

# CCRFA Matters



## Cerritos College Retired Faculty Association



Every day you made a difference in your job. Imagine if you brought those same skills to helping others. To improving lives of people who didn't get your opportunities. Of saving lives. Of making change. Imagine . . .

Spring 2025

### WELCOME TO THE CERRITOS COLLEGE RETIRED FACULTY ASSOCIATION

The Cerritos College Retired Faculty Association (CCRFA) is made up of retired faculty, counselors and administrators of Cerritos College. Our current membership numbers 124. However, we keep track of about 199 retired faculty. Our purpose is to meet socially, stay abreast of what is happening at Cerritos College and try to keep up with legislation being passed or considered in Sacramento affecting STRS and PERS retirees. We are not a political organization and do not lobby in Sacramento, leaving that job for the California Retired Teacher Association.

We meet twice a year at Cerritos College (in the Falcon Room Restaurant) for lunch – usually in April and October. We try to have other social activities in between

the April and October lunch meetings. We have organized a Palm Desert weekend, a Sunday at the beach, and also went for a cruise on the SS Lane Victory and attended a dinner/dance at the Huntington Harbour Yacht Club. Our newsletter is published twice a year and is made up entirely of letters received from our membership.

We stand ready to assist faculty with their non-STRS questions about retirement. We also stand ready to help students planning to be teachers with scholarships. If you would like to contact CCRFA, please E-mail : Hy Finkelstein at [hyfink@yahoo.com](mailto:hyfink@yahoo.com) . He will get in touch with you as soon as possible.



#### CERRITOS COLLEGE RETIRED FACULTY ASSOCIATION (CCRFA) TEACHER TRAC SCHOLARSHIP

Established by the Cerritos College Retired Faculty Association, this scholarship is awarded to a student newly admitted into the Teacher TRAC program and is based on letter of application, overall GPA, financial need, and school and community involvement.

You can make a donation to the scholarship fund by sending a check to:

**Hy Finkelstein, President**  
**242 E. Riverview Avenue**  
**Orange CA 92865**

Indicate CCRFA Scholarship Fund on the memo line of the check.

Enjoy reading about your fellow retirees? Your fellow retirees would enjoy hearing from you. Be sure to submit an article for the next issue of *CCRFA MATTERS*. Watch your e-mail for notification of when and where to submit your article.



#### 2025— 2026 OFFICERS AND OFFICE HOLDERS

President — Hy Finkelstein	Co-Secretary — Vykki Morgan
Vice President — Vacant	Co-Secretary — Sherry Perkins
Treasurer — Vacant	Newsletter — Hal Malkin

## Taps From the Gavel by Hy Finkelstein, CCRFA President



Hello to my fellow retirees. I am looking forward to seeing you all at our Spring luncheon. I hope that you are also in touch with each other in between our luncheons. I am excited to get calls or e-mails or texts from fellow retirees (about any topic but politics). I have read that making social contacts and new memories are 2 important behaviors that keep senior's minds staying sharp. So keep us updated on what's going on in your life.

What is new over here in my family is still the old story about re-furbishing our house. Little did we anticipate all the time, money, and frustrations we would encounter. But I can almost see the light at the end of the tunnel. I would advise anyone to really think about it before doing major work on their house.

Good news: We will have elections at our luncheon to officially vote in new volunteers for the position of Vice President and Treasurer of the CCRFA. Which means big thanks to both Rhea Black and Tom Jackson for the great job they have been doing for many years!

Hy Finkelstein, Retired  
Business Administration 1975-2011.



### Note from Jon Fults—

CCRFA is apolitical, which is wonderful. We leave the political fight to CALRTA and to say they have done a wonderful job protecting all of us is an understatement.

I have been retired 32 years and here are three things they have done for us which have netted us many thousands of dollars in our pocket.

When I retired PPP, which is an integral part of our STRS was 75% and they got it increased to 80%. They kept on fighting and when Schwarzenegger was Governor he said he wouldn't sign legislation increasing PPP to 85%, but when push came to shove he signed legislation increasing PPP to 85%.

These two items alone have already or will add thousands of dollars to your retirement checks.

The third thing they fought for took many years to accomplish. Back in the 80s Congress passed legislation denying Social Security benefits to retired teachers in California and several other entities. As a veteran some of us received 40% social security checks. In late 2024, the House and

the Senate, with bi-partisan support, passed a law restoring social security benefits in full and was signed by the President. It was retroactive to January of 2024, and many of us have already received retroactive checks for last year.

When I retired I purchased a lifetime membership in CALRTA (had a slightly different name then). I am so proud of them and grateful to them for picking the battles that are doing so much for us.

This is an organization truly worth belonging to.



**PLEASE JOIN US TO CELEBRATE THE LIFE OF  
JOHN JACKSON**

**Saturday, May 3, 2025 at 2:00 p.m**

**Faith Church Fellowship Hall,  
11226 Excelsior Drive, Norwalk, CA 90650**

**For additional information, please contact**

**Tom and Marie Jackson 562.864.9527**

## Fran Newman's Update

Yes, Sherry, including the last newsletter was a great idea Hal had. It inspired me to share a few highlights from my life, especially after reading the wonderful updates others shared. At 91, I feel truly blessed to still be active, so I thought it might be worth sharing my recent activities—though I might be a bit long-winded!

First, I've been a member of the Artesia Historical Society for years, alongside many of our retired staff. They do fantastic work, opening their museums of the restored Framptom-Dantema house and fire station #30. They conduct outreach school tours and have hosted over 13,000 third grade students to meet their California state requirement for local history. Thanks to the society's efforts, the school children, parents and residents are proud of the history of their city, Artesia.

At their most recent fundraising event, I participated in a Mystery Theater written and directed by Veronica Bloomfield, Ed Bloomfield's talented daughter. They asked me to act, and despite working hard to memorize my lines, I completely forgot them during the performance! It led to lots of laughter from the audience, but I must admit it ended my acting career in embarrassment.

I also attend a Bible Study Fellowship group weekly. It's an international organization with an excellent curriculum, and this year we're studying the book of Revelation—a difficult yet hopeful study. I attend at the Chinese Baptist Church in Fountain Valley, where I play the piano for hymn singing. The Chinese members enjoy the way I jazz up the hymns, making it a rewarding activity for me

In April, I'll be traveling to New York with a couple I worked with at USC for a Broadway tour. We'll see several current musicals and plays, which I'm really looking forward to.

In May, I'll be traveling to Columbus, Ohio, with my assistant, Braedon Vogel, who lives in my downstairs studio apartment. We're attending a nephew's wedding, and I'm grateful for Braedon's help with household chores and driving, especially since I have macular degeneration and am legally blind in one eye. Braedon, a Web Developer, has also taught me how to use Artificial

Intelligence, which I now rely on for everything. For instance, today, I used it to get the latest advice on macular degeneration, and I even had it edit this update!

By the way, in California, it's legal to drive with one eye, though I try not to drive unless necessary. To keep my driver's license updated for emergencies, I take the driver's test every two years. Currently, I'm practicing parallel parking—quite a challenge with my Hummer, but I managed it two years ago and hope to succeed again!

While I've never considered myself an athlete, I've been water skiing at Lake Mead for over 50 years. When my husband Jack was alive, we would meet 30 to 75 friends at the lake, find a spot on the beach, and camp under the stars. Four years ago, when Jack passed, this tradition stopped, but now 39 of our group members are planning a reunion in June. I'm going, and I'll be doing all the cooking. I also hope to water ski once more!

Lastly, I still sprint (walk and run) on the beach daily, covering a mile and a half. Most mornings, I'm out there with the dogs and surfers.

So, as you can see, this is why I don't often submit updates for the newsletter—I have too much trivia to share! But at 91, I'm grateful to be alive and active. OLE!!!!



**Arleen Meyers** says "hello everyone."

Greetings from Oregon. Yes, I left California about two weeks before Christmas to live in Oregon near my two families. I'm living in a very nice assisted living facility. It's in a woodsy environment reminiscent of the old wagon trails. In fact my son-in-law used to live on Wagon Trail Road. It's great to have my family members pop in to see me now.

Then on a good day, I just hop on my 3 wheel scooter and drive myself the four blocks to the little old historic town of Jacksonville. I do miss my friends and the California weather. Well, enjoy your meeting. Stay well and have a nice summer. New address; 805 N 5th Street Suite 205 Jacksonville, Oregon 97530. Phone. Same number on hand.

*Jose Fierro, President / Superintendent of Cerritos College* had an Op-Ed on the EdSource website. Below is a copy of the Op-Ed.

## **WHY CALIFORNIA MUST CHAMPION COMMUNITY COLLEGE BACHELOR'S DEGREES**

A college degree or certificate is a proven pathway to higher earnings, job stability and economic mobility. Yet, nearly half of California's adults have not pursued higher education due to [barriers like cost](#), rigid schedules and a lack of local options.

California set an ambitious goal: By 2030, 70% of working-age adults should hold a college degree or certificate. However, instead of making it easier to achieve this, public universities are blocking one of the most promising solutions — community college bachelor's degree programs.

Cerritos College is leading the way with its first-of-its-kind field ironworker supervisor bachelor's degree, which was developed with the California Field Ironworkers. The program creates a direct path from apprenticeship to high-paying supervisory roles. Designed for working professionals, it offers flexible online coursework that fits the schedules of full-time ironworkers.

With over 1,300 supervisor job openings annually in Los Angeles County alone, this program helps close critical workforce gaps while fostering regional social and economic mobility. First-line supervisors with a bachelor's degree earn an average of \$34,000 more in their annual salary than those with a high school diploma or associate degree. At under \$11,000 in total tuition costs — less than half the price of even the most affordable public universities, our students can recoup their investment in as little as four months, making this program a powerful tool for upward mobility.

Beyond the numbers, programs like these change lives. Rocio Campos, an ironworker and mother, defied societal expectations to pursue a career in construction. While balancing work, family and education, Rocio gained the training and resources to grow her career in ironworks through the field ironworker apprenticeship program at Cerritos College. She aims to earn a bachelor's degree in ironworker supervision once the program receives full approval, giving her a chance to advance into a supervisory role.

Community college bachelor's degrees are game-changers, especially for underrepresented communities. At Cerritos College, 73% of students in the ironworker apprenticeship program come from diverse backgrounds, and active recruitment efforts are bringing more women into this historically male-dominated field. These programs don't just increase wages; they provide economic mobility by helping workers build stability, advance their careers, and lift their families into greater financial security.

Several community colleges have received provisional approval to launch bachelor's degree programs in health care, technology and public safety — fields where California urgently needs skilled professionals. However, many of these proposals remain under review because of objections from public universities, particularly within the CSU system. Despite meeting workforce demands and serving students who might not otherwise pursue a four-year degree, these programs face unnecessary roadblocks. The final approval ultimately rests with the California Community Colleges board of governors, but these initiatives risk being delayed indefinitely without broader policy support.

California cannot rely on four-year universities alone to meet its growing workforce needs. Expanding community college bachelor's degree programs will strengthen industries, create more opportunities and solidify California's leadership in workforce innovation. It's time for policymakers, industry leaders and educators to support these programs and invest in the future of our state.