



California Federation of Teachers
American Federation of Teachers, AFL-CIO

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UC-AFT Leader Helps Lead National Campaign for Higher Education Funding

Sacramento, CA – The California Federation of Teachers (CFT), AFT, AFL-CIO, today released a statement by Bob Samuels, UC-AFT president, a leader of the nation-wide Campaign for the Future of Higher Education.

“The Campaign for the Future of Higher Education has begun a drive to involve our nation’s college and university faculty in the search for better solutions than funding cuts, privatization, soaring tuition and academic shut-downs. Our nation has arrived at our current quandary for a variety of reasons. One is surely a failure of imagination, a set of assumptions that profoundly limits our ability to think about possibilities.

“In the United States, quality public higher education was once accessible to most Americans able to benefit from it. The way it worked was simple—taxpayers funded public colleges and universities sufficiently so that students who were prepared to work a few hours a week could complete their degrees in a relatively short time with a minimum amount of debt,” said Samuels. “For those with even greater need, government provided state grants and Pell grants. This system worked well for decades and opened the door to opportunity for millions of Americans.

“Now, we are told we can no longer afford this. We believe that is wrong.

“Three working papers released by the Campaign for the Future of Higher Education aim at stimulating a more thoughtful, fact-based, national conversation about paying for higher education in this country. Two of the CFHE working papers address the common assumption that funding higher education through public means rather than through skyrocketing tuition is simply impossible.

“My paper explores the notion of free higher education and examines what the actual cost to provide such an ideal would be. I argue that we could make big strides towards free public higher education by reallocating current governmental expenditures for higher education and by eliminating regressive tax breaks.”

(More at: <http://ucaft.org/category/issues/why-college-education-could-be-free>)

For more information please visit: www.cft.org