

FUSA Informant

SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

FUSA membership costs one percent of your annual base salary.

FUSA members have access to benefits not available to non-members

FUSA represents your best interests at the bargaining table

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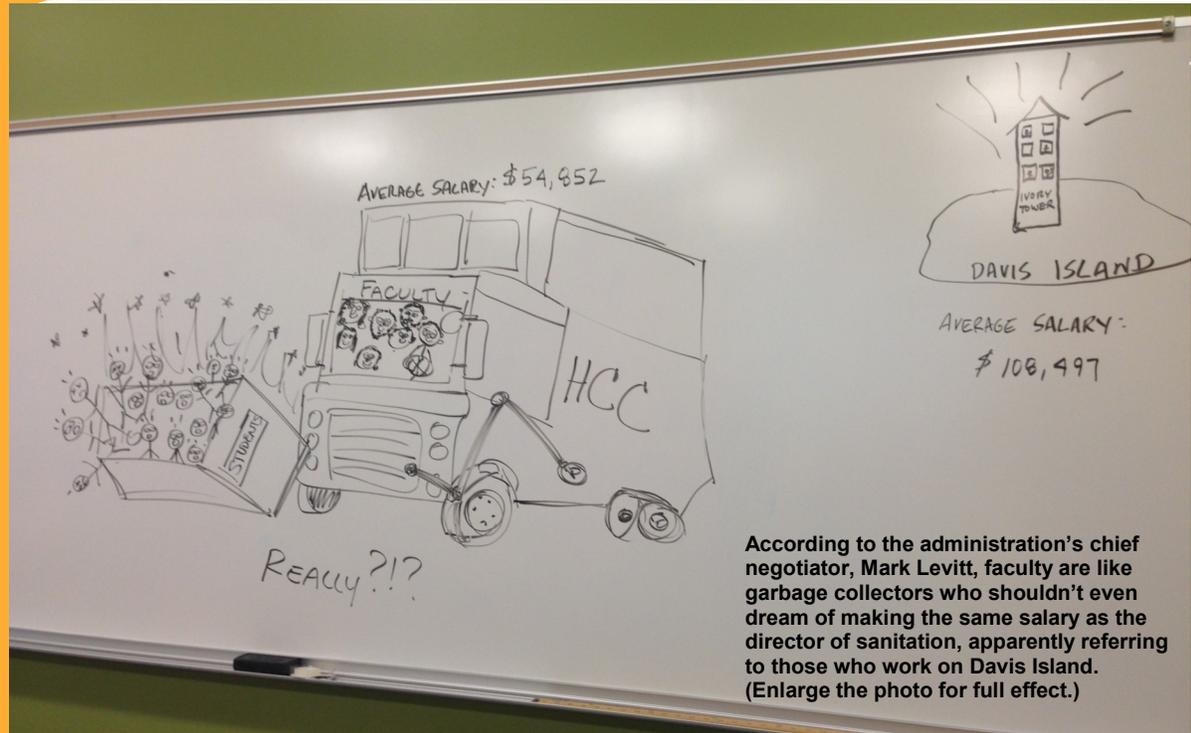
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VOLUME 2 ISSUE 1

OCTOBER 2013



According to the administration's chief negotiator, Mark Levitt, faculty are like garbage collectors who shouldn't even dream of making the same salary as the director of sanitation, apparently referring to those who work on Davis Island. (Enlarge the photo for full effect.)

How Faculty Are Viewed

On October 11, the FUSA council met with the administration for what we hoped would be a final bargaining session.

The room was filled with concerned faculty members who attended as a show of solidarity with the FUSA bargaining team, led by chief negotiator Rick Gaspar.

Bargaining with the administration began with an end to bargaining the 2012-2013 contract, which concluded in February 2013 with the administration's refusing to provide any increase to salaries or overload for the 2012-2013 year.

Bargaining for the 2013-2014 year began in June. It has been a

frustrating process because of the administration's insistence that all faculty receive a 3 percent raise, the same amount, they claim, that administrators received earlier this year.

The administration revealed in the April Board Workshop that the budget included a 3 percent raise for faculty salaries. Because the bargaining team believes that accepting a predetermined 3 percent raise is not actually bargaining, we worked with HR Executive Director Donna Keener to collect more precise information on faculty's and administrator's salaries.

During due-diligence research for negotiations, we

learned the raise that administrators received as a group was 3.335 percent, with college president Ken Atwater receiving a whopping 28 percent raise, adding nearly \$65,000 more annually to his base salary. We also determined that HCC faculty salaries rank in the bottom third of salaries of community colleges in the state, and the administrator salaries are 100 percent more than the average faculty salary.

After arriving at the meeting twenty minutes late, a common occurrence for the administration team, led by labor attorney Mark Levitt, the administration team listened to the faculty proposal.

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How Faculty Are Viewed

Attorney Levitt quickly interrupted the presentation, claiming that the numbers were incorrect. Rick Gaspar retorted that the numbers had been supplied by the administration.

After some spirited discussion, it was pointed out that the average salary of the 52 administrators equaled \$108,497 while the average salary of the 310 faculty members equaled \$54,852. Levitt, apparently ignoring the fact that the room was filled with faculty members who have not received a substantive raise in years, expressed surprise that we saw anything wrong with the large difference. When he was reminded that the faculty produce the

product that the college “sells,” Levitt provided the offensive analogy that the faculty were like the garbage collectors who collect the trash, and the garbage collectors shouldn’t dream of making the same money as the director of sanitation. After Levitt’s comments, the room erupted in a cacophony of groans and raised voices.

The administration left to caucus, and our talented faculty members illustrated Levitt’s analogy. (The drawing appears at the top of the first page.)

About thirty minutes later, the administration team, who all are paid their regular salaries while attending bargaining sessions (Levitt

earned over \$6,000 during last year’s bargaining), returned to tell us that the faculty would be offered no more than 3 percent, an offer that was rejected by FUSA in June.

Since the administration rejected FUSA’s proposal, the process will now move toward impasse. A special mediator has been requested.

It’s difficult to believe that our request for a 3.335 percent increase, an increase that matches what administrators received, would drive the administration toward impasse.

Whatever happened to the notion of “One College?”

What FUSA does for you

- protects YOUR academic freedom and tenure
- defends and improves YOUR faculty rights
- advances academic excellence
- gains economic benefits
- improves economic status
- negotiates the best possible working conditions (workload, instructional resources, equipment)
- influences policy decisions
- improves faculty’s role in decision-making
- assures fair and equal treatment
- represents and defends you

*“Do not go where
the path may lead;
go instead where
there is no path
and leave a trail.”*

-Emerson

**FUSA membership: It’s not
expensive; it’s priceless!**