

Union news for
PROFESSIONAL,
TECHNICAL &
ADMINISTRATIVE
EMPLOYEES
LOCAL 21, IFPTE | AFL-CIO
San Francisco

Chapter Presidents Attend the First Advisory Council Meeting

The first meeting of the Chapter Presidents Advisory Council was held on Thursday April 16 and produced several excellent discussions about serious issues and developments with impact on our jobs, careers and co-workers within our Chapters. 9 out of 17 Chapter Presidents attended, and we hope to build that number in the future.

This meeting serves as a working body of elected leaders to analyze and discuss large and complex issues facing our membership in CCSF. Chaired by SF Vice President Gus Vallejo, the chapter presidents discuss political issues, as well as representational issues affecting all of our members.

During the meeting, the following was discussed:

Political Endorsements: with the November election still several months away, the Council discussed both the Mayor's race as well as the race for District 3. Items discussed will be brought to the Political Action Committee for consideration, and any recommendations will go to the San Francisco Council before being considered by the Executive Committee.

Exempt: more than 25% of all Local 21 represented San Francisco city employees are exempt – and as a result lack the job security that permanent civil service employees have. This has been an issue that Local 21 has tracked for years, and made attempts at the bargaining table to resolve. However, there are complex

considerations in how best to address the issue, and a working group was formed to further explore the issue and potential proposals to curb the abuse of the system.

Standing Committees: The Advisory Committee also put forward recommendations to the SF Council to consider making three standing committees moving forward: A Pension Advisory Committee (continuing our work on retirement issues); a Health and Wellness Advisory Committee (to work on health and wellness issues in CCSF) and an Exempt Position Advisory Committee (to explore the issues surrounding Exempt hiring and to recommend plans of action).

Next Meeting: Expect another important agenda for the next CPAC meeting and be sure to be there. We will be calling on Chapter Presidents to offer encouragement and a reminder that their feedback on the larger complex issues persisting in San Francisco greatly contributes to Local 21's overall success.

Two New Field Reps at Local 21

Amihan Makayan has returned to Local 21 after spending nearly ten years working in San Francisco non-profit organizations fighting for the rights of the elderly and disability community as an advocate and community organizer. She was originally recruited into Local 21 in 2005 as a Representative/Organizer where she represented San Francisco and Golden Gate Bridge chapters. She left Local 21 to pursue a Master's in Public Administration at the San Francisco State University. For the past 6 years, she was employed by the California Teachers Association in San

NEW!! ON STAFF



MEMBERS IN ACTION:



KIM NIM

Rafael.

"I am excited to be back at Local 21 and to San Francisco, my favorite city!" she says.

Paul Kim was formerly with SEIU Local 721 in Southern California representing the Engineers and Scientists in Los Angeles, Waste Truck Operators in Pasadena, Librarians in Palos Verdes and Street Maintenance in Baldwin Park. Kim says that his past work experience in the private sector educated him on the necessity of unions and protecting working people in their work place.

Members in Action: Kim Nim

Another Local 21 member has been stepping up his work to get other members to develop their job skills for more career advancement. In his early thirties, Kim Nim, an At-Large Chapter Delegate and Compliance Manager for Office of Economic Workforce Development, has been doing just that. Working on compliance issues relating to workforce policies the city has with contractors, he helps make sure economically disadvantaged residents obtain job opportunities.

In his ninth year working with the City, Ken leads mini-trainings within his department about how employees can take advantage of not only the City employee extended learning program called City University, but the City's Employee Development Fund available to L21 members. Ken's sessions involve a quick one- or two-slide presentation of this program.

"It may seem like a lot of steps," Ken said. However, one selling point is that City University's extended learning and certification programs are vetted by the City.

Ken benefited by taking nine Project Management Institute certification

classes through San Francisco State University's extended learning program to complete his certification. Ken saved \$10,000 in tuition costs, the EDF covering a third of the costs that the City University program did not.

"I was taking classes every day after work," Ken recounts. And that time spent paid off, because he was able to obtain the certification he needed.

"If you're looking to move up within city ranks, these certificates that are available can provide you with educational experience, professional qualifications, and network with colleagues across industries," Ken said. "They make you more marketable." For example, he recounted how another City colleague was promoted to a Project Manager after completing the Project Management certificate. "If you're looking to move up within city ranks, these certificates that are available can provide you with educational experience, professional qualifications, and network with colleagues across industries," Ken said. "They make you more marketable." For example, he recounted how another City colleague was promoted to a Project Manager after completing the Project Management certificate. According to the program guidelines, employees are allowed to use some work hours to attend approved classes based on supervisor approval.

As for the EDF, Ken reminds other members that funds are limited so the time to seek your supervisor's approval for classes is now. Employees must receive approval from their supervisors to request training but EDF will subsidize coursework to help union members develop skills they may need in the future for their present jobs, paving the way for possible future advancement. Such coursework can include wellness



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and other enrichment programs, such as foreign languages.

Asked if he has any other advice to give to young workers or any other city employees seeking to further develop their skills, Ken said, "Be involved. Be familiar with your union and the benefits it offers you." He added that while there is a lot of disparate information out there, each employee's needs are different, so it is important to step forward and ask the union rep questions.

Ken encourages city workers to research other trainings and courses, such as wellness programs, and petition for EDF funding. "Network at union meetings," he said. "Find the right resources."

Ken is scheduled to present the City University program at the chapter meeting at San Francisco City Hall in May.

Find out more here about EDF and the City's policies and programs.

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Special Q&A with SFMTA Employee Virdis Gamble

One of our longstanding IT Chapter members, Virdis Gamble, just received a Special Recognition award from the SFMTA for his development work. A software engineer for twenty years, Virdis is very well known and well liked among our members at SFMTA.

Gamble serves as the agency SharePoint administrator, and was credited for his vital work in developing the Strategic Plan Action Tracking site, the transportation agency's performance planning site and the Public Outreach and Engagement Team site.

Virdis Gamble gave Local 21 the opportunity to interview him about his life and career as a tech employee in the public sector.

L21: Tell us a little about your accomplishments in IT working for MTA.

Virdis: When I first came to SFMTA, the priority was using Sharepoint to support the Central Subway project. I created sites that allowed SFMTA to manage contracts and other documents for the project.

The next major project involved replacing the agency's intranet. This project started with Sharepoint 2010. We revamped the intranet and included document and people search. Over the last couple of years, the initial implementation has been migrated to Sharepoint 2013, which is our current version.

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Today, we are working on expanding the intranet to include collaboration and project sites for the various departments within SFMTA. We are also building custom solutions using a combination of Sharepoint, Nintex Workflow, and KnowledgeLake.

L21: Amidst the tech boom and IT industry here in the Bay Area, what made you choose to use your IT skills for civil service in the public sector?

Virdis: It was definitely the challenge of standing up Sharepoint and providing solutions for SFMTA that attracted me to work in the public sector. In the large environment at RHI, we had 8 Sharepoint developers, 3 administrators, and 2 business analysts to support the Sharepoint effort. At SFMTA, it started with just me. I had to adjust and work all roles on my own.

Today, the Sharepoint team has expanded to include another developer, a business analyst, and others from IT that are willing to learn on the job. While we now have more people on the team, the challenge to build solutions for such a large agency with limited human resources still exists.

L21: What do you see for yourself in the future?

Virdis: I am looking forward to expanding the agency's use of Sharepoint to include Microsoft's new offerings. We have already begun work on using the cloud with Office 365. I am also very interested in expanding the agency's use of the public and private clouds.



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