CARA 16th Annual Convention was SWEET!

CARA’s 16th Annual Convention on October 22nd and 23rd surpassed all expectations. By every account, this year’s event was the best ever – and a great way to celebrate CARA’s Sweet Sixteen. Held at the Sacramento Masonic Center over 280 delegates and visitors participated in the Convention activities. The event started with a welcome by Fabrizio Sasso, Executive Director of the Sacramento CLC. We had a great panel to talk about the key national issues that will be in the forefront of CARA’s Senior Vote Program, including Dr. Paul Song, PNHP-CA, on Medicare for All, Jon “Bowzer” Bauman from Social Security Works PAC on Protecting, Improving and Expanding Medicare, Medicaid and Social Security, Tefere Gebre, Vice President of the AFL-CIO talking about the importance of protecting pensions and retirement security, and Adelita Serena, Mothers Out Front sharing information about global warming and climate change and the need to act NOW for our future.

A highlight of our Convention (according to the many evaluations we received), was our luncheon speaker, Josh Kornbluth. Josh shared some of his work – and his videos – about the importance of having purpose and empathy in our lives as we age to help us keep our brains healthy and increase our life expectancy. He was funny, insightful and inspirational (go to www.joshkornbluth.com to see some of his videos).

Workshops were informative and fun, which included Affordable Housing presented by Tori Truscheit from Housing California and Lupe Arreola from Tenants Together. We had a workshop on the next steps in building a blueprint for Long Term Supports and Services presented by Allie Cannington from the CA Foundation for Independent Living Centers and Amanda Ream from United Domestic Workers Union. The final workshop was the Schools and Communities First Campaign, presented by Ben Grieff from Evolve – CA. Following the workshops, we held two caucuses - the Labor Caucus was lively, led by Tom Rankin and Dan Prince to talk about expanding the commitment to retirees by labor unions. The Community Caucus elected some new Vice Presidents and re-elected some incumbents, led by two of CARA’s Community Vice Presidents – Kris Organ and Diana Madoshi (see list of those elected in this issue of the CARA Alert).

In the evening CARA sponsored our first Retiree of the Year Award Celebration honoring Nan Brasmer, CARA’s President. We had a lively group of presenters including Keith Pace, E. D. of CSEA (Nan’s union), and Ron Duva, Chair of CSEA’s Retiree Unit, Rich Fiesta, the E.D. of the ARA, State Senator Cathleen Galgiani, Susan Sachen, Organizing Director for the CA Labor Fed, several members of Nan’s Family (grandson Eddie, great-granddaughters’ Valaila and Aviana, and Nan’s sister Sally), and the award presentation by Jodi Reid, CARA Director. We had a great meal and ended the evening with music by Papa Hip. Nan was touched and it the event bodes well for future Retiree of the Year events. The evening was emceed by CARA’s Convention Queen – Pauline Brooks.
On Wednesday we conducted some CARA business that included voting on resolutions and by-laws, installing officers, recognizing our Leadership Academy graduates and a great door drawing. After our business, we marched to the State Capitol (some shuttled in a van provided by UCP) for a press event to launch the new and improved Schools and Communities First petition drive. CARA speakers were joined by coalition members from the League of Women Voters, PICO, CA Federation of Teachers, EVOLVE-CA and CARA members. Several media outlets including Associated Press, Capitol Public Radio, and the Sacramento Bee covered the event. It was an action-packed day and a half, but everyone left a little tired, but with a smile on their face.

CARA would like to thank our affiliated organizations for sending delegates to the Convention, to the many volunteers who made the event possible, and to the wonderful speakers and workshop presenters who provided great information. A big thanks also goes to our sponsors and Ad Book supporters for your generosity and commitment to the work of CARA. Kudos to the CARA Board and CARA members who helped decorate the hall and prepare our materials. Our Hat goes off to the CARA Webmaster, Chuck Walker, who ran our AV for the event. A special thank you to the Convention Committee led by Pauline Brooks as the Chairwoman with her committee members, A round of applause must go to the wonderful CARA staff – Jade San Juan, Kathrin Smith (Ad Book, Registration and Logistics Divas), Vishnu Subramaniam (Central Valley Organizer), our two Southern CA Organizers – Jenni Chang and Susan Meyer, and Jodi Reid, (General Overseer). A special mention goes to Jody Ginsberg from the CA Labor Federation who designed our beautiful program book and other convention materials, and to SEIU 1000 who paid for the production of our program book. Finally, we would like to extend a special thank you to the staff at the Sacramento Masonic Temple who were gracious and helped make our event super SWEET.

In this CARA Alert, we are featuring some highlights of the decisions that were made at the Convention. For pictures of the activities go to the CARA website at www.californiaalliance.org.

**2019 BOARD ELECTIONS**

CARA’s Board terms are staggered. This year, the CARA Treasurer was elected, 8 of our labor appointed vice president positions were installed, 10 community-based vice presidents were elected, and 4 of our CA Labor Fed appointees were installed for 4-year terms. Congratulations to all of our new and continuing board members. We look forward to their leadership in 2020 and beyond.

**Treasurer**  
(elected by convention delegates)  
Tish Ochoa, American Postal Workers Union

**Union delegated Vice Presidents:**  
(appointed by their union)  
Editha Adams, United Domestic Workers  
Addie Brinkley, Communication Workers of America  
Jo Carson, CA Teachers Association, Retired  
Kathryn Donahue, CA Nurses Association  
Stephanie Hueg, CA State Retirees  
Hene Kelly, CA Federation of Teachers  
Dan Prince, Dist. Council of Ironworkers  
Robert Turner, International Brotherhood of Teamsters

**Community Vice Presidents**  
(elected by the Community Caucus)  
Jacquetta Alexander, Easter Hill United Methodist Church  
Juanita Barbarin, Laurel Park Neighborhood Council  
Myrtle Braxton, Richmond Commission on Aging  
Luis Duran, Claremont Democratic Club
RESOLUTIONS FROM CARA’S 16TH ANNUAL CONVENTION

This year, four resolutions were presented by CARA affiliates and the CARA Board of Directors. Three were passed by the Convention Delegates. One is being rewritten and will be submitted to the Board of Directors for consideration. Three Bylaw changes were also adopted.

#1. Support the 100th Anniversary of Women’s Right to Vote: CARA will acknowledge that American women of every race, class, sexual orientation, and ethnic background, some recorded and not recorded, contributed to and ensured the historic passage of the 19th Amendment and supported the battles for universal suffrage for all and will encourage our members to support efforts to celebrate this historic 100 year milestone in 2020 in our communities and organizations about the power of our votes.

#2. Support a Public Postal Service: CARA will go on record opposing the full or partial privatization of the U.S. Postal Service.

#3. Oppose DHS “Public Charge” Rule Change: CARA will continue to opposing the DHS public charge rule change, and will support lawsuits, resolutions, and legislation to oppose this rule change and urge the national ARA to do the same.

BY-LAW CHANGES APPROVED AT CARA’S 16TH ANNUAL CONVENTION

#1 Individual CARA members who pay annual dues will have voting rights at the Biennial conventions by participating in an individual member caucus and casting their votes there. These votes will be counted and given the weight of 5 organizational delegate votes.

#2 Individual Dues will include these payment options: $15 for one-year dues; $40 for 3-year dues; $200 to become a lifetime member.

#3 Resolutions at the Biennial Convention can be offered by a bona-fide CARA Action Team, following all of the procedures and criteria established for organizational resolutions.
CARA ISSUE PRIORITIES FOR 2020

These were the statewide priorities voted on by CARA delegates at the CARA Convention. Two issues remain our top two – we didn’t vote on these because they will remain our top two until we win:
- Protect, Improve and Expand Social Security, Medicare and Medicaid – stop efforts to cut or privatize benefits.
- Support efforts to win universal, single payer health care (state & nationally).

The priorities voted on at the 16th Annual convention in order of preference are:
1. Support efforts to reform Proposition 13 and make commercial property owners pay their fair share of taxes (Make it Fair Campaign).
2. Protect pensions and retirement benefits (state and nationally), including fighting legislative and electoral efforts to eliminate or reduce benefits.
3. Advocate to increase SSI/SSP base grants, reinstate full COLA, and allow those on SSI to qualify for CAL Fresh.
4. Educate and engage seniors on climate change and other environmental issues.
5. Support efforts to build a California plan for long term care support and services that are based in the community.
6. Advocate for funding for affordable housing construction/preservation.
7. Require transparency of drug pricing; lower drug costs.
8. Support efforts to implement Campaign Finance Reform at state/national levels.
9. Expand protections for renters, homeowners, and manufactured homeowners in California.

UPCOMING EVENTS FOR CARA – RSVP TO CARA

SCHOOLS AND COMMUNITIES FIRST Petitions are in!!!! You can pick them up at your local CARA Action Team meeting in November or call the CARA office at 877-223-6107. We need to collect 1.2 million signatures by March 20, 2020.

CARA Leadership Academy on November 6th and 7th in Rialto, CA – Sign up today!  Space is limited.  Free for CARA members.  Call 877-223-6107

MEDICARE FOR ALL ACTIONS:

Sat., November 2nd at UN Plaza, Market & Hyde Streets, San Francisco/ 2pm-4pm
Support HR 1384 and urge Speaker Nancy Pelosi to move the bill forward.  Buses available from some locations.  RSVP at bit.ly/sfrally

Thursday, Nov. 21st in Sacramento/ North Steps of the Capitol/ 1pm.
Ask Governor Newsom to give us something to be thankful for!  Urge him to appoint the Health Care Commission and get them to work on making Medicare for All a reality in California.  Buses available from SF, Berkeley and Richmond.  Call CARA at 510-663-4086 to rsvp.  Others meet at North Steps of Capitol at 1pm.
Get Social With CARA. Did you know that CARA is on Facebook? Learn about our local activities and meetings, town halls and about other news affecting retirees. Be sure to like our CARA Facebook page here. Make sure your friends and family like this page too. Help retirees build power by liking CARA's Facebook page. Every like and share helps spread our message.

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