



## The 411 on 274

August 2025

### It's a Boy!

As a bit of a selfish insert—I just want to announce that my wife and I just discovered that we will be having a baby boy! He's due sometime in early January so stay tuned (and give me name ideas that my wife won't veto!).



## Labor Relations Representative Visit

Our CSEA Labor Relations Representative (LRR), Darwin Duncan ([dduncan@csea.com](mailto:dduncan@csea.com)), will be visiting our campus next month! Darwin will be available from 10am to 2pm on the following dates. **Note: The September 5th session is exclusively for CDC staff; all other dates are open to everyone.**

- **Friday, 9/5: CDC Conference Room (exclusively for CDC staff)**
- Wednesday, 9/24: AGIT-108
- Wednesday, 10/22: SCI-142
- Thursday, 11/20: LESH-309
- Thursday, 12/18: LRC-202

This is your chance to chat directly with Darwin about any union-related questions or concerns in a casual setting. Whether you're dealing with a workplace issue, curious about your rights, or just want to learn more about CSEA benefits, he's here to help advocate for you.

Common topics members might discuss during these drop-in sessions include:

- Grievance procedures for disputes or disciplinary matters.
- Workplace safety, harassment, or discussion of rights.
- How to get involved in union activities for stronger representation.

## New Member!

Please help me to welcome our newest member, Efren Diaz, to our union . Efren will be working at the CDC so if you see him be sure to say hi and welcome!

- **Efren Diaz** – Student Support Coordinator

## E-Board Spotlight

This month, I'd like to introduce the Vice President of our CSEA E-board here at Merced College – our very own Maintenance Mechanic, **Isaac Mock**! Isaac has served in multiple leadership roles on our E-board and he always brightens up a room when he walks in. He's been with the college for over 5 years now and continues to improve the lives of our members with the joy & encouragement that he spreads everywhere he goes! I'm proud to serve alongside him on the E-board



1. **What sparked your interest in joining the union, and what motivated you to take on a leadership role?**

*The union is huge in Indiana where I'm from. I know how important it is to have union reps who care about the employees and take pride in where they work. I was the CSEA president at Merced College when COVID hit and felt like I was able to make a difference. It's nice to be back in a leadership role.*

2. **Can you share a surprising challenge you've encountered as a union leader?**

*People wanting to stay anonymous. I think sometimes people think if they tell a union rep we take it*

*from there. I enjoy encouraging people to find ways to express their concerns and talk to their supervisors.*

**3. What are some simple ways new members can start getting involved with the union?**

*Come to the monthly meeting. It's the best way to connect and hear about what's going on.*

**4. Looking back to your first day on the job, what advice would you give your younger self?**

*Don't let anybody steal your joy!*

**5. What's the most valuable lesson you've learned from the workers you represent?**

*It's all about teamwork. We all play a role at the college and it's important that we recognize the various skills we all have.*

**6. How has a skill from your trade unexpectedly helped you in your role as a union leader?**

*As a Maintenance Mechanic I'm often on the side of fixing something. Daily I have to read work orders and follow up. As a union leader it's helpful to be able to just listen and know when following up is necessary.*

**7. What's a moment as a union leader that you're especially proud of?**

*Being able to use my "woo" to encourage my colleagues to participate more and have fun while doing it.*

**8. What's one key thing you wish all members understood about keeping our union strong?**

*We need to celebrate and appreciate where we work. When we feel we work in a place where we truly enjoy what we do we can more easily address the hard things. Having a positive outlook goes a long way.*

**9. How do you manage your union leadership duties alongside your other work or personal responsibilities?**

*I have always been one to connect with my colleagues so I feel like my role as the Vice President fits right in. There's not much additional work.*

**10. Outside of union work, what's a hobby or interest you enjoy, and how does it recharge you for this role?**

*I like smoking meat, especially for my family and friends. I have enjoyed bringing leftovers to work for my friends and colleagues to try. In my role I try to reach people on a personal level. Feeding them is a good place to start!*

## Special Message from CSEA:

(note: reach out to [memberbenefits@csea.com](mailto:memberbenefits@csea.com) to be on this email list)



## Save the Dates for Maintenance & Operations Academies in the South & North

We are thrilled to announce that our Maintenance & Operations Academies will be returning in two locations in Southern California & Northern California!

This year, we've designed an incredible program that not only enhances your skills but also boosts your career prospects.

**Improve Your Resume:** Learn techniques to make your application stand out.

**Learn Self-Promotion Strategies:** Discover how to effectively promote yourself for better opportunities within your district.

**Self-Defense Training:** Gain valuable self-defense techniques specifically tailored for those late-night shifts.

**In two days of training, you will earn two additional certificates:**

- Forklift Training
- Aerial Scissor Lift Certification

## Maintenance & Operations Academy South & North

### M&O Academy South

**Date:** September 13 & 14, 2025

**Location:** Santa Ana Unified School District

### M&O Academy North

**Date:** September 27 & 28, 2025

**Location:** CSEA Headquarters, San Jose

**Registration is not open yet but take a look below for some helpful details about registration:**

- The registration fee is \$50
- Registration includes a light breakfast, lunch and some amazing swag.
- Space is limited, so registration is based on a first-come, first-served basis. As soon as registration opens, you will receive another email notification from CSEA Member Benefits.

Mark your calendars for the training dates above and keep an eye on your email for open registration for this event. Don't miss out on this opportunity to elevate your career!

Stay tuned for more details!

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## Upcoming Events

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

**Date:** August 20<sup>th</sup>, 2025

**Details:** Our next chapter meeting is August 20<sup>th</sup> in LRC-202!

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](mailto: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>

