

ON THE EDGE

UTD takes a leadership role

President Karen Aronowitz addressed the members of the Miami-Dade Delegation at a public hearing in early December on the importance of funding education.

"Teachers are not a revenue stream. We need to cut bureaucracy and reduce reports to the state that do nothing for student achievement and take money away from the classroom," Aronowitz told the delegation.

Florida Representatives supportive of educational issues spoke out on behalf of UTD.

"UTD is a friend and a resource," Representative J.C. Planas said. Representative Dwight Bullard said the delegation needed to speak to educators and rally behind teachers.

Upcoming Events

DECEMBER 2008

- 15 Impasse hearing with Special Magistrate
- 16 Econ. Serv. Comm. meeting
- 17 Legislative Relations Comm. meeting

JANUARY 2009

- 7 Multicultural Comm. meeting
- 12 Internal Functions Comm. meeting
- 13 Professional Issues Comm. meeting
- 14 Fine Arts Comm. meeting
- 15 Council of Stewards meeting
- 16 New Teacher Orientation
- 28 Technology Comm. meeting
- 31 Pre-Retirement Workshop

EMPOWERING OUR PROFESSION

The Toledo Plan is a cooperative union/management program of teacher evaluation in Toledo, Ohio. The Toledo Plan is an effective teacher performance tool based on peer assistance, coaching, and evaluation. The intern-intervention-evaluation program uses outstanding experienced teachers to train and evaluate beginning teachers and to assist experienced teachers whose skills are severely deficient. UTD is the first teachers' union in Florida to explore evaluation and mentoring by the professional teachers in the field. Based on a national model used in progressive school districts throughout the nation, the union and the district sit on a panel to consider the recommendations of consulting teachers who report on the skills of new teachers to M-DCPS. Like the Florida Bar who police their own ranks, members of the profession determine the standing of those who are entering teaching as a profession.

There are 2 basic components of the

Toledo Plan: **Interns** - teachers in their first employment year who are mentored by a full-time released consulting teacher; and **Intervention** - that addresses instructional deficiencies exhibited by veteran teachers. Both components are reviewed by a PAR Panel, a collaborative effort between union and management that is standards-based and crucial to quality control issues.

Based on the Toledo Plan, UTD is participating in a national workshop sponsored by the American Federation of Teachers in January. Components of the plan are modified by the needs of each district and can be used in place of top-down evaluation systems that remove professional input into the process. UTD will be looking into the benefits of this program to either replace PACES and IPEGS or to supplement some of the more burdensome and tedious components of our current teacher evaluation systems.

AFT President speaks to School Board

Randi Weingarten, President of the American Federation of Teachers (AFT), addressed the Miami-Dade County School Board at the December meeting on the importance of honoring the teachers' contract in this time of crisis.

"I know you have unprecedented challenges because of the local economy as New York now does. Ultimately, I need to ask you to reconsider your decision not to fund the contract," Weingarten said. "In New York the mayor decided to do a different decision because we learned that the municipal services need to be intact in a time like this."

Weingarten stressed that teachers and schools were crucial now, because they had become a safe haven for the people all across this community.

AFT represents 1.4 million members throughout the United States and nationally, it has more than 3,000 affiliates, including United Teachers of Dade.



Randi Weingarten
AFT President

The 2010 Francisco R. Walker
Miami-Dade County Teacher of the Year
 Finalists



Ms. Grisell Rodriguez
 Spanish Lake Elementary



Dr. Merry Louis
 Hialeah Gardens Senior High
 UTD member



Ms. Ania Fernandez
 Charles R. Hadley Elementary
 UTD member



Ms. Patricia Fairclough
 Air Base Elementary
 UTD member

ROOKIE TEACHER OF THE YEAR FINALISTS



Corinne Margo Wainer
 Carol City Senior High
 UTD Member



Jeffrey Dearing
 Miami Springs Senior High



Marcos Redondo
 Coral Gables Senior High



Kelli Valdez
 Mandarin Lakes K-8 Academy
 UTD Member

A walk through history



This January, history will be made when Barack Obama is sworn in as the 44th President of the United States. The day before he takes his oath of office, the nation will be celebrating Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, honoring the man who will always be the face of the civil rights movement.

To commemorate this historic event, have your students research the lives of African-Americans who have made special contributions to American life or the civil rights movement. Have them write a short biography and print a picture of the individual so they may present it before the class. Then, make a timeline on a bulletin board and have the students place the pictures on the timeline. The display will be your *Walk through History*.

SUCCESS STORIES

Surplussed clerical's job saved by UTD

A UTD steward employed at her school site as a clerical was informed by her principal that she was being surplussed because she held the least seniority and the principal had to choose a position to delete. The UTD organizer, working together with UTD staff, was able to get the steward's job back at her worksite. The steward, a single parent, was thrilled.

"Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere."

- Martin Luther King, Jr.



The First Ever, Once in a Lifetime, What It Looks Like, Tastes Like, Feels Like, Sounds Like, Smells Like

The Definition of Good Teaching Contest

\$100 First Place Prize!

by **Karen Aronowitz**
UTD President

We teachers are in an oxymoronic profession (no, *not* moronic, oxymoronic.) Teachers are to implement curriculum decided upon by school boards, state departments of education, state and federal legislation, and grant award requirements to children assigned to them based on building site and time capacity, student load, inclusion, and occasionally, parental input. What used to be the purview of the professional included pacing, integration of materials, classroom layout, class environment, grouping, and presentation. Collaboration with colleagues was decided upon by the collaborators.

Many forces have been chipping away at the teacher's role for quite some time, attempting to standardize and sanitize good teaching. We have arrived at the nadir of mediocrity, for ourselves and our students. The insistence on one-size-fits all, it's 9:15 AM, every second (and third and tenth) grader in Miami-Dade County is on page 34, middle paragraph, has not produced creative, questioning, articulate, skillful and engaged students. Or teachers.

We teachers know what good teaching is all about. We have managed to sneak it in, under the guise of night, so that at some moments, yes, the entire class (including you!) was engaged in the sweaty, exhilarating rush of learning. What does good

teaching look like? Can you identify it when you see it?

UTD Contest Rules

Open to all members of United Teachers of Dade, except for those working for UTD at this time.

Deadline: January 31, 2009 by e-mail only to KarenA@utofd.com.

Subject line: Good Teaching Contest. Include your name, e-mail address, phone, and employee number on your submission.

Limit - 1 entry per contestant.

A peer review panel will decide the winner. The decision of the judges is final. Submit no more than 500 words on what good teaching looks like, tastes like, feels like, sounds like, and smells like. Spelling counts. The format is yours. Prizes will be presented at the February Council of Building Stewards meeting.

PRIZES!

- 1st Prize \$100.00
- 2nd Prize \$50.00
- 3rd Prize \$25.00



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Empowering Our Profession (story on page 1)



L-to-R: Karen Black (Teacher rep. to Teacher Evaluation Joint Committee), Peggy Green (Teacher rep. to Teacher Evaluation Joint Committee), Alberto Carvalho (Superintendent M-DCPS), Dal Lawrence (AFT Consultant for Peer Assistance and Review), Karen Aronowitz (UTD President), Millie Hernandez (District Rep. to Teacher Evaluation Joint Committee), Anna Marie Doublay (District rep. to Teacher Evaluation Joint Committee), Anthony Davis (Teacher rep. to Teacher Evaluation Joint Committee), and Audrey Fox (PAR Consulting Teacher from Toledo, Ohio.)

SEEING RED?

YES - as members speak out

UTD members have been wearing red every week as a form of protest for not giving M-DCPS employees their negotiated salary increases. Negotiations are currently at impasse.



Celebrating
Black History
MONTH

Join UTD for this special celebration
February 21, 2008
Save the date.

Keynote Speaker
REG WEAVER, Immediate Past President of NEA

THE DREAM REALIZED

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2 Teacher of the Year finalists
3 Enter the Good Teaching Contest
3 Job saved for surprised clerical

INSIDE...