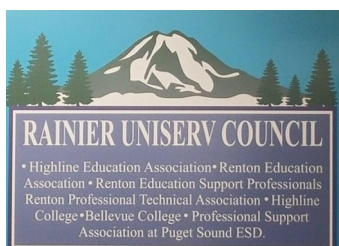


Spring 2016



# Rainier UniServ Council Newsletter

## Rainier UniServ Council

575 Andover Park West,  
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206-246-9308

Council President

[Jeb Binns](#)

Council Vice President

[Becca Ritchie](#)

WEA Board Members

[Deb Strayer](#)

[MaryJo McLaughlin](#)

UniServ Directors

[Elizabeth Beck](#)

[Alan Sutliff](#)

UniServ Field Assistant

[Lori Fleck](#)

## Upcoming Dates

WEA Representative

Assembly—Spokane

April 7-9

Educator Forum Night—

(School to Prison Pipeline)

April 14—5-8 PM

Pre-Retirement Seminar—

Shared Conference Room

April 15-16

Teaching Equity Conference—

Highline College

April 23

## Rainier Goes to the Thunderbirds Game Against Tri-Cities

By Heather Szczepanski

As a HUGE Thunderbirds fan, I was beyond excited to receive an email saying that tickets would be offered to members throughout the Rainier UniServ Council.

Emails started going around Nelsen Middle School like wild-fire and the next thing I knew, there was a whole group of teachers from Nelsen attending the game. I couldn't wait!

On March 1st, members from across the Rainier UniServ Council met at the Showare Center to enjoy what would turn out to be an amazing game of hockey. Not only did I get to

spend time with people I really care about from my school, but I was also able to get to know different people from around the council! The game consisted of smiles, hugs, laughter, and even talk of cats (during the intermission of course!).

Seven Thunderbird goals later, the game was over and I was exhausted from laughter and a fun night with such amazing people. I cannot wait for another opportunity to spend down time with my co-workers and friends!

Thank you Rainier UniServ Council for a fantastic night!



## Contingent Faculty

By Chace Stiehl, BCAHE President

Once upon a time contingent faculty or “part-timers” were a small portion of the teaching faculty in Higher Ed. They were contingent, based on need. The needs were usually quite specialized or else related to spikes in enrollment. Contingency, quite simply, was a practical tool for dealing with temporary issues related to enrollment management and instruction. What was once a practical tool, used as needed, has largely become a method of exploitation.

The State Board for Community and Technical Colleges’ (SBCTC) 2013-2105 *Operating Budget Policy Level Request Recommendation Summaries* states, “As state resources have diminished over the last four years, Washington’s community and technical colleges – similar to national trends – have come to rely on part-time faculty as a way to maximize instructional output while lowering costs.” The same document notes that “part-time” faculty teaching full-time were on average paid 62% of what a full time instructor was paid. The lingo itself at time seems a bizarre form of Orwellian doublespeak. “How,” you might ask, “can part-time faculty be teaching full time... Wouldn’t that just make them full-time?” In a normal world the answer would be “Yes!”. In Higher Ed the resounding answer is “NO!”.

A more detailed and honest answer to your question would describe it as a two-tiered faculty consisting of tenure-track and non-tenure track instructors. Tenure-track faculty make the “full-time” rate, while their non-tenure track counterparts most often make “part-time” rates (62% of full-time on average). The only major difference

between their jobs is that tenure-track faculty are expected to engage in governance and service, non-tenure track are often just encouraged to do so. Of course, most of this activity for non-tenure track faculty goes unpaid or poorly paid. Of course their *commitment* to the institution is often measured by their involvement, and it may also give them a leg-up in the competition for their jobs that occurs every quarter for most “part-timers”. Even if the difference in governance and service duties are accounted for, the SBCTC recognizes that “part-timers” are underpaid. It seems even the SBCTC is growing increasingly uneasy as “part-timers” understandably become increasingly aggrieved.

As the state has shirked its responsibilities to fund education and neglected the CTC system the percentage of the faculty now finding themselves in “part-time” status has routinely been upwards of 60% in recent years at Bellevue College. This means that hundreds of faculty members are working at reduced rates with little to no security. The average contingent faculty member lives quarter-to-quarter and makes less for doing very similar work to their peers. The only real question is “What makes them *contingent*?” It isn’t a question about whether or not they are needed. It might be more appropriate to describe Higher Ed’s business model as contingent on their exploitation.



## Sparks

By Jeb Binns

In mid-February twenty-two early career educators from RESP, REA, and HEA took part in Rainier's annual Sparks training in Poulsbo, WA. The "Sparkies" were treated to a variety of professional development ranging from which professional certificate to pursue, to a communication protocol to use in buildings between staff members or with students. Attendees were also led in an extensive "Know Your Contract" section led by their local affiliate Presidents and UniServ directors. But all was not hard work! On Saturday evening "Sparkies" participated in the annual Sparks Night Out scavenger

hunt and social. It was a great event bringing together new educators and sparking their interest in the offerings of their association and understanding one aspect of their association membership.



## Re-Ignite

By Amy Hepburn

Over twenty Rainier members, classified and certificated, and several ESA's from Federal Way attended this year's Re-Ignite Conference at the Cedarbrook Conference Center. These members with 10+ years of experience joined in a day of reconnecting with their Union, and were treated to a wide variety of workshops and opportunities to "re-ignite" their engagement in WEA, and in our Rainier UniServ. The Financial Planning workshop focused on a practical understanding of our retirement plans and of the realities of retirement planning. Participants had important discussions during the Social Media Do's and Don'ts Workshop, which was very enlightening. We refreshed our knowledge about the structure of our Union, from the NEA to WEA to UniServ, to local

associations, through a fun game of matching roles and names of elected and staff positions throughout the organization...designed by the highly creative Becca Ritchie, VP of the Rainier UniServ Board of Directors. We laughed and struggled in a session to find Work and Life Balance in our VERY busy lives, and most would undoubtedly agree that this remains a work in progress! And our intrepid members jumped into a hands-on activity to learn how to craft New Business Items for the April WEA Representative Assembly, thus learning more about WEA PAC and the ways we can influence our Union and our State. We finished with a much-needed Yoga session! Thank you to everyone who worked hard to make this a success, and Thank You to all who participated!



## Endorsement Convention

By Becca Ritchie

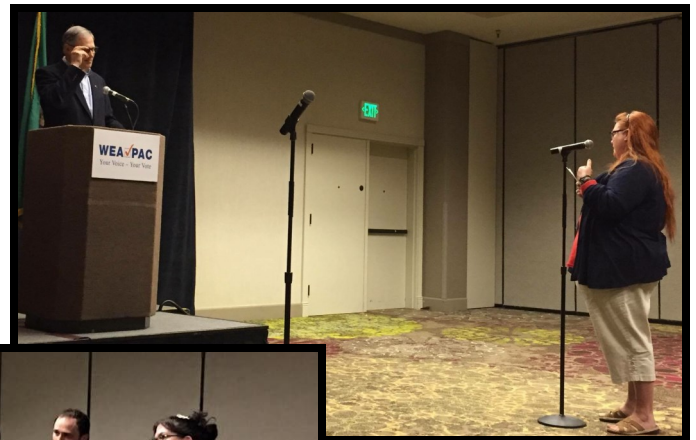
Members from the Rainier UniServ Council volunteered their day to attend the WEA Recommendation Convention on March 19th at the Tukwila Double Tree.

All candidates for statewide positions were invited to attend to speak to the WEA representatives. RUC WEA PAC chair Julianna Dauble and RUC president Jeb Binns set Rainier's process for WEA PAC members to attend and decided that anyone who answered the request to submit their letter of interest would be invited and the 65 votes that Rainier would cast would be decided by all who attended and not just delegates. They felt this was a much more inclusive way to make sure member's voices were heard.

The participants listened to speeches from each candidate. Candidates were then asked questions by WEA President Kim Mead, as well as from WEA PAC members. After that, candidates were asked to leave the room and the participants had an opportunity to speak on behalf of their chosen candidate. Following that, each council had caucus time to discuss how to cast their votes. Once it was decided, Julianna entered the councils votes in the computer.

The will of this body was to recommend Jay **Inslee** for Governor, **Cyrus Habib** for Lt. Governor and **Chris Reykdal** for Superintendent of Public Instruction.

Many thanks to the Rainier participants, for giving up their Saturday so that our members voices were represented.



## NEA Board Director: Martha Patterson

The Polar Vortex and the NEA Board of Directors meeting all descended upon Washington DC in February in one fell swoop! Bundled up against the biting cold, we descended upon Capitol Hill Thursday morning to meet with our state representatives and senators to lobby them on the Child Nutrition Re-Authorization Act, Student Loan Refinancing, and the Fiscal Year 2017 budget. The entire Washington delegation met with retiring Rep. Jim McDermott. Rep. Rick Larsen also working on his own Child Nutrition bill for Summer Meals, to provide meals for students during the summer months. Rep. Dave Reichert (R) sat with us agreeing on the importance of funding programs for our neediest students. Currently the budget funds Health, Human Services and Education at pre sequestration levels; Rep. Reichert, who has long been a friend of WEA and NEA said, "You cannot be an ideologue and accomplish anything". Most of our legislators support student loan refinancing for undergraduate borrowers at 3.86%. And Rep. Kilmer gleefully shared that while his 106 year old grandma was first using Facebook, she was proud to learn that Kilmer received an "A" report card from the NEA!

Fridays meeting included discussions on the implementation of ESSA. The president of the Flint, Michigan education association shared the communities response and the impact of the water crisis on members and students. WEA's own Debby Chandler, president of the National ESP's, shared that for the first time, the National ESP of the Year will be honored in May at the White House! The Board was updated on the presidential campaign, and the importance of electing a candidate who can take down the Koch Brothers. The Board began work on reviewing Constitutional Bylaw amend-

ments submitted for RA. For the Women's Observance, we were honored hear from Anna Jones, a mother from the Bronzeville neighborhood in Chicago who along with 11 others, went on a 34 day hunger fast to protest the closing of the lone neighborhood high school. During the intro, it was shared that one of her children was in a kindergarten class of 54! At Friday evening's NEA Gala at the National Building Museum. Forty two educators were honored for teaching excellence, including kindergarten teacher Gail Yamro from Edmonds, WA, a 40 year veteran! Saturdays meeting was full with a two hour observation and conversation on institutional racism, led by Lenworth Gunther. The day ended with a legal update and discussion on how the Friedrich's decision may impact NEA's budget. Late afternoon, as news of Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia's passing was announced, NEA legal counsel shared that with the conservative justice's passing, it may result in a split decision in the Friedrichs case, in which the lower court decision would be affirmed, which was in favor of unions.



## Message from your RUC President



..Happy Spring Rainier! Now that we have survived the last deluge of the winter (fingers

crossed) it's time to turn our focus to spring, re-growth, rejuvenation, and perhaps a bit of sunshine. But apparently we will not find our sunshine coming out of Olympia. It is another session of kicking the McCleary can down the road, one that saw legislation pass supporting (most likely unconstitutionally) the twelve hundred students in charter schools rather than the 1.2 million students in public schools, and little to no meaningful progress on addressing the crippling teacher shortage. We must look for our sun in the fall when we will mail in or drop off our ballots in droves. Elections have consequences, as you well know, and I urge you to make sure you fulfill your civic duty to vote and select officials who have the best interest of Washington's public school students at heart.

Earlier this month I was thrilled to host "Rainier on Ice" at the Showare Center where the Seattle T-Birds obliterated the Tri-City Americans 7-2. Not only did we have 45 Rainier members and their plus ones but we also witnessed two hat-tricks! Feedback from the event was wildly positive so look for more member events in the near future hopefully involving the Mariners and Sounders.

I am looking forward to our Representative Assembly in April where roughly 1,000 educators will gather to help set the focus and direction of the Washington Education Association for the 16-17 school year. I want to thank the nearly forty Rainier members who are giving up a big chunk of their Spring Break to do this important work. Please thank your colleagues who are giving of their time to make the trek to Spokane.

I wish you a wonderful final quarter. It's my pleasure and honor to serve as your Council President.

In Solidarity,  
Jeb

