



The 411 on 274

June 2025

Another Smash Hit: Pancake Breakfast & CSEA Week BBQ

Our annual **CSEW Pancake Breakfast and BBQ** was a huge success! A massive thank you to all the **volunteers**—including Professor Adam Fong, managers, administrators, classified staff—and **organizers** who made it possible. In a time when community ties can feel strained, these events are crucial for the health and well-being of our Classified Staff.

Special appreciation goes to **Angelica Campos, Dustin Mason, and Maria Soto**, and everyone who dedicated extra time and effort to create a space for fellowship, laughter, games, and fun prizes.

Please note: While everyone is welcome to attend CSEA events, complimentary food and prizes are reserved for our **dues-paying members**. Union dues fund these events, making them possible. Stay tuned for our next big gathering, **Winterfest**, coming up in December! If you're not yet a member and want to learn more, please reach out to our Membership Committee: [Angelica Campos](#), [Margo Pulido](#), or [Carmen Moreno](#).

New Members!

We've had numerous dues-paying members join in the first half of 2025, and we want to recognize them for contributing to the privileges we rely on as Merced College Classified Staff.

- **Leyla Polk** – Theater Administrative & Box Office Assistant
- **Jessica Levitt** – Curriculum Specialist
- **Nang Thao** – Agriculture Student Support Coordinator
- **Patrick Fuentes** – Athletics Instructional Support Tech II
- **Delcio Gois** – Custodian Coordinator
- **Jose Solorio** – Groundskeeper
- **Danielle Melao** – Student Health Services Nurse
- **Sissiley Childers** – Foundations Office Assistant
- **Madison Maraspini** – Facilities Management Administrative Assistant II
- **Ryan Villareal** – Art Gallery Coordinator
- **Silvia Williamson** – Admissions & Records Technician
- **Stefani Durbin** – Athletics Administrative Coordinator
- **Jenny McCaffery-Jones** – Office of Institutional Effectiveness Program Assistant
- **Cynthia Campos** – Admissions & Records Student Services Assistant
- **Anna Marvulli** – Senior Buyer
- **Luciano Gonzalez** – Career & Transfer Center Student Support Coordinator
- **Sky Medina** – Public Safety Security Guard
- **Jessica Higareda** – CDC Associate Teacher

Why Pay Dues?

Your [CSEA-negotiated union contract](#) secures vital protections, but it's only guaranteed for three years at a time. Without a united front, **we're always less**

than three years away from losing the job security, wages, and benefits our union has fought for over decades.

Since 1927, the California School Employees Association (CSEA) has been the voice of classified school employees, starting with Oakland custodians who demanded fairness, respect, and job security. From those humble beginnings, CSEA has grown into California's largest classified employee union, with 250,000 members, championing protections like the merit system that ensure fairness and stability.

For nearly a century, CSEA's relentless advocacy has delivered better wages, top-tier benefits, and safer working conditions for classified staff—the backbone of our schools. These gains directly support student success by empowering the workers who keep our campuses running. **The job protections, regular pay raises, and the gold-standard benefits you rely on today exist because of CSEA's unwavering commitment.** Stand with us to protect and build on this legacy.

Member Spotlight

Meet this month's featured union member: **Angelica Campos!** As our Administrative Coordinator for Math, Science, and Engineering, Angelica is more than just a colleague; she's been a vital part of the Merced College family for over 20 years. Throughout her impressive tenure, she's served as a guiding leader, a supportive mentor, and a true friend to so many of us.

Angelica's commitment to our union is unparalleled—serving in various leadership roles, including her recent impactful term as CSEA President. She's consistently fought for equity and stood as a confidante, pouring her time and heart into ensuring fairness for all our employees.

1. **Can you share a bit about your career path and how it led you to become involved with the union? What were your initial impressions?**

Uhh, let's see, this is my 20th year in this position; I started in 2005. So back in 2007, one of the lab techs in my area, Glen Harvey, was installed as the new CSEA President. For one reason or another the Secretary was unable to carry out her term, so I was appointed as her replacement. But it's only because Glen was super convincing and was able to persuade me to take it on lol! I actually had no idea what the union was all about and was definitely not involved.

Prior to 2018, anyone that was hired at the college was automatically enrolled into the union. That is no longer the case. My initial impression was that it was important and meaningful work and I was glad that I got involved. 18 continuous years later and I've been on the CSEA Executive Board (E-Board) in various roles, from Secretary, to Communications Officer, to Negotiator, to President, and now Past President! I don't think I've ever been Treasurer or VP yet though lol.

2. What motivated you to take on a leadership role within the union, and what were some of your proudest achievements during your tenure as president?

I finally decided to throw my name in the hat for President because I felt like I had enough of the history and understanding of what was needed, and I finally felt ready to take it on because nobody else was willing to. I much prefer to orchestrate things from the background though, so I'm glad Dustin stepped up to take over the reins! I'm actually more proud of the work I've done as a Negotiator than as President. That's where you actually see the work in action. The result is a Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) aka 'contract' where you negotiate changes and updates and salary increases with the District. You have to remember that you are representing all of the classified membership and negotiate what is in the best interest for all of us collectively, not just for yourself.

3. What role did mentorship play in your leadership journey, either as a mentor or mentee?

Refer to my response in question #1 lol. But I also enjoy mentoring others who are new to this arena and just want to learn how to do things. I have the history and knowledge and love to share that out to ensure continuity of government, but also, I don't want to do this forever you know? How else will I be able to walk away unless I teach others how to do it properly?

4. What advice would you give to future union leaders or members who are considering taking on a more active role?

Not to be afraid! It might seem daunting, but there is lots of training and mentors and we all want to help. Even if you feel like you have no clue what to do going into it, the only real way to learn is to jump head-first into it!

5. Looking back on your time as president, what are some of the most

memorable moments or experiences that stand out to you?

Last year we went to the main CSEA Conference where delegates from all chapters come together and it's this huge event with thousands of CSEA members in attendance, occupying several hotels in the area. But the coolest part was joining in solidarity with the hotel workers unions who were on strike, demanding fair pay and benefits. So thousands of CSEA members picketed the hotels we were staying at to stand in solidarity with our fellow unions. It was truly moving and an unforgettable experience.

6. Outside of your union work, what are some of your hobbies or interests that our members might not know about?

I can't believe I'm saying this, but I actually enjoy working out (now). I used to HATE IT! But one day I just decided I was going to commit to doing it and now it's become a habit. I still hate cardio, but I always feel good after a good workout. If I combined that with actually eating healthy, I'd be unstoppable lol! I also used to do roller derby and I still enjoy skating (quad skates). I would love to skate outdoors more, but the older you get, the more you worry about falling and breaking things!

7. How did you balance your responsibilities as union president with your personal life and other commitments?

That was a little tough actually. It does require you to do some after-hours meetings and events and trainings. But you recognize that it is what you signed up for and you honor that commitment and prioritize your duties. Even if that means cutting into your family time or R&R time.

8. How did you handle disagreements or conflicts within the union leadership, and what did you learn from those experiences?

Just be open-minded and willing to listen to all sides and opinions. Not everyone will always agree and see eye to eye, but you should at least be respectful and willing to listen to all perspectives and sometimes compromise is necessary, and that's not necessarily a bad thing.

9. What do you believe is the most significant challenge facing unions today, and how can they overcome it?

The fact that government is advocating to break them up. The only way to overcome this is to stand together in solidarity and continue to fight for our rights and stand up to the oppression. We

are stronger together than we are apart!

Chapter 274 NEEDS Stewards!

Want to champion your coworkers and strengthen our union? Chapter 274 needs Union Stewards to fight for your workplace rights at Merced College. Currently, we only have **one steward**, which is far too few to represent all of us effectively!

[Sign up for the virtual June 28th training here!](#)

What You'll Do:

- Educate employees about their contract rights.
- Investigate and present grievances to management.
- Relay member concerns to our Negotiating Team.
- Attend CSEA's annual training sessions.
- Collaborate with our Chief Union Steward on grievance resolutions.

Who Can Apply?

Active members in good standing qualify. No experience required—just bring your passion and willingness to learn. This role opens the door to future leadership, like Chief Union Steward.

Why Join?

- Empower your peers and improve our workplace.
- Build leadership skills with CSEA training.
- Shape our Chapter's future.

How Do You Get Started?

- Check out upcoming trainings [here](#).
- If you're ready to sign up for the June 28th virtual training then [register here](#).
- If you aren't sure of your member ID then reach out to me and I can find it!
- For any other questions please don't hesitate to reach out to me (michael.lara@mccd.edu) or Sandi (sandra.goudy@mccd.edu)!

**Steward's Corner: Following Up with
Supervisors via Email**

Many members seek guidance on communicating effectively with supervisors regarding schedule adjustments, vacation requests, or other matters, especially when emails go unanswered. This short guide will help you get answers—fast and professionally.

Scenario

You (*Alex*) need to confirm your new work schedule.

Your manager (*Jordan*) isn't replying to emails in a timely fashion.

1. Get a Verbal "OK" for Your New Schedule - Confirm via Email

Keep it simple and straight-forward. Different managers have different preferred forms of communication so yours may prefer an in-person conversation, a phone call, or even just a Teams or text message. Always follow up with email to keep a paper trail. If your manager is on leave and time is critical, reach out to their supervisor.

E-mail Example:

Subject: Clarification on New Schedule

Hi Jordan, I'd like to confirm my new work schedule, per our conversation. Please confirm that the attached hours work. Thanks, Alex

- Use a clear subject, be direct, stay polite.

2. Courtesy Follow Up Email (After 5-7 Days)

No reply? Forward your first email with a short, courteous note.

E-mail Example:

Subject: Follow-Up on Schedule Confirmation

Hi Jordan, just checking on my email about confirming my new schedule. Thanks, Alex

- Stay friendly, assume they're busy.

3. Second Follow-Up (After 10+ Days)

Still nothing? Forward again, add “Urgent.”

E-mail Example:

Subject: Urgent - Schedule Confirmation Needed

Hi Jordan, I still need to confirm my new schedule—it’s important for my planning. Please let me know if the schedule requires further discussion or clarification.
Thanks, Alex

- Keep it cordial! Always assume they've got a lot on their plate.

4. Try Other Ways

- Phone: “Hi Jordan, it’s Alex. I’ve emailed about my schedule—can you respond to confirm?”
- In-Person: “Hi Jordan, I’ve emailed about my schedule. Got a minute?”
- Coworker: Ask if they know how to reach your manager.

- Stay calm, don’t blame. Maintaining a professional good-faith relationship with your boss is always the aim.

5. Get Help

No luck? Please reach out to me or another E-board member. We'll steer you in the right direction!

Quick Email Tips:

- Check email daily.
- Keep it short and professional.
- Save all emails.

Key Takeaways:

Start with a verbal agreement and confirm via email, follow up once or twice, then try phone or in-person. Every manager is different so please use this guide as a loose template. Need help? Reach out to me, a colleague, or an E-board member—we’ve got you!

Coming Up

No Chapter Meeting This Month!

There are no chapter meetings in June or July (*you also don't pay dues those months!*) but your union leaders are available year-round. Meetings are regularly held August through May on the 3rd Wednesday of each month. Please don't hesitate to reach out if you have any questions

Get Involved!

Please reach out to me if you're interested in taking the next step in your journey as a union employee here at MCCD. The union can always use an extra hand for leadership, committee roles, and volunteering.

Any shoutouts, anniversaries, membership growth, contract wins, training completions, retirements, event successes, or other wins we should celebrate? Please reach out to me at michael.lara@mccd.edu

CSEA Chapter 274

Our mission | To improve the lives of our members, students and community.

Want to share your thoughts, join a committee, or connect with fellow members? Your Chapter 274 team is here to support you—reach out to me or any other E-board member!

<https://csea.com/chapters/274>



