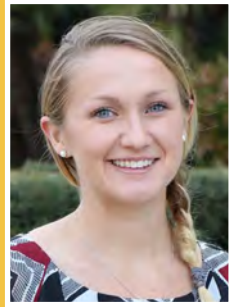


# CAPSULE

## CAPS MEMBERS ELECT 2023-25 Board of Directors



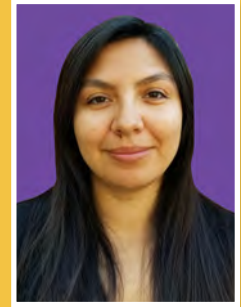
**Jacqueline Tkac**  
President  
CCWQCB – San Luis Obispo  
Environmental Scientist



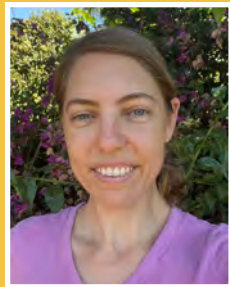
**Rae Vander Werf\***  
Vice President  
SWRCB – Sacramento  
Environmental Scientist



**Hannah Johnson\***  
Secretary  
CDPH – Sacramento  
Research Scientist II



**Itzia Rivera**  
Treasurer  
DWR – Sacramento  
Senior Environmental  
Scientist (Specialist)



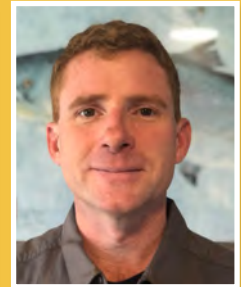
**Laura Radke\***  
District I Director  
DTSC – Orange  
Senior Environmental  
Scientist (Specialist)



**Esther Tracy\***  
District III Director  
DWR – Sacramento  
Senior Environmental  
Scientist (Specialist)



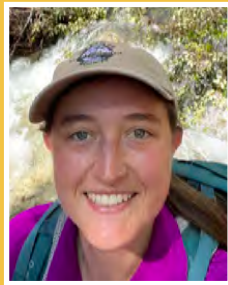
**Christina LaFave\***  
District IV Director  
CDPH – Contra Costa  
Examiner I, Laboratory  
Field Services



**Monty Larson**  
District V Director  
CDFW – Humboldt  
Senior Environmental  
Scientist (Specialist)



**Mia Roberts**  
Director At-Large  
CDFW – West Sacramento  
Senior Environmental  
Scientist (Specialist)



**Carolyn Buesch\***  
Director At-Large  
CDFW – Shasta  
Environmental Scientist



**Daniel Ellis**  
Supervisory Director  
CCWQCB – San Luis Obispo  
Senior Environmental  
Scientist (Supervisor)

The District II Director seat is temporarily vacant because there was no candidate. The CAPS Board has the authority to fill the seat.

\*First time serving on the CAPS Board of Directors.

### ISSUE #9

**OCTOBER 2023**  
www.capsscintists.org  
caps@capsscintists.org

**SOCIAL MEDIA**  
@capsscintists  
www.youtube.com/capsscintists

- ▶ CAPS Members Elect 2023-25 Board of Directors
- ▶ CAPS Media Program Attracts Coverage of Pay Equity Struggle
- ▶ President's Column
- ▶ CAPS Members Receive \$500 Professional Development Grants

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**CAPS INSURANCE**  
(415) 956-1344

## SPOTLIGHT

# CAPS MEDIA PROGRAM ATTRACTS COVERAGE OF PAY EQUITY STRUGGLE

CAPS represents your interests at the bargaining table, in the Capitol and departments, and when necessary, before the State Personnel Board, the Public Employment Relations Board, and the courts. CAPS' media program, when appropriate, encourages news reporters, editors, and content creators to cover our issues in a way that creates a positive public image for State Scientists and political pressure to support our agenda.

This list highlights some media coverage CAPS has earned since August 1 of this year. The reports covered bargaining, member actions, the strike authorization vote, and the successful impasse filing. They appeared in print, online, and on television and radio platforms from August 1 through October 11. When including reprints, rebroadcasts, and aggregations, the stories about CAPS' struggle for pay equity during that period were run about 60 times by more than a dozen media outlets.

1. [Local state environmental scientists protest lack of labor contract](#) – *Eureka Times-Standard/Microsoft News 7/26*
2. [Bargaining heats up for California state worker unions. Here's what's being negotiated](#) – *Sacramento Bee/Microsoft News 8/9*
3. [Wage War: Four California State Employee Unions Are](#)
4. [Legislators ask Gavin Newsom to give California scientists a contract addressing pay parity](#) – *Sacramento Bee/Yahoo! News 8/25*
5. [What Matters: Other Stories You Should Know No. 2: More state labor strife](#) – *CalMatters 8/28*
6. [California state scientists begin strike authorization vote as contract talks continue](#) – *Sacramento Bee/Microsoft News 8/30*
7. [Sacramento March and Capitol Rally](#) – *KCRA News 8/30*
8. ['Pay equity now': California scientists march to Capitol, demanding new contract and raises](#) – *Sacramento Bee/Deal Town 8/31*
9. [State scientists considering strike! \(with Mia Roberts and Cory Copeland\)](#) – *Voices: River City Podcast 8/31 (CAPS discussion starts at 7-minute mark)*
10. [California state scientists authorize first-ever strike. Will workers walk off the job?](#) – *Sacramento Bee/Yahoo! News 9/2*
11. [What Matters #2: No holiday for hot labor summer](#) – *CalMatters 9/5*
12. [Morning Edition – LAist \(KPCC/NPR, Pasadena\) 9/11 7:00 a.m.](#)
13. [Editorial: Big raises for California prison guards is a bad look for Gov. Gavin Newsom](#) – *Sacramento Bee/Yahoo News 9/11*
14. [Will California scientists strike? Union declares impasse over salaries, requests a mediator](#) – *The Sacramento Bee/Yahoo! News 9/20*
15. [Scientists at a Standstill](#) – *Politico 9/26*
16. [California scientist union moves closer to strike after state board approves impasse request](#) – *The Sacramento Bee/Yahoo! News 9/26*
17. [An update on the California Association of Professional Scientists](#) – *Sacramento Bee State Worker Newsletter 10/12*

You can find this list with live links to the stories in this issue of CAPSule's e-edition at <https://capsscientists.org/resources/capsule>. For CAPS' social media posts about bargaining, search for @capsscientists accounts on [Instagram](#) and [X.com](#).

# NEWSOM VETOED OUR BILL. DID HE READ IT?

Margarita Gordus

Earlier this month, Governor Gavin Newsom vetoed [Assembly Bill 1677](#), which would have required the UC Berkeley Labor Center to conduct a study of the existing Unit 10 rank-and-file salary structure, issues currently impacting the current horizontal and vertical salary relationships as compared to historical relationships, and provide recommendations, if applicable, for alternative salary models for State Scientists.

We worked with Assemblymember Tina McKinnor on the bill because we wanted a reputable third party to study State Scientists' wages and compare them over time to what our managers and colleagues in other state bargaining units earn, as well as comparable scientists outside of State service. The researchers would have reported their findings to the administration and the Legislature along with recommendations – remember that word, recommendations – to repair any wage inequities that have developed over the years. The analysis would have been due by April 30, 2024.

Here's [the reason](#) Newsom gave for vetoing the measure:

“This bill’s requirement to implement any increase in compensation resulting from the study effectively circumvents the collective bargaining process and limits the state’s ability to consider various economic factors that impact the state or Bargaining Unit 10 members when proposing compensation packages during negotiations.”

No, it didn't. It was not a plan to negate bargaining or the Dills Act. Newsom's characterization incorrectly implied that CAPS was attempting to circumvent bargaining, which is the last thing we'd ever want to do. Bargaining gives unions power; we value it.

It would have, perhaps, produced some **RECOMMENDATIONS** to solve inequitable salaries that State Scientists have endured for nearly two decades. A “recommendation” is not a “requirement.”

We're talking about a bill that went to Newsom on the strength of a combined 96 “aye” votes in the Legislature. I, for one, have faith in our State lawmakers to recognize the difference between a bill that would upend a law as important as the Dills Act and one that would provide recommendations.

AB 1677 would have done nothing more than find neutral data that our side and Newsom's side could agree on. It set a 2024 report deadline. CAPS certainly didn't view AB 1677 as some lever to pry concessions from the Newsom Administration. We are eager, right now, to reach an agreement that values State Scientists and our work.

But CAPS has a long history of disagreements with governors about whether State Scientists' salaries lag the market. We thought impartial analysis would be helpful. We are scientists, after all, so we're interested in facts and truth.

Nevertheless, CAPS will continue to work towards bringing legislation forward that would benefit State Scientists' position in government, which will in turn benefit the State of California.





## CALIFORNIA ASSOCIATION OF PROFESSIONAL SCIENTISTS

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# FOUR CAPS MEMBERS RECEIVE \$500 PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT GRANTS

CAPS' Member Benefits Committee awards up to four Professional Development Grants each quarter. The grants – for which only members are eligible – pay for research, education, and other professional development activities that the State does not fully fund. These State Scientists each won a \$500 grant for the quarter that ended June 30.



**Habeom Kim**, a Research Scientist III for the Department of Health Care Services in Sacramento, used the grant to offset the costs of attending this year's Society for American Archeology conference in Portland, Oregon. Kim presented research at the event.



**Natalie Cooper-Gasca** used the grant to help with the costs of attending the August Joint Statistical Meetings in Toronto, Canada. Cooper-Gasca is an Environmental Scientist based in Sacramento and works for the Department of Pesticide Regulation.



**AnneMarie Blackburn**, a Caltrans Environmental Scientist in San Luis Obispo, used the Professional Development Grant to attend the International Conference on Ecology and Transportation in June. While there, Blackburn presented "Partnerships Pave the Way: Highway 17 Wildlife Crossing Completed for Mountain Lions in Santa Cruz County, California."



CAPS grant funds helped pay for **Pius Ekong** to attend a course in South Carolina that covered mapping, geographic, and time-cluster analysis of health data. Ekong is a Research Scientist III with the Department of Public Health's Center for Health Statistics and Informatics in Sacramento.

The next quarterly deadline to apply is **January 31**. For more details about how to apply for this members-only benefit, please go to [capsscientists.org/application/benefits/grant](https://capsscientists.org/application/benefits/grant). Certain limitations apply. Questions? Please contact CAPS staff at 916-441-2629 or [caps@capsscientists.org](mailto:caps@capsscientists.org).