



CAS President's Report

Dear CAS Members:

General Membership Meeting (GMM)

Thank you to those of you who attended this year's General Membership Meeting. The meeting was a huge success! I would also like to thank the GMM planning and content committee for all of their hard work. We heard from Chuck Agerstrand, President of NSO who talked about the attacks on unions and what NSO is doing to secure, protect and defend affiliates from these attacks. Chuck stated that in times of fear it is easy for us to turn on our own union brothers and sisters; he reminded us that this is what management wants us to do. We must stand together now more than ever. Tom Green with Michigan United Staff Organization shared with us real life examples of concessionary bargaining and other attacks on unions happening in his state as well as other state affiliates. Tom also led a discussion on the importance of solidarity especially in these difficult times and what we must do as an organization to come together. A house divided is a house that crumbles. We were shown a very moving video on Mother Jones which reminded all of us about the struggles that workers faced and how far we have come as a labor movement and that we must keep up the good fight. For those of you who saw the video and have asked, we are researching the possibility of putting the video on the CAS website.

Many of you have asked for the GMM to be more interactive and focus more on audience input and participation, and as promised we delivered. The icebreaker on the first day got people moving around and getting to know one another by discovering our commonalities; it was very fun and was an energizing way to start the day. We also had participants form small groups for focused discussion on what each member's priorities for next year's bargaining. The results of these small group discussions will be in the upcoming CAS Connect. We also had an open member discussion forum which gave members an opportunity to ask questions or talk about any issues or concerns that they had. It was great to see the interaction of our members and the discussions were great. In the past we have talked about how we can actually conduct business at the CAS GMM (which would require some amendments to our Bylaws & Standing Rules) and we are getting one step closer. One of the issues that has been a hot topic for the past couple of years is the CAS Crisis Fund. There was much discussion and members at the GMM came up with two suggestions to offer to the Rep Council at its July meeting. One suggestion is an assessment of \$4 per pay period dedicated to the CAS Crisis Fund and the other was to use the excess budget balance or a percentage of it towards the crisis fund (or combination of both ideas). Any decisions made by the Rep Council to assess monies must be put to a vote according to our Bylaws. Please keep in mind that a Crisis Fund does not replace your paycheck and will take us years to build up a fund, but the discussions and suggestions made at the GMM have started us moving in the right direction. Although we never want to think about going out on strike beginning to establishing a crisis fund will help us go a long way toward an adequate operating strike budget so that we can bring any possible job action to a quick and successful conclusion. NSO also provides assistance through the Charlie Love Crisis assistance program. The fund was established to aid members with a prolonged crisis. The fund is now over \$2,777.780 and is available to help members who have gone long periods of time without a paycheck.

On Saturday evening during our dinner program we began by playing our own version of "Who Wants to be a Millionaire game show" put together by Shelly Bomberry and Amihan Makayan. The questions related to what we discussed and learned earlier that day. It was a lot of fun! Please look for the upcoming issue of CAS Connect that will have more details of what took place at the General Membership Meeting.

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You may have seen some of your colleagues who attended the meeting wearing a button that says ***“CTA Works Because We Do.”*** Our fingerprints are on everything that CTA does -- from assisting members in the field, processing memberships, property management and maintaining the CTA website, to coordinating conferences and trainings, organizing statewide lobby days and supporting CTA's field campaigns. All of us should be proud of the work that we do on behalf of CTA and its members. During the recent State of Emergency (SOE) activities, it was our CAS colleagues who worked long hours every day to help make SOE a success. I know that many of you around the state worked SOE in some sort of capacity, but I would like to acknowledge our members who assisted and staffed Camp Inspiration in Sacramento, the SOE Headquarters/Crisis Center. Without the dedication and hard work of CAS members like Debra Alvillar, Lisa Boyle, Sharyl Caras, Samy-sundaram Ganeshan, Jeff Hall, Susan Harper, Katie Howard, Cornel Long, Ajesh Nand, and Sarah Najarro, Camp Inspiration would not have run as smooth and successfully as it did. Just another prime example of ***“CTA Works Because We Do!”***

NSO Western States Coordinated Bargaining Council

The CBC took place March 18-19, 2011 in San Francisco, and the California staff unions (CAS and CSO) were the hosts for the first time in many years. There was a presentation by the National Labor Relations Board and the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Services. Both presentations outlined key provisions that we should know about both organizations. The FMCS offers trainings to organizations on labor/management relations, communication skills, grievance training, labor history and grievance mediation. This training was interactive and educational. Lynn Adler, NSO Vice President of Defense talked about the assistance that NSO provides and reviewed the current NSO Goals and Settlement Standards that should be used by all affiliates in establishing a benchmark that is achievable when preparing for bargaining. In light of what is happening around the country with the attacks on unions, NSO sent an environmental survey to all affiliate presidents to help identify upcoming issues and determine the readiness of NSO to respond to potential attacks on union members and their rights. There will be a National NSO CBC meeting on October 21-22, 2011, location to be determined.

National Labor-Management Summit

NSO and NEA jointly sponsored a Labor-Management summit which took place on March 20th and 21st in Chicago; your representatives from CAS were Katie Howard, Rhonda King, Amihan Makayan, Debra Oshige, and myself. The purpose of the summit was to bring labor and management together to discuss ways of working together in these difficult times. The goal for the two day meeting was to work in teams Labor/Management to talk about what is important for both parties and how we will work together as an Organization. There was a facilitated discussion by Patrick Dolan who focused on aligning labor/management actions within our external environments, he focused on the ***“collective we”*** or the ***“enterprise”***. Mr. Dolan conveyed that defending the status quo no longer works and that unions should offer an alternative and compelling vision to change and that we should look to quality and fairness.

CTA/CCA Merger Discussions

Recently CAS and CSO have been asked to attend meetings between labor and management groups consisting of CCA, AFT, and others on a possible merger with CCA. CAS nor CSO have been invited to attend these meetings which have gone on now for about 3 years until now. It is our understanding that creating such a merger which would mean another creation of an option office which goes against the ***“Rule Award”*** which indicates that there cannot be a creation of Option 2 offices, it also violates article 30 (Assignability Clause) of our contract as well as CSO. This potential merger would not affect CAS as much as it would CSO and all parties have agreed that we do not see this happening for many years. A joint letter by myself and Don Hillman, CSO President will go out explaining this in much more detail.

Upcoming CAS Connect!

Look for more news and information in our upcoming edition of the ***CAS Connect*** – look for it in your email next week! That's it for now. As always, feel free to call me or your Area Representative and/or Director if you have any concerns or questions. And remember, ***“CTA Works Because We Do!”***