

November 14, 2007

Dear AFT and NEA Members and Friends,

Mark your calendar and join us for the joint 2008 NEA/AFT higher education national conference, Friday-Sunday, March 28-30, 2008, in Washington, DC, at the Hilton Washington. We invite you to participate in our joint pre-conference sessions on Leadership Day, Thursday, March 27 as outlined in the attached agenda.

Our conference theme is “Building Alliances for Higher Education and the Public Good.” Our Friday dinner keynote speaker will be John Podesta, President and CEO of the Center for American Progress. Charles Ogletree, noted author and Professor of Law at Harvard University, will give the Saturday luncheon Polishook Lecture.

We will feature three main workshop tracks: collective bargaining/union management, policy and public support, and teaching and learning/professional development. Within those tracks we will have sessions that focus on specific issues related to contingent faculty, academic professionals, and education support professionals as well as general sessions that will look at the issues more broadly. We’ll explore questions such as:

- What are current and anticipated trends in higher education, and how are our locals dealing with them at the bargaining table?
- Where are our members working in coalitions, and who are these partners?
- What are our affiliates and their institutions doing to partner to promote faculty diversity?
- What are our affiliates and their institutions doing to bolster student achievement?
- What are our locals doing to respond to academic staffing trends in higher education?
- How do we build support for public funding of higher education? What’s an effective message to generate this support? What do state policymakers say about public funding?
- How are our locals dealing with threats to academic freedom?
- How are our locals mentoring new members and becoming bigger, stronger, and more effective?

Check out our respective Web sites for conference details (www.aft.org/higher_ed and www.nea.org/he), including on-line conference registration, links for making your hotel reservations as well as a schedule of pre-conference events such as Leadership Day and NEA’s National Council for Higher Education (NCHE) membership meeting and information about the conference itself.

Please note changes to conference registration and hotel reservation deadlines and costs:

Early bird conference registration will run *through February 1, 2008*, and costs \$125 for AFT and NEA members. Nonmembers pay \$200 through February 1. Rates increase after February 1 to \$150 and \$250 for members and nonmembers, respectively. In addition, the charge for Leadership Day is \$35. Conference registration covers all meals and breaks (except Saturday dinner) as well as conference materials.

We urge you to register for our joint conference and to get your hotel reservations as soon as possible. **PLEASE NOTE:** The Hilton Washington will guarantee the conference rate of \$179 plus tax per night for single and double occupancy through *February 13, 2008 only*.

We look forward to seeing you in Washington in March.

In Solidarity,

Sandra Schroeder
Chair, AFT Higher Education
Program and Policy Council
American Federation of Teachers

James Rice
President, National Council for Higher Education
National Education Association