



The 411 on 274

May 2025

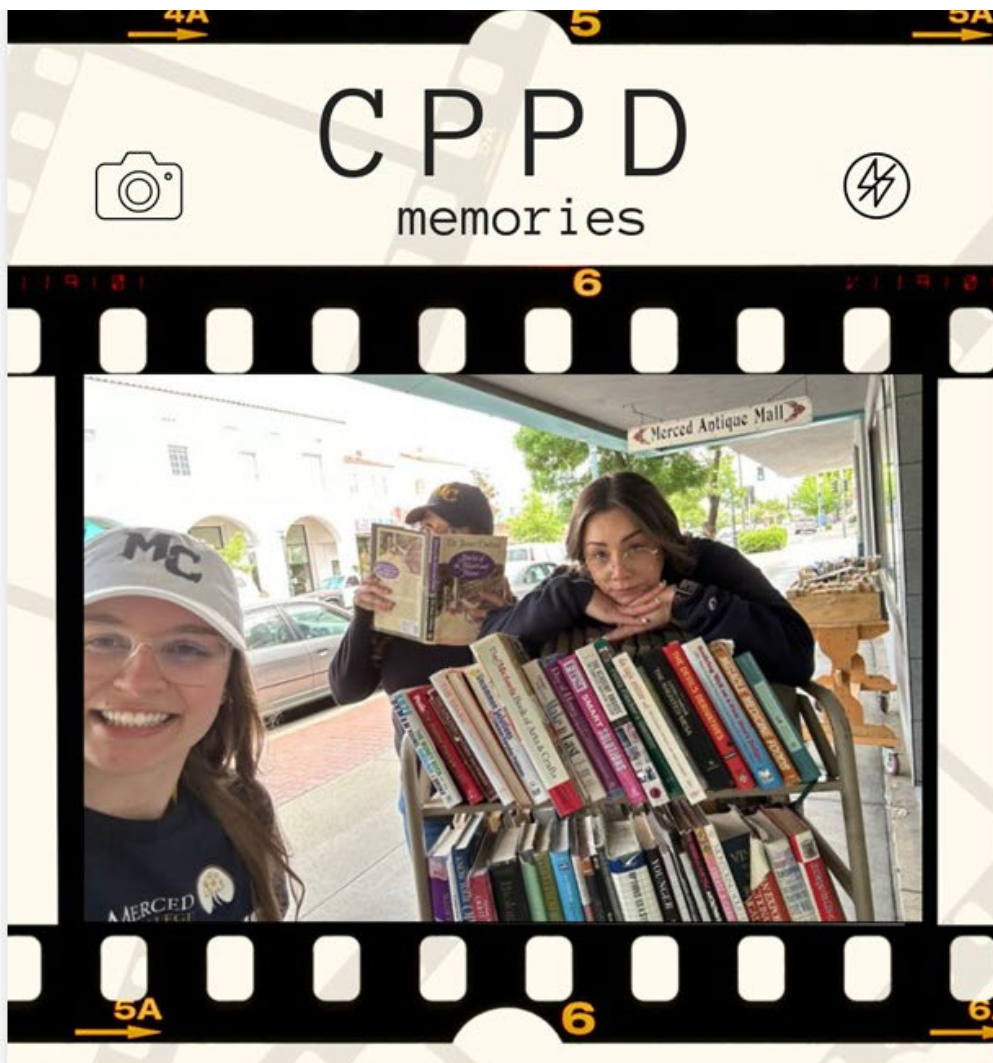
Classified Professional Development Day was a Hit!!

A huge thank you to **Cassie Gunter**, **Gabriela Garcia**, and the entire behind-the-scenes team for making Classified Professional Development Day (CPDD) an unforgettable success! Our Classified Employees had an absolute blast exploring downtown, embarking on an exciting scavenger hunt, and crafting delicious chocolate treats. Your hard work and creativity truly made the day



shine!





In



Memory



Member Spotlight

This month, we're honored to spotlight **Sandra "Sandi" Goudy**, our Senior Programmer Analyst. Recruited from Ohlone College in 2013 for her unparalleled programming expertise, Sandi has been a vital part of Merced College for 12 years. She has led us through major technological advancements and transitions, empowering us to serve our students and community. Sandi's influence extends beyond her technical achievements. A dedicated leader within CSEA, she has served in key roles, championed union initiatives, and mentored countless colleagues with her wisdom and commitment. As she nears her well-earned retirement at year's end, we celebrate her as a true rockstar—recognized statewide and beyond for her remarkable contributions to education and leaving a legacy that will inspire us for years to come.



1. How long have you been a member of our union, and what inspired you to join?

- Initially I joined while at Foothill/De Anza CCD in 1990 (7 years)
- CSEA member at Ohlone CCD 1997-2013 (16 years)
- CSEA member here at Merced 2013 to current (12 years)

Total: **35 years!**

I plan to retire in December, at which time I will become a retiree member of CSEA! This allows me to keep all the awesome benefits of CSEA, still participate in some activities, AND they assist with the retirement process, including helping to set up medical and which options are best for me! Dues come right out of PERS!

2. What's your current role or job, and what do you enjoy most about it?

I am the Senior Programmer Analyst and I support the functional/programming side of our ERP system, Colleague by Ellucian.

I enjoy working with everyone and helping find automated solutions to manual and cumbersome processes. I love it when a simple process can replace hours of work in someone's work routine.

3. Can you share a memorable moment or achievement from your time with the union or in your work?

With the Union:

Becoming a union steward. It involved a few days of my own time to go through the training (TOTALLY worth it!) then the big celebration with all the other Area E chapters out at Lake Yosemite. Many of us earned our Steward's Jacket.

Over the years, I've served in many of the officer roles, President, Secretary, Chapter Public Relations Officer (now called Communications Officer), and negotiator, which I think is the most fun role of all. It has given me the opportunity to work with district administrators in ways I would not have had the opportunity in my primary role, as well as making sure that our contract is serving us and meets our current needs.

In my Work:

Our software system, Colleague, is shared by approximately 28 other districts (last time I counted). Because of this, I've got friends and colleagues all over the state. I was honored this last March, at the Chief Information Systems Officers Association (CISOA) conference and awarded the "Technology Excellence" award. I was stunned, and even more so when I learned I was nominated by someone from another college. One of the CISOA officers will be on campus for our July 8th Board meeting to re-present the award to me there. Mark your calendars!

4. What does being part of this union mean to you personally?

Like Merced College, it's family. We have our immediate CSEA family here at Merced and the association's staff. Then add in the members we meet from other chapters; it's like getting extended family. I also know CSEA is there for me if I ever need assistance, be it at work, or personally.

5. Are there any union activities, events, or committees you're particularly passionate about?

I am most passionate about negotiations. I've learned a lot about "legal language" I never thought I'd understand. Working with the team is awesome and sharing our different perspectives on contract issues alone is valuable, but the friendships that are built I appreciate the most, and that will last beyond negotiations.

6. What's a hobby or interest you have outside of work that you'd love to share with the chapter?

I love most crafts, though I don't do them as often as I used to. You can bet I'm first to sign up when they are offered at Fri-Yay!

I love getting out into nature, Yosemite is one of my favorite places. And one of my other favorite places is the "happiest place on earth"... Disneyland! I do love all things Disney.

I also love entertaining. If there's an event or celebration happening, I love hosting!

When I'm not out and about sharing time with friends and family, I am very involved with my church. It is very rewarding and fulfilling.

7. Is there a cause or issue related to our union's mission that you feel strongly about?

I think just that I know I represent all of us in CSEA, and bringing all the issues to the table to make our chapter stronger.

8. Who has been a mentor or influence in your career or union involvement, and how did they impact you?

Union involvement:

I have many years to think back on for this one. Here at Merced, Angelica Campos, Christine Clarkson, Diana Butts, and Terry Plett. They have all helped me with chapter history, working with administration at the table, and just the support and encouragement along the way. Chapter operations and negotiations at Merced are very different than my experience at Ohlone. It is so much better here and everyone has helped me, I could never have done this alone. Thank you all.

9. What's one thing you wish more members knew about our union or its work?

The difference between being a dues-paying member, often referred to as "active member" and just part of the bargaining unit. As a dues paying member, number one, you have a voice. You have the right to vote on any ratification. That's all contract changes and new or changed positions. You get all the benefits from CSEA, like the \$5,000 accidental life insurance, legal assistance (I have used this!), discounts on all kinds of things (Disneyland, Movies...). There are even special funds when natural disasters happen like the floods we recently had, and the fires. But mostly it's the protection you get in your job. All members of the unit are covered by the contract (the Collective Bargaining Agreement), and CSEA will represent everyone to the legal limit. Sometimes we need assistance that is not necessarily a contract violation, for active members, CSEA may offer assistance and guidance when they can.

Getting involved helps in so many ways, the more you know about our union, the more you can help the next new person coming into Merced College and you make our union stronger.

10. **If you could give a shout-out to another union member who's made a difference, who would it be and why?**

Anyone who has EVER served as an officer, negotiator, on a hiring committee and/or a shared governance committee representing CSEA. You all deserve a SHOUT-OUT!

There is always a need for serving on a hiring committee and it's the easiest way to begin your involvement with CSEA.

I'm sorry if this sounds like a membership drive, but I do strongly believe you get more when you give more. If it was not for CSEA, there are so many of you that I would have never had the pleasure and opportunity to meet! I cherish that (even when I have to ask your name again more than once! LOL)

Step Up as a Union Steward for Chapter 274!

Want to champion your coworkers and strengthen our union? Chapter 274 needs Union Stewards to fight for your workplace rights at Merced College. Right now we've just got one—far too few to represent us all!

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 CSEA at the bottom of [this page](#).
- 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: Navigating Your Union Contract

Welcome back to the *Steward's Corner*, where we share practical tips and strategies for handling workplace situations professionally and effectively. This month we'll take a look at two scenarios that exploring extended leave and career advancement. Here's a link to the [union contract](#) for your reference!

Scenario 1: Taking Leave for a Family Emergency

Contract Reference: Article 22 – Leaves (Sections 22.1, 22.2, 22.5)

Situation:

Maria, an administrative assistant with five years at Merced College, faces a crisis when her mother is diagnosed with a serious illness requiring constant care. Unsure how to balance work and family, she turns to the union contract for guidance.

What Happens:

Maria discovers **sick leave** (Section 22.1) lets her use accumulated leave to care for an immediate family member. For shorter-term needs, **personal necessity leave** (Section 22.2) allows up to seven days per year from her sick leave for urgent personal matters, like this. If her mother's condition worsens, she can consider Family and Medical Leave Act (**FMLA**) leave, taking up to 12 workweeks of leave in a 12-month period. Beyond that, there is also **catastrophic leave** (Section 22.5) which offers a way to request donated leave from colleagues. As a last resort, Maria can utilize **unpaid leave** by working with HR—protecting her job for a period of time. Maria starts with personal necessity leave, submitting forms to her supervisor and HR as outlined in the contract.

Why It Matters:

You have multiple leave options for family emergencies—don't hesitate to explore them to support your loved ones without risking your job.

Scenario 2: Advancing Skills with College Courses

Contract Reference: Article 24 – Professional Development (Section 24.2)

Situation:

John, a custodian with three years of service, wants to learn computer science and maybe earn a degree. A coworker mentions the contract offers educational benefits.

What Happens:

In Article 24, Section 24.2, John finds that employees can enroll in college courses and, with approval, get release time each week or even tuition assistance for job-related classes. He talks to his supervisor, and they submit a request to HR for release time to attend a course at Merced College.

Why It Matters:

The contract supports your growth—take advantage of release time or financial help to boost your skills and career, all while working here.

Upcoming Events

- **Next Chapter Meeting – Save the Date**

Date: May 21st, 2025

Details: Our next chapter meeting is May 21st!

- **Classified School Employee Week (CSEW) 2025**

Date: May 18th – 24th, 2025

Details: Celebrate classified employees with our annual breakfast and BBQ. Event details are still being planned. Volunteers needed—contact Angelica Campos (campos.a@mccd.edu) or Maria Soto (soto.m@mccd.edu).



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>

