

David Georgi's Cal Council Presidency

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When I was asked to write a mini-memoir about my time as Cal Council president, my first thought was “Now, when exactly was that?” That pretty much summarizes the quality of my memory these days. So please consider that anything I write may be questionable, not because of any ill intent, but because I’m getting older and feeling the effects of a lifetime enjoying fine wines. Nevertheless, here goes . . .

My first contact with the California Council on the Education of Teachers was back in the 1970s when the California Federation of Teachers asked me to be their representative as a teacher. As I entered the conference room, I wondered “Who are all these old farts?” I had no inkling that I would ultimately become one myself. After several years of attending, there was a vacancy on the CCET Board of Directors and I was appointed to it. Then I was subsequently elected to the Board, and later in 1998 to six years as President Elect, President, and Past President. All of this gave me the dubious distinction of having served considerable time on the CCET Board.

I remember being asked to run for President Elect and being convinced that I was a fall guy because my opponent was Beverly Young who worked with the Office of the Chancellor of the California State

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University. I figured she was smarter and more attractive than me and had a more prestigious job. When told I had been elected, I simply did not believe it. My years as a high school teacher left me with a certain political naiveté that didn't appreciate the grassroots feeling about the California State University's Chancellor's office. I finally admitted I was elected and figured I had better get a suit.

During my first meeting as President Elect, Grace Grant suggested that I continually nudge people to action. Leadership in a professional association would require getting as many CCET members as possible to volunteer their time and energy. I took this advice to heart.

About this time alternative teacher education programs were growing. There is a certain stealth quality about Cal Council and I was concerned that there were few Beginning Teacher Support and Assessment staff or New Teacher programs present at our meetings. Board members engaged in some ongoing invitational activities, and as it says in the I Ching, "perseverance furthers." From that point forward CCTE has enjoyed greater participation from the BTSA and induction community.

One item that was near and dear to my heart was the absence of a Cal Council logo. I presented the board with a suggestion from a colleague who taught art students. She volunteered to have one of her classes engage in a contest in which students would design alternative logos from which we could choose the one we liked best. The logos were presented to the CCTE Board and the one we currently use was selected. The teacher candidate who designed it received \$100 from CCTE as well as an A in the class.

Somewhere along the way the opportunity to change the name of CCET emerged, since CCET was merging with the California Association of Colleges of Teacher Education and the State of California Association of Teacher Educators. To accommodate this merger I suggested changing the name from the California Council on the Education of Teachers to the California Council on Teacher Education and ultimately this change was institutionalized.

My time on the board was shared with my involvement with some federal technology grants, giving me time and funding to pursue relations with our affiliated national organizations, the Association of Teacher Educators (ATE) and the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (AACTE). Over the years I served as the president of each state affiliate and attended the national conferences. I remember somehow annoying the ATE president to the extent that he attended a Cal Council conference to see if I was for real.

Perhaps the most controversial event in my presidency was when I proposed to the CCTE Board that we support a movement to protest

the No Child Left Behind policy of the Bush administration by encouraging teachers, parents, and students to boycott any schools giving the bubble tests and engage in civil disobedience in schools that used them. A resolution somewhat along those lines was adopted by the new CTE Board, but the ensuing controversy and the reality that such an overly bold stance could call into question CTE's credibility caused it to disappear from the website and it wasn't mentioned much afterwards. I did attend a conference where a speaker referenced it as an "amazing resolution."

In sum, I had a great time serving Cal Council and am pleased to see it continue to stand up for teachers and students.