

CTA is your advocate for all issues related to compensation and workload. We need to know if the District representatives violate your rights under the contract at any time. Please contact your CTA representatives any-time you have questions or concerns.

Imperial Valley College CTA Newsletter

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Get the VOTE out for IVC CTA-endorsed candidates

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CTA Endorsements

- District 2
(western El Centro, Seeley, Ocotillo)
Karla Sigmond
- District 5
(eastern El Centro)
Juanita Salas
- District 7
(eastern Calexico to AZ border)
Steven Taylor

The IVC CTA Political Action Committee has chosen three candidates to endorse for the upcoming Nov. 4 election. Endorsed are Karla Sigmond for District 2, Juanita Salas for District 5, and Steven Taylor for District 7.

"It's critically important to elect board members who are willing to listen to all points of view and who ask questions as IVC faces challenges with accreditation and finances," said Eric Lehtonen, IVC CTA Vice President and PAC chairman.

All candidates were interviewed by the PAC committee, which included five faculty members. Then the recommendations were brought before the membership in two general meetings.



Juanita Salas, District 5

Lehtonen noted that this will be the first board election in which voting will be limited to the districts in question.

Incumbent Karla Sigmond won the IVC CTA endorsement for District 2. District 2 includes western El Centro, Seeley, and Ocotillo.

Sigmond was first elected to the board of trustees in 2010, and she has experience as an elementary school principal, an elementary school teacher, a commissioner for the Imperial County 0-5 Children and Family First Commission, and several other education-related posts.



Karla Sigmond, District 2

She attended IVC, obtaining an A.A. in Liberal Studies, before transferring to San Diego State University.

Juanita Salas received the CTA endorsement for District 5, which includes eastern El Centro.

Salas was appointed to the board in 2013.

She works as a public policy professional focusing on education, access to healthcare, and economic development.

Salas attended IVC before transferring to San Diego State University.

Steven Taylor got the CTA endorsement for District 7, which includes eastern Calexico to the Arizona border.

Taylor, an incumbent who took office in 2010, is running unopposed.

He works at the Winterhaven Fire Protection District as the Fire Chief, where he has worked for the past 17 years.

Taylor attended IVC and received his EMT certification here.



Steven Taylor, District 7

CTA Benefits

Advantages of membership

- ◆ **Life Insurance:** Members have an automatic life insurance policy of up to \$2,000, and there's an accidental death and dismemberment benefit of up to \$10,000. If the member dies or suffers dismemberment due to an accident or assault while engaged in work duties or in union activities, there is a \$50,000 benefit.
- ◆ **NEA Life Insurance:** Members have an automatic NEA life insurance policy for up to \$1,000, and a \$5,000 accidental death and dismemberment policy. If the member dies in an accident on the job, there is a \$50,000 policy. If a member is the victim of a homicide at work, the policy will pay \$150,000.
- ◆ **Disaster relief:** A standard grant pays up to \$1,500 for significant economic hardship related to damage to a member's primary residence, displacement or disruption in required utilities. If the damage is "catastrophic," the grant is doubled.
- ◆ **Legal defense:** Every CTA member receives coverage for legal defense costs in lawsuits arising out of his or her educational employment activities. The Educators Employment Liability (EEL) Insurance policy provides the following benefits: Up to \$1,000,000 coverage for legal defense costs in civil suits (except civil rights cases) arising out of educational employment activities and up to \$35,000 reimbursement of attorney fees and costs to defend employment-related criminal proceedings.
- ◆ **Discounts on services:** CTA offers discounts on many services, such as theme park tickets, movie tickets, car rentals, hotels, travel, and financial services.
- ◆ **Voluntary benefits:** For extra fees, members can get disability insurance, additional life insurance, and home and auto insurance.
- ◆ **Credit Card program:** CTA offers a rewards Visa Card at competitive rates.
- ◆ **Retirement and Savings Program:** CTA offers a low-fee 403(b) retirement investment/savings plan.

What your local CTA Chapter does for you

By Mary Jo Wainwright

- ◆ No one can prepare an incoming union president for how much is involved in enforcing the contract and dealing with all the issues that affect faculty on a daily basis. Although we have highlighted the individual benefits that are available to you as members of CCA/CTA/NEA, we also want you to know all your local leaders are doing for you every day:
- ◆ Attend Board and shared governance meetings to monitor current issues, including accreditation, budget issues,

AB86, SPOL, calendar issues, Distance Education, insurance, proposed professional development, etc.

- ◆ Answer questions from all faculty members regarding a variety of issues, not just the contract
- ◆ Investigate and prepare contract grievances for individual faculty members and represent faculty at meetings with administrators
- ◆ Meet and consult with District administrators on matters that impact faculty

compensation, workload, and working conditions

- ◆ Just in the last two months, the union has handled four grievances and two requests for MOUs
- ◆ Communicate important information to faculty and hold general meetings;
- ◆ Stay abreast of current legislation affecting community colleges and other education issues
- ◆ Plan for the upcoming contract negotiations

Welcome to New CTA Members!

The CTA Executive Board is thrilled that the following faculty have signed up as CTA members this year:

- ◆ Alto Benedicto, Chemistry
- ◆ Alison Brock, Business
- ◆ Guadalupe Castro, Mental Health Counselor
- ◆ John Clarkson, ESL FT Temp
- ◆ Mark Duva, Psychology
- ◆ Diana Ferrell, English FT Temp
- ◆ Zhong Hu, Math FT Temp
- ◆ Roger Kroeger, ESL FT Temp
- ◆ Katrina Kuschnik, ESL FT Temp
- ◆ Dahna Rasmussen, Sociology
- ◆ Andrew Robinson, Health/Men's Basketball
- ◆ Nicole Rodiles, Psychology FT Temp
- ◆ Kathy Rodriguez, Administration of Justice
- ◆ Terri Sullivan, Nursing
- ◆ Austen Thelen, Geography
- ◆ Xochitl Tirado, English
- ◆ Sabrina Worsham, Speech Communications

Meet Veronica Soto

By Kathleen Dorantes

Veronica Soto knew she wanted to be a counselor from the moment she began working with junior high and senior high school students as a counselor's aide for UC-San Diego's Early Outreach program.

"I had thought I wanted to study business," she said. "But I found I loved counseling. There were no more business classes for me after that."

Soto's IVC roots run deep.

She's from Heber, and she came to IVC as a freshman after graduating from Central Union High School.

Soto graduated from IVC in 1994. Then, after earning a degree in Liberal Studies from San Diego State, she returned to IVC in 1997 to interview for a counseling position. She was told she could be hired if she enrolled in a master's program at the University of Redlands.

"So I worked here at IVC part-time at Upward Bound and then at EOPS, and I went to a satellite campus of the University of Redlands to get my master's," she said.

She earned a Master's of Arts in Education Counseling in 1999.

"I worked at IVC as an adjunct then," she said, "but in 2001, I moved to the main campus of SDSU where I was a graduation advisor."

Then it was back to IVC in 2007 as an adjunct counselor working in Matriculation, and then as an adjunct counselor in EOPS. Later, she was still adjunct at IVC while holding down a position at Northern Arizona University-Yuma as Interim Transfer Center Director/Articulation Officer.

These were all great jobs, but not her dream job. Soto got that in 2013 when she was hired back at IVC as the Transfer, Articulations, and University Partnership Coordinator.

"I was ecstatic about that. I wanted to come back to the Valley, first, for my parents," she said. "And I also wanted to give back to the community colleges. This is what gave me my start. I wanted to do something for the community and the college that did something for me."

Soto's goals are to bring innovative ideas to IVC.

"I want to have more online outreach," she said. "I also want to try to get students through IVC faster. Right now, it takes the average student



Veronica Soto, IVC's Transfer, Articulations, and University Partnership Coordinator

five years to get through IVC. I'd like to get that average down to two-and-a-half or three years."

Another way that Soto gives back to the community is by being the club advisor for the SNIP Club. SNIP stands for "Spay, Neuter Incredible Pets."

"We started the club last year because we had a cat problem on campus," she said. "People drop off cats here all the time. We spay and neuter them to take care of pet overpopulation, and it's better for their health, too."

Just a few weeks ago, the Humane Society was on campus and captured

four cats. The SNIP club paid for the spaying and neutering of these cats, which were brought back to live on campus.

"Ten were spayed or neutered last summer," she said.

She estimates there are 15 feral cats living on campus. "They help with the rats and mice, so they do serve a purpose."

Soto lives in Heber with her boyfriend, Edward. In her spare time, Soto enjoys listening to music, reading mysteries, and playing with her two dogs, Sophie and Sandy.

IVC CCA/CTA/NEA

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YOUR ADVOCATE

ivccta.com

Website Poll:

Results of Website poll, August-September:

How important is a low cost to you when you choose a textbook?

- ⇒ Very important 76%
- ⇒ Somewhat important 18%
- ⇒ Not even considered 6%

NEW POLL:

What types of social activities would you like to see CTA sponsor?

Go to www.ivccta.com and vote for your favorite social activities!

Accreditation, election and AB86 top CTA president's concerns

By Mary Jo Wainwright

Wow, what a busy first two months!

IVC's accreditation status is obviously the most critical issue facing IVC, and I am attending many meetings all the time to stay abreast of what is happening.

I just returned from the Community College Association's Fall Conference in Sacramento at which there was a very informative session with a panel of speakers from City College of San Francisco, Victor Valley College, and College of the Siskiyous, on their experiences with AC-CJC. It was both moving and scary to hear their stories. I will share more on this at the next CTA general meeting.

The impact of AB86 on the future of ESL and basic skills courses at IVC is unknown, but IVC should be proud that we are the only community college in the state that has a faculty member (Dr. Martha Garcia) leading the team in writing the AB86 plan, and faculty involvement has been solicited. The goal of the law is to eliminate duplication of services to the community, and the community colleges and K-12 schools must work together to create a comprehensive plan on how to deliver these critical services to our community.

The loss of FTES if there is a decrease of ESL/basic skills courses or a switch to all non-credit, could be a significant loss of revenue for IVC over time. This means that all faculty would be affected directly or indirectly by this law, so all of us should be paying attention. There will be a special board workshop on AB86 on October 29, 2014.

Although it is a non-presidential election year, it is still a critical election in California. Besides

the IVC Board of Trustee elections, there are also state races that are very important.

Although I don't normally campaign for candidates, the race for State Superintendent of Public Instruction is critical because Superintendent Tom Torlakson is running for re-election in a tightly contested race. Torlakson's record speaks for itself. He was a teacher and supports students and teachers first and foremost. His opponent is Marshall Tuck who is a former investment banker, has never been a teacher and is receiving millions from Wall Street. Tuck advocates for privatization of schools, supported the Vergara case (anti-tenure lawsuit) and is openly against unions and shared governance.

There are also many other important initiatives on the ballot this year. Please take the time to vote, and encourage your friends and family to **vote on November 4.**

I also just want to say thank you to all the faculty who have shown their support in a variety of ways. The CTA Executive Board meets monthly, but there is constant discussion. Each officer of the union has specific duties.

Jim Fisher, the faculty representative is contacted by faculty with possible contract violations almost every week. Jim and I work together to make sure that each in-

quiry is investigated and followed-up to conclusion.

Eric Lehtonen is working hard as PAC chair on the Board of Trustees election coming up in November.

Kathleen Dorantes took on the task of doing the newsletter and building our new website, Dolores Diaz takes and prepares the minutes of all meetings, and Ed Wells makes sure all the finances are in order. It is a very dynamic

team, and I am very grateful for their hard work and support.

The Negotiations Team of Mary Lofgren (lead), Frank Hoppe and David Zielinski, as well as alternates Sidne Horton and Javier Rangel, represents both experience and new blood.

Negotiations planning meetings are now taking

place every two weeks. So far, the District has not "sunshined" its proposal for the new contract. While we wait, we are preparing the survey for faculty input, gathering documentation, and reviewing the contract. I want to sincerely thank the team for being willing to serve in this capacity. It is a big responsibility.

I encourage you to stay abreast of current legislation that might impact community colleges through the CTA website, www.cta.org. Click on Issues and Actions to see all the latest information.

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