



From the President...

by Debby Weintraub, PRO President

COVID, like an uninvited self-absorbed dinner guest, has yet to leave despite concerted attempts to urge its departure. In fact, it has kept all of us at a distance, and continues to, if not dominate most conversations, interject often enough to keep us reminded of its long and unwanted presence in our homes. And, while extending its visit, this guest has exposed some very unwelcome truths, revealing the magnitude of fundamental inequities we have been living with, from access to food, housing, education, health care, and employment, to treatment by police of Black citizens. All these inequities are so intrinsically linked it is difficult to separate one issue from another. But as PRO's President I want to focus on PRO's mission in relation to the health crisis we are currently facing.



The pandemic has laid bare the devastation that comes from years of inadequate health care for a great number of families and has exposed the limited medical resources available in many American communities. It has made it impossible to ignore the broken health care system we have and the urgent need to reform it. For me, that reform means supporting high quality, affordable and easily accessible health care for everyone, some may refer to this as Universal Health Care. This public health care crisis reminds us that our own health is dependent on the good health of all the members of our extended communities.

I was thrilled when California was holding down hospitalization numbers, and then thrown into a dark mood when our numbers spiked in mid-July. I felt like we were never going to come out from under the curse of COVID. I read the data and saw that my particular zip code had very few cases; I live in Rockridge in Oakland. But two zip codes away, in East Oakland, people were being hospitalized and dying in high numbers. It did not comfort me that the area I lived in was pretty

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Upcoming PRO Event:

Annual Membership Meeting on Zoom

**Thursday, November 12
11:30 AM - 1 PM**



See details on page 3

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PCCD Board Elections 2020

There are three Peralta District Board seats that will be filled by voters this November. Two current members of the Board, Meredith Brown from Area 2 and Karen Weinstein from Area 6 are not running for re-election. In each case there is only one candidate for the vacated seat. In Area 2, Kevin Jenkins is the candidate and in Area 6 it is Dyana Delfin Polk. The only contested seat is in Area 1 where incumbent Bill Withrow is being challenged by Jeff Heyman, Peralta's former Executive Director of Public Information, Communications & Media who retired in 2018. Below are short statements from each of the candidates.

Area 1

Bill Withrow

It has been a distinct honor and privilege to serve as a Trustee on the Governing Board of the Peralta Colleges for more than fifteen years. This is a tremendous institution, composed of an outstanding faculty and staff, that is pursuing a mission to provide outstanding post-secondary education to the residents of our six city Service Area.



(Continued on page 9)

Peralta Retirees Organization

**1250-I Newell Ave., #162
Walnut Creek, CA 94596**

<http://www.peraltaretirees.org>

President - Debby Weintraub

info@peraltaretirees.org

Vice-President - Bruce Jacobs

Secretary - Judith Cohen

Treasurer - Bruce Jacobs (acting)

Past President - Jerry Herman

Board of Directors

Karen Anderson

Alex Pappas

The Peralta Retiree

Editor - Bruce Jacobs

brucejacobs@gmail.com

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Volume 17 Number 1

PRO Election 2020

Nominations Now Open

The PRO Board opened nominations for this year's Board election at the August 26 Board meeting. The following people, all of whom currently serve on the Board, were nominated for two-year terms at the Board meeting.

- Karen Anderson
- Judith Cohen
- Bruce Jacobs
- Alex Pappas
- Debby Weintraub

Additional seats are currently vacant.

Members are encouraged to submit additional nominations by emailing the nomination to info@peraltaretirees.org (please make the subject of your email "Nomination for Board"), or by mailing the nominee's name to the PRO Postal Box (484 Lake Park Ave #598 · Oakland, CA 94610-2730).

Nominators must include their names and should have verified that the nominee is willing to serve if elected. Nominees and nominators must be current in their payment of PRO dues (through the end of 2020). Self-nominations are permitted. Nominations will close at the general business meeting on November 12 (see page 3 for information about the meeting).

If there are more than eleven nominees an election will be conducted by mail during December. If there are eleven or fewer nominees the general membership meeting will be asked to elect the nominees by acclamation. The new Board members will start serving at the December 2020 meeting.



PRO's Annual Membership Meeting **on Zoom**



Thursday ■ November 12

11:30 AM – 1 PM

To receive the Zoom invitation email, please let us know that you want to participate by sending an email to:

peraltameeting@gmail.com

In that email include your name and the email address that you want the Zoom invitation sent to.

What To Expect At This Year's PRO Annual Meeting

For the last 15 years PRO has hosted a luncheon as part of our annual business meeting where we all got a chance to greet old colleagues in a convivial atmosphere. This year, because of the Covid 19 pandemic, that will be impossible.

But the PRO Board has decided to host a Zoom meeting on **Thursday, November 12 from 11:30 am to 1 pm** for those who would like a chance to visit with other retirees and have an opportunity to hear how and what people are doing during this difficult time.

If you haven't used Zoom before, here's what to expect:

Shortly before the meeting's date and time, you will receive an email which will include a link to the Zoom meeting.

To ensure receiving this invitation email, please let us know that you want to participate by sending an email to:

peraltameeting@gmail.com

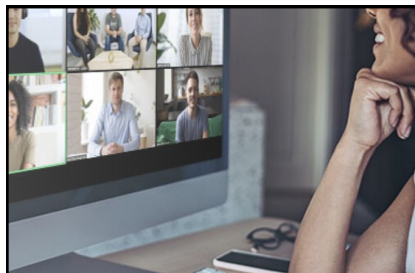
In that email include your name and the email address that you want the invitation sent to.

When you get the invitation, you will notice that there is a link to a web site. All you have to do is

click on the link at the indicated time. (Note: the email will include a Meeting ID which you may have to enter in your computer in order to access PRO's meeting.)

The Zoom Meeting

Once you're part of the Zoom Meeting, you will be able to participate fully in the Membership Meeting.



At this time, we know that we will conduct the PRO election for Board members. There will be announcements and updates about the Peralta Board election and a report on the effort by the State to send a special trustee to monitor the District.

The PRO Board is also planning additional activities which, as they become finalized, will be announced in emails to everyone for whom we have an email address. (If you received an email about the availability of this newsletter, we have your email address.)

We are looking forward to having lots of retirees attend this Zoom meeting!

Survivor Tips: What You Need to Know

By Bruce Jacobs

The death of a loved one is always difficult and dealing with the bureaucratic necessities during this trying time can be overwhelming. At the same time, it is often essential to take care of these matters to ensure the well-being of the survivor. (By a *survivor* I mean any person receiving medical benefits from Peralta based on the relationship with a retiree.) If you have adult children or someone who will be assisting the survivor after a death you want to assure that they know about the Peralta benefits to which the survivor is entitled as well as the information below.

It is important to prepare for the death of a retiree or a survivor by making sure beneficiary information is up-to-date, and that each knows the steps to be taken to assure continued medical and pension benefits.

What To Do Now

Make sure beneficiary information for all retirement

accounts as well as STRS and PERS is up-to-date. You can often check this online or by calling the company that holds the IRA, 401(k), 403(b), etc. accounts. There is an excellent article by SF Chronicle writer Kathleen Pender about advantages and disadvantages of various beneficiary choices for retirement accounts that includes information about recent changes in the law. If you have a tax advisor, you might also want to discuss this with him/her. (See <https://www.sfchronicle.com/business/networth/article/If-you-inherit-a-retirement-account-make-sure-15385544.php>)

Make sure both the retiree and any dependent know the procedures for getting Medicare reimbursement from the District. Full details of the procedure are on the PRO Website. (See <https://www.peraltaretirees.org/Docs/Medicare/mcreimb.htm>)

Compile a list of agencies and companies to be notified about the death of a retiree or a spouse (or domestic

(Continued on page 5)

Renewal Due for Retirees Whose Membership Expires at the End of 2020

If your PRO membership is about to expire (or has expired) you will receive an email letting you know that you need to renew for 2021. If you do not receive an email renewal notice by the end of October and you think your membership needs renewal you can send an inquiry email to: webmaster@peraltaretirees.org

Dues are \$20 for 1 year, \$55 for 3 years, \$80 for 5 years and \$250 lifetime.

It's easy to renew your membership in PRO. You can now pay your dues for 2021:

- securely by credit card at the PRO web site (using PayPal).
Just go to: www.peraltaretirees.org/index.htm
- by mailing your check to PRO, 484 Lake Park Ave #598 · Oakland, CA 94610-2730

(Survivor Guide...Continued from page 4)

partner) with phone numbers and, if applicable, account numbers. The list should include:

- Any agency from which a pension is being paid (Social Security, STRS, PERS, etc.)
- Medicare
- The Peralta District Benefits Office
- Any company that holds a retirement account in the deceased's name (IRA, 401(k), 403(b), etc.)

If the survivor is a dependent be sure the survivor knows about the option the retiree chose (if any) for benefits after the retiree's death.

... it is essential that the retiree's survivor, when notifying the District about the retiree's death, let the District know that the survivor wishes to continue receiving Peralta medical benefits.

When A Retiree's Dependent Dies

If a retiree's dependent dies, the retiree should notify all agencies and companies on the list in number (3) above. This should be done within a few weeks of the death. Some agencies (STRS, for example) may allow online notification. Usually they will require submission of a death certificate (or a copy).

If the retiree is the beneficiary of any retirement accounts, be sure to consider the tax consequences of closing the account. It is best to talk to a tax advisor or read about tax consequences online. There are excellent guides available online that deal with inherited retirement accounts. These are often provided by investment companies (see, for example, <https://www.schwab.com/public/file/P-1625576> or <https://www.bankrate.com/retirement/inherited-ira-rules/>).

When The Retiree Dies

When the retiree dies, the survivor should follow all of the steps listed above. *However, it is essential that the retiree's survivor, when notifying the District about the retiree's death, let the District know that the survivor wishes to continue receiving Peralta medical benefits.* Dependents are entitled to receive Peralta medical benefits for the rest of their lives (spouse/ domestic partner) or until age 26 (dependent children). However, *the benefits will no longer be free.*

To continue receiving the Peralta benefit, the survivor must pay a monthly premium. The fee will depend on

whether the survivor is or is not on Medicare, whether they are enrolled in Blue Cross or Kaiser, and how many survivors there are. The premium will change from year to year and will need to be paid monthly.

If the survivor chooses to "buy into" the benefits, they will be eligible for the same benefits they received when the retiree was alive including reimbursement for any Medicare premiums. The same rules for submission of requests for reimbursement will apply as did before the retiree died (why it is important the survivor knows how to do this). The survivor is also eligible to change coverage (from Blue Cross to Kaiser or *vice versa*) during open enrollment or after a qualifying

event (e.g., moving out of a Kaiser coverage area). *It is essential that payments be made on time.* It is probably best to arrange this as an automatic payment from a bank account to avoid any problems with staying current.

If the survivor decides not to buy into the Peralta benefits, it is vital to know that this decision cannot be reversed later. Any decision not to buy into Peralta's benefits should be carefully thought out and researched since these benefits are extremely comprehensive and a comparable alternative would be hard to find in the current marketplace.

Although the people working in the Benefits Office in Peralta may try to be helpful, it is best not to rely on them to get information about the survivor's rights and obligations. The office is frequently understaffed and turnover is normal. Also, some information may vary depending on the retiree's date of retirement which can result in the office providing inaccurate information. For best results, the survivor should know before calling the District what the entitlements are.

Yes on 15

Proposition Funds Schools and Community Colleges

The following is excerpted from a fact sheet provided by the California Federation of Teachers.

Proposition 15, the California Schools and Local Communities Funding Act of 2020, is fair and balanced reform that raises revenues to invest in schools and vital services for our local communities.

1. **Prop 15 reassesses only commercial/industrial properties:** The reassessment of only commercial and industrial properties to fair market value means no more property tax loopholes for the richest corporate property owners to avoid paying their fair share. The richest 10% of corporate properties will provide 92% of the revenue for Prop 15. Reassessments will be conducted on a regular, ongoing basis, and are estimated to generate as much as \$12 billion annually in new revenues when fully implemented.
2. **Prop 15 specifically exempts all residential properties** and agricultural land, maintaining full Prop 13 protections for homeowners, renters, and agriculture: No residential properties will be reassessed, whether rental residential (apartments and rental homes), homeowner or condominium owner, or mobile home. It exempts all agricultural land from reassessment used for producing commercial commodities or for agricultural production. It also exempts open space, so that farmland, which is held without production would also be exempt.
3. **Additional funding for every school district in California:** 40% of Prop 15 revenue goes directly to schools, with 89% of this dedicated to K-12 and 11% for Community Colleges. State politicians can't take it away. New School Revenues Over Prop 98: New revenues will be pooled statewide and deposited into the Local School and Community College Property Tax Fund to ensure that the local schools and community colleges portion of new revenues is considered additional to all other funding, over and above the Proposition 98 guarantee. New School Revenues to Advance Equity: The school share of new reve-

Prop 15 reassesses only commercial/industrial properties. It specifically exempts all residential properties and provides additional funding for every school district in California.

nues will be allocated to advance social equity according to the local control funding formulas for all schools, which provide additional funding for districts with large populations of low-income students, English-learners, and foster youth.

4. **Invests in essential workers and local services:** 60% of Prop 15 revenues go to cities, counties and special districts to give local communities desperately needed resources so essential services and frontline workers can respond to current challenges and prepare for future crises, whether from a wildfire, pandemic, or earthquake.
5. **Cuts taxes for small businesses:** Prop 15 protects small businesses and cuts their taxes by exempting businesses operated out of a home and business owning \$3,000,000 or less of nonresidential commercial property. It also exempts all businesses from the business personal property tax on up to \$500,000 of equipment, computers, and fixtures greatly benefiting the vast majority of businesses that lease but not do own their property.
6. **Supports economic and racial equity:** Prop 15 makes sure schools with the greatest needs get the most help and gives local communities critically needed resources to deal with the unequal impacts of COVID-19, unemployment, and housing costs on communities of color.
7. **Restores balance to the property tax:** Since Prop 13 passed, the residential share of property taxes has skyrocketed from 55% to 72% and the nonresidential commercial share has fallen. Meanwhile we're paying more in fees, fines, and other taxes. Prop 15 rebalances the scales.
8. **Transparency and Accountability:** Public disclosure is required by all entities (i.e., local education agencies, community colleges, counties, cities and counties, cities and special districts) on an annual basis as to how new revenues from Prop 15 are spent. The measure mandates that public disclosures be widely available to the public and written in a manner that is easily understood.

(From the President ...Continued from page 1)

healthy. In fact, it only broke my heart and angered me to discover this lethal disparity. I know my neighbors and I do not live in a bubble; we often interact with people from many nearby zip codes: at a grocery store, at a needed on-site medical or dental visit, or picking up take-out food to name a few.

I know, too, that there are large numbers of students and part-time employees in Peralta who have little or no health care, and that the full-time post-July 2004 hires will retire with limited medical care options. Therefore, I think it is time to expand PRO's mission to include fighting the health care crisis COVID has so cruelly and universally exposed.

Without compromising what has been our primary mission, safeguarding our own lifetime benefits, PRO could do more. Here are a few suggestions:

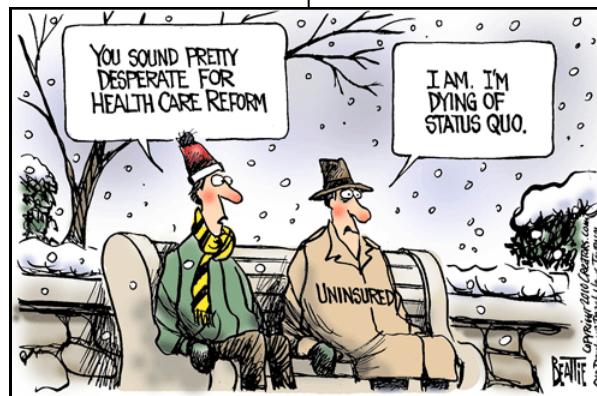
- PRO could expand its purpose to advocate for better health care for all. For example, we can use our collective strength to take public positions, take opportunities to speak out or become involved in campaigns that would result in improved health care for all.
- Voting Yes for Proposition 15, that requires relooking at the tax system in California and making corporations pay their fair share of taxes, could result in much needed tax dollars — some of which could be used to help provide better health care.
- Electing people that support universal health care or extending the Affordable Care Act to government positions on both a local and national level could be another form of engagement for PRO.

I want to see PRO commit to tackling the larger social and political issues of providing affordable and accessible health care for all Americans while at the same time protecting our own retiree benefits. It feels remiss not to do so at this time.

COVID has demanded that we all look inside ourselves and ask what we are willing to do to not only keep ourselves and our family safe, but how we will keep our communities healthy too. Being more concerned about

the health and daily lives of people all around us could be a silver lining of the Corona virus. I wear a mask, not just to protect myself. In fact, I primarily wear it to protect others. I want others to do the same, to show me and my family the same regard. I want, too, for PRO to put on our metaphorical masks and do our part to protect everyone's health. Let's commit to being more involved in advocacy for health care for all.

Since what I am proposing is adding to the mission of PRO, I hope at least some of you will be willing to be part of a dialogue which can help determine the direction PRO goes in the months and years ahead. I invite you to respond to my column by writing your views and concerns in the newsletter or by contacting the Board and/or me personally. I am very interested in what PRO members think. This column is me grappling with what I hope will be a post pandemic world and wondering how an organization I give my time to can be part of keeping American (and global) communities healthy. I'd like your feedback.



COVID has also added new challenges as to how we operate as an organization. The Board has been meeting via Zoom since March and will continue to do so into the fore-

seeable future. **The Board agreed to hold our 2020 annual membership meeting over Zoom, as well, on Thursday, November 12, 2020 from 11:30- 1:00.** We are working on interesting and fun ways to gather everyone over Zoom — there are details about how we hope to get you all connected to the Membership Meeting on Page 3 of this newsletter.

This new electronic way of gathering could enable even more people to join the membership meeting. And going forward, even when we are able to break bread together in person, we could consider having a way to “zoom” in members who would not otherwise be able to make it to the membership meeting in person.

The Board is looking forward to seeing folks on November 12. We are eager to connect as an organization and celebrate the friendships so many of us have with one another.

Be well,
Debby

The Forgotten History of the Radical ‘Elders of the Tribe’

This article is excerpted from one that originally appeared in the NY Times.

By Susan J. Douglas

The Gray Panthers staged rowdy protests against ageism and found common cause with young activists on everything from health care to racial justice. What can they teach us today?

By the mid-1970s, she was a national celebrity. She had speaking engagements all over the country; she traveled 100,000 miles annually, giving at least 200 talks a year. She was all over the TV: “The Phil Donahue Show,” the “Today” show and “The Tonight Show” with Johnny Carson, multiple times. Media monikers for her included “ball of fire,” “dynamo” and the now-problematic “feisty.” In 1978, the World Almanac named her one of the 25 most influential women in the United States. Shortly before she died in 1995, ABC News profiled her as its “Person of the Week.”



Maggie Kuhn

She was Maggie Kuhn, the woman who, 50 years ago, founded the Gray Panthers, a movement to encourage activism — sometimes radical activism — among the country’s older people. Today, both Kuhn and her movement have been all but forgotten. But their mission is worth remembering, commemorating and perhaps even resurrecting, especially in the present moment.

Then, as now, was a time of intense activism. Inspired by demonstrations on behalf of racial and gender equality, and against the Vietnam War, Kuhn insisted it was time that the issues facing older people be included in any social reform agenda. Her passion was to shatter every stereotype she could about older people and, as a lifelong feminist, especially older women.

Infuriated by being forced out of her job at 65 (and even more irked that her parting gift was a sewing machine), and outraged by what gerontologists in the 1970s championed as “disengagement theory” — the notion that it was normal and natural for older people

to simply withdraw from society — she took on what was then, and still is, one of the most socially acceptable biases in our country: ageism.

Kuhn was not one to “disengage,” or as she put it, keep “out of the way, playing bingo and shuffleboard.” She was a galvanizing figure, and by the late 1970s, the Gray Panthers had 100,000 members in more than 30 states.

Their tactics combined often-rowdy public protests, political lobbying and grass-roots organizing. Dressed in Santa suits, they picketed a department store for its mandatory retirement policies the day before Christmas, holding signs charging that Santa was too old to work there. Taking on the American Medical Association’s neglect of older Americans’ health issues, they dressed as doctors and nurses and made a “house call” to its convention to issue a diagnosis that it lacked a heart.

Their greatest achievement was getting Congress, in 1986, to ban mandatory retirement ages for most jobs.

But the Gray Panthers also won greater accessibility in mass transportation, fought proposed cuts to Social Security and Medicare, exposed abuses in nursing homes and, ahead of their time, pressed for government-subsidized universal health care.



Kuhn also railed against the rampant negative stereotypes about older people in the media, charging, in testimony before Congress, that “old people are depicted as dependent, powerless, wrinkled babies.” So the Panthers monitored how older people were portrayed on television — if they appeared at all — and then lambasted network executives for demeaning caricatures, and got some eliminated.

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(PCCD Board Continued from page 2)

I am very proud of the accomplishments that we have achieved in terms of student success.

Our students that transfer to four year colleges have been found to be substantially better prepared for upper division courses than students that took their lower division courses at the four year schools.

The feedback from employers, with respect to students who achieved certificates from our Career Technical Education programs, is extremely positive.

The feedback from older students, who augmented their skillsets for promotional opportunities in their current occupations, is also extremely positive.

I have greatly enjoyed my role as the Chair of the Retirement Board and the leadership role of protecting the programs for Retiree Healthcare (OPEB). My extensive background as a Wealth Management Executive, in the Capital Markets arena, has been put to good use.

I am pursuing re-election in the hope that my years of experience, in both the public and private sectors, will continue to bring value to our institution in the development and monitoring of policies for the colleges. My website is billwithrow4trustee.com. I hope to have your support and vote on November 3rd.

Jeff Heyman

Jeff is running on a slate to bring reform to the troubled Peralta Community College District. He brings more than 18 years of on-the-ground experience at the District leading a diverse, student-focused department and teaching journalism at Laney College.



The Peralta Colleges have been reeling from years of Board and administrative mismanagement. Fiscal misappropriations have resulted in tens of millions of dollars disappearing from college classrooms. The State's Financial Crisis & Management Assistance Team had to step in to quell the out-of-control spending.

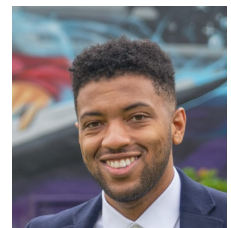
The Peralta Colleges have been put on probation for the second time in ten years by the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges. And, a new Chancellor hired by the Board to clean up the District, resigned after only nine months on the job, issuing a scath-

ing letter outlining the Board's dysfunction and inability to follow its own policies.

He asserts that, "I've thrown my hat in the ring because I care deeply for our students and they deserve more than this from our elected officials. Every dollar that has been misspent by this Board is a dollar less that goes into our classrooms to educate our students, depriving them of the opportunities they need to succeed." He became so concerned with the situation at Peralta that he filed a whistleblower complaint in 2017 prior to his retirement. He added, "I intend to work to clean up the financial and administrative mismanagement that I witnessed and to ensure that our students get the education they deserve – and what our taxpayers are paying for."

Area 2**Kevin Jenkins**

I am a proud native of Oakland. I graduated from Oakland High School. I have a 6-year old son, Elijah, who I am proud to say that I am raising in my hometown as a 2nd generation Oaklander. As an alum of Peralta Colleges, I understand the benefits provided by community colleges. From working in collaboration with the District, I understand areas where the district can be more efficient and responsive to students. I have worked in local government for many years and I understand how to create interjurisdictional partnerships that will help the district better serve the residents of Area 2 of our community. I currently serve as the Vice-Chair of the Peralta Bond Oversight Committee. For over a decade, I've worked in partnership with many Community Based Organizations in varying capacities and these projects have allowed me to build strong relationships within the community. I am confident that I can rely on these community partnerships to help me build upon the great work currently taking place at Peralta. I am grateful to Peralta for encouraging me to earn my bachelors and masters degrees. I look forward to working with the Peralta Retirees Organization.

**Area 6****Dyana Delfin Polk**

A third-generation Mexican-American, Dyana Delfin
(Continued on page 12)

Contribute To The PRO Scholarship Fund By Honoring Or Memorializing A Friend Or Loved One



Yes, I want to support the PRO Scholarship Fund with a contribution.
(Please print)

In honor of: On the occasion of: In memory of:

Please send acknowledgement card to:

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ **State:** _____

Zip: _____

Contributor's Name: _____

Contributor's Address: _____

City: _____ **State:** _____

Zip: _____

Make check payable to: **The Peralta Foundation—PRO**

Send to: PRO, 484 Lake Park Ave #598 · Oakland, CA 94610-2730

Contributions are tax deductible to the extent allowed by federal and state law.

Contributions Received for the PRO Scholarship Fund

In Memory of:	Contributor
Ida Pound	Tom and Barbara Southworth

Welcome New Member

*PRO welcomes the following retiree
who has recently joined.*

Louis Quindlen

IN MEMORIAM

The following Peralta retirees have passed away during the last months. PRO extends our deepest condolences to their family and loved ones.

**Lucy Kinchen
Kathleen Sullivan**

If you have any information about the passing or the serious illness of a Peralta retiree, please contact Bruce Jacobs at: brucejacobs@gmail.com or by writing to PRO, 484 Lake Park Avenue #598, Oakland, CA 94610-2730.

PRO's on Facebook: Sign Up For The New Group

by Judith Cohen

The Peralta Retirees Organization (PRO) has a Facebook group. Created in June as a private group, there are now over 120 members. The group is not limited to retirees and is open to Peraltans who are currently or were previously with the district.

We've had fun sharing old photos and it's a quick way to post news.

If you are a Facebook member, search for **Peralta**

Retirees Organization and request to join the group. All requests are reviewed by the site administrators for approval.

If you are new to Facebook, join through Facebook.com, selecting "Sign up" and entering your profile information. Personal information can be limited to minimal details and can be edited for privacy.

It's been great to hear from so many colleagues and to add new friends.

CalPERS and CalSTRS Under Pressure to Divest From Fossil Fuel Investments

This article is excerpted from the CSU-ERFSA web site. CSU ERFSA is the organization that represent emeritus and retired faculty and staff from the CSU system.

Recently CalPERS and CalSTRS, along with many other pension systems, have been under pressure to divest from fossil-fuel-related investments.

A recent article in the Calpensions blog reported that "CalPERS is stepping up its ESG [Environment, Social, and corporate Governance] investment program, despite evidence that funds based only on environmental, social and corporate governance strategies have tended to underperform." CalPERS has long been a leader in ESG investment strategies, having divested from most tobacco-related investments in 2000.

A state law passed in 2015 required both CalPERS and CalSTRS to divest from most coal investments, and by 2017 both systems essentially were out of thermal coal investments. Critics claimed that the systems lost money on account of these decisions, because the Trump Administration's actions reducing environmental restrictions on coal temporarily boosted the fortunes of the coal companies. However, rapid declines in the cost of competitive energy sources such as cleaner natural gas and clean renewables including solar and wind are pricing coal out of the market.

The scientific evidence connecting the burning of fossil fuels to long-term climate change has reached the point

where it essentially is irrefutable, and estimates of the time remaining to make changes in our energy use that will prevent irreversible climate change continue to decrease. This has prompted activist groups such as Fossil Free California to call upon CalPERS and CalSTRS to divest from all investments in fossil fuels as a means of hastening the conversion to renewable energy sources.



At a recent CalSTRS investment committee meeting, after a series of public comments urging the fund to divest from fossil fuel investments, the Chair of the CalSTRS investment committee said that "CalSTRS understands that climate change poses material risks to humanity, the world economy and our investment portfolio" "CalSTRS, as part of a global coalition of investors, is currently engaging with the major fossil-fuel companies to advance a transition to a low-carbon economy."

While CalPERS appears to be moving more slowly to address investment issues related to climate change, it has developed a sustainable investments program that includes addressing climate change.

For the moment climate activists are focusing their energy on CalSTRS, but as the effects of climate change become more and more pronounced in California, and as those effects become more costly for local and state government to address, the pressure on CalPERS to make investment decisions that hasten the transition to a carbon-free economy will mount.

(Gray Panthers ... Continued from page 8)

But crucial to the Panthers' progressive agenda were intergenerational alliances to promote issues that remain of pressing concern today: affordable housing, better access to health care, racial equality in employment, economic justice and environmental protection. Their motto was "age and youth in action." Kuhn was also outspoken about the ravages of racism and sexism.

"We're the elders of the tribe," she said. "We are concerned about the tribe surviving." Older Americans," she said, "are most free to transcend special interests and seek public interests." She shared her home in Philadelphia with "panther cubs," youthful activists, and argued against age-segregated housing that isolated older people from the young. She was especially perturbed by how the generations were pitted against each other in the media, with older people cast as getting benefits they didn't deserve.

So why have she and the Panthers been mostly forgotten? In part, it's because Kuhn was such a charismatic leader that once she died, the organization began to drift. In the decades since, there's been a shift away from activism on the part of older people and toward more institutionalized forms of political power; these, in turn, have certainly seen some success. Starting in the 1980s, the American Association of Retired Persons expanded and built up its lobbying activities. Now called simply AARP, it focuses almost exclu-

sively on issues affecting older people, like ageism and preserving their safety net. Its magazine combats stereotypes but emphasizes self-actualization, not activism, a safer and often more comfortable message. It does not seek to unite old and young in the name of broader social justice efforts.

... the need for intergenerational alliances not just to save Social Security, but also to achieve health care for all, to battle climate change, to combat race- and gender-based violence, to defy ageism and to push for a more equitable and humane economy is urgent.

Today we're seeing the limitations of that narrower agenda.

On the one hand, many older people, including older women, are more visible and powerful than ever before. "Disengaged"

is the last word you would use about Nancy Pelosi, Maxine Waters or Elizabeth Warren, not to mention Joe Biden.

On the other hand, the fate of nursing home residents in the coronavirus pandemic — a true debacle — has revealed the persistence of ageism. We've seen narratives about the pandemic pit old and young against each other, with the old cast as "expendable" and the young as "irresponsible."

Kuhn and the Gray Panthers have been so forgotten that it's almost difficult to recall a time when advocacy groups for older people pursued a broader vision of a just society. But the need for intergenerational alliances not just to save Social Security, but also to achieve health care for all, to battle climate change, to combat race- and gender-based violence, to defy ageism and to push for a more equitable and humane economy is urgent. Old people have been organized radicals before; they can be so again.

(PCCD Board Continued from page 9)

Polk was raised in Merced and Berkeley, California. A proud community college graduate, Dyana is the Associate Executive Director for HOMEY, a 21-year old youth-centered and violence prevention nonprofit that works with Bay Area youth to address systemic violence in low-income communities and provide a pathway for at-risk youth to pursue education. In her role, Dyana teaches Step to College, a partnership with San Francisco State University, managing an agency-wide budget, and fosters collaboration between HOMEY and community partners.



Dyana's work at HOMEY inspires her every day to advocate for students, especially low income students of color who often struggle in education. And she's seen as a college-level instructor that faculty do not receive adequate resources to be set up for success in helping students get through school. As Peralta Trustee, Dyana plans to be a champion for both students and the faculty who dedicate their lives to teaching and mentoring, and is passionate about education's power to transform lives. She is endorsed by current Peralta Trustees Karen Weinstein and Nicky Gonzalez Yuen, as well as many others.