



TCNJ's Local 2364 is affiliated with the **Council of New Jersey State College Locals**, the bargaining agent for more than 7,000 professional staff, librarians and full-time, part-time and adjunct faculty at the nine state colleges/universities of New Jersey.

Dear TCNJ Campus Community,

Welcome to our Union local's monthly newsletter. We want to share information about what your Union is doing to help all of us create an inclusive and positive campus environment

Meeting Schedule

Our local generally meets on the third Wednesday of each month at 3:00pm. Our next meeting will be November 17 at 3:00 pm in SB 223 and via Zoom. A link will be sent out a few days before the meeting time.

AFT Gets Debt Relief for Thousands from Student Loans

In October the AFT settled a lawsuit, *Weingarten v. DeVos*, that it had brought against the Department of Education in 2019 on the Department's failure to deliver on its Public Service Loan Forgiveness program. The PSLF is supposed to guarantee that those who work in public service and consistently pay their monthly student loan bills will have the balance of their loans forgiven after 10 years. Since the program's inception in 2007, fewer than two percent of applicants have received the relief they were promised.

Under the settlement all PSLF applicants who were denied relief will have an opportunity to have their cases reviewed by the department. The Department of Education has created a [factsheet](#) on the program's overhaul.

The review will help more than a half-million public service workers—including teachers, nurses and firefighters—who had thought they were paying down their student debt for years achieve the actual reduction or elimination of their debt burden that they were promised. Under the settlement, if a borrower thinks that they qualify for a review they need to submit a [public service loan forgiveness application form](#) before October 31, 2022, to have their previously ineligible payments counted.

The AFT estimates that the program will help at least 200,000 AFT members. "The AFT is committed

to helping our members, our students and our communities thrive," said AFT President Randi Weingarten in announcing the settlement. See the full announcement of the settlement [on the AFT National website](#).

Helpful Note

On Facebook, there is a private group for Facebook members who are navigating the Public Service Loan Forgiveness (PSLF) Program. To find the group, you will need to type in Facebook's search engine "Public Service Loan Forgiveness Program Support (PSLF)." The private Facebook group requires you to join. The group allows members to post questions, responses, success stories, etc. The cover image is below.



Our Long Deferred Pay Raise

As many of you are aware, as well as agreeing to 12 furlough days last year, AFT members also agreed to defer our 2% pay raise in 2020 to help TCNJ and the State of New Jersey bear the extra financial burdens of Covid. The deferred pay raise for 10-month employees was due to kick in at the start of the 2021 academic year. Human Resources interpreted the start of the academic year to mean September, although for several years now we have been paid for the start of the academic year before we step foot on campus. This year our first paycheck was for July 31 onward, which of course, translates to fewer pay periods at the end of the academic year in June.

For the first time in recent TCNJFT history the President of our Local, Nancy Lasher, could not get Human Resources or President Foster to agree to the date for the start of this raise and had to threaten to initiate arbitration proceedings. With two days left to file, the TCNJ administration finally agreed that the raise should have started from our first paycheck of the academic year. Unfortunately, due to a new error at Human Resources, the deferred pay that we missed in our first three paychecks was not processed until November 5, when a special pay run was completed.

The TCNJFT has had a lot of reports of problems with pay, especially since the change to the Oracle Cloud system, so we've included some links in this month's newsletter on how to review your paycheck and to resources for those who are dealing with financial hardship.

Pay Raises for President Foster and Administrators: Sharing the Pain?

At the October 26 Board of Trustees' meeting the Board voted to give President Foster a 4.055% increase to her base salary, retroactive to July 1, 2021, and a one-time bonus of 9.46% of her pre-increase base. The Board resolution, distributed to attendees at the meeting, stated that the President's salary has remained unchanged since her last compensation adjustment, which took effect on July 1, 2019. That adjustment occurred when the Board voted at its February 25, 2020 meeting to increase President Foster's salary for the 2019-2020 fiscal year by 8.8% retroactive to July 1, 2019 and to award her a 7.4% bonus. When asked about the raises and bonuses, a spokesman for the Board of Trustees noted that "Prior to the Board's action last week, the president's total salary had not changed since July 1, 2019."

The Board also authorized a 5% increase in the salary pool available for non-unit employees for 2022, to be awarded based on merit.

When asked about raises and bonuses in light of the Huron work to find academic and administrative efficiencies, the spokesman said "Huron's work was to assist the college in identifying potential operational efficiencies. None of the roughly \$13.2 million in options identified by Huron as potential reallocation or expense savings would come from compensation. TCNJ has always been a people-centered institution,

and the college will continue to invest in attracting and retaining quality faculty, staff, and leaders."

How to Review your Paycheck

Several members have reported mistakes on their paychecks since we transitioned to the Oracle Cloud and ADP pay systems. As a result, we thought we would link to some useful information on reviewing and understanding your paycheck and whom to contact in Human Resources if you have questions:

- Payroll provides a [Pay Statement Description](#) listing the contents of a typical TCNJ paycheck. It can be useful to see what the fields in your paycheck mean.
- The AFT salary charts can be found [here](#) on the Council of State College Local's website. You can confirm that you are being paid the correct amount for your step and range. Note that the current relevant chart is the one that begins July 2020 (not the chart for July 2021) since we are a year behind because of our deferred raise.
- The [Payroll website](#) has other useful information including payroll schedules for 10- and 12-month employees and links to Oracle Cloud and ADP logins.
- Human Resources has a [Forms Index](#) if you need to find a form.
- Human Resources also has a [chart of services](#) and whom to contact with questions on specific issues.

Getting Back to Campus: Useful Resource #3—Financial.

Each newsletter, we hope to feature some of the available resources and services to those living and working on campus. Relevant to our efforts this month to focus on pay (and any discrepancies therein), we wanted to include a list of resources for those who may be experiencing financial hardship.

The Shop @ TCNJ

[The Shop @ TCNJ](#) is a food pantry open to ALL TCNJ community members. It is currently open 11:00am-4:00pm weekdays, and can be accessed outside of these hours by reaching out to care@tcnj.edu. You can access food, hygiene items, and cleaning supplies anytime, no questions asked. The Shop is located in Campus Town, on the north side of Building 700 on Campus Town Drive, next to the fitness center.

Employee Assistance Program

The [EAP](#) is provided at no cost to you as a benefit of working at The College of New Jersey. As an employee, you are entitled to up to three (3) counseling sessions. Adult household members are also eligible for EAP services.

Also available at no cost are a 30-minute legal and/or financial consultation with an attorney or financial professional, respectively. Employees may obtain consultations for any legal or financial issue, with the exception of those involving employer-related and tax-related issues.

AFT Grievance Process

The [grievance process](#) initiates legal proceedings on behalf of members, but keep in mind that it can only be used if a contractual violation has occurred.

Grievances are not the only way to resolve problems at work but can be used, in the event of a contract violation only, if other less complicated alternatives are not effective.

Because filing a grievance initiates a legal process, the various phases of which are spelled out in detail in our contract, it is important that everything be done exactly as prescribed in the particular contract. Again, you should take advantage of the experience of the Local and Council in filing and handling grievances if you think you may have one.

The NJ state Department of Human Services may also be of use

The Department has listings of [state and federally funded financial assistance programs](#) that may be useful.

Social Justice Committee Film Event: *The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks*

On December 13 at 2:00pm The TCNJFT's Social Justice Committee will be hosting a screening of *The Immortal Life of Henrietta Lacks*, the 2017 HBO movie. As well as the chance to watch this riveting story of the collision between ethics, law, race, and medicine, you will have the chance to chat with your AFT Social Justice Committee members and pick up some refreshments. For more information about the story and the film [here is the HBO website](#) on the film. Look for our email reminder at the end of the semester. We hope to see you there.

Staff Achievement Spotlight

At the Mid-Atlantic Association of College and University Housing Officers (MACUHO) Annual Conference, Residence Director Alex Wehrenberg (he/him/his) shared his presentation "Good Trouble: How to Be an Accomplice for Social Change." The purpose of Wehrenberg's presentation was two-fold: 1) he shared that he comes from many privileged communities and wants others to recognize their various levels of privilege in society, and 2) he wants to use privilege to both help amplify the voices of marginalized, or historically targeted, groups and educate and challenge others to do the same.

It's not enough to be "non-racist" or "non-sexist," as Dr Ibram X. Kendi shares. Anti-racism (-sexism, -oppression, etc.) is the only way to truly fight against these mindsets that have been systemic and omnipresent in our society. Dr. Annaliese Singh goes further to say, "You need the intentional mindset of 'Yep, this racism thing is everyone's problem-including mine, and I'm going to do something about it.'"

When challenging systemic oppression, Wehrenberg shared some steps: 1) find equity champions within your circles; 2) don't be afraid of mistakes, just apologize and move forward; 3) do the work yourself, as asking someone to continuously share their story can be tiring; 4) don't call yourself an "ally," as that should be an earned title ("accomplice" and "co-conspirator" have become the more sought after titles anyway, as they suggest active work being done).

Resources include <http://bit.ly/ANTIRACISMRE-SOURCES> and <https://www.whiteaccomplices.org/>. Feel free to reach out to [Alex](#) if you have any questions or want to learn more!

Contact Us

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