

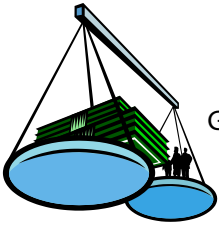
CAPSule

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January 2014, Issue #14-01

Salary Equity NOW!



Governor Brown's negotiators hear it every time they meet with the CAPS Bargaining Team: Salary Equity NOW!

Your CAPS Bargaining Team refuses to budge from its demand for full salary equity for ALL state scientists. Yet there is still no final agreement with Governor Brown's negotiators. That's because CAPS continues to say NO to Governor Brown's salary offer: a 2% general salary increase effective July 1, 2014 in the event a financial "trigger" is met, plus a 2.5% general salary increase on July 1, 2015.

CAPS' demand for salary equity received a boost in the state budget when the Governor's Department of Finance inserted language and funding for the Like Pay Like Work decision CAPS won in 2008. That budget item is by law limited in application to state scientific supervisors. The companion item is being firmly pushed by CAPS at the bargaining table.

There was also recent validation for the long-standing demand by CAPS in the *Sacramento Bee*, which has long been critical of state employees in any proposal to increase compensation. *"The union took encouragement last week from a sentence in Brown's 2014-15 budget proposal that sets aside money for 'salary parity and inequity issues...that still doesn't mean big raises for the rank and file, but equity increases at the top adds leverage to the argument that workers farther down the org chart should get a taste, too. That's the scientists' position, anyway. We'll see if Jerry Brown agrees."*

CAPS never ceases to point out the negative impact of the wide salary gap state scientists have with counterparts in local government, and with state environmental engineers, for whom the work is comparable. The CAPS Team insisted that salary equity must be realized before any final agreement is reached.

Vacation Buy Out. One of the tentative agreements previously reached would allow state departments to cash out up to 20 hours of accrued vacation or annual leave annually based on availability of funds in that department. However, this and all tentative agreements would be effective only upon ratification of an overall agreement. That full and final agreement is still pending, and is dependent almost entirely on the state making a satisfactory salary proposal.

Professional Conferences. During the last meeting with Cal HR on January 17, CAPS made a new proposal for increasing scientists' opportunities to attend professional seminars and conferences. CAPS proposed that every state scientist be entitled to attend up to three professional development opportunities annually. Such requests would require a prompt written response and could not be unreasonably denied. The state took the proposal under review.



Salary Survey. CalHR proposed to modify the joint salary survey it conducts with CAPS. CAPS favors improving the salary survey, but also demands that something be DONE about the wide salary gaps that result from doing it. There is little use to calculating salary lags when nothing is ever done to close the ever widening gaps. That survey consistently shows lags between 30% and 40% for state scientists. The differential between state scientists and state engineers is even greater! Details can be found on the CAPS webpage: www.capsscientist.org.



The CAPS Team is scheduled to meet next with state management on February 6 & 7.

California State Scientists ... Knowledge, Innovation, Protection

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CalPERS Opens Long-Term Care Plan



CalPERS has opened its Long-Term Care (LTC) Program to new applicants. It proposes “a new generation of LTC products designed to meet individual needs.” The program is available to all current California public employees, retirees, their spouses, parents, parents-in-law, adult children and adult siblings, between the ages of 18 and 79. California public employees include those employed by the State of California and all state departments, state assembly and senate, judicial systems, school districts, cities, counties and special districts.

This is the first time since 2008 that CalPERS is accepting LTC applications, and is the beginning of continuous open enrollment, with no closing date. The last CalPERS LTC plan

Features of the new plan:

- » Coverage to better suit members’ needs and budgets
- » Options to help keep pace with the rising costs of receiving long-term care
- » Benefits that make it easier to receive home care or care outside the United States

suffered several steep premium increases and ultimately was closed to new subscribers. CalPERS says that the new LTC Program is designed to provide innovative coverage with the flexibility to meet a variety of participants’ needs. CAPS urges members interested in long-term care to evaluate this plan as well as other options readily available on the open market.

Interested applicants can download an application kit and information on the Open Application process by going to the CalPERS Long-Term Care Page at www.calpers.ca.gov and clicking on the link to the Long-Term Care website. You may also request a kit by calling (800) 908-9119. CalPERS is the largest public pension fund

in the U.S., with more than \$276 billion in assets. CalPERS administers the Long-Term Care Program for more than 145,000 participants. The Long-Term Care Fund has more than \$3.7 billion in assets.

Defer Leave Credits Upon Retirement

When you retire, you have one last chance to contribute to your Savings Plus account(s) and thus to defer income and reduce taxes. Transferring your unused accumulated leave credits (Lump Sum Pay) into your Savings Plus account(s) allows you to defer taxes and make one final contribution towards your retirement. When you are ready to start your payout options — you are not required to start taking your money until you are 70 ½ — Savings Plus payout options are flexible. Generally, if you separate service on or after November 1, you may use your separation pay to defer contributions into the plan for the following tax year to maximize the benefit to your Savings Plus account. You may play “catch-up” to make up for the previous years you didn’t contribute the maximum amount allowed to your 457 plan. So you can typically use your separation pay at retirement with catch-up to maximize your deferral.



To review the Traditional Catch-Up Guide and see if you qualify, log on to the Savings Plus website at www.savingsplusnow.com or call the Savings Plus Service Center at **(855) 616-4SPN (4776)**. **After you retire**, Savings Plus has a licensed retirement specialist through Aon Hewitt Financial to assist you. Advisors and Financial Specialists are available by phone or face-to-face for consultation.

Important Notes: When you open a new account, your investments are deposited into the Asset Allocation Fund-Moderate until you request a different fund option. If you already have an account, your cashable leave credits will be deposited into the investment choices you have on file. You may change your investment selection at any time online or over the phone.

All For One...

By David Miller, President

I believe we could soon accomplish something really special: Salary Equity NOW!

By WE, I mean all of us, all state scientists. You know, the ones who do the important work quietly, with excellence and humility. We don't go to extremes. We avoid ugly outbursts that reflect badly on all of us.

Together, we are the Team that has made the case for a salary equity wage package that goes far beyond what most employee groups have already agreed to: 4.5% over three years – the SEIU model.

CAPS has been consistent on the need for salary equity – that means no less than 30% for ALL state scientists. Our joint salary survey with CalHR shows a salary lag of between 30% and 42%; the differential with engineers ranges from 38% to 50%.

One thing is always constant: we need Governor Brown to say yes. A salary increase for ANY state scientist in ANY amount by law requires agreement from Governor Brown. That is why having him propose to fund the Like Pay for Like Work decision in his budget proposal for 2014-2015 is so important. During each of the last two years, our legislative advocates – with your help – convinced state lawmakers to amend the state budget and add funding for this item because Governor Brown would not. Prior to adoption of the state budget during each of the last two years, Governor Brown cajoled legislators into dropping our budget item, just as he did for billions of other appropriations. So it wasn't just our money, but all kinds of important projects that lost out-- education, aid for the aged and disabled, etc. All because we faced the worst series of state budget deficits in history.

Times have changed. Proposition 30 with its temporary tax increase was enacted by the voters, and CAPS strongly supported it. That and a strengthening economy have turned the state budget from red ink to black. Governor Brown has responded by recognizing the need to pay state scientist supervisors and managers a competitive wage. We don't yet know how much or to whom it applies. We do know it's a monumental shift in the position of this administration, and that's HUGE.

Salary equity for rank-and-file state scientists must correspond with any raises for supervisors and managers.

If we reach agreement at the bargaining table, salary equity must be part of it.

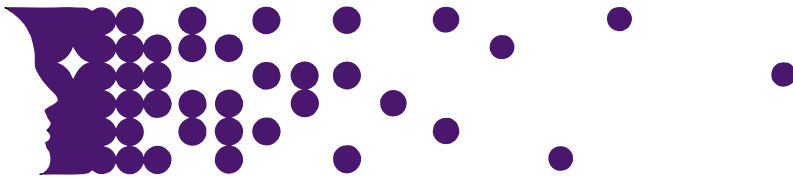
Please be patient. All of this must correspond with the state budget process, and that is just getting under way. The Governor's January budget proposal is subject to review and approval in both the state Assembly and Senate. The state Legislature is required to adopt a budget no later than June 15. I don't expect it any earlier than that. Funding for a collective bargaining agreement likewise must pass muster in the state legislature. For this to happen, we will need to speak with ONEVOICE. CAPS will be there every step of the way to guide this effort, as we have all along.

“...it's a monumental shift in the position of this administration, and that's HUGE.”

For those of you who want to assign blame because it hasn't happened yet, please think again. As your exclusive bargaining representative on all matters related to pay and benefits, I believe we have consistently held out on the right issues for the full amount, as long as possible. We have communicated with you every step of the way. When we needed your help communicating with state officials, state lawmakers and the Governor, you provided it. When we needed support at the bargaining table, you provided it. When we reached tentative agreements in the past – unsatisfactory as some of them have been – you made the final decision. Every CAPS member got the chance to cast a vote.

All For One And One For ALL! Salary Equity Now!





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First Quarter CAPS Grants


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CAPS proudly awards a quarterly cash grant of \$300 to each of four CAPS members. The purpose is to promote professional development because state departments do too little for too few. The CAPS Grants program has been in continuous operation for over 20 years. *ANY CAPS member can apply for a CAPS grant via the CAPS webpage: www.capsscscientist.org.* Congratulations to the first quarter grant recipients for 2014:

 **Research Scientist III Valorie Eckert** of the Department of Public Health in Sacramento will use her grant to attend the 2014 Women's Policy Summit. For her the Summit will focus on gender and health disparities, pertinent to the work she does in HIV/AIDS surveillance and epidemiology. Access to prevention, testing and care are cornerstones to reducing HIV transmission and ensuring quality of life among women who live with HIV/AIDS in California.

 **Environmental Scientist Alexis Frangis** of the Department of Parks and Recreation in Ventura will use her grant to attend the Annual Western Snowy Plover Rangelwide Meeting in San Diego, and the Annual California Least Tern Information and Coordination Meeting in Carlsbad, both during January 2014. Frangis actively manages both species on state beaches, conducting nesting season monitoring and ensuring protection of nesting areas.

 **Public Health Microbiologist II Kara Lee Pham** of the Department of Public Health in Richmond will use her grant to offset the costs of attending the UC Davis 32nd Annual Infectious Diseases Conference in Sacramento during January where she will receive an update regarding infectious diseases.

 **Associate Hazardous Materials Specialist (AHMS) Mark M. Yang** of the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation in Corcoran will use his grant to cover lodging expenses for the 25th Annual Continue Challenge Hazardous Materials Emergency Response Workshop in Sacramento during September 2014. The workshop offered the latest in biological sampling, handling small spills and keeping up with the chemistry of hazardous materials.

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.