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## *I was a "Newbie" at this year's 85<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference*

A Newbie is a first time conference delegate. My badge was a red ribbon!

On day one, as first time delegates, we attended a session to learn how the conference runs and what to expect. Initially, I wasn't sure what to expect but I knew it would be a great opportunity for me to learn more about my union.



Conference members wearing their Newbie red ribbons

It was awesome to see a huge room of 2,000+ people working together as one. The democratic process was utilized throughout the conference. The room was full of energy from the time the doors opened at 7:30am until they closed late at night. The conference was empowering, exciting and all worth it! I felt it was an honor to be a part of it.



2000+ Delegates made decisions that affect members all over the state



Education Days Session



The Pre-Retirement session was very informative. I wanted to learn more when it was over. I plan to attend the next CSEA free seminar in our area.

The Budget Crisis Bargaining session was quite interesting also. When the facilitator called out to members to stand and remain standing if they had been furloughed, laid off, had taken a pay cut or were paying for their own medical benefits just to keep their jobs – well, the only people left sitting down in the entire room was my group of SMCCD Chapter 33 delegates.

At that time, I wasn't sure if I should feel happy or cry knowing that everyone else was standing. I realized then how fortunate I've been during these difficult times. I, like many members, still have a job because we have a strong CSEA Union working for staff like me. I encourage all Chapter members to get active with our union.