

CAPSule

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April 2017, Issue #17-04

CalHR Makes New Reclass Proposals

CalHR recently released new proposals to reclassify state scientists. One addresses the Research Scientist series, and the other addresses "Energy Specialist." The Energy Specialist proposal is divided between rank-and-file and "excluded" employees (that means supervisors and managers who are excluded from bargaining).

CAPS' initial reply to these CalHR proposals can be summarized as follows: FATAL FLAWS ARE EVIDENT IN EACH OF THEM!

CAPS has posted the proposals and its comments on the web page: <http://capsscientists.org>.

There's Still Time for Changes. Both proposals from CalHR are inconsistent in several critical areas with the results CAPS jointly developed with CalHR in 2015. There are no doubt other concerns about these proposals that need to be addressed. That's where **YOU** and the CAPS Subject Matter Experts come in. So please feel free to scrutinize these proposals and make comments.

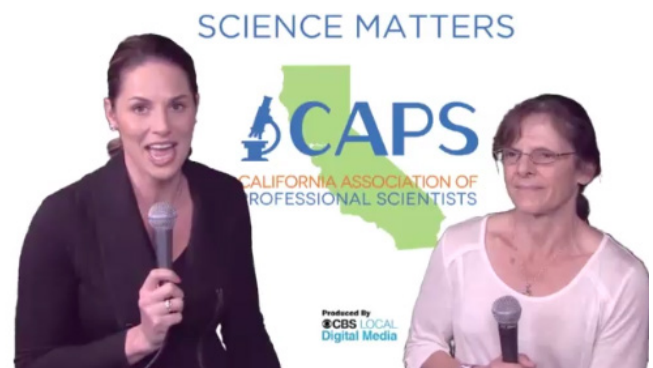
SPB Makes the Final Decision. CalHR can't implement anything unilaterally. The agency ultimately responsible for adopting **all** revisions to state classifications is the State Personnel Board, a constitutional agency. The SPB staff has requested more information from CalHR before they can be evaluated fully. The SPB has assured us that, in the meantime, that Board will NOT consider adopting any changes proposed by CalHR.

The CAPS Bargaining Team is hoping to resume a **bilateral** process to review these classification revisions as well as the others affecting State Scientists in the coming weeks. And while **these** proposals are unacceptable, the fact that CalHR is now churning out new stuff may open the door for what could be more productive discussions in the future, **including a salary review**.

Other Classification Series are Important Too!! No word yet on proposals for the several other classification iterations we are expecting: **Lab Scientist, Industrial Hygienist, Hazardous Materials Scientists, Heritage Scientist, Earth Scientist, Health Physicist and any continuing classes**. We hope to prompt CalHR to speed up this effort and to include CAPS (including our subject matter experts) in the development process in a meaningful way.

If you have any comments or questions, please feel free to send them to CAPS: caps@capsscientists.org.

CAPS MEDIA PROGRAM SPOTLIGHT



As part of the CAPS media program, CBS has been rotating six audio spots on six Sacramento radio stations and on KCBS in San Francisco and KNX in Los Angeles. The spots feature CAPS members like Beverley Anderson-Abbs (right). Beverley's video interview with Sacramento King's court reporter and sports talk show host Kayte Christensen (left) are also running in rotation on CBS local news websites in the three markets. Read more at calscientists.org!

Science Matters. California State Scientists

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CAPS Local Reps and Leaders Meet In Sacramento April 15 for Rep Training. THANKS to one and all for sacrificing their Saturday for a worthy cause: SERVICE to fellow CAPS Members. Science Matters.

Public Service Loan Forgiveness Program

Working for the government sometimes has its perks. As a state employee, you may qualify to have some of your student loan debts forgiven by the federal government. The Public Service Loan Forgiveness (PSLF) Program, sponsored by the Federal Student Aid Office, forgives the remaining balance of recipients' Direct Loans after they have made at least 120 qualifying monthly payments while working full-time for an eligible employer.

Do YOU qualify? Successful applicants must have received a federal student loan under the William D. Ford Federal Direct Loan Program. Applicants must be employed full-time for a government organization (at any level: federal, **state**, local, or tribal); or for a 501 (c)(3). The employment does not have to be continuous or consecutive.

Successful applicants can't be employed by a labor union, political organization, for-profit organization, or a non-profit that is not a 501(c)(3). Union membership isn't disqualifying, however.

Other Federal Student Loan Programs include the Federal Family Education Loan or Federal Perkins Loans, which are ineligible for this program. Applicants may be able to become eligible if they consolidate those other loan types into a Direct Consolidation Loan. However, consolidating those loans resets the clock on those 120 monthly payments, as the applicant must now make 120 qualifying monthly payments on the Direct Consolidation Loan to be eligible to take part in the PSLF Program.

Applicants must have made 120 qualifying monthly payments after October 1, 2007. Qualifying monthly payments are made:



- While you are in "repayment" (payments made while your loans are in an "in-school" or "grace" status, or in a "deferment");
- For the full amount due (partial payments don't count);
- As separate monthly payments (lump sum payments or advance payments for future months only count as one large payment);
- No later than 15 days after the due date (no late payments); and
- While the recipient is employed full-time by a qualifying employer (you have to have worked full-time for a qualifying employer or employers for at least a sum of **10 years** while paying off these loans to qualify).

NOTE: The qualifying monthly payments **do not need to be consecutive**. It takes at least **10 years** of on-time, full-amount loan payment to qualify for the PSLF Program. Individuals may submit an application once they have made at least 120 qualifying monthly payments. The application will officially be available prior to October 2017, the date when the first borrowers would become eligible for the program.

For more information, or to check if **you're** on the right track to loan forgiveness, visit: <https://studentaid.ed.gov/sa/repay-loans/forgiveness-cancellation/public-service>.

SCIENCE MATTERS!

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE from the MARCH FOR SCIENCE on APRIL 22, 2017

By Patty Velez, CAPS President



Editor's Note: These remarks were delivered by Patty Velez to the crowd at Sacramento's March for Science, where an estimated 400 CAPS members, family members and nearly 20,000 others attended.

"I'm Patty Velez, President of the California Association of Professional Scientists.

CAPS represents over thirty-five-hundred dedicated state scientists who protect public health; protect the water you drink; the air you breathe; the food you eat; and guard California's 50 billion dollar agriculture and farming industries and guard our environment.

We are here today to stand up for science; to stand up for truth. Not with harsh words that will close minds, but with a burning conviction that will open eyes. Not with an air of self-importance that turns serious debate into personal argument, but with a humble understanding that science must inform our politics and our public policy.

History is marred by moments when scientists and science have become targets. Galileo published evidence that the Earth circles the Sun, challenging centuries of thinking that the world is at the center of the universe. HIS REWARD: A life sentence under house arrest.

Less than 100 years ago, politics trumped science when Russia rejected genetics and natural selection in the 1920s. They embraced claims that, for example, weeds could spontaneously mutate into wheat.

Because the country was struggling with widespread famine that called communism into question, the pseudo-scientific theories were attractive to Joseph Stalin. Scientists who disagreed were punished.

More than 3,000 mainstream biologists were fired, imprisoned or executed for contesting the state's official position, even as the Russian food crisis deepened. The nation's political campaign against science didn't formally end until 1964. It did untold damage to the nation's agricultural economy for decades.

Now we confront another challenging moment for science. Another moment when those in power are threatening scientists and their findings.

But this time, instead of ordering beatings, they control budgets. This time, instead of locking up scientists, they want to erase scientific research. This time, they would rather ignore the facts and continue business as usual, even if it pollutes our air, fouls our water, and threatens our collective future. What can we do?

I say that we can again look to science for an answer. Scientists engage with the world. They seek answers to questions, not merely to solve them, but to move mankind forward.

We too must engage. You've engaged today by marching to the Capitol.

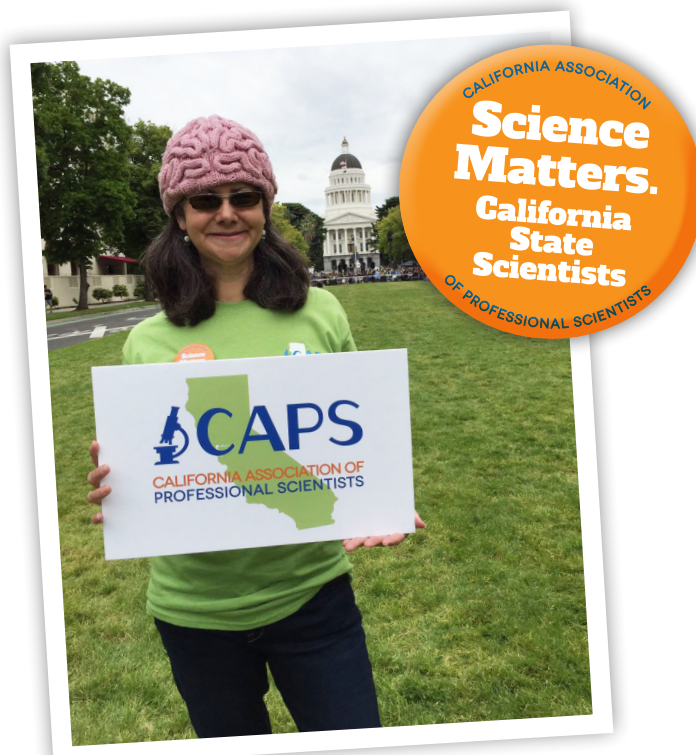
Now, will you walk to your neighborhood polling place and engage on Election Day?

*"Scientists engage
with the world.
They seek answers
to questions, not
merely to solve
them, but to move
mankind forward."*

You've engaged today by carrying signs that you've made. Now, will you carry the defense of science into the voting booth?

Will you make a difference by writing to your elected representatives and telling them that you support funding for science?

So on this day, on Earth Day, we recommit to defending the truth. We join with hundreds of thousands of like-minded marchers in our state, our nation and around the world in declaring a simple truth: **SCIENCE MATTERS.**"





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CAPS Grants Awarded

The CAPS Benefits Committee proudly awards FOUR \$400 professional development grants to CAPS members each quarter. This practice started many years ago because state departments don't adequately fund State Scientists' professional development. Grants awarded for the **SECOND** quarter of 2017 are listed below. **ANY** CAPS member can apply for a CAPS grant via the CAPS webpage: www.capsscientists.org.



Environmental Scientist Terri Weist of the Department of Fish and Wildlife in Graegle will use her grant to offset the costs of attending the annual meeting of the Western Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies 12th Western States Deer and Elk Workshop in Sun Valley, Idaho during May, 2017.



Associate State Archaeologist Chris Kimsey of the Department of Parks and Recreation will use his grant to offset the cost of attending the Society for California Archaeological meetings where he is presenting a paper on the "Lithic Technology During the Archaic-Emergent Transition."



Research Scientist III Dulce M. Bustamante-Zamora of CDPH in Richmond will use her grant to offset the costs of publishing a paper on the race/ethnic disparities in education and poverty levels for all California cities, using publicly available data. She will travel to Boise, Idaho, to participate in the Council of State and Territorial Epidemiologist meeting during June, 2017.



Environmental Scientist Sara Holm of CDFW Rancho Cordova will use her grant to offset the costs of attending the annual meeting of the Western Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies 12th Western States Deer and Elk Workshop in Sun Valley, Idaho during May, 2017.

MARCH FOR SCIENCE ON APRIL 22, 2017!

April 22, 2017 marked one of the best-attended Earth Days worldwide since its inception in 1970. This particular Earth Day was attended by scientists and science-enthusiasts advocating for fact-based policymaking. The organizers of the worldwide March for Science identified 610 Satellite Marches that took place world-wide across all seven continents (Antarctica included!). Each March had one central message: **SCIENCE MATTERS!**

State Scientists attended marches across the state, a united sea of green and blue advocating CAPS' message with branded signs, banners, buttons, t-shirts and lanyards.

CAPS members marched alongside researchers from colleges and universities, federally-employed scientists, engineers, and other concerned citizens in large crowds everywhere. CAPS assisted members and the public with signs that were "science positive and apolitical" as the March was a bipartisan demonstration advocating for science.



Fresno



Monterey



San Diego



Los Angeles



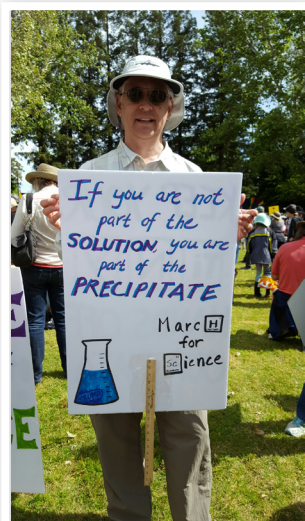
Sacramento



San Francisco

CONTINUED ON REVERSE »

MARCH FOR SCIENCE ON APRIL 22, 2017!



CAPS Booth at the Sacramento March



Sr. ES Specialists Glenn Forman and Christine Papagni in Berkeley



Santa Cruz



Riverside



Future Scientist Thomasina Dominiguez at the Sacramento March



View the entire CAPS March for Science photo album and more at www.capsscientists.org!