

All Ganz On Deck

CSO learn from master organizer to support CTA leadership at State Council and beyond

On Wednesday, October 7, over 60 CSO brothers and sisters met in Norco to learn about a piece of the Marshall Ganz model for organizing. They spent the day learning and practicing three portions of the story telling component of Ganz's model. "The Story of Self", "The Story of Us, and "The Story of Now" were the focus and allowed the participants to get a deep understanding of how to use these techniques to enrich conversations for relational organizing. Those 60 brothers and sisters then took their learning to the state-wide staff meeting on



CSO facilitators, CSO members, CTA managers and CTA Board Members study organizing together.

October 15. They were the facilitators you worked with to learn the "Story of Self."

The intent of the state-wide staff meeting was for participants to get an understanding of what will be occurring at State Council on October 23-25. The representatives there will also be trained in the "Story of Self" in order to facilitate a "3000 Conversations" campaign. The hope is that the State Council representatives will go back to their constituents and have five or more

conversations with a focus on the values that bring our people to the work they do. As they are doing this, staff may be asked by them for advice or counsel on how to best achieve this goal.

CTA's Strategic Plan relies heavily on relational organizing to achieve the overall goals. The Ganz strategy of storytelling should give our State Council members a better chance at beginning and maintaining those relationships.

classroom." — Brenda Hensley, Mathematics Teacher, Will C. Wood High School, Vacaville.

Find us on Facebook at California Staff Organization to see all of the responses and to answer our next question — How can we turn around the teacher shortage in California?

Facebook question: As a student, parent or employee, what is your favorite back-to-school activity or tradition?

"Going to school sites and seeing all of the amazing teachers starting their year. They are an amazing group of humans!" — Jake Anderson, Golden Oaks UniServ

"Back to school clothes shopping (and) organizing my

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A CSO publication

Conspicuous solidarity



Seattle EA supporters push for a fair contract during their strike earlier this year.

It's October, and football stadiums across the country are awash in seas of the red, blue, green, or other colors worn by fans supporting their teams.

These fans are engaged in conspicuous solidarity, an obvious and intentional esprit de corps. They are empowered by the belief that by wearing that color, they may somehow have an impact on the outcome of the game at hand.

While there may be more of a casual relationship (or no relationship at all) as opposed to a causal one between the number of folks wearing

the colors of their team and the success or failure of that team, one thing is certain: a group of people, united around a cause, can generate over \$3 billion annually in merchandise sales alone for the NFL. What if there were a causal relationship between the number of people wearing a team's color, or the loudness of the fans cheering them on? Besides generating billions of dollars in revenue for the NFL, what lessons could we learn about the power of conspicuous solidarity?

The impending Friedrichs decision has many of us concerned that our capacity to advocate for our members, our students, and our communities will be negatively impacted due an unfavorable decision. To name a few of the alarming consequences that may result with the loss of Fair Share are the

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Solidarity

Educators have an intrinsic desire to make a difference

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 weakened abilities to bargain fair contracts that protect our working conditions and our students' learning environments, to consult on issues that impact how resources are allotted, the ability to influence local and state policies regarding curriculum, assessments and evaluations, and an inability to provide opportunities to which our students and our communities are entitled.

We know the only way to overcome these potential scenarios is to organize. However, what do we organize around specifically? History is full of examples of groups that organized around fear, uncertainty, and desperation and of groups that organized around hope, promise, and righteousness.

Examples of the former typically ended, either dramatically or quietly, as one would expect: defeated and powerless to effect change.

Examples of the latter, time and again, became movements that changed entire social structures and systems by reaching people where they were, instilling a belief and an assurance in them that they could in fact be the change they wanted to see in the world. Whether or not those involved in these movements initially believed they had a necessary stake

in the outcome, ultimately their participation and action rested on the belief that there was a collective cause greater than their personal circumstances.

We are being called to such a cause right now – the future of public

...we know there will be another Friedrichs, another Vergara, another Prop 32...

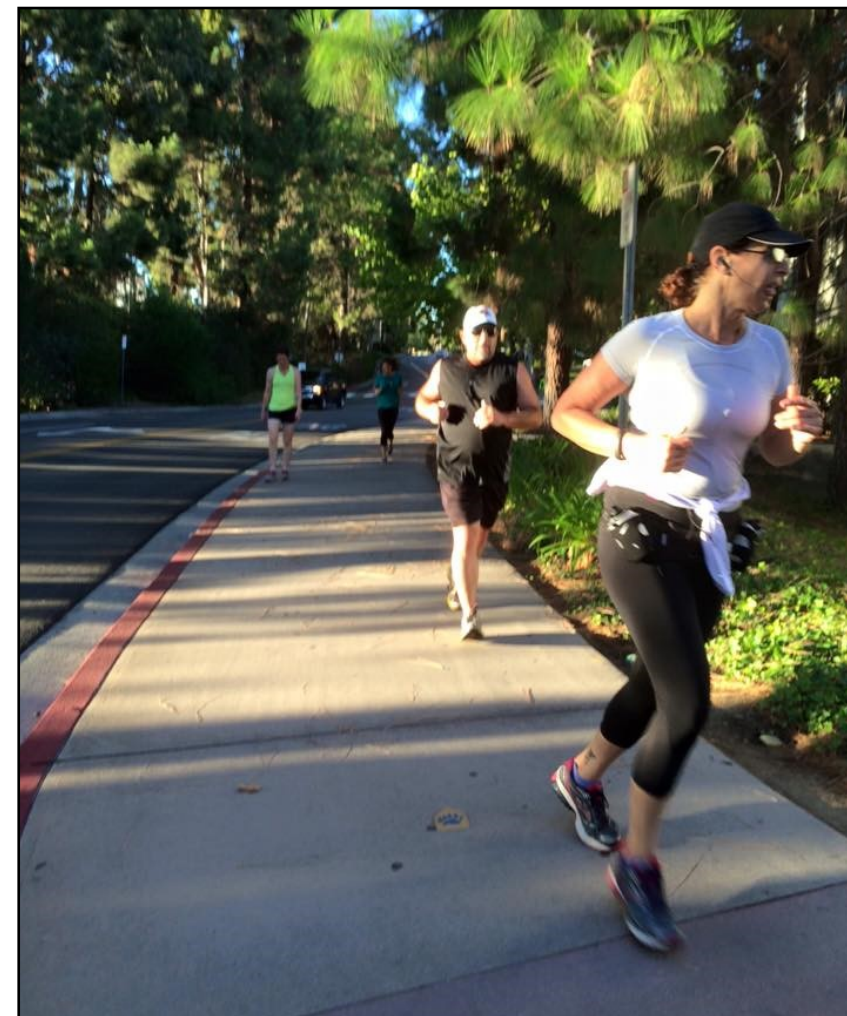
education. The attacks on our profession and our union will not end even if we “win” Friedrichs, because we know that there will be another Friedrichs, another Vergara, another Prop 32 to fill the void.

While these attacks pose real threats, they can be seized as an opportunity to define our core values and to act on a cause greater than our personal circumstances. When the members of the Seattle Education Association went on strike last month, they marched with slogans referencing equity, fairness, commitment, and unity. Moreover, students and their parents marched with similar messages in support of the Seattle educators. These are not unlike many messages and support displayed throughout California and the rest of

the country when such actions are taken against public education. These messages speak to our core values as educators and as advocates for our students and our communities.


The principles of fairness, equity, community, and justice are what initially inspired many of us to become educators and advocates for public education. Educators have an intrinsic desire to “make a difference” in the lives of our students and, in spite of the challenges we face, we show up every day because we believe in the righteousness of this work and because what we do on a daily basis actually does make a difference.

This is our opportunity to define for ourselves what our values are as opposed to allowing those who attack us to define them for us. It is our opportunity to organize our members and our communities as part of the greater movement to secure the future of public education and our ability to advocate for our students. Indeed, those movements that resulted in the most progressive advances in social justice and human rights were organized around such self-determined core values. By doing this, we can achieve a conspicuous solidarity that has an actual causal relationship with our team's success for many seasons into the future.



Partners in Running — Summer Institute is a long week, still dozens of CTA members and CSO volunteers turned out for the annual 5K fun run and walk at UCLA August 5.



 **Advocacy Appeal** is produced by the California Staff Organization, the union for professional departmental and Regional UniServ Staff who work for the 325,000 members of the California Teachers Association. Comments or inquiries may be emailed to calstaffcommunications@gmail.com. Find us online at www.calstaff.org or search Facebook for California Staff Organization.