

CAPS Scholarship Winners

Eleven lucky dependents of CAPS members were each awarded a \$500 scholarship to support their college education at an accredited university or community college. The need is great. A total of 35 members applied for this year's scholarships. The 11 winners were selected by the CAPS Benefits Committee, chaired by District II Director Margarita Gordus, an Environmental Scientist with the Department of Fish and Game from Fresno. Thanks to everyone who participated. CAPS will keep 2010 applications on file for next year's drawing.



Keenan Lorenzato, son of member Stefan Lorenzato (DWR) will attend Guilford College with a major in Biology. Keenan will graduate in 2014.

Mark Paddon, son of member Marlissa Campbell (OEHHA) is attending Cal Poly with a major in Computer Science. Mark will graduate in 2012.



Brent Hogan, son of member Jennifer Hogan (DWR) will attend Sonoma State University with a major in Jazz Studies/Music Education. Brent will graduate in 2014/2015.

Mohammed Omer, son of member Amir Omer (CDPR) is attending Stanford University with a major in Biomechanical Engineering. Mohammed will graduate in 2012.



Brett Parmenter, daughter of member Steve Parmenter (DFG) is attending Warren-Wilson College with a major in Biology. Brett will graduate in 2012.

Christine Durand, daughter of member Maria Durand (DTSC), is majoring in Liberal Studies at Cal State Dominguez Hills and will graduate in 2012.



Hannah Cady, daughter of member Liza Cady (CDFA) is attending the University of Vermont with a major in Environmental Science. Hannah will graduate in 2011.

Saraf Nawar, daughter of member MD Murshidul Hoque (DOC) will attend Harvard University with a major in Chemistry and Physics. Saraf will graduate in 2014.



Matthew Holmes, son of Robert J. Holmes (CalRecycle) will attend Cal Poly with a major in Environmental Engineering. Matthew will graduate in 2014.

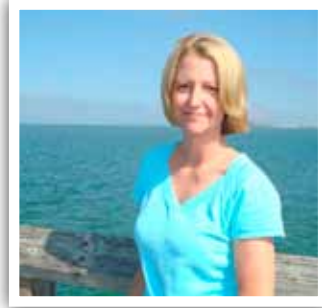
Isaac Rodriguez, son of Raul Rodriguez (DFG) attends California State University Monterey Bay with a major in Marine Biology. Isaac will graduate in 2013.



Jagger Waters, daughter of Elissa Lynn Gruner (DWR) will attend the University of Chicago. Jagger will graduate in 2015.

Spotlight on a State Scientist

Susan Klasing, Ph.D.
Staff Toxicologist
Office of Environmental
Health Hazard Assessment



Career Focus:

Dr. Klasing’s career has focused on evaluating the potential human health effects of elevated levels of natural and anthropogenic chemicals found in our environment, including those essential to human life. Most of her work has involved evaluating chemical contaminants in fish and assessing potential hazards to the human consumer.

Scientific Specialty:

Susan joined OEHHA in 2000 as a toxicologist in the fish consumption advisory program. She has written advisories for numerous water bodies in California, including Folsom Lake, Trinity Lake, and coastal areas of Ventura, Los Angeles, and Orange counties. She also senior-authored an OEHHA report on the Development of Advisory Tissue Levels and Fish Contaminant Goals for Common Contaminants in California Sport Fish. Following the 2007 M/V Cosco Busan oil spill in San Francisco Bay, Susan was part of a team that evaluated the safety of fish and shellfish consumption from oil-impacted areas. She later took a new oil spill-related seafood safety position at OEHHA in partnership with the Office of Spill Prevention and Response. Since then, Susan assessed the safety of fish and shellfish consumption following the T/V Dubai Star oil spill in San Francisco Bay and was recently deployed to Louisiana to consult with federal and Gulf state agencies on seafood safety issues related to the Deepwater Horizon incident.

Professional Awards:

OEHHA honored her with a Sustained Superior Accomplishment Award in 2005 for her work on chemical evaluations in fish and shellfish and the issuance of fish advisories in California.

Education:

Susan earned a B.S. in Animal Science and an M.S. and Ph.D. in Animal Nutrition from the University of Illinois.

Hobbies:

Susan loves gardening, hiking, playing the piano, and, especially, hanging out with her friends and two adult daughters.

Quote:

Jonas Salk said “the reward for work well done is the opportunity to do more.”

I appreciate all that CAPS does to ensure our opportunity to do our work well!

CalPERS Retirement: Good As Gold



In state government, the politicians have cut programs so often and so deep that smoke and mirrors no longer balance the budget. One of the best funded public agencies in the world, CalPERS, is right here in Sacramento’s back yard. Politicians of all stripes gaze longingly at CalPERS as a budget fix. Governor Schwarzenegger in particular has targeted CalPERS. He has attacked CalPERS as an institution, in addition to the campaign he has waged to cut pensions and increase employee contributions. CAPS on its own and as part of coalitions has opposed these assaults every step of the way. CAPS has also rejected various bargaining proposals that would cut benefits and increase employee retirement contributions.

If CAPS doesn’t agree to Schwarzenegger’s retirement changes, he has threatened to hold the budget hostage until the legislature implements it with a final budget deal, which, at this point, is nowhere in sight. CAPS’ contention is that changes to scientists’ contributions to CalPERS must have CAPS’ agreement to be legal.

Schwarzenegger wants to double the retirement contributions of state employees, and so far six bargaining units have agreed to his changes. The current rate, five percent, has been in place for decades. In fact, the state Supreme Court has held that where the employee’s contribution rate is a fixed element of the pension system, the rate may not be increased unless the employee receives comparable new advantages for the increased contribution. (Allen v. City of Long Beach (1955) 45 Cal.2d 128); See also Pasadena Police Officers Association v. City of Pasadena (1984) 147 Cal.App.3d 695.) Such a change to a vested pension rate would therefore unconstitutionally alter the pension obligation of the state.

The lesson here: they can’t do it without CAPS’ agreement, and CAPS isn’t about to deal anything away unless something of considerable value is given in return. To do any less would fail to do justice to the dedicated years of public service given by all who earn a CalPERS pension.

DNA of the CalPERS Pension Buck

Pensions are a shared responsibility. Every dollar paid to CalPERS pensioners comes from three sources:*

- 63¢ CalPERS Investment Earnings
- 22¢ CalPERS Employers
- 15¢ CalPERS Members

*Income over the last 20 years as of June 30, 2009.
Source: CalPERS

Standing TALL

By CAPS President Patty Velez

Governor Schwarzenegger has faced off against more than a few imposing adversaries in his movie career. He beat them all. During his meteoric political career, he has chewed up adversaries, starting with his stunning election as governor, then reelection victory against Phil Angelides. In between, he made a succession of legislative leaders look like amateurs.

Then he took on the State Controller John Chiang. Quiet and unassuming, a few weeks ago most people would have had difficulty reciting his name. No more.

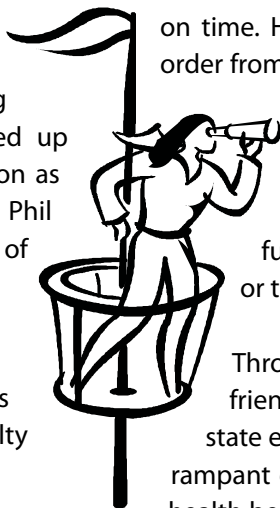
It started over Schwarzenegger's full court press for minimum wage. His legal and media relations juggernaut seemed almost certain to force state employees (except those with contracts) to get minimum wage paychecks when the state budget would again be late.



Every court up the line ruled for the Governor, claiming that legal precedents require

minimum wage. Controller Chiang stopped the Governor dead in his tracks.

Controller Chiang is a plain spoken purveyor of transparency in government when it has become fashionable to lie low, pass the buck and shade the truth. He is not afraid of a fight, even when the opponent is a celebrity governor who revels in crushing his opponents. Faced with the legal onslaught by Schwarzenegger, John Chiang methodically made the case for paying us in full and



on time. He said he would pay absent a definitive order from the court to the contrary. On Friday, July 16, Controller Chiang was vindicated, ironically by the very same judge who we believe wrongly allowed Schwarzenegger to implement unpaid furloughs without approval by either CAPS or the legislature.

Throughout this dark period, we have had few friends. Almost everything being said about state employees was negative. Public jealousy is rampant over the modest retirement program and health benefits we enjoy. Some said our retirement benefits were preventing government from delivering services. Meanwhile, those with the greatest duty to defend the proud tradition of public service have been largely silent. Our pensions were (and are) threatened.

We were forced to take THREE unpaid furlough days per month, more than ANY jurisdiction, public or private, anywhere in the country. We lost two holidays and had

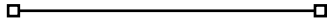
overtime rules changes in an 11th hour budget deal. We have been the target of untold hostile news stories and editorials, led by our own "home-town" *Sacramento Bee*. One of the few voices of reason and fairness came from Controller Chiang.

State Controller John Chiang deserves thanks from every state scientist and every state employee. In fact, every California taxpayer owes him a debt of gratitude for preventing this unnecessary financial disaster.



"State Controller John Chiang deserves thanks from every state scientist and every state employee."

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CAPS Represents YOU!



CAPS represents YOU! This has never been more evident than in the current minimum wage litigation. CAPS leaders and staff have worked this issue for YEARS to ensure that you get paid IN FULL AND ON TIME. The law has been interpreted to mean that state scientists (and all state employees) are entitled to no more than federal minimum wage if a budget is late. Well, the budget IS late, and you will STILL get a full paycheck for July. That's no coincidence. The Governor has tried every legal maneuver and trick to force minimum wage this summer. He lost. You won. That's largely because CAPS never gave up on this effort, and got some timely, effective help from a giant of a State Controller, John Chiang.

CAPS remains defiant on a wide range of issues, all to protect YOUR hard earned salary and benefits. But it's not just "big picture" issues CAPS works on. Your dues dollars pays for expert advice and representation when you need it most. Most times it's a question with a simple answer. Circumstances can develop that can have serious ramifications for your employment. When this happens, it's best to consult with a CAPS worksite rep, or pick up the phone and call your nearest CAPS office.

CAPS has dozens of grievances, classification disputes and adverse action cases pending on behalf of individual scientists. CAPS doesn't always win these cases, but we fight hard and smart--for YOU! CAPS is your insurance policy that guards against the unlimited resources of state management.

If management is considering an action against you, or you suspect a violation of the CAPS MOU, contact CAPS. We will help evaluate the situation and develop a strategy that makes sense. Everyone deserves to make the defense possible. Thousands of CAPS members have used the services of CAPS successfully. Why not you?

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