

Itzia Rivera for CAPS Treasurer

I'm a Senior Environmental Scientist (Specialist) at the Central Valley Flood Protection Board (CVFPB) in Sacramento where I work in conjunction with the Department of Water Resources (DWR) on the Central Valley's flood control system. I've been a state scientist for 10 years, almost entirely with DWR. The majority of state scientists work in Sacramento and I'm one of only two candidates running for a CAPS statewide officer position that lives and works in Sacramento. I'm also the only CVFPB/DWR candidate running in this election. I would be honored to be your newly elected CAPS Treasurer.

My introduction to unions happened early in life. I learned their value and when I started my state career in 2005, I immediately became a union member. In 2008, I became further involved in unions when I was nominated and elected to serve as the SEIU Local 1000 Senior Steward for the Cal/EPA Building. In that role, I counseled state employees on their contract, accompanied and represented members at disciplinary meetings, and organized worksite meetings. After becoming an Environmental Scientist in 2009, and regularly being the go-to person at our worksite for union contract and personnel-related questions, I volunteered to become a CAPS Local Representative. I've regularly interacted with CAPS staff and attended CAPS Board Meetings to take what I learn back to the scientists at my worksite. I've also consistently read all the bargaining contracts, researched the Dills Act, answered questions from and had one-on-one conversations with my scientist coworkers, and closely followed state scientist pay equity issues. Understanding the value of our union and wanting better for state scientists, I joined the Coalition of Labor Union Women and in 2019 was re-elected as the California Capital Chapter's treasurer.

I'm running to be the next CAPS Treasurer because I haven't seen the transparency and accountability that we should expect from our union. If given the opportunity, I would like to change that. As treasurer, I plan to conduct a thorough review of the CAPS' financial records and budget to understand how we can better manage and maximize the dues we collect, and make the dollars work to increase our pay, benefits and protect scientists in the workplace! I will ensure that our reporting of expenses is easily understandable and accessible to all members.

In addition, I would like to work with other CAPS Board Members to make our union more democratic and inclusive of its membership. I propose creating a process in which members can join CAPS committees, expanding CAPS Local Representative's role and responsibilities to include identification and training of leaders at each worksite, holding worksite/membership meetings outside of and in preparation of our contract bargaining cycle, providing opportunities for members to communicate and organize around workplace issues, and increasing fairness in CAPS Board election procedures.

I have extensive knowledge of the issues facing state scientists. Two issues of particular importance to me are state scientist's pay equity issues and benefits. As a state scientist, I've worked alongside state engineers and geologists, performing substantially similar work without equal or even comparable pay. Scientists' work is of equal value to that of engineers, and CAPS should be fighting to remedy this immediately. I understand not all state scientists perform similar work to engineers and geologists; however, I'm painfully aware of the vertical pay inequity the Brown Administration created 5 years ago when it implemented the CAPS Like Pay for Like Work decision and provided scientist supervisors an up to 43% salary adjustment. Not only did it demonstrate that the State doesn't value rank-and-file scientists, but it created supervisor-scientist reporting relationships that never existed before. I will fight for state scientists to obtain the pay that reflects the value of their work. In addition, I believe all state employee benefits should be equitable and I will work to ensure that CAPS not only maintains current benefits for state scientists, but fights for increased benefits to match those given to other state employees.

Thank you for considering me for CAPS Treasurer. I also recommend a vote for Shana Rapoport for CAPS Secretary. For more information or to contact me, please visit: ItziaforCAPS.com.

Please vote Itzia Rivera for CAPS Treasurer!