

Kamehameha Schools Faculty Association

P.O. Box 894163, Mililani HI 96789 / www.ksfaculty.org

www.ksfaculty.org

Ok, so it took a little while for us to get digital, but we (meaning you, the KS faculty) are finally there. Check us out. The site has all the basics:

- President's message
- Current Executive Committee / negotiating team members
- Current Rep. Assembly members
- The KSFA constitution
- A section called "What we believe."
- Past issues of this newsletter, going back to the beginning, even before there was a KSFA.

When we were first organizing, KSFA maintained a phone with an auto message that changed every week or so, depending on the progress of the effort. We don't need that anymore, but we do need to communicate better with members. This site is the attempt to do just that. Please check it periodically for between-newsletter updates on negotiations or any news pertinent to faculty members. Also, use it to get email addresses of your friendly Rep. Assembly representative, to ask questions or communicate concerns.

If you are a new faculty member ("new" meaning hired within the past five years), use our newsletter archive to educate yourself about some of the reasons the KS faculty organized in the first place. (We had no choice.)

There has been some discussion about including a message board, a place where members could log on and chat, in order to track down rumors or express concerns directly to other faculty members. (KS does well on vertical communication, especially the top-to-bottom kind, but not so well on the lateral kind, among professionals.)

A chat room is usually filtered through a moderator, who checks to make sure messages conform to the chat room guidelines. Discussion is sorted by topic.

We are going with a simple website for the moment, but please let your rep. know what you think of an expanded website that might include a chat area.

Our site, by the way, was designed and is being hosted by the former KS webmaster, Blaine Fergerstrom, through his company, ZZ Type. Please let us know if you have suggestions to make it more useful or easier to navigate. It's your site as much as anyone else's.

— Jan Becket, Unit 11/12

Eh! (translation: hey you!)

Yes, you.

When we organized KSFA, our major concerns revolved around basic workplace rights, such as a credible, transparent grievance procedure, and clear procedures for terminating employees "with cause." There is lots of room for improvement, but thanks to a vast number of hours donated by several consecutive negotiating teams, we now have a contract with clear, understandable language that spells out our basic employment rights and obligations. It took a long time and it took a toll on many personal lives.

Several of our most valued Rep. Assembly members now need to put time into other efforts, with everyone's thanks. They helped us through the roughest part. Now, the Rep. Assembly has a few puka, and you know what that means.

Ideally, KSFA should have a pool of folks who rotate in and out of the Rep. Assembly every couple of years, as their own lives allow. A smaller pool of folks need to rotate in and out of the Executive Board, so that those folks don't get burned out. Being a Rep. Assembly member just means that you attend a meeting once a month. That's all. There are no hidden tasks, no mandatory committee assignments. It's a limited commitment you can handle: two hours once a month.

It's no secret that the focus of this round of negotiations will be salary / compensation. If you feel that you are worth a higher salary, come help make that happen.

Now the guilt. Know it or not, you have benefited tremendously from our past negotiations, just as you will benefit from this round. Your salary is much higher than it would otherwise be right now (believe it or not). Your benefits are better. You have a matching 401k contribution to count on. And you have some rights that, one hopes, you will never need to exercise. If you do, a pretty solid contract, a lawyer and an organization made up of your colleagues is right there behind you.

All of these goodies are like dishes at a potluck, where we all enjoy the fruits of the work of those who contributed. Nobody minds if someone comes to a potluck once or twice without bringing anything, but after a while, after a few years, it begins to appear unfair that only a few bring food and others show up with nothing but their appetites. Even if people don't talk stink, they might still think stink.

Teachers are pretty good at sensing what's fair and what's not. Having eaten the dishes of others, you now need to contribute your own. Jump into the pool: volunteer to serve on the Rep. Assembly.

— Jan Becket, unit 11/12

Who will take my place?

“Who will take my place?” This is the question that the current KSFA leadership is asking itself. It is the quiet mantra that helps us through the challenges we face as Executive Board and Representative Assembly members. Many currently in leadership positions have been there since the pre-union Na Kumu struggles when we had a common and identifiable “enemy”. We have persevered through multiple, contentious CBA negotiations and frustrating grievances. A few of us have fallen by the wayside and, thankfully, others have stepped up to take their places. The reward for our efforts is the affirmation and thanks we receive from our membership.

The challenges facing KSFA now are subtler and the KS leadership seems more benevolent. But, as recent negotiations and grievances have shown, there is still a need for KSFA. KSFA and Na Kumu are the most consistent “teacher advocates” for our membership. Everyone focuses on the students and the administrative leadership has their “teams” but we alone, are left to support each other.

Na Kumu works to preserve the intellectual freedoms we deserve as professional educators. KSFA is here to fight for competitive professional wages and fair and reasonable working conditions. This includes a viable and workable grievance process that actually serves to foster communication

and resolve problems. Again in the most recent non-renewal, we have seen that the KS leadership is unwilling to have its decisions looked at on merit. Instead, it relies on legal trip wires to stop the process short of a resolution that both parties can agree on.

How can you help? Get involved. KSFA is about lokahi (unity, agreement, accord, unison and harmony). KSFA is a way (mechanism?) to stay in touch with what is happening on our campus as a whole, not just as discrete units and departments, but also as united KES-KMS-KHS faculty members that know and care about each other and about the diversity of our roles as educators.

Many in our membership only think of us when they look at the salary schedule or the monthly dues deduction on the pay stub. Perhaps they wonder “what are they up to now” or “why do we need a union”? Others look to the union only in times of personal concern. Those who are involved as officers or serve as representatives know the answers to these questions and listen to the concerns.

Your involvement in KSFA is needed to ensure our vitality and viability in the future. We often hear this in the context of preserving the Hawaiian culture, but it is equally true for us if we hope to continue as a representative body that truly serves our membership.

— Don Kroessig, Unit 7/8

The Representative Assembly needs one representative for every ten teachers at each unit, according to our constitution. Here are the people who have agreed to serve for the next two years. Jump on board!

Unit KES (Congrats!)

Moana Leong, Winona Farias
Bette Savini, Lynn Tagami,
Diane Tanner-Cazinha

Unit 7/8 (2 more needed)

Mike Ching, Don Kroessig,
Grace Omura

Unit 9/10 (2 more needed)

Bill Follmer, Tom Gardipee,
Warren Takata

Unit 11/12 (6 more needed)

Jan Becket