadjuncts.org](http://www.harperadjuncts.org).

## SURS PROGRAM

In November, SURS Representative Lee Bridges focused his presentation on the needs of adjuncts. He explained the SURS retirement system and addressed all of the individual questions raised by attendees. Some of the topics discussed included:

- Retirement Eligibility
- The Effect of the Change in the SURS Money Purchase Factor
- The Impact of Benefits from the Social Security Administration (SSA) and Other Pension Plans on SURS.

Lee Bridges talked in depth about the reductions made to SURS benefits by the SSA through the Windfall Elimination Provision and Government Pension Offset.

- Proposed Legislation  
Responsiveness to legislation is crucial.

If you have questions about your pension, contact SURS at [WWW.SURS.ORG](http://WWW.SURS.ORG) or 800 ASK-SURS.

## APPEAL TO MEMBERS TO CONTACT THEIR REPRESENTATIVES

Some of the most important requests included asking you to **urge your congressmen to:**

**Protect your pension by cosponsoring the Social Security Fairness Act.** The Senate's Social Security Fairness Bill would repeal unfair offsets (See *SURS Program* on left.) Prior to congressional adjournment, Senators John Kerry (D-MA) and Susan Collins (R-ME) introduced the Social Security Fairness Act (S. 2010), which would repeal the unfair Government Pension Offset (GPO) and Windfall Elimination Provision (WEP). The bill is a companion to House version H.R. 1332, introduced earlier last year by Representatives McKeon (R-CA) and Berman (D-CA). The GPO and WEP take away Social Security benefits earned by many public employees. The WEP may reduce the amount of your retirement benefit if you have worked for both SURS and SSA. The GPO will reduce your spousal benefits. The Social Security Fairness Act would fully repeal these unfair penalties.

**Protect your bargaining rights. Throughout the country, there have been mounting attempts to limit the ability of unions to protect their members' rights and represent them in meaningful ways. Urge your representatives to fight the assault on bargaining rights.**

**Reminder: If you plan to teach in fall 2012, Harper Availability Forms are due by February 15.**

## UNION REPRESENTATION (WEINGARTEN RIGHTS) (National Labor Relations Act)

**It is recommended that an employee never give up his/her right to a representative in an investigatory meeting that might result in discipline.**

**The right to union representation arises when:**

1. An employee is subjected to questioning or investigation by a supervisor;
2. The employee reasonably believes the questioning will result in discipline;
3. The employee requests representation.

**When an employee requests Union representation during this type of meeting, the employer has 3 lawful options:**

1. Halt questioning until the representative arrives.
2. Cancel the interview.
3. Tell the employee it will cancel the interview unless the employee voluntarily gives up his/her rights to a representative.

**During an investigation, the following rules apply:**

1. The employer must inform the rep of the subject of the investigation;
2. The representative must be allowed to take the employee aside for a pre-interview conference;
3. During the interview, the representative cannot argue with the employer but can interrupt to clarify a question or object to confusing or intimidating tactics (However, constant interruptions are not permitted);
4. The representative can give the employee advice on how to answer the questions;
5. The representative can add information at the end of the interview in support of the employee.



## WHAT CAN I FIND AT WWW.HARPERADJUNCTS.ORG?

### Left Side

Upcoming Meetings And Events

### Center Blog

Latest HCAFANews

### Right Side

Notices

Twitter Feed from IEA and NEA

### Tabs at Top of Page

#### Join

Sample HCAFA Enrollment Form

Explanation of Eligibility for Union Membership

#### Links

Harper Faculty Senate (Full-Time Faculty) Website

IEA/NEA Website

American Association of University Professors  
(AAUP) Website

#### Newsletters

Past Newsletters

### Documents

Adjunct Faculty Handbook (Link to Harper Portal)

Availability Form (Link to the Harper Portal)

Bylaws

Contracts for:

Librarians/Counselors

Teaching Adjuncts

Dual Unit Memo of Understanding (MOU)

Large Lecture MOU

Librarian/Counselor Eligibility MOU

Professional Development MOU That Expanded  
Allowable Purchases

Explanation of Professional Development

Professional Development Form

(Link to the Harper Portal)

Harper Faculty Senate (Full-Time Faculty) Contract

### Contact

Contact Information for Officers

Contact Information for Division Representatives

Address & Phone for the IEA Office in Palatine

**HCAFA EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE  
OFFICERS**

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*Note: For divisions without reps, we'll do our best to keep you informed through newsletters. If you are in BUSS, please consider becoming a rep and join us for our monthly meetings. It will be to your advantage and you will love the friendships.*

**HERE ARE MANY WAYS TO STAY CONNECTED TO HCAFA!**  
**Check out our bulletin board on the 3<sup>rd</sup> floor of building A at the entrance to HR.**  
**Read *The Harper Adjunct Advocate*.**  
**Contact your division reps or officers.**  
**Visit Our Website, [WWW.HARPERADJUNCTS.ORG](http://WWW.HARPERADJUNCTS.ORG).**

If undeliverable, return to  
Janice Cutler, MS/Math

PLEASE DELIVER TO:

