

CAPSule

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CalPERS Delays Release of Pension Database



CalPERS has delayed the launch of a pension database on its website pending the outcome of legislation promised by organizations representing member retirees. This promised legislation would limit what retiree data is made available by CalPERS for public consumption. That delay was quickly lambasted by the *Sacramento Bee* and other media outlets as an effort to weaken the California Public Records Act.

CalPERS has a legal duty to respond to the requests it receives for information. And it receives many such requests. The resulting information is then mentioned in news articles or posted online, usually in order to make a point about how much retiree benefits are costing taxpayers.

This information is provided by CalPERS in accordance with the California Public Records Act and established case law. CalPERS was prepared to take this a step further by publishing a searchable online database that would make certain information about ALL retirees available. CalPERS promises to keep private information such as date of birth, health information, and other confidential information about members not subject to release. CAPS will be monitoring this legislation and situation closely.



Raises for Some Retirees. Some CalPERS retirees will see a raise this month. Based on past work by CAPS and other labor groups, CalPERS pays two additional benefits to eligible retirees, the Purchasing Power Protection Allowance (PPPA) and the Cost-of-Living Adjustment (COLA). The COLA benefit is an annual cost-of-living increase and the PPPA is added protection against inflation. PPPA restores up to 75 percent (maximum) of the original purchasing power of the retirement allowance for those retirees who have state or school service, and up to 80 percent of the original purchasing power of retirement allowances for those retirees who have other public agency service.

Both benefits are calculated based on the annual Consumer Price Index. PPPA and COLA benefits can help stretch retirement income every month, but not everyone receives both of these benefits. CAPS is working to ensure that these programs survive for the benefit of current and future retirees. After retirement, increases are modest and retirement income must be stretched to ensure that it meets the needs of retirees throughout the golden years. For more information on these benefits, **go to www.calpers.org**.

What's Good for The Goose...

Courtesy of **Californians for Retirement Security**



We're not big fans of taking short-term snapshots of the investment returns of the state's retirement systems. But those who attack retirement security sure are -- critics like David Crane, Joe Nation, right-wing groups, and former Enron Executive John Arnold. They estimate "pension liability" on ultra-low rates of return -- despite the fact that CalPERS and CalSTRS have long-term histories of returns that beat the market. Maybe, just maybe, the unrelenting attacks on pensions will abate. We aren't holding our breath.

But what's good for the goose is good for the gander. So let the numbers speak for themselves: **CalPERS reported a 12.5 percent return on investments for the 12 months that ended June 30, 2013.**

CalPERS has COMPLETELY recovered from the great recession caused by Wall Street that crippled investors everywhere. CalPERS' 12.5 percent return is well above the Fund's discount rate of 7.5 percent. That's the long-term return required to meet current and future obligations. CalPERS' 20-year investment return is 7.6 percent, while its return since 1988 is 8.5 percent. According to CalPERS Chief Investment Officer: *"When things got rough we didn't panic. We stuck with our exposure to growth assets and applied the lessons we learned from the past. The numbers show us that our approach is working."*

CalSTRS--which manages the retirement fund for teachers--returned 13.45 percent for calendar year 2012. Buddy Magor, President of the Chula Vista Police Officers Association, said it well in the *San Diego Union Tribune*:

"For more than five years, pensions have been used by critics as the scapegoat for all of government's budget problems. But now that the California Public Employees' Retirement System (CalPERS) and other pension systems are healthy and yielding double-digit returns, they're not getting an equal share of positive attention."

Californians for Retirement Security is a coalition of more than 1.5 million Californians representing **public employees and retirees... www.letstalkpensions.com**.

California State Scientists ... Knowledge, Innovation, Protection

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Third Quarter CAPS Grants

Every quarter for the last 20-plus years, CAPS has proudly awarded \$300 cash grants to CAPS members. The purpose is to promote professional development because so many state departments don't. Any member—including YOU—can apply for a CAPS grant via the CAPS webpage: www.capsScientists.org. Congratulations to the third quarter grant recipients for 2013:

 **Associate State Archeologist Scott Greene** of Parks and Recreation in Kings Beach will use his grant to offset travel costs to present scientific findings in support of the nomination of an archaeological site within Topanga State Park. He will make the presentation at the annual meeting of the Society of California Archeology in Visalia.

 **Research Scientist III Wenhao Chen** of Public Health in Richmond will use his grant to offset costs of attending the annual conference of the American Society for Heating, Refrigeration & Air Conditioning Engineers in Seattle. Balancing public health with reductions of energy and resource use will be addressed.

 **Research Scientist Yvette Nonato** of Pesticide Regulation in Sacramento will use her grant to present a poster on a recently published article "Inhalation of Phosphine Gas following a Fire Associated with Fumigation of Processed Pistachio Nuts" at the 2013 North American Agricultural Safety Summit in Minneapolis during September 2013.

 **Public Health Microbiologist II** Joselita Joaquin of the Microbial Diseases Section at the Richmond campus will use her grant to pay for advanced molecular coursework at Cal State Eastbay to improve knowledge and skills in molecular methods.

Note: the CAPS Grant program is independent from the two days of professional development earned by every state scientist annually in accordance with Section 15.3 (G) of the CAPS MOU.

Where Are They Now?



Emily Kalvass received a \$500 CAPS Dependent Scholarship in June 2000. "I definitely remember that moment and being very excited to have received it, in order to help with the costs of college," Emily tells CAPS. "I was very influenced by my Dad growing up and I thought he had a great job, as he was able to go diving in the ocean for work. He is a biologist for the California Department of Fish and Wildlife in Fort Bragg, CA. I consider him one of the smartest people I know!"

After winning the scholarship, Emily was inspired to take science courses at UC Davis and really enjoyed biology. She also worked in a laboratory at the Center for Comparative Medicine at UC Davis. Though she began with a major in biology, Emily decided she wanted to focus more on working directly with people, and in 2003 graduated with a degree in psychology with a biology emphasis.

After graduation, Emily became interested in a career in chiropractic medicine, following her own personal experience with a back injury acquired through playing competitive soccer. She pursued a Doctor of Chiropractic degree through Palmer West College of Chiropractic in San Jose, CA. There she studied the basic sciences like anatomy, neuroanatomy, chemistry, microbiology, pathology and physiology; in her third year, she used her hands-on skills to work out of a community clinic. Emily also traveled to Vietnam for a clinic abroad trip, where she treated hundreds of Vietnamese people who were in dire need of care.

Since 2009, Emily has enjoyed working in a private practice in midtown Sacramento. In her spare time she works with a company doing behavioral therapy for children with autism. "I enjoy working with people from all walks of life," she says. "It has been amazing to be able to help people recover from serious injuries, pain and drastically improve their lives in terms of form and function. I could never have done it without a solid science education."

We are pleased that a **CAPS Dependent Scholarship** helped Emily achieve her dreams. Stay tuned for more updates on past scholarship winners!

★ 2013 Dependent Scholarship Winners ★

CAPS has awarded a \$500 scholarship to dependents of 15 CAPS members in support of their college education. These lucky 15 were among the several dozen applicants for this year's scholarship program. CAPS will keep 2013 applications on file for next year's drawing. Thanks to everyone who participated! NOTE: These scholarships are not funded by dues or fees from state scientists.



Elliot Schoenig, son of CAPS member Steve Schoenig (Fish and Wildlife), is majoring in ecology and evolution at UC Santa Cruz and will graduate in 2017.

Maya Angelica Hernandez, daughter of member Richard Hernandez (Water Resources), is majoring in economics and computer science at UC Berkeley and will graduate in 2017.



Richard Uyehara, son of member Richard Uyehara (Food and Agriculture), is majoring in mechanical engineering at CSU Long Beach and will graduate in 2015.

Daniel Cheung, son of member Wendy Cheung (Public Health), is majoring in industrial design at CSU Long Beach and will graduate in 2017.



Natalie Decio, daughter of member Ken Decio (CalRecycle), is majoring in liberal arts at American River College and will graduate in 2016.

Nathan Lentz, son of member David Lentz (Fish and Wildlife), is majoring in electrical engineering at Cal Poly San Luis Obispo and will graduate in 2016.



Elizabeth Arikawa, daughter of member Catherine Sullivan (Energy Commission), is majoring in computer science at UC Merced and will graduate in 2017.

Tanner Schaefer, son of member Robert Schaefer (Fish and Wildlife), is majoring in physics at UC Davis and will graduate in 2016.



Julia Hoffman, daughter of member Roberta Welling (OEHHA), is majoring in physics at Reed College in Portland, Oregon and will graduate in 2016.

Jason Ramos, son of member Leandro Ramos Jr. (Public Health), is majoring in social and behavioral sciences at CSU Northridge and will graduate in 2015.



AnnaMaria Boullion, daughter of member Thomas Boullion (Water Resources), is majoring in psychology at Shasta College and will graduate in 2015.

Rowan Frankenbach, son of member Rolf Frankenbach (DWR), is majoring in history at UC Santa Cruz and will graduate in 2016.



Julia Kerbs, daughter of member Karen Randles (OEHHA), is majoring in political economy at Georgetown University and will graduate in 2017.

Edgar W. Roberts IV, son of member Edgar W. Roberts III (Fish and Wildlife), is majoring in business at College of the Redwoods and will graduate in 2015.



Jacob Warren Barton, son of member David Barton (Corrections), is majoring in safety administration at Eastern Kentucky University and will graduate in 2016.

Encapsulations...

Working from Home



Recognizing the lack of pay increases for state employees, a media representative for Governor Brown's Department of Human Resources recently told the *Sacramento Bee*: "The Administration is well aware of this issue, and we're tackling the problem head-on." That includes, she said, upgrading the state's job-search website, changing state culture to offer more life-work balance perks like telecommuting, and developing leadership succession plans at each department. The reality for many state scientists has been very different.

Meaningful succession plans are few, and telecommute plans are too often denied. In fact, CAPS recently filed a grievance with the Department of Toxic Substances Control demanding that they approve *existing* telecommute plans. The Department of General Services doesn't like telecommute plans of any kind. Nonetheless, CAPS contract language helps ensure that scientists will get a fair hearing where a telecommute arrangement makes sense. If it's unfairly denied, contact your nearest CAPS office.

CAPS Supports Fee Increase For OSPR



CAPS recently took on virtually the entire oil industry in the state legislature over the per barrel fee that supports the Department of Fish & Wildlife's Office of Spill Prevention and Response. The fee is currently 6.5 cents a barrel, but state law will allow it drop to 5 cents on January 1, 2015. If this level of funding remains in place for 2015, it would likely mean severe budget cuts to the state's spill prevention budget. To prevent that, Assembly Member Wesley Chesbro proposed legislation

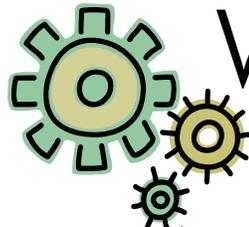
to increase the fee to 8 cents in 2015 and index it to inflation. Due to intense oil company lobbying (sprinkled with more than a little disinformation), the bill garnered only 27 votes of the required 41 votes. CAPS legislative advocates lobbied intensely in favor of the bill, and ultimately negotiated an acceptable agreement -- the fee will be 7 cents per barrel effective 2015, it will not be indexed, and the sunset on the fee will be removed. CAPS may revisit the issue next year with another fee increase proposal if the 7 cent fee does not fund **OSPR's** current statutory responsibilities. This is a similar scenario to what played out in 2011 when the last fee increase bill (AB 1112) was on the Senate floor.

CAPS Steps Up for Pesticide Regulation



Protecting the turf of the Department of Pesticide Regulation is among the many actions CAPS pushed in the 2013-2014 state budget. CAPS supported the Legislature's Budget Conference Committee's approval of \$788,000 for five additional positions at DPR to "improve the assessment of pesticides in the environment including impacts on pollinators (bees)." Unfortunately, the Assembly attempted to add 'trailer bill' language to this item that sought to extend pesticide oversight to local governments. That could have curbed DPR's authority and create a hodgepodge

of local pesticide enforcement programs. CAPS acted decisively to oppose the language and made clear that "with over 200 scientists and an \$81 million budget, only DPR has the scientific expertise and resources needed to protect human health and the environment."



Working **HARD** AT THIS

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By David Miller, President

I recently received this from a hard working state scientist: *"I have only worked four years as a state scientist and I am just sick and tired of all the CAPS pay inequality DRAMA. I love my job and therefore I don't want to leave, but there are other jobs with local cities, counties, and consulting firms that make at least 30% more than State Scientists."*

She made several positive suggestions on how best to achieve salary parity. But what really struck me about the message was its sincerity--and frustration. I provided a personal response -- everyone who writes gets one -- but it's hard to put into words the amount of hard work everyone has put in to get this done. EVERYONE includes the CAPS Bargaining Team, CAPS directors, staff, local reps and other volunteers.

This includes many of you too. We asked you to write a letter to Governor Brown and copy it to your elected state lawmakers and your managers. Over 800 of you responded so far. I have read many of those letters. They are a testament to the dedication and frustration of a remarkable group of scientific professionals whose patience has worn thin.

We asked you to watch the video from the June 12 bargaining session. Nearly 700 of you have done that. This is important because it transports you right into the bargaining session. You can see state scientists -- just like you -- make the case for salary equity. It is a strong and emotional one delivered by state scientists who dedicate their professional lives to state service, and who feel the pain of being left behind. I know. I am one of them.

While I'm on the subject, let me thank those who participated: Cassandra McQuaid and Jan Lidgard, both Public Health Microbiologists from the Richmond campus; Environmental Scientists Jeremiah Puget and Jon Marshack of

the Water Boards and Environmental Scientist David Rist of Toxics in Berkeley. If you haven't seen these videos, it's well worth your time. These scientists answered our call for help at the bargaining table, and they worked hard to present the best case on your behalf. Ironically, not long after making her presentation, Ms. McQuaid took a job as a microbiologist in San Francisco immediately paying 30% more. Who can blame her? That's a retention problem in anyone's book.

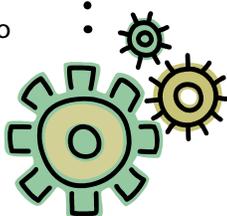
Yet in spite of all the hard work, the salary inequity remains. It is frustrating, especially when the state budget is finally in surplus, and Governor Brown has recognized the value of other state employees who work on the state water project with immediate raises of up to nearly 38%. Apparently the recruitment and retention issues with that small group of state employees are important to prompt action by Governor Brown. But not ours, at least not yet.

Predictably, SEIU Local 1000 was early to settle and for what I consider to be a modest amount:

4.5% over three years. That contract was ratified overwhelmingly by their members, who apparently are satisfied with a modest catch-up after years of pay cuts. We watch what other groups do, but it doesn't limit the ambitions of our team. We never assumed Governor Brown would meet our demands without a fight, and we clearly now have that. The contract we need includes salary equity—NOW!

I can't predict when Governor Brown will authorize his negotiators to meet our salary needs. Regardless, the CAPS Bargaining Team is determined to see it done this year. Everyone is working hard to get it done. And while we hear sympathetic words from the Governor's representatives at Cal HR, it takes more than kind words. It takes money. That's the message for Governor Brown and his representatives from CalHR and the Department of Finance. This could be a long, hot summer.

"...the CAPS Bargaining Team is determined to see it done this year."





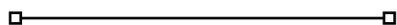
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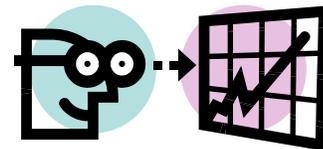
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Annual Age-Related CAPS Group Policy Insurance Premiums Adjustment



Some CAPS members who have insurance through the CAPS group plan with The Standard Insurance Company will see an increase in insurance premium deductions effective with their pay warrants received at the end of July (August 1 warrants for retired CAPS members).

Employees who had their 30th, 35th, 40th, 45th, 50th, 55th or 60th birthday since July 1, 2012 will see an age-related premium increase as specified in plan brochures and other materials. (Please note that The Standard Insurance Company does not send individual letters notifying affected individuals of these increases.)

If you are interested in learning more about reduced rate insurance through the CAPS group plan, or in obtaining a quote on insurance coverage you might be interested in, please visit the CAPS insurance information web page at: <http://www.capsScientists.org/Benefits/insurance.htm>.