



# Nevada Faculty Alliance Gazette

• January-February 2021

## CSN – NFA Officers 2020-22

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Jill Acree – *Legal Chair*

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### Faculty Advocates

John Aliano [john.aliano@csn.edu](mailto:john.aliano@csn.edu)

Jill Acree [jill.acree@csn.edu](mailto:jill.acree@csn.edu)

## Why CSN Should Not Be a Trade School

On January 19, 2021 in his annual State of the State Address, Governor Sisolak announced that he would seek to remove the Community Colleges from the Nevada System of Higher Education to create a separate system focused on vocational education. Motivated by the unpopularity of NSHE (which narrowly escaped constitutional disenfranchisement in November) and the historical funding imbalances that have favored the universities, he suggested a separate system to work with unions to train workers – a system long favored by educational entrepreneurs such as the Lincy Institute, NCHEMS and others. No formal bill has been presented yet, so the contours remain unclear.

The Nevada Faculty Alliance feels this potential move, though well intended, is misguided.

Make no mistake. Everyone at CSN greatly values our career and technical education faculty and programs, and they will continue to flourish given additional funding, such as the \$7 million just added last week by the US, but this proposal is as likely to harm Nevada as it is to help it for a number of reasons:

- It would create yet another bureaucracy, eating up taxpayer money.
- Fight over funding would simply move to the legislative arena where universities have advantage, as occurs in many other states that have multiple higher education systems.

(continued on next page)

## Featured In This Issue:

- **Why CSN Should Not be a Trade School**
- **Results from NFA Survey**
- **Relocation Pay – How new hires can get it**
- **Shared Government at the Crossroads?**

## News

- Governor recommends CCs become vocational schools, leave NSHE
- Overload paid retroactively
- Furloughs to end June 30
- Base pay raise looks likely
- Merit pay not so good (as usual)
- PEBP reductions lessened, prices rise
- Sabbaticals reinstated for FY 2021-2
- NFA General Meeting **March 19, 9:30am** - - Microsoft Teams  
(For more info -see **News Items** p. 2)

- Community Colleges in Nevada also provide an important path to transfers for Bachelor's degrees, crucial for management jobs.
- Liberal Education and the critical thinking it fosters have never been more important to society, as illustrated by the Jan 6 attack on democracy, rampant Covid denial and growth of conspiracy theories on social media.



Instead of a huge possibly wasteful change, we suggest the following:

- ✓ **Funding formula should be changed** to direct more money to Community Colleges now that both universities have gained the long coveted Research -1 status
- ✓ **Community Colleges should tasked with ramped up teacher training** as CCSD hires 2000 teachers per year mostly from out of state. These are good paying union jobs. Nevadans deserve the opportunity to have them
- ✓ **Health Sciences and growth technical fields should be especially ramped up** as well and funding increased. Contact Governor's Chief of Staff: [michellewhite@gov.nv.gov](mailto:michellewhite@gov.nv.gov)

- **Overload pay** has been raised as of January 2021 with back pay to August
- **Sabbaticals** have been reinstated for next year. Check with your department chair. Special thanks to VPAA James McCoy
- **Furloughs to end** June 30, 2021 according to the Governor's announcement last month
- **The 1.75% base pay raise** along with back pay and a .25% bonus looks likely according to conversations with CSN and NSHE. CSN has not had to tap further into reserves and the NSHE Chancellor has indicated support, these sources indicate.
- **Merit pay banned again** -The Governor's budget reinstated the ban on institutions granting merit pay. Merit pay has now been denied for 8 straight years - ever since the **ill-advised move off of steps** in 2012-13 in favor of merit pay.
- **PEBP has proposed lessening some of its reductions** including allowing dental benefits to continue. However, long-term disability will still be discontinued and premiums up \$3- \$40/month for singles and families. Details are still in flux.
- **NFA Members:** The CSN-NFA Chapter is revising its bylaws. We want this process to be inclusive, and we request you to consider being part of the committee in this important task. Please contact the Bylaws Committee Chair [Ted.Chodock@csn.edu](mailto:Ted.Chodock@csn.edu) to be part of the committee or for additional information.

## **-NOTICE: NFA General Meeting-**

Fri March 19 – 9:30am on MS Teams

Topics will include salary increases, CBA Negotiation Team structure, Efficiency Committee, State Board nominations

# NFA Survey Results

Over the Christmas break, the NFA conducted a survey of all academic faculty in the lead-up to the collective bargaining that begins again in 2022. We had an exceptional response rate of about 42%. Respondents were 91% tenured/tenure track and 9% market hires, and 60% had been at CSN for a decade or more. A number of topics were covered including Covid response, attitudes about the Administration and NFA, and suggestions for bargaining goals. The link to the complete survey is to be found at the bottom of this article.

Nearly 40% of faculty have not been on campus at all last semester, while 27% had ten or more times. 74% reported they were very or somewhat satisfied with CSN's Covid response, while 19% were somewhat or very dissatisfied. More generally, 51% rated the Admin favorably, while 28% rated them unfavorably. **Admin rated lowest on "listening to feedback" 41% - 34%**, and highest on providing a "safe and respectful environment" 61%-21%. Faculty rated the HR Dept 30% good or improving and 17% not improving/and or getting worse. The majority were undecided.

**The Nevada Faculty Alliance was rated favorably by nearly 64% and unfavorably by 12%**, though of course, the percentage may be skewed by some unfavorables choosing not to respond. However, this is the highest the NFA has scored since it began doing surveys in 2013.

Regarding bargaining goals, excluding base pay raises (which are a given) faculty was most interested in prioritizing Merit pay (since the survey, however, the governor has banned merit pay) Supplemental benefits (41%) Professional Advancement (Ranks) – 35%, and improving faculty-admin relations – 42%.

Among supplemental benefits, faculty were most interested in Long Term health insurance, Life Insurance, and short term Disability, in that order.

The survey also contained significant qualitative responses in terms of bargaining and general feedback for NFA. **Please feel free to examine the survey at: [Survey Link](#).**

## SHARED GOVERNANCE - Fact or Facade?

In April 2016, after NFA won the right to be collective bargaining agent for CSN, then-CSN President Mike Richards announced that the **"culture and shared governance of CSN must change"** to reflect the new reality. The 2020 CSN/NFA Collective Bargaining Agreement includes an Article on Shared Governance which states "whenever a CSN committee is formed to address through shared governance any issue covered by this CBA, a designated NFA representative shall be seated on that committee".

To implement this, a Faculty Liaison pilot project was initiated under Dr. **Chuck Milne that excluded NFA.** (see October [NFA Gazette](#)).

Now the Faculty Senate Shared Governance committee has created a policy on Shared Governance Liaisons. This policy has excluded NFA from participating in the most important aspect of shared governance. Specifically, NFA was left out of procedures used to initially elect Shared Governance Liaisons, which occurs yearly. **The removal from this portion of the policy appears intentional** - despite requests made by the NFA Executive Committee and the NFA representative to the Senate Executive Council. NFA's changes were met with support from Faculty Senate Senators at its most recent meeting on February 5th, 2021, though the matter remains up in the air.

**--The CBA requirement of NFA to represent all CSN academic faculty establishes a requirement for CSN-NFA to participate in choosing shared governance positions.--**

For the Senate and NFA to continue to work together collaboratively, **it is imperative that NFA be allowed to participate** in the election of the potentially powerful and influential Liaison positions. (Continued on next page)

The primary role of Liaisons are to “create communication practices that facilitate effective shared governance”, and to “engage the various stakeholders, facilitate task group formation, create systems to track and respond to stakeholder input, and coordinate communication with the different employee groups and the administration”.

-- **Support CSN-NFA in representing the interests of all academic faculty.** Please contact the faculty liaison [Charles.Milne@csn.edu](mailto:Charles.Milne@csn.edu) or FS Chair-Elect [Julian.Smit@csn.edu](mailto:Julian.Smit@csn.edu) or Chair [Maria.schellhase@csn.edu](mailto:Maria.schellhase@csn.edu) .

## Diversity Updates

### African American History Events at CSN

<https://www.csn.edu/events>

### New Chief Diversity Officer at CSN

Lawrence Weekly takes office as CSN’s first Chief Diversity Officer/ Chief of Staff. NFA will be meeting with him for the first time on Feb 12, 2021

**Empowerment Network Initiative (highlighted in last edition; program now has a website)** <https://www.csn.edu/empowerment-network-initiative>

## AAUP Resources

Faculty Matters/Students First/

**Empowerment Network Initiative (highlighted in last edition; program now has a website)**

<https://www.csn.edu/empowerment-network-initiative>

### Statement on Efforts to Restrict the Teaching of History

<https://www.aaup.org/news/statement-efforts-restrict-teaching-history#.YCGI8uhKiUk>

### Learning through the Pandemic

<https://www.aaup.org/article/learning-through-pandemic#.YCGGyehKiUk>

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### NFA Gazette team

Contact:

[Andrea.brown@csn.edu](mailto:Andrea.brown@csn.edu)

[Dustin.Shaffer@csn.edu](mailto:Dustin.Shaffer@csn.edu)

[Bob.manis@csn.edu](mailto:Bob.manis@csn.edu)

[Staci.walters@csn.edu](mailto:Staci.walters@csn.edu)

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## Relocation Pay

**Prior to 2017, New Hires at CSN were hit with a double financial burden upon arriving:** No reimbursement for relocation expenses and no pay for until the 2<sup>nd</sup> paycheck after hiring. Numerous complaints over two decades went unheeded as new hires were forced to take out loans from family, friends, banks and even pawn shops. One of the first proposals submitted by NFA when bargaining commenced in November 2016 was a proposal to reimburse both in and out of state expenses and move the initial payment up to the first paycheck. CSN implemented the latter during the bargaining, and relocation reimbursement began July 1, 2020.

If you started work after that date and have moved a distance of greater than 220 miles to CSN, or a distance of greater than 500 miles, you are entitled to reimbursement of \$2000 or \$3000 respectively.

These reimbursements are considered taxable benefits. If you have not received a reimbursement you deserve, please contact your HR hiring rep or [staci.walters@csn.edu](mailto:staci.walters@csn.edu) at NFA.

## Power in Numbers

**Our ability to move CSN and NSHE depends on our collective power and effort. We have doubled our membership since 2013.** It is only through membership that we have the power -- not only to have a seat at the table—**our voices have been heard!**

# These are extremely challenging times for academia.

Now, more than ever, we need to work together to defend shared values and improve the quality of higher education. You make the difference! Please consider joining!

## Why Join NFA?

1. Enhanced rights and compensation
2. Vote to elect officers or run yourself!
3. Help shape policy
4. Assistance with tenure and grievances
5. Up to 5 hours of free legal assistance
6. Full access to AAUP seminars and papers
7. Free Monthly Academe Magazine
8. Builds faculty power at Faculty Senate and the State Legislature. And that means more money and self-determination for you!
9. The Collective Bargaining Team worked tirelessly to negotiate an increase in overload and base pay that benefits us all!
10. You have already benefited—now pay it forward!

Complete the linked application:

<http://nfa-csn.org/join-nfa.html>

