

CAPS JULY

CAPS BARGAINING TEAM REFUSES STATE'S INADEQUATE MOU OFFER

Your CAPS Bargaining Team (CAPS Team) met with state negotiators until the last possible moment to reach a tentative agreement for a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) but rejected the administration's 11th-hour offer on August 23 because it did not meet members' needs for pay equity.

For nearly two decades, State Scientists have been underpaid relative to what many other state, federal, and local government scientists receive for performing the same work. And since 2014, the state has paid most Unit 10 supervisors and managers tens of thousands of dollars more each year than the rank-and-file scientists they oversee.

The State's proposal provided Special Salary Adjustments (SSAs) to different classification groupings in the Bargaining Unit without a rationale for their numbers. Meanwhile, the State's GSI offer was similar to those bargained with other units. Had the CAPS Team accepted, it is CAPS' view that it would have further solidified pay inequities that have been the focus of bargaining for nearly three years.

So, what next?

First, state law requires the pay, benefits, and all other provisions of our expired MOU to remain in effect until a new agreement is ratified.

Second, the CAPS Team is already working on bargaining strategy and tactics for the next round.

Third, member actions will continue. CAPS leaders intend to build on the momentum developed over the last several months through letter-writing campaigns, social media posts, public rallies, and other events that have drawn attention from the media, department and agency leaders, and the Governor's Office.

You deserve to be valued for your vital work as a scientist for the State of California. CAPS Team is committed to bargaining a new MOU that aligns employment compensation with its value to public health, the environment, our food supply, and California's natural resources.

FOLLOW #FLATGAVIN

He's checked a rail-yard for toxics, counted salamanders, and even joined the Stand Up for Scientists Rally on July 29.

Who is he? Flat Gavin, the downloadable likeness of California's 40th governor. With a sign that reads, "#ValueScientists," the slightly ruffled executive has become a companion that CAPS members bring on their scientific adventures and document with photos.

CAPS members are having fun with the campaign, but #FlatGavin also aims to boost awareness about State Scientists' vital work and to amplify the message that CAPS members are united and demand pay equity.

You can find #FlatGavin on Twitter, Instagram, and Facebook. Visit capsscientists.org/flat-gavin for guidelines of appropriate use and to download a printable image.



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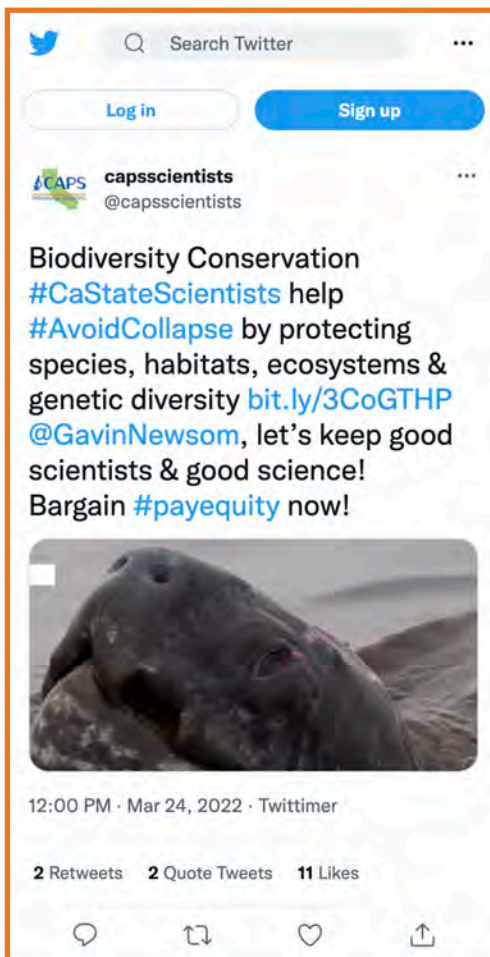
CAPS Awards Professional Development Grants

Each quarter, CAPS' Member Benefits Committee awards up to four Professional Development Grants of \$400 to support members' scientific research and professional development activities that the State does not fully fund. The Committee recently awarded grants to these two deserving CAPS members:

Associate State Archaeologist **Brendon Greenaway** used his \$400 award to reimburse expenses he incurred attending the Society for California Archaeology Annual Meeting in March. Brendon, who works for the Sacramento office of the Department of Parks and Recreation's Office of Historic Preservation, sought the CAPS grant because "... being up to date on research and challenges in my discipline is crucial to my professional development and the work that I do for the State of California."

Mollie Preijers, an Environmental Scientist for the State Water Resources Control Board in Sacramento, will use her \$400 to offset some of the cost of pursuing a graduate degree in Environmental Science Management from the University of Maryland Global Campus. "I aspire to be an Environmental Program Manager," Mollie wrote in applying for the grant. "I believe acquiring a Master of Science will make me a more well-rounded supervisor who can offer creative and efficient solutions to the environmental problems we face."

CAPS makes **\$1,600 in grants available** to deserving members each quarter. The next quarterly deadline to apply is September 30. Once submitted, applications remain eligible for two quarters. For more details about CAPS' Professional Development Grants and how to apply for this members-only benefit, please go to capsscientists.org/application/benefits/grant. Still have questions? Don't hesitate to contact CAPS staff by calling 916-441-2629 or at caps@capsscientists.org.



CAPS PRESENCE ON SOCIAL MEDIA GROWING: JOIN US!

CAPS is amplifying its presence on Twitter and Instagram with help from social-media savvy members who are sharing out our messages and live-streaming events! Become part of the growing wave of [@capsscientists](https://twitter.com/capsscientists) followers on both platforms!

It's free and easy to join Twitter with your existing Google or Apple accounts or your phone or email information. Instagram also has a phone or email sign-up portal, although if you have a Facebook account, you can also access Instagram.

YOUR CAPS CONSULTATION: THE "EVERGREEN CLAUSE"

Question: CAPS has been bargaining with CalHR for a new Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) since well before our last agreement expired on July 1, 2020. So, what has been dictating our wages, hours, and other terms and conditions of employment since then?

Answer: Under the "evergreen" provision of the Dills Act (Government Code Section 3517.8 [a]), terms of an expired MOU continue to be in effect until a new MOU replaces the expired MOU.

It is worth noting that since June 2020, CAPS has negotiated six Side Letter Agreements (think of them as single-subject MOUs)

that have benefited all or part of CAPS members: Contact Tracing Bilingual Pay, Contact Tracing, Telework Stipends, Joint Labor Management Committee on Telework, DJJ Closure Retention Incentive Pay Differential, and Healthcare Facility Retention Payment.

Your CAPS Consultation highlights timely issues that come to the attention of CAPS' labor-relations consultants and attorneys. Our seasoned, knowledgeable professionals assist individual CAPS members – and only members – on matters concerning the Unit 10 MOU, workplace disputes, state labor law, and civil service rules and regulations.

President's Column

A WELCOME, A THANK YOU, ENHANCED MEMBER BENEFITS, TELEWORK

Margarita Gordus

Some quick thoughts and news:

CAPS has set membership recruiting records in the last few months. Since May, the number of new Unit employees joining our union each month has exceeded the month before.

The injection of new members started with a Caltrans decision to add hundreds of Environmental Scientists to its workforce. Before now, Caltrans didn't use the classification.

We have also seen significant hiring of State Scientists at Water Resources, Toxic Substances Control, and other state departments bulking up for expanding programs, driven by new legislative mandates and funded with state and federal allocations.

On behalf of the CAPS Board and the nearly 5,000 state scientists we represent – FIVE THOUSAND! – a warm welcome to our new Caltrans members and everyone in Unit 10 who is new to state service and CAPS. It's great to have you aboard!

CAPS members have been thoroughly engaged this year, particularly with events that supported the CAPS Bargaining Team's efforts to bargain fair pay for State Scientists. The activism pushed our salary-equity message from the streets of Sacramento to Instagram and Twitter, to the Capitol press corps and the Governor's Office.

Everyone heard the noise. The energy, creativeness, and high spirits of that work set an example that other state-employee unions envied and caught the attention of State officials. Thanks to everyone who participated. We intend to build off of this momentum and continue to put the pressure on the Administration with more CAPS actions in the coming months. Be sure to look out for CAPS Call to Action Emails with the most recent actions you can take in support of CAPS' efforts at the Bargaining Table!

I'm pleased to announce significant enhancements to two CAPS members-only insurance benefits. For decades, CAPS membership has included a \$5,000 Basic Life Insurance policy and \$5,000 in Accidental Death & Dismemberment (AD&D) coverage. CAPS automatically enrolls members in the programs, which are administered by The Standard.

Early next year, the coverage for members' Basic Life Insurance benefit will increase to \$10,000, while members' coverage for the included AD&D policy will increase to \$15,000. And here's the best part: CAPS members will still enjoy the benefits at no extra cost. The only thing necessary to receive coverage is to keep your CAPS membership.

CAPS members also have been able to purchase additional life, long-

term disability, auto, pet, and home coverage at group rates that are generally less expensive than what you can buy on your own. There are significant improvements to those programs as well.

Now CAPS and The Standard are partnering to make three more programs available to members that help cover out-of-pocket expenses caused by serious illness, injuries, and hospital stays. There will be more details soon about these new programs and an Open Enrollment period. Watch for information in CAPS emails and website updates on www.capsScientists.org.

CAPS continues to address telework policy issues that our members call to our attention. Many members have been working successfully from home since the COVID-19 pandemic triggered an unprecedented shift to remote work more than two years ago.

Telework has become a significant work-life balance factor in recruiting and retaining employees. Studies also show that employees are generally happier and more productive when working from home.

CAPS is pushing departments through Meet and Confers, formal complaints and objections, and member-led petitions to release policies that offer maximum flexibility.



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Media Response Program Seeks Volunteers

MEDIA RESPONSE PROGRAM SEEKS VOLUNTEERS

CAPS is launching a new program to respond to news media requests for interviews on issues such as Unit 10 pay or the challenges of scientific work as a California state employee.

Members like you can help! If you're interested in participating in the new Media Response Program, please fill out the online form at <https://bit.ly/3Bi2ToW>.

Those selected will be made available to reporters seeking comments for news reports, including coverage of State Scientists' salaries. In addition, participants will speak publicly, understanding that they are speaking only for themselves, not their employer or the union. CAPS will provide media training to all participants, and Media Relations staff will help them prepare for specific interviews. If you have questions about the program, please email them to caps@capsscscientists.org.

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