

37th NACST Convention

The 37th annual NACST Convention/Conference was held **October 9-11, 2015** at the Hilton Columbus Hotel at Easton in Columbus, OH.. Thirty-one delegates were in attendance.

The keynote speaker was Mike Milz, retired PSEA organizer and former NACST Executive Vice President.

Attorney Martin Milz [Spear, Wilderman] presented delegates with information on the move by schools to implement so-called Teacher/Minister Contracts and other legal issues facing local unions.

Chris Ehrmann, CTU Executive Vice President, joined with Martin Milz to give delegates a summary of the efforts to organize secretaries at a school in the Camden [NJ] Diocese.

Convention delegates were also briefed on Acceptable Use of Technology policies and the Affordable Care Act.

Delegates unanimously passed a resolution supporting the St. Denis Teachers Association.

37th NACST Convention: Keynote Speaker

Organize or Die: Internal and External Organizing

Keynote speaker Mike Milz addressed the convention on the importance of maintaining current unions and expanding the number of schools with union representation.

Milz framed his talk around the experience of his former union, the Scranton Diocesan Association of Catholic Teachers [SDACT], which was founded and negotiated its first contracts in 1974. He noted that the Scranton diocese withdrew recognition of the union on January 22, 2006. With the union gone, teachers at the schools once represented by SDACT have been working without any salary increases since 2008. The Scranton experience serves as a warning to locals that they must be ever vigilant in "our unique situation with regard to Catholic social justice teaching."

Many locals affiliated with NACST have been representing and bargaining for teachers for thirty and forty years. Longevity, however, does not guarantee future success for the locals. It is incumbent upon locals to continue to bolster union membership and service in schools they currently serve. It is also incumbent upon locals to reach out to teachers in other schools, as well as support staff, and, even, adjunct faculty members at Catholic colleges and universities.



*Keynote Speaker
Mike Milz with NACST
President Rita Schwartz*

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37th NACST Convention Internal & External Organizing

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Milz presented convention delegates with a set of procedures for internal and external organizing.

First, unions must reach out to new groups of employees at the schools in which they represent teachers. That is, locals must reach out to organize support staff.

Second, unions must reach out to schools in their dioceses in which teachers do not have a bargaining representative. Meet with the teachers and staff to discuss their situations, asking, "so ... what's your dream?"

Third, unions should set up organizing committees within the local. The work of organizing belongs to union members in general, not just to local officers.

Fourth, unions should adopt an "issues program." Such a program would identify and develop strategies for meeting the needs of those teachers and staff who are already unionized, but also for those who are not yet organized.

Milz ended by again referencing the SDACT experience. Unless unions continue to organize both internally and externally, they may share the fate of that now defunct union.

Martin Milz: The NLRB

With the unionization of secretaries at a school in the Camden [NJ] diocese, the National Labor Relations Board may be an avenue for organizing support staff, according to union attorney Martin Milz.

Although the petition for recognition of the secretaries was withdrawn when the school agreed to hold a representational election, unions in Catholic schools must consider the possibility of NLRB jurisdiction in organizing non-teaching school employees.

Milz noted that the Board is now up to its full five-member status. Two cases, Browning-Ferris [decided August 27, 2015] and Miller-Anderson [expected to be decided soon] deal with the issue of "joint employers." The August decision was considered a victory for unions, with the ruling that employees of different employers [i.e. temporary agency employees in a workplace with the same working conditions and terms of employment as permanent employees] at the same location are a single bargaining unit. The rulings could have implications for support staff employees at Catholic schools.



Attorney Martin Milz
[Spear, Wilderman]

from the President ...

STATE OF THE UNION 2015
SOME GOOD NEWS AND SOME BAD NEWS

I begin my State of the Union this year with some good news and some bad news. Strangely, it seems, that every time we hear a bit of good news, it is followed soon after by some not so good news.

This past spring, NACST received a call from teachers at Cardinal Ritter High School in St. Louis. The school had been part of the Archdiocesan system and, therefore, its teachers were unionized; however, about 25 years ago, it was privatized. The School Board at that time would not recognize the Union and, thus, the teachers became employees-at-will with no representation or job protection.

The school has now moved back under the Archdiocesan umbrella and the teachers are eager to upgrade their status from “at-will” to “unionized.” The Archbishop of St. Louis has given his approval for an election and the vote should, hopefully, occur early in January.

As NACST welcomed Cardinal Ritter’s teachers back, we received word from the Diocese of Trenton, New Jersey that St. Denis School in Manasquan was closing in June. This meant that the St. Denis Teachers Association would cease to exist. There was no stronger or more militant group of teachers in the National. Their loss is beyond sad for all involved. (See 2015 CONVENTION RESOLUTION on Page 6)

A number of NACST locals negotiated contracts during the 2014-2015 school year. Important gains were made; however, there were a few thorny issues, most especially, medical insurance. There were some language concerns as well, but the locals handled them well.

In September, many of us were caught up in the visit of Pope Francis to the East Coast. It was a defining moment, especially for those of us lucky enough to attend many of the Masses and other papal appearances. Now, however, we are all in “pope-partem depression.”

The major focus of our Convention this year was on Organizing, both internal and external. There are numerous opportunities for each of us to reach out to the teachers who do not enjoy due process, job security and fair treatment. According to the NCEA study of the 2014-2015 school year, there are 150,709 full-time professional staff, 97.2% of whom are lay.

We need to make 2015-2016 a year of growth, growth from within our unions and from outside, bringing in our colleagues in the schools surrounding us.

Please let NACST know how we can be of help to you.

Have a happy and productive school year, everyone.



At the 37th NACST Convention in Columbus ...

Affiliated Locals

**Altoona Johnstown Catholic School
Teachers Association**
(Diocese of
Altoona Johnstown PA)
Michele Kirk

Association of Catholic Teachers
(Archdiocese of Philadelphia PA)
www.act1776.com
Rita Schwartz

Catholic Teachers Union - NJ
(Diocese of Camden NJ)
www.ctunj.com
Bill Blumenstein

**Central Ohio Association of Catholic
Educators**
(Diocese of Columbus OH)
www.coace.com
Erica Gowitzka

**Cleveland High School
and Academy Lay
Teachers Association**
(Diocese of Cleveland OH)
Michael DeSantis

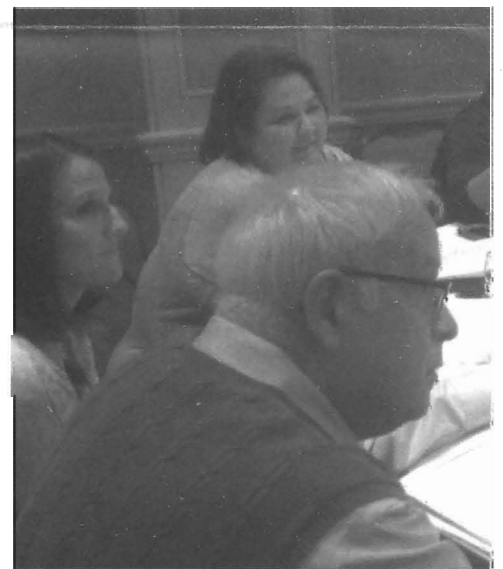
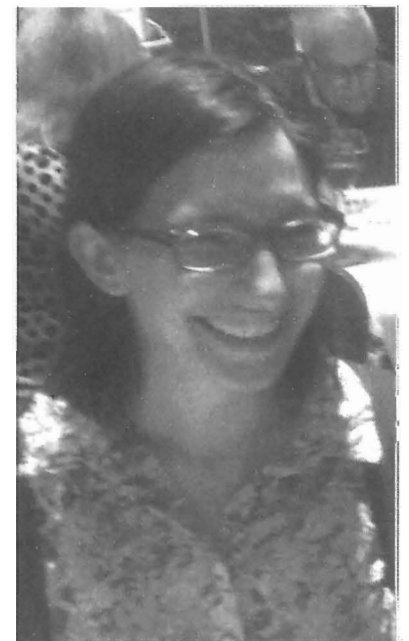
DELTA
(Diocese of Worcester MA)
Jonathan Meagher

**Diocesan Elementary Teachers As-
sociation**
(Diocese of Buffalo NY)
Joann Biggie

**Federation of Pittsburgh
Diocesan Teachers**
(Diocese of Pittsburgh PA)
Brian Klisavage

**Greater Hartford Catholic Educa-
tion Association**
(Archdiocese of Hartford CT)
Paul Fitzpatrick

**Greensburg Diocesan Teachers As-
sociation**
(Diocese of Greensburg PA)
Will Merchant



37th NACST Convention: Among the Locals

excerpts from the Reports of Locals

ACT [Philadelphia] - Early Bird negotiations began in the Spring of 2015 and were concluded in mid-June, teachers ratified a one-year contract, negotiations for a subsequent agreement open in the Spring of 2016 - negotiations for Holy Cross High School will begin at the same time - the union continues to represent teachers at seventeen high schools in the Archdiocese

CTU [Camden] - negotiations for an initial contract for secretaries at one school continue - a representational election was won by CTU in March - negotiations began June 30

CHALTA [Cleveland] - union members ratified a 3-year contract in March 2015, sick leave accumulation increased from 190 to 220 days, salary increases \$1,100 per year - the union won a grievance filed over assignment of duties outside the 7.5 hour workday

DELTA [Worcester] - following a June 2015 negotiation session, the superintendent declined to hold meetings after that session, union officers then met with the Vicar General to discuss the situation, subsequently, the superintendent informed union officers that the diocese was prepared to resume negotiations, sessions were held throughout September and negotiations are ongoing

SLATA [St. Louis] - the union was contacted by an Archdiocesan high school in the Spring of 2015, meetings were held with SLATA officers, who then contacted the Archbishop to seek a representational election, meetings between SLATA officers and the Superintendent and Associate Superintendent were held to set an information meeting at the school and then to hold a representational election

UDCT [Youngstown] - the High School Basic Contract was successfully negotiated in November 2014, all previously negotiated benefits were retained, the team successfully negotiated the third year of the Salary Schedule, it was ratified in June 2015 - the Elementary School Negotiation team has begun sessions with the diocese, after a Basic Contract is reached, negotiations concerning Local Issues will commence

Affiliated Locals

NACST @ St. John Vianney
(Diocese of Trenton NJ)
Helena Rosato

**Queen of Peace H.S.
Lay Teachers Association**
(Archdiocese of Newark NJ)
Lynn McGill

**St. Louis Archdiocesan Teachers
Association**
(Archdiocese of St. Louis MO)
Patricia Spellman

**St. Peter Prep
Teachers Association**
(Archdiocese of Newark NJ)
Steve Caslowitz

**St. Rose
Teachers Association**
(Diocese of Trenton NJ)
Dee Badach

**Scranton Diocese
Association of Catholic Teachers**
(Diocese of Scranton PA)

Secondary Lay Teachers Association
(Diocese of Buffalo NY)
Chris Rusin

**Union County Catholic Education
Association**
(Archdiocese of Newark NJ)
Jaelyn Church

**Youngstown Confederation of Dioc-
esan Teachers**
(Diocese of Youngstown OH)
Barbara McVickerr

**RESOLUTION
NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF CATHOLIC SCHOOL TEACHERS
2015 CONVENTION**

WHEREAS, the National Association of Catholic School Teachers is an organization founded on the precepts of Justice and Dignity for Catholic School Teachers, and, in that capacity, strives, at all times, to foster among our affiliates the tenets that are contained within the Social Justice teachings of the Catholic Church; and

WHEREAS, the St. Denis Teachers Association has been a strong and active affiliate of the National Association of Catholic School Teachers since June 19, 2000 when the teachers of St. Denis School unanimously voted for union representation and, later that year, negotiated and ratified its first collective bargaining agreement; and

WHEREAS, for the next 15 years, the St. Denis Teachers Association remained a strong and united voice for the rights of the teachers it represented; and

WHEREAS, SDTA President, Janne Darata faithfully represented the members of the St. Denis Teachers Association in an exemplary manner throughout the union's history; and

WHEREAS, the closing of St. Denis School in June, 2015 is very much like a death in the family and the subsequent dissolution of the St. Denis Teachers Association leaves a hole in the heart of the National Association of Catholic School Teachers;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the National Association of Catholic School Teachers hereby stands in admiration of the St. Denis Teachers Association and the highest standards of Catholic School Unionism which it practiced throughout its existence; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the St. Denis Teachers Association will hold a special place in the history of the National Association of Catholic School Teachers as it exemplified all that is best in all of us.