



Colorado Connection

3rd Quarter 2023



President's Remarks

By: Bernadette Jiron

Welcome back, Educators, to a new school year!

We have a lot of challenges this school year, such as school without air-conditioning, school board elections, staff shortages to say a few.

Welcome to our new Executive Board Members:

Wayne Scott – CCSEA - Vice President

Christi Herrick -CCSEA - Vice President

Kathy Dorman – Executive Vice President -DCF

Lucy Squire – DCF - Vice President

Dee Smith – DFPNSE - Vice President

Kallie Leyba will be doing a dual role in AFT Colorado: Executive Director/Lobbyist Beginning now in August. I will be taking her place in the Denver Area Labor Federation beginning August 24th.

COPE: Committee on Political Education (COPE) - 100%of your contributions will be used in Colorado. Contributions are used to advocate for members' issues and to support candidates who support AFT Colorado. The last page of this newsletter contains the form to sign up. All donations automatically come out of your banking institutions.

If you have any questions about COPE, please email www.info@aftcolorado.org.

We are here for you!!!!!!

In Unity -

Bernadette (Bernie) Jiron
AFT Colorado President
303-744-9962



From your Executive Director

By: Kallie Leyba

I hope you are enjoying your summer as much as I am. I was one of the fortunate ones who got tickets to Taylor Swift (see the photo with my friend Julia – we were in Kansas City). The show exceeded all expectations and, on top of that, we learned that Swift gave each driver of her fleet of semi-trucks a “life-changing” bonus of \$100,000. If only all employers were so thoughtful! Unfortunately that’s not reality for most employees. But together we can improve our working conditions, pay, and benefits for our profession. It doesn’t happen just because we are union members though – we MUST all be engaged. Make this your year of increased union engagement and let’s change lives!



The Denver Area Labor Federation is working on endorsements for municipal and school board candidates and I have participated in all of the interviews. Mayors, city council, county commissioners and especially school board directors can make a positive impact on our lives – or they can destroy years of collaboration and threaten our very profession. I encourage everyone to complete a minimum of two volunteer shifts for these elections. We will be communicating opportunities—you can always [email me](#) as well and I’ll connect you.

AFT Colorado has made a decision to tighten our budget up by moving our lobbying in-house. I am excited to add this important political role into my work. If you have interest in coming to the Capitol to meet with lawmakers, testify in support or opposition of a bill (either in person or over zoom) or just hang out at the Capitol – [please let me know](#).

Happy back-to-school and I hope to see you all soon at a candidate phone bank or canvass, or another volunteering event.

In solidarity,
Kallie Leyba

From your Executive Vice President

By: Katherine Dorman



I was recently elected to the Executive Vice President role at AFT Colorado. I am grateful for this honor and in this position. I plan to continue my advocacy work for all my Union brothers and sisters. This will include lobbying at the Capitol, advocating for individuals running in local political races and supporting bonds and mill levies for public schools.

I, along with Monico Vitale from Austin, Texas, presented at AFT TEACH, the bi-annual convention for educators held in Washington DC. We presented a session titled, "Transforming Your Teacher Identity" where we examined our own surface culture, shallow culture and deep culture. During the presentation, participants had an opportunity to reflect on how culture affects them as educators while building their own culture trees. We learned a lot and had fun in the process!

Back in Colorado I continue to work as the Local Site Coordinator for Douglas County Federation. In this role, I work to provide professional development classes for the educators and staff in the Douglas County School District. We will be starting an ELL 589 class this coming week. I am happy to discuss possible professional development opportunities for other educators as well. Please contact me at kndorman@msn.com if you have questions.

In solidarity,
Kathy Dorman

**Benefits
Designed
with AFT
Members
In Mind**

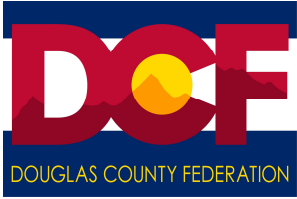
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Local Union Updates



Douglas County Federation

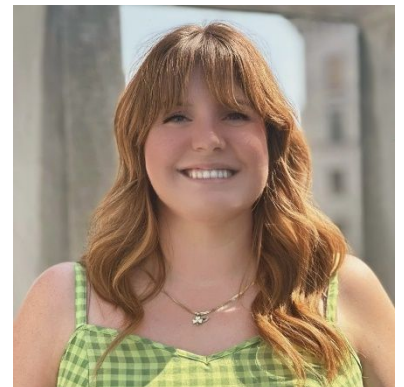
School has started and DCF is connecting with both current and potential members. At the August 2nd new teacher orientation, we helped welcome more than 600 new educators to the Douglas County School District. DCF ambassadors greeted hundreds of excited new teachers with smiles and invitations to join us! Our union is stronger thanks to the DCF member leaders



who stepped up on their very last day of summer vacation to greet these new educators.



We are also delighted to welcome Fiona Boomer to DCF in the role of Executive Director! Fiona was born and raised in Ogden, Utah and is a graduate of the Industrial and Labor Relations School at Cornell University. Fiona was inspired to join the labor movement after watching her high school teachers fight for better working conditions amid the financial crisis. She graduated from Cornell in 2018 and worked for the Pennsylvania State Education Association for five years. She helped manage the fallout of the Janus decision, lead election advocacy campaigns and won a faculty organizing campaign at Harrisburg Area Community College after a two-year fight. Fiona has also explored social media and communication tools as a means of member organizing and advocacy to bring classic labor movement strategies into the digital age.



AFT COLORADO

STANDING TOGETHER: MAKING A DIFFERENCE

Committee on Political Education (COPE) Deduction

925 S. Niagara St., Suite 600, Denver, CO 80224 www.aftcolorado.org 303-947-6709

What is COPE? COPE is how AFT Colorado raises and collects voluntary political contributions from members. COPE is a non-partisan political education committee. These voluntary funds are used statewide to help back candidates and committees that support education and labor. There is one reason AFT Colorado needs to grow our COPE program, **YOU**. With the current economic environment our priorities are vulnerable and are constantly being targeted for reduction. Education budgets, programs, and services are often first on the chopping block when states face dwindling tax revenues. Along with decent working conditions, retirement, and health care. All vitally affect our lives. A strong COPE program will protect our various interests.

At the local level COPE is essential. AFT Colorado will use your voluntary funds to assist in school board races, levies, and referendums in your district. Reductions in state education aid and inflation have made local budgets even more of a challenge. We use COPE dollars to work with labor and education friendly supporters on both sides of the aisle.

FIRST NAME _____ LAST NAME _____

BILLING ADDRESS _____

BILLING CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

HOME PHONE _____ WORK PHONE _____

MOBILE PHONE _____  wish to receive periodic text messages and accept the associated charges.

HOME EMAIL _____ LOCAL _____

WORK LOCATION _____

PAYMENT

*Due to the associated fees, we prefer that you sign up for **bank draft** payment.*

MONTHLY COPE AMOUNT ☐ \$5 ☐ \$10 ☐ \$15 ☐ \$OTHER _____

BANK DRAFT *****PREFERRED METHOD*****

Fill out below or simply attach a voided check.

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ROUTING NUMBER _____ ACCOUNT NUMBER _____

CREDIT/DEBIT CARD: CARD TYPE: ☐ VISA ☐ MC

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CARD NUMBER _____ EXP DATE _____

I hereby authorize a monthly contribution to the AFT CO COPE (AFT CO COPE) in the amount indicated above. This authorization is signed freely and voluntarily and not out of any fear of reprisal, and I will not be favored nor disadvantaged because I exercise this right. I understand this money will be used to make political contributions by AFT CO COPE. AFT CO COPE may engage in joint fundraising efforts with AFT COPE and/or the AFL-CIO. This voluntary authorization may be revoked at any time by notifying AFT CO COPE in writing of the desire to do so. Contribution or gifts to AFT CO COPE are not deductible as charitable contributions for federal income tax purposes. Contributions cannot be reimbursed or otherwise paid by any other person or entity.