

## Reports of Locals highlights

*from the 2016 Convention*

**AJCSTA** - negotiations resulted in a 3% salary increase with no increase in insurance premium co-pays in the high school talks

**COACE** - increase union membership from 476 in the 2015-2016 school year to 556 members in the current school year

**SLATA** - the reorganized Cardinal Ritter High School teachers voted to be represented by the union - the union gained recognition from the school as the teachers' bargaining agent

**CTU** - the union announced a \$10,000 contribution to the NACST Reilly Scholarship fund

**ACT** - began negotiations using the collaborative Interest Based Bargaining method under the auspices of the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service, due to time needed to devote to state legislative issues, however, the IBB was suspended and expedited negotiations resulted in a one year agreement with a salary increase of \$1,100

## 38TH NACST CONVENTION

The 38th annual NACST Convention/Conference was held October 7-9, 2016 in Baltimore, MD. Thirty-five union officers from twelve NACST locals served as delegates to the convention.

Keynote speaker Clayton Sinyai, Executive Director, Catholic Labor Network, addressed delegates on the history of Church union partnerships developed in the 19th and 20th centuries, and the process of a strategic campaign for locals to accomplish their negotiation goals. Delegates then worked with officers from different locals in a workshop format to practice application of strategic campaigning.

NACST Counsel Martin Milz of Spear, Wilderman [Philadelphia] addressed delegates on "Contract Interpretation for Grievance Handling."



*Keynote Speaker Clayton Sinyai with NACST President Rita Schwartz*

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## 2016 NACST Convention ...

### The Most Important Union You Never Heard Of

- Sinyai Clayton article in America magazine & on the Catholic Labor Network website [www.catholiclabor.org](http://www.catholiclabor.org)

On Oct. 8, in my capacity as Executive Director of the Catholic Labor Network, I was invited to speak at the annual convention of the National Association of Catholic School Teachers. They met in the historic see where the U.S. bishops, gathered at the Third Plenary Council of Baltimore (1884) had called for the construction of a comprehensive system of Catholic schools mirroring America's parishes. The bishops wanted to

ensure Catholic children rooted in their faith, rather than entrusting them to the Protestant-dominated public schools.

James Cardinal Gibbons of Baltimore, who presided over the assembly, would soon distinguish himself as a labor advocate—he defended Catholic participation in trade unions (specifically the Knights of Labor) before Pope Leo XIII, not long before the Holy Father issued the social encyclical "Rerum Novarum." Surely Gibbons was looking down on the N.A.C.S.T. assembly with some satisfaction. Delegates representing nearly 4,000 Catholic elementary and secondary school teachers had gathered to discuss the challenges they faced in collective bargaining, handling grievances and teacher retention.

Wait a minute, you are surely asking: Didn't the Supreme Court rule in *NLRB v. Catholic Bishop of Chicago* (1978) that the National Labor Relations Act did not apply to Catholic elementary and high schools because of the first amendment?

Well, yes. But the court did not rule that the teachers couldn't have a union, just that the National Labor Relations Board couldn't get involved. And after all, Catholics are bound by a higher law. When Leo XIII wrote "Rerum Novarum," and said "workingmen's unions...exist by right" he did not make an exception for employees of Catholic schools. Admittedly, in a time when the schools were largely staffed by men and women religious, he probably did not conceive of today's lay workforce. But America's bishops reached the obvious conclusion in 1986, indicating that "all church institutions must fully recognize the rights of employees to organize and bargain collectively with the institution through whatever association or organization they freely choose." Today, hundreds of Catholic schools bargain with unions representing their teachers.

N.A.C.S.T. schools dot the Northeast and Midwest, with large Catholic

*continued on page 4*

*From the President ...*

**STATE OF THE UNION:  
A BUSY YEAR HELPING OTHERS**

I will begin my talk by telling you that our National Union is strong and healthy, like the many local Unions that comprise the National Association of Catholic School Teachers.

Each year, as we come together as Union leaders, we share with one another how we have been successful in making things better for our members and our locals.

This year, the locals have been very busy. I am happy to welcome back the teachers at Cardinal Ritter College Prep High School. The teachers were, originally, part of the St. Louis Archdiocesan Teachers Association, but had to leave when the school was privatized. The school has rejoined the Archdiocesan high schools and the teachers voted overwhelmingly to rejoin SLATA. Their right to unionize was recognized by Archbishop Carlson.

The leadership of the Central Ohio Association of Catholic Educators is embarking on an organizing campaign to unionize Diocese of Columbus teachers who work outside Franklin County. We are very excited about this.

The Catholic Teachers Union New Jersey recently settled a first contract for secretaries at Camden Catholic High School. The Diocese agreed to voluntarily recognize the secretaries' bargaining unit rather than have a representation election set up by the National Labor Relations Board.

During our Convention today, we have learned much from both Clayton Sinyai and Marty Milz. Clayton introduced many of you to the work of the Catholic Labor Network and his role as Director. His second presentation on Strategic Campaigns gave us many new ideas about how best to get our message out and to whom. Marty Milz, our trusted counsel, had many words of wisdom pertaining to contract interpretation and past practice.

We will leave this year's Convention with some new ideas and some new ways of looking at things. All of this is to help us be more effective in our local unions.

On the subject of our local Unions, they are in very good hands. They are led by Presidents and Executive Boards who work hard day in and day out, never expecting recognition or thanks for all that they do. As I have said so often, no one ever calls with good news. Rest assured, our teachers know that when they have a problem, their Union leadership is there to help them.

The 2016 NACST Convention Resolution recognizes the Catholic Teacher Union leaders for all that they do to foster social justice and equity in their local dioceses. With the Resolution, the Convention Delegates are making a strong and clear statement of how proud we are of the Union leadership and all that they do.

Until we come together again – that will be in October 2017 in Cleveland – I wish all of you a productive, but not too stressful, school year.

Please call us if you need us. NACST exists to help you, your Union, your members and your schools.

*NACST Counsel  
Martin Milz with  
President Rita  
Schwartz at the 2016  
NACST Convention*



*Rita*

*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  
William 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)  
Kate Harris

**Diocesan Elementary Teachers Association**

(Diocese of Buffalo NY)  
Joann Biggie

**Federation of Pittsburgh Diocesan Teachers**

(Diocese of Pittsburgh PA)  
Brian Klisavage

**Greater Hartford Catholic Education Association**

(Archdiocese of Hartford CT)  
Paul Fitzpatrick

**2016 NACST Convention ...**

**Clayton on NACST**

from p. 2

school systems under contract in places like Buffalo, Philadelphia and Pittsburgh and smaller groups of schools across several states, stretching from St. Louis, Mo. to Worcester, Mass. Their members are deeply committed to their Catholic faith. They have to be: Their wages and benefits are substantially lower than those earned in the public schools. At a surprising number of Catholic schools, teacher salaries start below \$25,000 per year. These teachers have chosen significant material sacrifice to deliver our children a quality education rooted in our faith.

In fact, the union itself was born when teachers found it difficult to reconcile their faith and commitment to Catholic education with the politics of the national teachers' unions, which oppose tuition voucher programs for Catholic education and have defended legalized abortion. In 1978, a group of local unions representing Catholic schoolteachers broke away from the American Federation of Teachers to form the

N.A.C.S.T.

Without the protection of the N.L.R.B., this was no small matter. The officers of N.A.C.S.T. locals are working teachers who pursue union business on their own time; without the resources of a large union like the A.F.T. or the National Education Association, they lack powerful political friends or large strike funds. In large measure, their survival depends on their employer's fidelity to Catholic social teaching. If a bishop or school system decides to bust the union—as happened in the Diocese of Scranton, in 2006—they have few tools at their disposal to resist.

We do not pay our Catholic schoolteachers enough for the important work they do. School administrators will point out—with some justification—that their finances are limited and there is only so much they can do. Be it so, but they can certainly recognize their employees' right to organize and bargain collectively. Surely that is the least we owe our educators.

## 2016 NACST Convention ...

### from the editor ... Establishing a Strategic Campaign

In his presentation to Convention delegates Sinyai Clayton focused on the need for local officers to deliberate on the goals which teacher unions have in the labor-management relationship with school and Church officials. Locals need to be clear about their overall goals as well as those held in specific situations.

Overall goals for Catholic school unions are rooted in the social justice teaching of the universal Church as well as the teaching of the US Conference of Catholic Bishops.

In working on behalf of teachers and staff, unions must recognize the shared concerns with management including wage justice, the right to organize and bargaining in good faith.

The strategic campaign in specific negotiations or other representation actions is developed from answers to the following questions.

1. **GOAL:** What is the expected outcome of the action taken by the union?

2. **RESEARCH:** What resources are available to the union working with the school or diocese to accomplish the goal?

3. **TARGETING:** Who has the influence to bring any and all resources to achieve the goal?

4. **MESSAGING:** What is to be communicated with those who have influence to apply the resources in particular circumstances?

Clayton emphasized the need for union members to be realistic in their research for specific circumstances. While the ideal may be for the employer Church to provide salaries competitive with public schools, Catholic school and diocesan financial resources may not be able to provide parity. Instead, unions should look to achieve the greatest degree of parity possible with the resources available. The union should also look to work with the school or diocese to increase the financial resources committed to the schools.

It is incumbent upon all union members to be advocates for the important work teachers accomplish in Catholic schools. Teacher messaging must be directed not only to school and diocesan officials, but must also reach out to non-union school teachers to organize, communicate with parents about our common interests, and promote the continuation of Catholic school education in the nation.

The implementation of strategic campaigns using Clayton's paradigm will enable the schools and teachers to be exemplars of Catholic social justice teaching.



### *Affiliated Locals*

**Greensburg Diocesan Teachers Association**  
(Diocese of Greensburg PA)  
Will Merchant

**NACST @ St. Joh Vianney**  
(Diocese of Trenton NJ)  
Lisa Lenn

**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

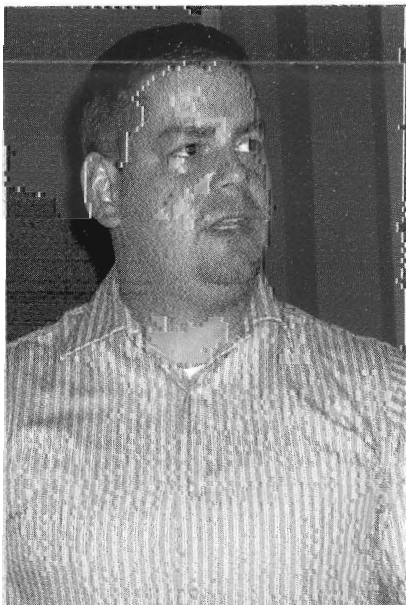
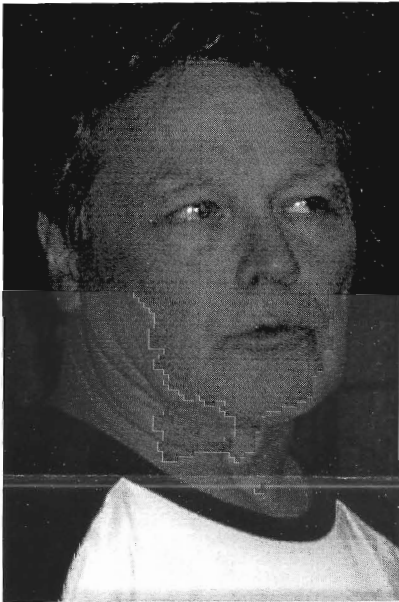
**St. Rose Teachers Association**  
(Diocese of Trenton NJ)  
Colleen Reilly  
Laura Urspruch

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

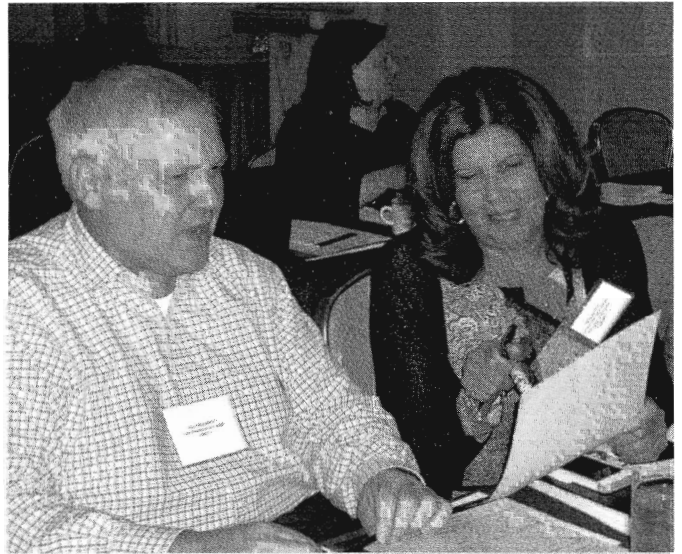
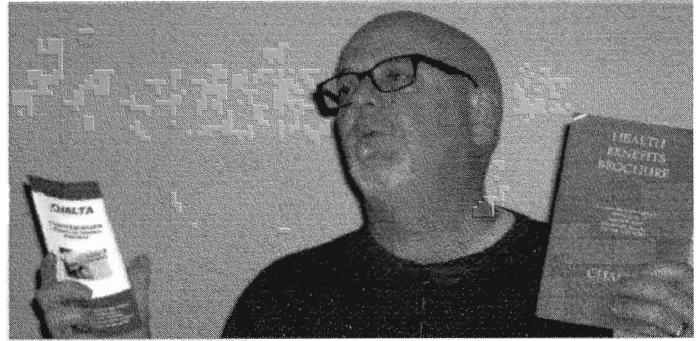
**Union County Catholic Education Association**  
(Archdiocese of Newark NJ)  
Jaelyn Church

**Youngstown Confederation of Diocesan Teachers**  
(Diocese of Youngstown OH)  
Barbara McVicker

*2016 NACST Convention ...*



2016 NACST Convention ...



**Resolution passed unanimously by the delegates to the  
2016 NACST 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 Presidents, Vice Presidents and Officers of the local unions affiliated with the National Association of Catholic School Teachers labor each and every day on the front lines of the battle to obtain and retain Social Justice and equity for the teachers and staff members they represent; and

**Whereas**, the Presidents, Vice Presidents and Officers of the affiliated local unions ensure that the Labor-Management Agreements are enforced, that their teachers' rights are honored and that their unions are treated with respect; and

**Whereas**, these fighters for Social Justice and teachers' rights go above and beyond and achieve all of these accomplishments while holding full-time teaching positions in Catholic schools;

**Therefore**, be it resolved that the Executive Committee of the National Association of Catholic school Teachers and the Delegates to this Convention recognize the leadership of our local unions for their tireless work on behalf of their members; and

**Be it further resolved** that as the Presidents, Vice Presidents and Officers of NACST affiliated unions continue to take on many new challenges, they do so knowing that their colleagues in the National Association of Catholic School Teachers hold them in the highest esteem.