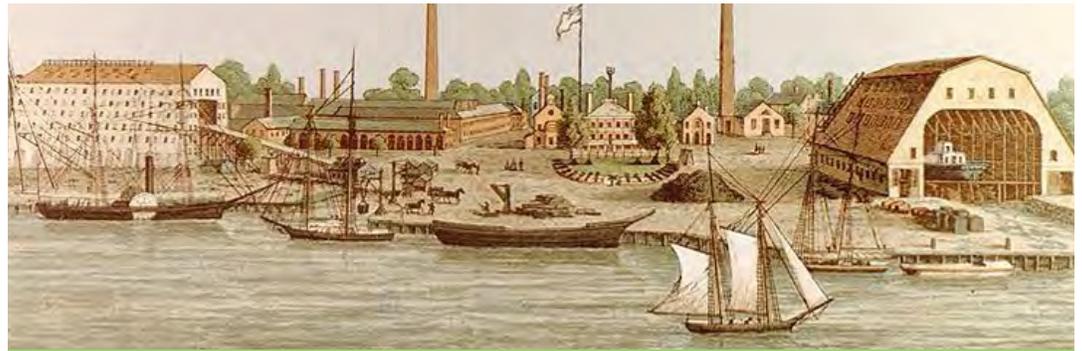




C A P S U N I E



Lessons for CAPS from the 19th Century

As CAPS and fellow public employee unions confront attacks and lawsuits from anti-labor billionaires, it's helpful to step back and realize that for most of our nation's history, groups like ours gained ground with no organizing rights at all.

Government workers organized at the U.S. Navy Shipyard in the 1830s – nearly 200 years ago – to reduce the sun-up to sun-down workday, increase pay, and allow employees to eat lunch on the premises.

Since then, firefighters, teachers, sanitation workers, hospital staff, railroad workers, postal employees, printers, park laborers, public golf course caddies, gravediggers, construction workers, and other public employees have collectively acted to improve wages and working conditions, armed with nothing more than unity of purpose and the conviction that working together was better than acting alone.

So what are the lessons for CAPS?

We are strong. CAPS remains the sole representative for more than 3,000 California State Scientists. CAPS has collectively bargained successive contracts totaling five straight years of 5% general salary increases. CAPS has a strong record of representing members when their employers violate the terms of our MOU or disregard civil service laws. CAPS employs full-time, experienced professionals – attorneys, labor relations experts, communications specialists, bookkeepers, and seasoned negotiators – who work under the CAPS Board's direction to serve members and their interests.

The 19th Century shipyard workers who fought for a 10-hour work day and the right to eat meals at their worksites would be amazed at CAPS' strength and resources.

The law counts, but it's not the only thing that counts. Our labor ancestors proved that government employees can band together, even when judges don't protect them. CAPS serves its members, protects their pay, benefits, and pensions because State Scientists 35 years ago united over shared concerns and tapped into the power of that solidarity.

The U.S. Supreme Court's recent Janus decision to end "fair share" fees hasn't changed that. If anything, it has underscored the value of group cohesion that is so vital to CAPS' collective strength.

We must remain vigilant. The anti-labor interests behind those court cases won't stop. Already, they are exploiting the Janus ruling with a spray of follow-up lawsuits nationwide that claim government employee unions should repay fees legally collected from non-members before the Supreme Court's decision last summer. A judge has already dismissed one such claim in Washington state, but the anti-labor group pushing for refunds there will probably take the matter to the U.S. Supreme Court.

Meanwhile, pension lawsuits that could end with cuts to California public employees' retirement benefits are also in the courts. And it seems like there's always some sky-is-falling ballot measure that would slash retirement benefits promised to current government workers.

CAPS has always combatted those efforts. We closely monitor legislation and fight any bills that would adversely affect the pay, pensions or benefits of State Scientists. We also join other labor organizations that share our concerns, such as Californians for Retirement Security, which has kept anti-pension proposals off the statewide ballot for nearly 20 years.

Our union ancestors would undoubtedly envy CAPS today. They would wonder why anyone would refuse to be a member, given the gains State Scientists have made since organizing, and the never-ending threats to that progress. They knew the power of sticking together.

CAPS Member Spotlight

Dr. Maureen Lee-Dutra, one of the 45 veterinarians employed by the State, and proud CAPS member, recently spent time in Chico caring for animals injured during last month's Camp Fire. Maureen, who works for the Department of Food and Agriculture, volunteered for the duty as a member of the California Veterinary Medical Reserve Corps. The Corps provides care for pets, farm animals and wildlife impacted by disasters.

The animals hurt in the November wildfire that leveled Paradise included cats, chickens, chinchillas, dogs, snakes, hermit crabs, and other critters brought to the Chico Municipal Airport. There, Maureen worked with colleagues to provide care.

"I'm tired," she said after spending a week in Chico, "but it was definitely worthwhile."



Dr. Maureen Lee-Dutra and other veterinary professionals provided medical care to injured animals – and sometimes made new furry friends – at the Chico Municipal Airport during last month's Camp Fire.

EnCAPSulations

CAPS Wins Nearly \$48,000 for Member

CAPS membership can really pay off. In 2017, a CAPS member at CDFW in Sacramento contacted CAPS staff, concerned that she should have been hired in 2015 at Range C instead of Range B. Staff submitted a merit issue complaint (MIC) on her behalf. The Department denied the MIC at every level. CAPS appealed to the State Personnel Board (SPB) last year. The SPB returned in October and awarded our member a salary bump to Range C retroactive to her 2015 date of hire. The Department's backpay calculation was \$47,784. Remember, the staff expertise that produced the award is now available **only** to CAPS members!

Help Support NCR Camp Fire Victims.

Within the North Central Region alone, 22 Department of Fish and Wildlife staff have been impacted by the Camp Fire and at least 6 staff have lost their homes, vehicles and belongings. Many more have close family who lost homes as well. Please donate and share the GoFundMe link to help support NCR Camp Fire Victims. <https://www.gofundme.com/ncr-camp-fire-victims>

DTSC wins Backpay for Bilingual Work.

A CAPS member working for DTSC in Orange County was assigned bilingual work in March 2017. She applied for bilingual differential authorization in keeping with CAPS MOU, but did not receive the extra money despite following up several times. Meanwhile, the Department kept giving her bilingual case assignments until March of this year. CAPS called the Department's attention to Article 2.4 (F) of the MOU and in September DTSC agreed our member was entitled to 15 months of bilingual differential pay.

Scientists Fighting Newcastle Outbreak in SoCal.

State Scientists continue working day and night to contain and eradicate a fast-spreading, fatal disease that is afflicting poultry in Southern California. The Pasadena Star News reports, "An outbreak of the bird-killing Newcastle disease has resulted in nearly 54,000 birds — mostly chickens — being euthanized in the greater Los Angeles area." Under CAPS' new MOU, licensed veterinarians and staff toxicologists fighting the Newcastle epidemic qualify for overtime.

2018 Was a Busy Year for CAPS.

by Patty Velez, President

A new contract agreement was reached. Two elections were held. A huge court decision was rendered impacting CAPS membership. When I think about the year that's about to end, those are a just a few of the things I'll remember about one of the most eventful years in CAPS history. Let's look back.

January: CAPS' Bargaining Team held several strategy meetings to prepare for contract negotiations with CalHR (which represents Governor Jerry Brown). Meanwhile, CAPS' Board of Directors approved a media campaign to highlight our pay concerns, and to gain bargaining leverage and public support.

February: A survey of our members' contract priorities showed that, as expected, pay parity continued to be the top concern and priority.

March: Contract talks with CalHR started. At the same time, CAPS' "Scientists Matters" media campaign began. By the time it ended four months later, CAPS' TV and radio messages would run more than 500 times, and additionally in targeted emails, social media posts, and web videos.

April: At the Bargaining table, CAPS members made some great presentations to CalHR for pay parity, education differentials, provisional overtime, geographic pay, and more. Some of the proposals made it into the MOU. I was proud of our members for engaging and participating in the process and using our collective power to voice their concerns.

May: CAPS' Board of Directors unanimously endorsed Gavin

Newsom for Governor. Bargaining talks continued. Around that same time, CAPS' staff launched a software program to help us track "future member" recruiting efforts that are extremely important to keep CAPS healthy and strong.

June: Californians chose Lieutenant Governor Newsom and John Cox to run for governor in November's General Election. A few weeks later, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled public employee unions could no longer collect "fair share" fees from non-members. The special interests that pushed the case want to destroy unions that look out for working men and women.

"I was proud of our members for engaging and participating in the process and using our collective power to voice their concerns."

It hasn't worked on CAPS. From January through November of this year, 276 State Scientists joined CAPS, bringing total membership to 2,746. That's an 11% increase – even after accounting for retirements and other employee separations from Unit 10. This happened through hard work by the Board, committed members, and staff who put out the word that CAPS is the only organization that protects State Scientists' pensions, guards their health benefits, and promotes better pay.

July: CAPS' MOU expired, although it remained in effect while CAPS and CalHR continued to bargain.

Late August: CalHR's best contract offer fell far short of pay parity. I and others on the Bargaining Team were profoundly disappointed. Still, the raises and other financial improvements in the proposed MOU were enough that the Team decided to let members vote on it, but without recommending ratification or rejection.

September: The Bargaining Team and CAPS staff met with members statewide to discuss the tentative agreement.

October: Despite its flaws, the MOU won approval from 70% of CAPS voting members.

November: On Election Day, CAPS-endorsed candidates and supported causes won big. Of 83 races and ballot measures in which we took a position, 77 went the way we hoped, including the race for Governor. About a week later, Governor-Elect Newsom's support for labor was evident by the many pro-union leaders he named to his 16-member transition team, including President Laphonza Butler of SEIU Local 2015, and Art Pulaski, CEO of the California Labor Federation.

December: Your CAPS Board of Directors is working on a 2019 budget. We will adjust for the end of fair share fees, while still funding the valuable programs that serve members and protect your interests!

Next month, I'll share my thoughts about what 2019 will mean for CAPS.

Happy Holidays!



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*Best Holiday Wishes to
You and Yours for Peace
and a Happy New Year!*

