

Vocational Instructor

Local 4200A ~ AFT, AFTCT, & AFL-CIO

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**"It Pays
To Be Taught
By a Vo-Tech
Teacher"**

March 2017



Priorities

By Ed Leavy, SVFT President

Kevin Lembo, Connecticut's Comptroller, spoke at the AFT Connecticut Legislative Conference this month about the importance of maintaining revenue, because only with revenue, "can we do the good work we need to do, like ensuring access to healthcare for children." As Comptroller, he sees the budget not as a collection of numbers, but as a series of choices we make about our priorities as citizens. Budget cuts to a department are not primarily based on inefficiencies that can be corrected (as is inevitably the claim), but because their work is viewed as not important enough to fund fully. As former Vice-President Joe Biden says, "Don't tell me about your values. Show me your budget and I'll tell you your values."

The Governor's proposed budget is a document of his perception of our values. All we have been hearing about are the "tough choices" we have to make in this budget, and how the "new economic reality" means there must be "shared sacrifice." So, the CTHSS receives in effect a \$7.6 million cut. The Governor projects \$1.5 billion in labor savings. Many towns see their education funding drastically reduced. The list of cuts goes on and on. Meanwhile, as this budget is being debated, several bills are being presented to the Appropriations and Finance Committees that seem to be operating on a different "economic reality" altogether. These bills make clear how the budget speaks to our priorities as a state.

Multiple bills address amending or eliminating the estate tax. I knew nothing about the estate tax until I read AFT Connecticut's bill tracker and saw how many legislators from both parties seem to feel we must address this issue. After a day of calling labor lobbyists and doing some research, I'm still struggling to understand the problem. In Connecticut, when an estate of more than \$2,000,000 is inherited, the person inheriting the estate pays taxes on it. The Federal threshold is roughly \$5.5 million, so anyone inheriting an estate above that amount must pay Federal taxes on it as well. A person inheriting an estate worth less than \$2,000,000 pays no estate tax. The Yankee Institute, Connecticut's right-wing advocacy group, is of course all over this issue. They point out that Connecticut loses residents to Florida, which has no estate tax. The implication is people move to Florida so they don't have to pay the estate tax. Of course, when they sell the home they pay taxes on the sale, so it's unclear how they are saving money. They also comment that other states like New York changed their estate tax to "make it friendlier to mid-sized estates." It says volumes about the Yankee Institute's constituency that a \$2,000,000 estate is considered "mid-level." People are moving from New York to Connecticut in large numbers, so the estate tax isn't dissuading them; where is the logic in their position? But the argument is about values, not math.

On March 3, I provided testimony to Appropriations arguing against the estate tax. The bill in many ways has nothing to do with me: I won't be inheriting a \$2 million estate, and it is becoming increasingly unlikely I will bequeath one. These bills speak to our priorities. Our budget is a series of choices. How can the government turn to State workers asking for help, but also hand one more tax break to our richest citizens? How can we cut vital services or leave our students without teachers, but eliminate an annual \$200 million source of revenue? How is that "shared sacrifice"? These are the questions I asked the Finance Committee. These are the questions all of us need to ask our legislators, either in a phone call or an email or face-to-face at AFT Connecticut's legislative breakfasts this spring. We are not the ultra-wealthy who have a Yankee Institute to lobby tirelessly to get us even more money. We are working people who have the collective voice of our union, and our individual voices as citizens. We need to make sure our elected officials believe it is their responsibility to help working people and families. Then we need to hold them accountable to passing a budget that reflects those values. Make sure if they don't, we will find candidates who will. We already have enough people in Hartford who make giving more tax breaks to the wealthiest residents their priority.

Labor History: The Origins of “Right to Work”

By Ed Leavy

“Right to work” legislation has gained momentum throughout the country; over half of all states are now “right to work.” Some effects of “right to work” are undeniable: wages go down, the percentage of people with health insurance goes down, workplace injuries and fatalities rise. Some effects are unclear. There is no evidence the number of jobs increases, though that is always the rationale behind the bills. We can understand why Republican governors and legislators love “right to work”; union households are far more likely to vote Democratic, so it makes political sense to limit the number of union households. That does not explain the origins of “right to work,” or why it started in the South in the 1940s when Democrats controlled most Southern states. To understand how “right to work” began, we must turn to Vance Muse.

Vance Muse did not come up with the idea of “right to work” – Dallas Morning News editorial writer William Ruggles originated the idea and the name (for anyone unclear on “right to work,” it allows employees in a union workplace to have all the contract benefits of a union contract without paying any dues to the union, and thus starve the union of the resources it needs to survive). Muse met Ruggles and agreed to have “right to work” become part of the Christian American Association’s campaign.

Vance Muse made his living as a corporate lobbyist – he was successful in defeating a proposed Constitutional amendment prohibiting child labor – but his passion was maintaining what he considered the Southern way of life. As a younger man, he had fought against women having the right to vote. He was called, “a white supremacist, an anti-Semite... a man who beat on labor unions not on behalf of working people, but because he was paid to do so.” The description was not made by a union opponent, but by Vance’s own grandson. Vance obviously saw himself differently, but not that much differently. He claimed he was not anti-black, and in fact likes African-Americans – “in their place.” He believed that “right to work” legislation helped blacks, but “good” blacks as opposed to “those Communist” blacks. Of course, the sincerity of his claim is brought into question not only by what he means by a “good” African-American, but also by the fact he used neither the word “black” or “African-American” to describe people of color, but stuck exclusively to the n-word (editing his comments to get across his feelings while avoiding his most offensive statements is a nightmare). When lobbying Southern legislators and even in his pamphlets, he unabashedly claimed the problem with unions was, “From now on, white women and white men will be forced into organizations with [African-Americans] whom they will have to call ‘brother’ or lose their jobs.”

Muse didn’t only hate people of color. He was also a virulent anti-Semite. As World War 2 began, he had to modify his tone a bit, but there was no doubt where he or his Christian American Association stood. His wife and coworker Maria acknowledged in 1943, “Christian Americans can’t afford to be anti-Semitic outwardly, but we know where we stand on the Jews, all right.” For Muse, the combination of Roosevelt and Truman’s civil rights agenda and the CIO’s plan to spend \$1 million to organize both white and black workers in the South was an attack on his vision of the South’s way of life. He worked tirelessly behind the scenes to ensure the Taft-Hartley Act contained state’s rights provisions on labor law. An overwhelming number of Southern politicians – they were known as Dixiecrats; the South at the time was largely Democratic because Abraham Lincoln had been a Republican – and when Truman vetoed Taft-Hartley an even larger percentage voted to override the veto. Arkansas and Florida very quickly voted to become “right to work,” and the number of Southern states becoming “right to work” rose dramatically when “Brown v. Topeka Board of Education” was handed down. “Right to work” remained a primarily a byproduct of Deep South segregation until the Koch brothers and others began pushing it again a decade ago.

Do the clearly racist roots of “right to work” matter? I was fervently against this legislation for ideological reasons long before I ever heard of Vance Muse. Ultimately, though, “right to work” does promote a world in which race and gender matter, a world in which Vance Muse would feel right at home. With a union, a contract determines wages through job classifications and experience. Without a union, management determines salary exclusively. It is not a coincidence that in “right to work states” income inequity between races and gender is far higher than in non “right to work” states. Vance Muse would be proud. The rest of us should be ashamed.

This article was based on a series of internet pieces. “The Origins of Right to Work” in lawcha.org and “The Ugly Racial History of ‘Right to Work’” in dissentmagazine.org were especially helpful.

Scholarship and Professional Development Mini-Grants Reminder

The SVFT Scholarship Program has been revised and is now seeking applications. A total of eight \$1,000 scholarships are available for students, and mini-grants for professional development are available for members.

To be eligible for a \$1,000 scholarship, a student must be the son or daughter of an SVFT member and must be a high school senior who will be continuing his/her academic or vocational education in 2017-2018.

Applications may be downloaded from the union website <http://svft.ct.aft.org> or requested by contacting the union office. The application lists the additional required documentation. Completed applications must arrive at the SVFT office before May 12, 2017. The SVFT Scholarship Committee will announce the names of the scholarship recipients on or before June 2, 2017.

Members may apply for an SVFT mini-grant by submitting a typed letter (not more than 250 words) with your name, school where you teach, and explanation of how the money will be used. Mini-grants not totaling more than \$1,000 will be awarded. Letters of Application must arrive at the SVFT office before May 12, 2017 and announcement of those receiving mini-grants will be made on or before June 2nd.

Our state affiliate, AFT-CT, also offers scholarships for our members, which can be found at <http://aftct.org/scholarships>. Anyone with questions about the SVFT Scholarship Program should contact Vice-President Paul Angelucci at the union office at Pangelucci@svft.org



Labor-Management Meeting

A labor-management meeting of the year was held on February at the SVFT. Representing the CTHSS was Superintendent Dr. Nivea Torres, Human Resources Director Karen Zuboff, and Labor Specialist Colleen Clancy. Dr. Nikki Menounos represented administration. The SVFT was represented by Ed Leavy, Paul Angelucci, Bob Riccitelli, Bullard-Havens Auto DH Roxane Amiot, Norwich Electrical DH Jamie Lamitie, and Ellis Related DH John Pascone. Issues discussed included:

The Budget – The CTHSS budget was cut by \$2.9 million from last year. However, that figure does not include the \$4.7 million rescission from this year that was supposed to be restored in 2017-2018 and will not be, so the cut is actually \$7.6 million. While this cut will certainly have an impact on the curricular and extra-curricular programs that will be offered, it is very unlikely we will have school closings.

Health and Safety Issues – Trade department heads are concerned the CTHSS may not be compliant on some Conn Osha protocols. Areas such as ladders, fall safety, and arc welding gloves are a concern, because these items need to be certified yearly. In addition to the obvious safety concerns, the financial liability is considerable.

Admission Policy and the ALEKS Program -- Paul Angelucci reported that because of the number of concerns we have been receiving, the SVFT is forming a working group on these two issues. Dr. Torres asked if the SVFT could write a summary of their findings and send them to her so she can address them.

Other issues discussed include the disposal of scrap metal, the changes and improvements to the department head evaluations, and the process for job applications. The most striking aspect of the meeting was the spirit of collaboration we had.

We Must Testify

This year's legislative session has had more bills submitted than in memory, and a larger percentage of bills receiving public hearings. As a result, the SVFT has provided testimony on bills from prevailing wage to removing pension from collective bargaining to capping arbitrated pay increases at 2%. We also testified on the CTHSS proposed budget. Below is Paul Angelucci's testimony:

**Testimony of Paul Angelucci
Vice-President State Vocational Federation of Teachers, AFT Local 4200A
State Department of Education Budget
Appropriations Committee
February 21, 2017**

I am Paul Angelucci. I am the Vice-President of the SVFT, representing the 1200 educators in the Connecticut Technical High School System. I am also a Plumbing and Heating Department Head at Wilcox THS and a proud graduate of Bullard-Havens THS.

I am the embodiment of the opportunities our system creates. As one of nine children growing up in Bridgeport, college was not an option. My plumbing trade at Bullard-Havens helped me get two years toward my apprenticeship, and I was earning a living as a licensed plumber before friends in my graduating class had left college. My experience in the system has helped me have a successful career. I was able to build my own home in Trumbull and put my two sons into college. The trade has been my path to a middle-class life. I have been honored to work in this system and help my students develop the skills that will lead to their own success story.

I tell my story not to convince you of the importance of the CTHSS. My conversations with legislators from both parties assure me we have bipartisan support. Everyone understands the importance of our system. It is impossible, however, to both support the system and then starve it of resources.

This budget represents a nearly \$4 million cut from last year. Last year's budget was slashed nearly \$13 million from what had been allocated. We recognize in these difficult times we must be willing to share the sacrifice. We have done so, trying to do more with less, but we are reaching a breaking point. I hope no further cuts will be made as emergency rescissions. There is nowhere left to cut. We have already lost all our adult health programs, and the hundreds of students they served have no replacement. Our high school shops run on the bare bones of what is needed to adequately prepare students for the trade; trade budgets are often less than they were when I was in high school, even without adjusting for inflation. We must understand CNC machines are more expensive than textbooks, and copper tubing is more expensive than paper. For over 100 years, Connecticut has decided that investing in career technical education is good for students and good for our state's economy. This budget threatens that investment. Any further cuts would destroy it.

Thank you



Years of Service Recognized

The SVFT Leadership would like to thank the following teachers who in 2017 are starting at least their 25th year in the system

Years	Name	School
40	Aaron Silva	Howell Cheney THS
37	Pamela Cramer	W F Kaynor THS
	Nancy Iannuzzi	Emmett O'Brien THS
	Paul Soucy	E C Goodwin THS
36	James Marrone	Emmett O'Brien THS
	Sarah Curry	A I Prince THS
35	Wendy Avallone	Oliver Wolcott THS
	Trevor Jones	H C Wilcox
34	John Opramolla	Platt THS
33	Vincent Palladino	H H Ellis THS
	Angel Perez	Eli Whitney THS
	Deirdre Shaw	A I Prince THS
	Gail Houlihan	W F Kaynor THS
	Jeffrey Rheiner	E C Goodwin THS
	Jean Marconi	Bullard Havens THS
32	Christopher Sansone	Emmett O'Brien THS
	Louis Marinelli	Vinal THS
	Daniel Nemerhut	Henry Abbott THS
	Stanley Danielczuk	Oliver Wolcott THS
	JanMarie Weston	Vinal THS
	Regina Wrenn	W F Kaynor THS
	Karen Stabile	J M Wright THS
	Kathryn Patrick	W F Kaynor THS
	Caren Menard	W F Kaynor THS
	Louis Pecoraro	Norwich THS
	John Snopkowski	W F Kaynor THS
	Joseph Hanlon	Bristol Tech Education Ctr
	Ed Leavy	Bullard Havens THS
	Robert Janiga	H C Wilcox THS
	Thomas Dunlap	Bullard Havens THS
	Kathleen McGirr	Howell Cheney THS
31	Maria Isidro	Bullard Havens THS
	Peter Dzialo	Eli Whitney THS
	William Paradis	Ella T Grasso THS
	Andrew Giannettino Jr.	Platt THS
	Raymond Simmons	Bullard Havens THS
	Calvin Thomas	Windham THS
	Deborah Krodell	Norwich THS
30	Francine Ramos	Bullard Havens THS
	John Carew	Platt THS
	Frederick Huhn	Howell Cheney THS
	Michael Lorusso	Oliver Wolcott THS

Years	Name	School
30	Donna Marinan	H C Wilcox THS
	Patrick Burke	H C Wilcox
	Patrice Hanko	Bullard Havens THS
	Ralph Salemme	Platt THS
	William Weidner	Vinal THS
	Danuta Mullen	E C Goodwin THS
	Constance Fields	Vinal THS
29	Linda Ransom	H C Wilcox THS
	Richard Dulac	Bristol Tech Education Ctr
	David Morello	Howell Cheney THS
	Vincent Distasio	W F KaynorTHS
	Biagio Montanaro	Bullard Havens THS
	George Stowell	Bullard Havens THS
	Margaret Solomito	W F Kaynor
	Debra Fengler	H C Wilcox THS
	Mary-Paule Monks	Windham THS
	Roxanne Amiot	Bullard Havens THS
	Daryl Meninsky	Eli Whitney THS
	Gina Sabo	W F Kaynor THS
	Margaret Sonntag	H C Wilcox
	Raymond Royals	Oliver Wolcott THS
	James Menard	E C Goodwin THS
	Michael Cyr	E C Goodwin THS
	Roger Brogis	W F Kaynor THS
	Virginia Cann	HC Wilcox THS
	Anne Simko	Eli Whitney THS
	John Welch	Eli Whitney THS
	Jeffrey Denote	W F Kaynor THS
	Roger Giori	J M Wright THS
	Cathy Burnside	Norwich THS
28	Susan Murphy	Platt THS
	Mary Sheehan	H C Wilcox THS
	Terrie Thomas-Jones	E C Goodwin THS
	Rueben Charles	E C Goodwin THS
	John Blake	Ella T Grasso THS
	Elizabeth Neubelt	E C Goodwin THS
	Paula Paccadolmi	W F Kaynor THS
	David Grenier	Windham THS
	Robert Hughes	Howell Cheney THS
	Gregory Beyer	Oliver Wolcott THS
	George Wruck	H C Wilcox THS
	Clarence Parks	Oliver Wolcott THS
	Judith Leonard	Norwich THS
	Susan Manning	Ella T Grasso THS
	Henry Wheelahan	W F Kaynor THS
	Gary Edward Baier	Howell Cheney THS
	Deborah Mills	J M Wright THS

Years	Name	School
28	Kevin Mizak	Ella T Grasso THS
	Debra Anderson	Emmett O'Brien THS
	Daniel Thibault	H C Wilcox THS
27	David Feda	Platt THS
	George Ballard	Henry Abbott THS
	William Clark	Henry Abbott THS
	Eric Sawyer	Vinal THS
	Charles Hilton	Hartford Aviation Maint Tech
	William Barbarito	W F Kaynor THS
	Jan Praytor	H H Ellis THS
	Brian Kelleher	Bristol Tech Education Ctr
	Deborah Ann Luster	Vinal THS
	Ellen Card	Howell Cheney THS
	Donna DiCamillo	Oliver Wolcott THS
	Robert Hipp	Henry Abbott THS
	Roger Phillips	Hartford Aviation Maint Tech
	David Felker	H H Ellis THS
	Kathleen Grimaldi	Eli Whitney THS
	Keith Stadler	J M Wright THS
26	Jeanne Loomis	Norwich THS
	Krystin Konow	Norwich THS
	Gregory Peck	Ella T Grasso
	Russell Casey	E C Goodwin THS
	Jack Smith	E C Goodwin THS
	Maria Carpanzano	Henry Abbott THS
	Nancy Janeczek	H C Wilcox THS
	Henry McMillian	A I Prince THS
25	Todd Belcourt	H C Wilcox THS
	Joseph Scarduzio	Stratford Aviation Maint Tech
	David Bellinghiri	Norwich THS
	Thomas Jones	Norwich THS
	Robert Riccitelli	Platt THS
	Roger Degray	H H Ellis THS
	Lee Pelletier	W F Kaynor THS
	Maryellen Gilmartin	W F Kaynor THS
	Audrey Smith	Oliver Wolcott THS
	Paul Tema	W F Kaynor THS
	Scott Behling	H C Wilcox THS
	Jean Recchia	Howell Cheney THS
	Robert Mitchell	E C Goodwin THS
	David Parillo	W F Kaynor THS
	Edward Drapatin	W F Kaynor THS
	Harjit Bains	Ella T Grasso THS

thank you!

2017 Regional Legislative Meetings



Saturday, March 11, 2017
Southeastern CT Area
8:30am-10:00am
Lynde Tavern, Niantic

Saturday, March 18, 2017
Greater Hartford Area
11:30am-1:00pm
Margaritas, East Hartford

Saturday, April 1, 2017
Windham Area
9:00am-10:30am
UConn, Storrs (Student Union)

Saturday, April 1, 2017
Central CT Area
8:30am-10:00am
Manor Inn Restaurant, Milldale

Saturday, April 8, 2017
Western CT Area
9:30am-11:00am
Hilton Garden Inn, Danbury

Tuesday, April 11, 2017
Southwestern CT Area
5:30pm-7:00pm
Place: TBA

To register for a Legislative meeting please contact SVFT Office Manager Lindsay Hochadel at LHochadel@SVFT.org or call the SVFT office at 203-793-7996

Vocational Instructor

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State Vocational Federation of Teachers
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Vice President..... Paul Angelucci
Executive Union Rep..Bob Riccitelli
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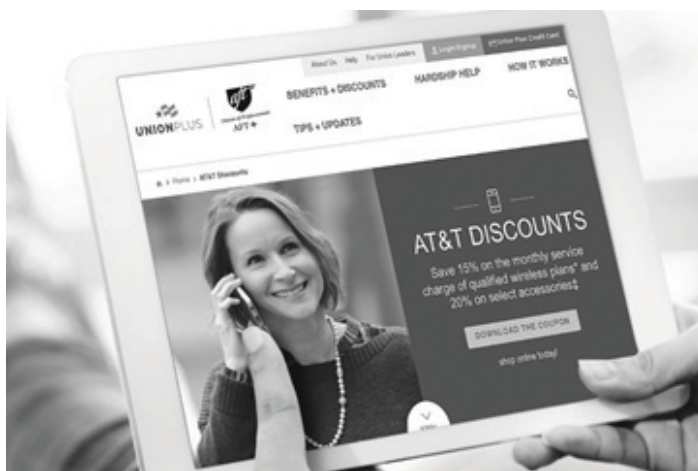
Happy St. Patrick's Day!



SVFT Mission Statement

The SVFT is an organization of professional educators that promotes excellence through the mutual adherence to policies, documents, and procedures negotiated with the CTHSS. We work to guarantee that the contract is followed and positive working conditions are maintained. This organization shall be to provide a safe and positive teaching environment for all by:

1. Maintaining the integrity of the contract, the Vocational Technical High School System, and the solidarity of the union
2. Ensuring all members are protected by the contract and equipped with the tools and knowledge necessary to make them successful
3. Protecting the jobs of our members and strengthening our system
4. Providing members opportunities to further their education and receive quality professional development
5. Responding quickly to the emerging changes to the workplace and technological challenges
6. Handling all interactions with fairness and integrity
7. Striving for productive, open communication between the SVFT leadership and our membership
8. Building and improving relationships with our union affiliates and local labor councils



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