



UNION NEWS

AFT LOCAL 2279
2126 K STREET
P: 916-448-2452
F: 916-446-2401
www.lrcft.org

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Photo by Francisco Dominguez

All cover photos by Patty Felkner

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

By Dean Murakami

We find ourselves in very challenging budgetary times. The Governor and legislature break a record in how late a budget is passed; the budget was in a deficit before the ink was dry; there are significant cuts to education; it focuses on borrowing, which increases the state's debt; we have a worldwide economic crisis that has seen our 403b's lose significant value; and that same crisis has taken a chunk out of the STRS and PERS reserves. And, it gets worse. Clark Kelso has filed a lawsuit to divert an additional \$8 billion out the general fund to prisons, and with the rise in unemployment the State Unemployment Benefit Fund will be out of money in the first quarter. Finally, the legislature will meet in January to consider midyear cuts.

Doesn't it feel like our state budget is the Wicked Witch of the West and just got a good dousing of water? At the State Capitol the Republicans are the Tin Man without a heart for those in need of social services, and the Democrats are the Cowardly Lion who doesn't have the courage to stand up to the Republican caucus. I'll let you guess who the Scarecrow might be.

The very small COLA of 0.68% and minimal growth of 2% clearly does not meet the needs of the demand for higher ed-

ucation in the state. The growth in Los Rios has been phenomenal, reflecting the need for adults in Sacramento to improve their job skills, retrain for new careers, improve their basic skills, and provide the pathway to the university system. We should be investing in community colleges as a means to move California out of this fiscal crisis. The coordinated lobbying of the state legislature by LRCFT, the other community college employee organizations, and the State Chancellor's Office has been somewhat successful in that we did not suffer the same level of budget cuts as some health and social service programs, there were no major cuts to our categorical programs, competitive CalGrants remain in place, and student fees did not increase. LRCFT will work with the State Chancellor's Budget Task Force to strategize a lobbying effort while the legislature meets to consider midyear budget cuts.

While chaos occurs all around us, I want to assure everyone that Los Rios remains in a fiscally strong position. LRCFT and the District will do everything we can to minimize the effect of budget deficits on all employees. We have consistently made our way through each budget crisis over the years and we will do so again.

The election campaigns have been very

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active this past month and I hope that all of us will make the effort to vote, no matter which candidate you might support. If you would like to participate in an election campaign LRCFT may be able to help you. If you volunteer for any campaign, please let me know. We want to get an idea how active Los Rios faculty are in the campaign and give credit for their participation. Read the other article in this edition for further details about volunteering on campaigns.

At our recent California Federation of Teachers (CFT) Community College Council we had a long discussion with our lawyer, Bob Bezemek, concerning the use of student learning outcomes (SLO) by the Accrediting Commission for the Community and Junior Colleges (ACCJC) when it conflicts with the rights of collective bargaining (e.g. performance review) and academic freedom. CFT President Marty Hittleman has written a letter to Barbara Beno of the ACCJC expressing our concerns. A copy of the letter follows.

[cont. on next page]

October 13, 2008

President Barbara Beno, ACCJC
10 Commercial Boulevard, Suite 204
Novato, CA 94949

Ms. Lurlean Gaines, Chair, and Commissioners of
the ACCJC
10 Commercial Boulevard, Suite 204
Novato, CA 94949

Re: Amendment of ACCJC Standards III.A.1.c. and
II.A.6.

Dear President Beno, Chair Gaines, and Commis-
sioners of the ACCJC:

I write this letter as President of the California Fed-
eration of Teachers, AFT/AFL-CIO. As you are well
aware, the Accrediting Commission for the Califor-
nia Junior Colleges (ACCJC) serves an important
function by virtue of California law. In particular, the
State has dictated that,

“Each community college within a district
shall be an accredited institution. The Accred-
iting Commission for California Junior Col-
leges shall determine accreditation.”
(5 Cal. Code Regs. § 51016)

In conferring this important responsibility on the AC-
CJC, the State of California and the Board of Gov-
ernors of the California Community Colleges expect
that the ACCJC will fulfill an important state objec-
tive, providing education through accredited public
community colleges. ACCJC may or may not be a
quasi-governmental entity, but either way it must re-
spect State laws when fulfilling its functions.

Of particular importance to the California Federa-
tion of Teachers, and its constituent locals, is the
Educational Employment Relations Act, California
Government Code section 3540 et seq. The Act, as
you know, provides a framework for collective bar-
gaining for employees in the California Community
Colleges.

One of the most important rights faculty have is to
negotiate with their employer over evaluation proce-
dures, criteria and standards. In fact, this right is so
important that the Legislature deemed it worthy of
explicit enumeration within the Act. In addition, pur-
suant to the EERA, academic freedom policies are
negotiated at community colleges.



In recent years, considerable controversy has ex-
isted within the community colleges over the issue
of Student Learning Outcomes or SLOs. It is an
understatement to say that many within the college
community, faculty and administrators alike, feel the
ACCJC has gone too far in its demands regarding
SLOs, especially when they intrude on negotiable
evaluation criteria and violate principles of academic
freedom.

Not long ago, the CFT invited comment from its fac-
ulty unions about SLOs, and their impact on their
local colleges. Of particular concern to CFT is the
propensity with which accreditation teams from
the ACCJC have indicated to the colleges that they
should “develop and implement policies and proce-
dures to incorporate student learning outcomes into
evaluation of those with direct responsibility for stu-
dent learning.” This directive is based on ACCJC
Accreditation Standard III.A.1.c., which states,

“Faculty and others directly responsible for student
programs toward achieving stated student learn-
ing outcomes have, as a component of their evalua-
tion, effectiveness in producing those student learn-
ing outcomes.” (ACCJC Accreditation Standard
III.A.1.c.)

Another standard has been used by accreditation
teams to justify changes in faculty work such as syl-
labi. This standard, which has interfered in faculty’s
academic freedom rights, states:

“The institution assures that students and prospective
students receive clear and accurate information ... In

[cont. on next page]

every class section students receive a course syllabus that specifies learning objectives consistent with those in the institution's officially approved course outline." (ACCJC Accreditation Standard II.A.6.)

We believe both of these standards, as written and as applied, intrude on matters left to collective bargaining by the Legislature. For a time, we recognized that the ACCJC's inclusion of these standards might have been considered to be mandated by the regulations and approach of the U.S. Department of Education.

Now, however, with the recently re-enacted Higher Education Act, the Federal mandate for the SLO component has been eliminated for community colleges and other institutions of higher education. I'm sure you are aware that Congress passed, and the President signed, legislation amending 20 U.S.C. 1099 (b), to provide that the Secretary of Education may not "establish any criteria that specifies, defines, or prescribes the standards that accrediting agencies or associations shall use to assess any institution's success with respect to student achievement." [See Higher Education Act, S. 1642 (110th Congress, 1st Session, at p. 380)]

Given this amendment, it is CFT's position that the ACCJC has no statutory mandate which prescribes inclusion of the above-referenced standards dealing with faculty evaluations, and syllabi.

Under the EERA, absent mandatory proscriptions in the law, each and every aspect of evaluation is negotiable. See, e.g., Walnut Valley Unified School District (1983) PERB Dec. No. 289, 7 PERC 14084, pp. 321-322; Holtville Unified School District (1982) PERB Dec. No. 250, 6 PERC ¶ 13235, p. 906. The Legislature reaffirmed the negotiability of evaluation procedures and criteria when it adopted A.B. 1725 in 1989. (See Cal. Ed. Code § 87610.1, 877663(f)). The Legislature did specify that community college evaluations procedures must include a peer review process and, to the extent practicable, student evaluations. (See Cal. Ed. Code § 87663(g)). However, it did not mandate SLOs.

Accordingly, the CFT wishes to inquire as to what actions ACCJC intends to take to conform its regulations to the requirements of State law, and to recognize that the adoption of any local provisions which include faculty effectiveness in producing student learning outcomes, should be entirely a matter of collective bargaining negotiations. And, similarly, that the ACCJC cannot mandate inclusion of information in syllabi which faculty, by reason of academic freedom and tradition, are entitled to determine using their own best academic judgment, or through

the negotiations process. Of course, in negotiations over evaluation, the law also provides that faculty organizations shall consult with local academic senates before negotiating over these matters.

While ACCJC is free to encourage colleges and their faculty organizations to negotiate over this topic, it is not free to mandate or coerce the adoption of such standards by sanctioning colleges which do not adopt standards that ACCJC would prefer in these areas. Given its state function, ACCJC must respect the negotiations process mandated by state law, and academic freedom rights adopted by contract or policy.

California's public community colleges are an extraordinary public resource, and the Legislature has seen fit to decree that when it comes to faculty evaluation, that process shall be subject to collective bargaining. With the adoption of the landmark bill A.B. 1725 almost 20 years ago, the Legislature came down squarely on the side of faculty determining, with their employers, the method and content of their evaluations. This system has worked exceptionally well for almost 35 years.

Given the change in Federal law, the CFT calls upon ACCJC to take prompt and appropriate action to amend its standards to respect the boundaries established by the Legislature and not purport to regulate the methods by which faculty are evaluated or determine their course work such as syllabi.

I look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

Marty Hittelman, President
California Federation of Teachers ■

THE FINISH LINE IS IN SIGHT

By Robert Perrone

The 2008 General Election is almost upon us and there is still an abundance of volunteer opportunities for those who are willing to spend time to help a candidate or a ballot proposition.

For those interested in lending a hand to support Barack Obama, there are phone banking opportunities through various outlets. Contact Zak Ford at the Sacramento Central Labor Council at 916-927-9772, ext. 229 or the Sacramento County Democratic Party headquarters at 916-739-6001. You can be referred to more local opportunities in Elk Grove or Fair Oaks. Phone bankers are calling voters in important swing states such as Nevada, New Mexico and Colorado.

For those interested in helping out with local Assembly races, there are two opportunities. The Sac-

ramento Central Labor Council is also organizing phone banking and precinct walking for Alyson Huber in the 10th Assembly District and Joan Bucanan in the 15th Assembly District. The contact information is the same as above.

For those interested in doing precinct walking in Nevada, every weekend thousands of Californians are making the trek to the Reno area. Go to <http://my.barackobama.com/page/content/nvhome> for more information.

And, finally, for those interested in working for John McCain, visit his official Web site at <http://www.johnmccain.com/> for volunteer opportunities.

The California Federation of Teachers recommendations for state ballot propositions:

1A	Bonds for high-speed rail	YES
2	Treatment of farm animals	NO
3	Bonds for children's hospitals	YES
4	Parental notice for teens seeking to terminate a pregnancy	NO
5	Alternatives to incarceration	YES
6	Increases teen incarceration	NO
7	Renewable energy	NO
8	Eliminates right of same sex couples to marry	NO
9	Limits due process	NO
10	Alternative fuel vehicles and renewable energy	NO
	Energy scam by financier T. Boone Pickens that would provide \$5 billion in public bonds to benefit him and other private natural gas producers	
11	Redistricting	NO
12	Veteran's Bond Act	YES

The LRCFT recommends the following local choices:

Measure M Los Rios bond issue YES

Lois Wolk State Senate District 5

Mariko Yamada State Assembly Dist 8

Alyson Huber State Assembly Dist 10

Joan Bucanan State Assembly Dist 15

For Los Rios Trustees:
Kay Albiani
Terry Cochran
Pam Haynes ■

CHIEF NEGOTIATOR'S UPDATE

By KC Boylan



As many of you know, several negotiations issues remain in discussion between LRCFT and LRCCD. Legislative action and negotiated deadlines have led to four issues in particular emerging this semester as high priority topics: AB591, Paid Health Leave, counseling workweek, performance review for online faculty.

First, many adjunct faculty were eagerly following the progress of AB591 and since its passage, many more have called or emailed seeking information about the implications for adjunct faculty in Los Rios. The recently approved legislation allows for adjunct faculty to teach as much as 67% or (.670 FTE) in a given semester; however, Los Rios will maintain an academic year limit of 1.290 FTE. The District has an interest in remaining below a 1.340 FTE limit, above which an adjunct faculty moves into tenure-track status. The passage of AB591 has the greatest implications for adjunct faculty teaching in disciplines with 4 and 5 unit courses. According to LRCCD, full time faculty will still be limited to 60% (.600 FTE) overload in order to support "quality instruction."

The next issue involves the Paid Health Leave Committee, which LRCFT believes is the first step toward a more comprehensive Catastrophic Sick Leave Bank Program. When negotiations ended in May, LRCCD and LRCFT agreed to convene a committee to accomplish two goals: establish the structures for the initial program and recipient approval process; ex-

plore sick leave models that meet the needs of members and their immediate family members. According to the new contract, Article 9.13, the first goal is to be accomplished by December 1, 2008, and the second by April 1, 2009. The small teams have been identified and negotiations continue on this important program. Watch for more details soon.

The third issue involves counseling faculty and clarification of workweek expectations. Unable to conclude negotiations prior to the May deadline, LRC-CD and LRCFT agreed to convene a committee to clarify how "college service" was accounted for in the counselor's workday/workweek and to distinguish between those activities that were determined by the faculty member versus those activities that were directed by administration. This distinction became more important as it became clear that the meaning and use of professional development (PD) time versus student contact time were interpreted inconsistently across the district. This committee, which included counseling faculty as well as administrative representatives from all four colleges, had an October 1, 2008, deadline and, consequently, met five times in September. Unfortunately, no recommendations came out of those meetings; however, LRCFT and LRCCD do agree that the current contract language distinguishes between PD time and student contact time. Additionally, all of the colleges will implement practices to ensure compliance with existing language.

The fourth issue continues to represent a technological challenge: performance review for online faculty. While conducting performance reviews for on ground faculty is fairly consistent across the district, conducting performance reviews for online faculty continues to pose problems, particularly with the distribution of student reviews. Currently, three of the colleges utilize different processes, and the fourth college does not have an agreed upon method for conducting student reviews. LRCFT has expressed two interests relative to the inclusion of student reviews: maintaining confidentiality in the process and ensuring that student reviews remain the sole property of the faculty member under review after the performance review process has been completed. Members of the LRCCD and LRCFT negotiations team are continuing to explore options to resolve this ongoing issue while meeting our shared interests. ■

PART TIME FACULTY PAY COMPARISON

By Bill Miller

Hello from San Francisco! I've been on unpaid (and one semester of Type C) leave from the Chemistry Department at SCC from Fall 2007, and I'll be coming back to SCC for Fall 2009. Before going on leave, I had been at Sac City for 8 years (7 full-time and 1 part-time). Since going on leave, I've been teaching at two to three different colleges down in the Bay Area, depending upon the semester. These include City College of San Francisco (CCSF), College of San Mateo and Skyline College (last 2 in San Mateo CCD). Each semester, my combined teaching load has varied between 80% and 110% of the full-time teaching load.

Being part-time and also being at different colleges gives me a bit of perspective on things back in Los Rios. I'd like to share that.

Before I do, let me say how much I miss Los Rios, Sac City and my dear colleagues in the Chemistry Department. As Dorothy once said, "There is no place like home!" It is so true. Thank you all for the support my wife and I have received while down in the Bay Area. A special thanks to our Union for negotiating the ability to accrue and take Type C leave. What a wonderful benefit!

Of course, the great drawback to being part-time is less pay and benefits. At CCSF, however, it is supposedly not that bad. This information is from the CCSF faculty union web site (<http://www.aft2121.com/html/part-timers.html>):

Currently the pro-rata for part-timers at City College is 85%; that is, a part-timer is paid 85% of what a full-timer receives for each in-class hour. The current difference in pay (the 15% less that part-timers are paid) reflects the time spent on additional professional duties that full-timers are expected to perform, such as participation in departmental and college-wide committees and holding office hours, for which credit instructors are currently paid extra.

Even more recently, it was negotiated to be 86% of what a full-timer receives (time for them to update their Union web site)!

Comprehensive studies have been done for at least seven years on full-time salaries (http://www.santa-rosa.edu/afa/statewide_study.shtml) and on adjunct salaries (<http://www.cpfa.org/pronews/07-spring/p4-5.pdf>). Those studies focus on overall compensa-



tion. I'd like to present my own survey that looks at the mechanics of how adjunct faculty get paid in addition to overall compensation.

As an adjunct (again), I've become familiar with the variety of ways of compensating adjunct faculty. There are different lab/lecture ratios, different compensation for office hours and of course, different medical benefits.

I'll be looking at a fairly typical teaching load for an adjunct science faculty: a three-hour lecture and a six-hour lab class. I'll personalize it further by looking at what I get paid as a new adjunct instructor with a Ph. D. and seven years of prior teaching experience in another district. The table shows a side-by-side comparison of many of the aspects of getting paid in the three different districts.

Salary placement in Los Rios CCD and City College of San Francisco are both at Step 1 for any new adjunct, regardless of past teaching experience. However, having a Ph. D. allows me to be placed in Class 5 in each of these two districts.

Placement is entirely different in the San Mateo CCD. There is only one "Class" for all adjunct faculty regardless of degree. However, each adjunct faculty member does get credit for past teaching experience. For me, that placed me on Step 7.

As a note, all three districts pay the same for adjunct salaries as for the overload assignments of full-time faculty.

There is also a large difference in compensation for office hours. First, San Mateo CCD pays for office

hours based on your adjunct load. For example, if you work 0.52 FTE, then you get paid for $0.52 * 5 = 2.6$ office hours per week. They also automatically include office hours in your paycheck. No forms to fill out!

The history of San Mateo CCD's large number of office hours is that several years ago, most of that pay was part of the hourly adjunct salary. Then, some of that money was taken out of the hourly pay and made into the pay for office hours. In the end, I hear the adjunct faculty did end up getting a raise out of the deal.

CCSF pays for 15 office hours per semester and requires a form to be filled out at the end of the semester to get paid for those. I filled out the form wrong my first semester when I was only working less than 0.20 FTE. I thought I could get paid for one office hour per week. Silly me! It turns out that I could only get paid for four office hours per semester. I never even resubmitted the form for those four office hours. Now that I can see I get over \$1,000 this semester, I think I'll fill out the form.

As far as medical benefits goes, I am excited to report that all three districts provide substantial portions of the medical benefits to their adjunct instructors. I have not had to rely on these benefits as my benefits were covered by Los Rios CCD while on Type C leave.

What does it all mean? In reflecting, I would agree with the California Part-Time Faculty Association in saying that there is a long way to go toward equal pay

for part-timers, but not as far as it used to be. I can also see that I would make almost \$58,000 a year for working 1.06 FTE each semester at CCSF and San Mateo CCD together and having full medical benefits. CCSF and Skyline College, in the San Mateo CCD, are approximately 15 minutes apart. Putting a full-time teaching schedule together between these two schools does not require a whole lot of travel. Doing the same between Los Rios CCD and either Woodland Community College, Sierra College or Solano Community College involves at least a little more travel, depending upon where you live. And still, there is no place like home. ■

	LOS RIOS	CITY COLLEGE OF SF	SKYLINE COLLEGE COLLEGE OF SAN MATEO
LECTURE	\$76.63/hr	\$96.46/hr	\$76.26/hr
LAB	\$57.47/hr	\$81.97/hr	\$66.11/hr
OFFICE HR (OH)	\$57.47/hr	\$81.97/hr	\$47.25/hr
LAB/LECTURE RATIO	0.75	0.85	0.80
FTE FOR 3 HR LEC/ 6HR LAB	0.50	0.54	0.52
OFFICE HOURS	18/semester (if .40 FTE or higher)	15/semester (if .40 FTE or higher)	2.6/week (pro-rated at full timer rate)
ITEMIZED PAY PER SEMESTER	\$4,138.02 lec \$6,206.76 lab \$1,034.46 OH	\$5,208.84 lec \$8,852.76 lab \$1,229.55 OH	\$4,118.04 lec \$7,139.88 lab \$2,347.38 OH
TOTAL	\$11,379.24	\$15,291.15	\$13,605.30
MEDICAL INSURANCE	83% paid (full if 0.60 FTE)	100% paid (full if 0.50 FTE)	\$550 contributed/mo (if 0.40 FTE)
For comparison purposes, all values are from the 2007-08 year pay scale.			

MEMBERS' RETIREE INFORMATION

By Lanny Hertzberg

On September 24, the LRCFT Executive Board voted to recommend to the membership the establishment of a retiree chapter of the Union. This move would entail amending the Union's constitution, which requires the approval of two-thirds of those voting in an election. Such an election will be held in November in which you will be asked to elect a president and secretary-treasurer of the LRCFT, along with Union college representatives. You will also be asked to approve the amendment to the Constitution. The purpose of this article is to describe the rationale for such a change.

First, a little context. There is a national movement among educator unions to establish retiree chapters, A. At present, the movement is still in its infancy; yet those unions which have established retiree chapters report numerous advantages for both the unions and the retirees.

There are many reasons for unions to establish retiree chapters: Retiree participation allows the union to have a source of continuity in knowledge and experience; retirees generally have time available and are a good source of volunteer labor; retirees make good community liaisons; retirees can act as short term substitutes for faculty; retirees have an interest in seeing their prior workplaces continue to be effective places of learning.

There are advantages for retirees also. Retirees can continue relationships with fellow faculty; contributions of time and other resources lessen the shock of transition from working as a contract employee to being retired; the union can offer both professional and social activities of interest to retirees; and retired members can participate in organized political actions for which they previously had an interest, but did not have time.

More information and the actual proposed constitutional changes will be sent to all members soon. You should receive a ballot via U.S. mail around November 17 or shortly thereafter.

The Executive Board urges you to approve the amendment. ■

LRCFT CONTACTS

ARC ■ CRC ■ FLC ■ SCC

President: 484-8497	Dean Murakami murakad@arc.losrios.edu
Past President: 650-2905	Dennis Smith smithd@sc.losrios.edu
Chief Negotiator: 608-6628	KC Boylan boylank@flc.losrios.edu
Secretary/Treas: 568-3100 x2754	Donna Nacey nacey@sbcglobal.net
Dispute Res. Officer & Col Rep: 691-7254	Reona James jamesr@crc.losrios.edu
ARC CP: 484-8210	Diana Hicks hicksdl@arc.losrios.edu
CRC CP: 691-7229	Chuck Van Patten vanpatc@crc.losrios.edu
College Rep: 691-7668	Jason Newman newmanj@crc.losrios.edu
College Rep: 691-7673	Gabriel Torres torresg@crc.losrios.edu
Adjunct Rep:	Linda Sneed sneedlc@crc.losrios.edu
FLC CP: 608-6628	KC Boylan boylank@flc.losrios.edu
College Rep: 608-6605	Zack Dowell dowellz@flc.losrios.edu
College Rep: 530-642-5685	Wayne Olts oltsw@flc.losrios.edu
Adjunct Rep:	Hali Boeh boehh@flc.losrios.edu
SCC CP: 558-2579	Annette Barfield barfiea@sc.losrios.edu
College Rep: 558-2602	Tonie Hilligoss hilligoss@oro.net
College Rep: 558-2484	Sandra Warmington warmins@sc.losrios.edu
Adjunct Rep:	Fred Dawkins dawkinf@sc.losrios.edu
Exec. Director: 448-2452 x14	Robert Perrone perrone1@igc.org
Admin. Assistant: 448-2452 x10	Reina Mayorga myhija@aol.com

THAT OTHER ELECTION

By Robert Perrone

While we're on the topic of elections, here is a reminder that the LRCFT will be having an election in mid November for Union president and secretary/treasurer; Union college presidents and college representatives, including adjunct representatives (who receive a \$1,000 stipend each semester); and approximately 40 delegates to the annual convention of the California Federation of Teachers (CFT). This year the CFT convention will be held in Sacramento, making it easy for people to attend. Here is a timetable of events:

October 20	Notice of Election and Nominations mailed to homes of Union members
November 3	Nominations close
November 17	Ballots out
December 1	Ballots counted

If you or anybody you know are interested in running for any of these Executive Board positions or as a convention delegate, nomination petitions will be available from your LRCFT College President, the LRCFT Web site at www.lrcft.org or from the LRCFT office on October 20.

Voters in the LRCFT election will also be asked to approve an LRCFT constitutional amendment regarding the establishment of a retiree chapter. Please read the article in this issue that explains the proposed amendment.

If you are a dues paying Union member and have not received a Notice of Election by October 24, please call the LRCFT office at 448-2452. ■

WHAT ARE WE DOING IN NIGERIA?

By Robyn Waxman

On July 8, 2002, 600 local women in Nigeria's oil-rich Niger Delta used "stripping naked", a serious cultural taboo, to shut down Chevron's largest oil production facility in Nigeria for 10 days. They held 700 workers hostage. They blocked production of half a million barrels of oil a day. The women had no weapons, just their bodies and the power of a cultural taboo. Fed up with the loss of their access to clean water, their inability to feed their families, and the loss of family members through the violence that rips through this militarized one, local women climbed over the barbed-wire fence and threatened to take off their clothes. A soon-to-be-released documentary titled "The Naked Option" tells this amazing and heroic story of passive resistance.

The public has a right to know about Chevron's activities in Nigeria, Africa's most populous country and the United States' third largest supplier of oil.

Oil is Nigeria's main export, accounting for 95% of the country's revenues, yet the citizens of Nigeria live in abject poverty. The land and water in the Niger Delta is poisoned. The main source of trade—fishing—is an impossible means for locals and potable water is virtually nonexistent— all due to oil contamination. Since 1976, more than 6,000 oil spills have been recorded in the area. Less than 25% of them have been cleaned up.

The Nigerian government and Chevron have reaped enormous profits over the years from the sale of oil and gas reserves. The residents of the Niger Delta continue to live in poverty. This grinding poverty and the government violence that accompanies it is a means of

controlling the land, free speech, and any attempts by the local populace to gain control of resources.

I could continue to list facts and figures that would eventually sound like white noise. Instead I would like to tell you how this affects you as a citizen, and as a Los Rios employee.

WE OWN PART OF CHEVRON. CalSTRS and CalPERS are two of the largest Chevron shareholders.

Why should Los Rios employees care enough to change this relationship? Because raising awareness just might be the tipping point it takes to head off civil war in the Niger Delta. Because the children of the Delta deserve a future. Because what happens in Nigeria ripples through African society, resulting in political instability and having a negative impact on global economic markets. Because Nigeria produces more than 10 percent of the U.S. oil supply. Ultimately, the events unfolding in the Niger Delta affect us all and I personally, don't want to own that burden.

After a series of alleged Chevron-financed shootings which killed villagers in Nigeria, a court case will finally be held in Chevron's hometown: San Francisco. The landmark Federal court case, *Bowoto v. Chevron*, will be held on October 27th after surviving over 65 Chevron appeals for dismissal of the case. A rally will be held at 12 noon on the 27th on 9th Street and Harrison (a Chevron station) for one hour during the first day of the court hearing. I hope to see you there. In the meanwhile, let's think about investing with a more responsible company. ■