

MCCC News

MTA/nea
208

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— In Memoriam —

Former MCCC President Jim Rice passed away on Dec. 16 after a brief illness at the age of 74.



(Photo by Cathy Boudreau)

Jim was deeply committed to the profession, teaching English for 44 years at Quinsigamond Community College before retiring in 2013. He was an inspiration to his colleagues and his students.

Rice was one of the founders of the MCCC in 1975 when state law first allowed faculty to have unions with collective bargaining rights. He was the first MCCC Treasurer and became the fourth, and the longest serving, MCCC President from 1982 to 1992.

Rice was a dynamic and inspiring leader who was president of the MCCC during a pivotal time. He spearheaded the signature drives during the 1980s that resulted in unionizing community college adjunct faculty. And he led the union through a strike in 1990 to achieve the first DCE contract.

During his tenure in MCCC leadership, the union developed much of the structure that is still in place over 20 years later, leaving an enduring legacy.

He continued his union activities with the NEA based National Council for Higher Education (NCHE) where he served multiple terms as president. In that role he helped to build this organization of higher ed. members from across the country. NCHE advocates for issues affecting public higher ed. both within the NEA and in the larger public sphere.

He is survived by his two sisters Kathleen M. Ecker of Worcester and Margaret

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Upcoming Dates

MCCC Election

Nominations Closed Thurs. Feb 4

But members may still write in their names for MTA and NEA delegates when the balloting begins.

Election will be conducted on line. Materials will be mailed out the first week of March with unique member IDs and PINs. Voting will close Friday, March 25 at 4:00 P. M.

The March issue of the MCCC News will have photos and statements from candidates for statewide offices. Third class mail delivery is not always timely, but the issue will be available the first week of March on the MCCC website.

Bylaw Proposals are due to the Bylaws Committee by March 1.

Submit to: Secretary@mccc-union.org

Award nominations are due to MCCC President by March 1

Forms available on MCCC website. ■

Day Contract Talks Resume

After a brief hiatus for the holidays, the MCCC Day bargaining team resumed negotiations with management over the winter break. They continue to believe a tentative agreement (TA) is possible soon, but several significant sticking points must be overcome before that can happen. After the Union expressed its anger to the college presidents at the lack of progress, the tone

improved, but still little progress has been made on the major impediments at press time for this newsletter.

One of the key areas of contention is management's insistence on changing the syllabus requirement for instructional objectives to Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs). Management has been unclear on many aspects of how SLOs would be used,

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Contract demonstrations have resumed with the start of the new semester. The community college presidents were greeted at their January meeting in Worcester by members from Quinsigamond and other chapters.

(Photo by James Morgan)

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Part-time Dues Reduction Proposal

Former Director and part-time professional staff member from Holyoke Community College Trudy Tynan gave presentations to the MCCC Executive Committee and Board of Directors for an MTA bylaw proposal to reduce dues for part-time faculty and staff.

Tynan had put forward her own dues reduction proposals in the past because part-time MTA members pay a higher percentage of their earnings in dues than

full-time members. This current proposal had its inception at UMass Boston, and she has joined in supporting this one.

The dues members pay are apportioned between the MCCC, MTA and NEA. The levels are determined by each of the respective organizations. The MCCC has worked to keep dues low, but MTA and NEA still have dues structures that many members feel is unfair to part-time members.

MTA dues levels are determined by three earning levels with cutoffs of \$9,000 and \$18,000. Currently higher ed. members who are half-time or earn over \$18,000 pay 50 percent of full-time MTA members' dues. Those working less than half-time but earning over \$9,000 pay 30 percent and those teaching 3 credits or earning less than \$9,000 pay 15 percent.

The proposal would reduce the percentages to 26.5, 20.4 and 10.2 percent

respectively. Individual members would save between \$8 and \$70 a year. If implemented, MTA could lose almost half a million dollars, which would have to be absorbed by budget cuts or increased dues levels for all members.

The Board voted to support the measure. Bylaw changes are voted on at the MTA Annual Meeting in May. Delegates to the meeting will be elected in the upcoming MCCC elections. ■



Part-time professional staff member Trudy Tynan made appeals for support at the MCCC for an MTA bylaw proposal to reduce the dues for part time members.

(Photo by Don Williams)

Mass Bay Community College Investigated

On Jan. 21, Massachusetts Inspector General Glenn Cunha released findings of an investigation into Mass Bay Community College where employees in the facilities department were conducting a private landscaping business on college time using college equipment.

The 15-page report detailed multiple instances of apparent conflict of interest and behavior the report said "likely constitutes larceny and false claims" on the part of the Institutional Maintenance Foreman who has been at the college since 1996 and his father who has been an employee for the past four years under his supervision. The two have run their private business since 2009.

State ethics law restricts an employee

from supervising another family member. Mass Bay's HR dept. allowed the father to be employed in the work area but had explicitly prohibited the foreman from directly supervising his father. This was routinely violated.

The college administration fully cooperated with the investigation. It was cited for a lack of supervision in the Facilities Dept. and recommendations were made for tightening procedures. The Inspector General also recommended that the college refer matters to the Massachusetts State Ethics Commission and the Norfolk County District for further investigation and actions.

No MCCC members were involved in the investigation. ■



Members at the Roxbury Community College chapter organized a demonstration on campus as the Board of Higher Education held meetings at the Reggie Lewis Track Center on Jan. 26.

(Photo by Ruth Kiefson)

Write Us

Letters to the Editor

Only submissions by MCCC unit members will be accepted. Letters should be no more than 200 words in length. The author must include name and chapter affiliation, which will be published with the letter. Authors must provide the editor with contact information in the form of either email address, mailing address or telephone number. Letters will be published on a space available basis and may be edited for length and appropriateness. Not all submissions can be published.

Guest Columns

Guest Columns should be no more than 400 words in length. Columns by authors who are not MCCC members may be accepted. The author's name and affiliation will be published with the column.

Mail to:

Donald Williams
North Shore Community College
1 Ferncroft Road
Danvers, MA 01923

Or email:

Communications@mccc-union.org

Always in A Hurry

My grandmother Helen used to joke that her mother was running when she gave birth to her in 1904. Honora Nagle and her daughter were always in a hurry. Their approaches to life—a fierce determination to do things right the first time and impatience with nonsense are traits I’ve inherited. Helen also loved all vegetables, fried clams, a New York sirloin fried in butter, an occasional highball, most dogs, her two spoiled sons, a sunny day at the beach and a good laugh.

She lived the hell out of her 97 years. Her life often wasn’t easy. She kicked my grandfather out of the house in the 1930’s. Imagine his nonsense. She worked two jobs and raised her two sons on her own while often providing a place to stay and a good meal to her siblings and

their families. Imagine determination and generosity. Times were tough in the Great Depression. Ordinary people were getting a raw deal.

I felt we were getting a raw deal in the 1990’s. Our union wasn’t getting enough respect. Salary increases were rare. Steps and changes in rank meant nothing. Salary inequities and grievances were the norm. Faculty and staff felt angry and disrespected.

Over lunch one day, I complained about another year without a raise to my grandmother. “Why don’t you do something about it?” she asked. I decided we could do better. We could address salary inequities. We could battle and win regular contracts. Unions prosper when members volunteer their talents. I decided to pro-

duce my chapter’s newsletter. I was elected as local chapter president and MCCC Director and a member of the MCCC Executive Committee. In the late 1990’s I ran for MCCC President and lost. My grandmother helped to stuff envelopes in my first statewide campaign.

I’m a determined person. I ran for vice president two years later and won.

In two terms as vice president our union increased our profile on Beacon Hill. We hired our own lobbyist. We strengthened our Strategic Action Committee. I mentored our legendary political activist Donnie McGee. Our volunteers worked inside and outside the State House on legislation to help our members. We fought proposed increases in health insurance splits and higher co-pays and deductibles. We fought for increased state support for our colleges. I served as day bargaining team chair.

My grandmother was no longer around to stuff envelopes when I won my first race for MCCC President in 2006. In five terms, I’ve endlessly experimented with new ideas and worked to improve our services to members. We’ve negotiated many contracts and taken few zero years and have always at least equaled salary increases earned by other state workers. While we haven’t yet achieved salary equity for our DCE members, we’ve improved salaries and strengthened contractual rights in what is the best community college contingent contract in the nation. We’ve created member-



Joe LeBlanc, MCCC President

driven committees. We’ve fought to fund contracts in a more timely manner.

As I approach my journey’s end fighting for one more day unit contract, I want to thank you. You have (almost) always been kind, generous and fair. It has been an honor to serve you. After traveling more than 100,000 miles on union business, reading and answering and filing away tens of thousands of emails, speaking with a couple of generations of members, battling some college presidents, pushing for legal and other services from the MTA and NEA, it’s time for me to return to fulltime teaching at Northern Essex. It has been a helluva ride, but it’s time to move on to the next chapter in my life.

Thank you. ■

Day Contract Talks . . .

Continued from front page

and the union is extremely concerned that the change could affect evaluations and increase workloads.

The demand for SLOs is coming from the Department of Higher Education and several college presidents. Nationally, “outcomes” are becoming more commonly used over “objectives” in higher education. The Union has been insisting on a statement of principle that would protect academic freedom and put faculty at the center of developing and implementing SLOs.

DCE faculty are not affected directly by this contract, but some aspects such as a change to SLOs on syllabi are expected to be demanded when the DCE contract comes up for negotiation in the coming year. The Day bargaining team is mindful of how agreements reached might impact adjunct faculty and is determined to protect their rights as well.

Another key area where the sides are apart is the financial package. It is below what other higher ed. unions who are also represented by MTA received while bargaining under the Patrick Administration, and well below what the union believes is fair for the kinds of changes that management has been demanding. At this point the state’s offer remains at 2, 2.5, and 2.5 percent over the 3-year contract.

The union believes that the MCCC contract is one of the first to come up for the Baker administration and they may be looking to establish a precedent for other contracts of lower raises and increased management rights. Vice President Donnie McGee has pointed out that these difficulties are the result of the change of governor. “Elections have consequences,” she reminds people. “And some of our members voted for Baker.”

The news is not all bad. The Union has managed to favorably resolve about

a dozen other issues. There has also been agreement to investigate a new grid system to improve upon the classification system. A new salary grid would more fairly distribute raises to take into account aspects like promotions, change of rank and years of service to the College. A new grid will take time to develop and implement.

Reports of community college managers receiving raises of between 2.5 and 3.5 percent are being investigated by MCCC Research Coordinator Hilaire Jean-Gilles. He is analyzing the payrolls of the campuses to see how widespread these raises are. Jean-Gilles reported to the MCCC Board of Directors that the contract calls for the colleges to give the union their October payrolls and he is looking into other databases to refine his search.

Meanwhile Work-to-rule continues. President Joe LeBlanc has said, “Work-to-rule is hard. But make no mistake, it is working. It’s driving the presidents crazy.” He urges members to continue to intensify their implementation of WTR.

Member demonstrations have restarted as well, with members from Quinsigamond and other community colleges greeting the 15 college presidents with signs when they had their monthly meeting at the campus in January. The union will be looking for other opportunities for public actions to help advance negotiations.

While the Department of Higher Education appears to be controlling the negotiations, the college presidents are integral to the process. Ultimately they will be in charge of implementing the final agreement. “The presidents need to own the proposals at the table,” said Pres. LeBlanc. And if they want WTR to end, they have to be involved more directly to achieve a mutually agreeable resolution. ■

MTA Members & Families

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For more information:

Central & Eastern MA

Karla Christiansen – 508.523.6393

Western MA

Jason Niles – 413.449.4697

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Dental Insurance Problems?



Full-time faculty and staff should report any problems with the Met Life Dental Plan by contacting Rick Ponticelli, the MCCC representative to the Health and Welfare Trust, at rpontice@northshore.edu ■



MCCC News

<http://mccc-union.org>

Editor:

Donald R. Williams, Jr.

President:

Joseph LeBlanc

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Donnie McGee

Secretary:

Claudine Barnes

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The MCCC News is a publication of the Massachusetts Community College Council. The Newsletter is intended to be an information source for the members of the MCCC and for other interested parties. Members' letters up to 200 words and guest columns up to 400 words will be accepted and published on a space-available basis. The material in this publication may be reprinted with the acknowledgment of its source. For further information on issues discussed in this publication, contact Donald Williams, North Shore Community College, One Ferncroft Road, Danvers, MA 01923. email: Communications@mccc-union.org

ADJUNCT/ PART-TIME CORNER Neil Cronin

The MCCC welcomes adjunct faculty to contribute their perspectives to regular guest columns in this space. Submissions should be no longer than 400 words and sent to MCCC Communications Coordinator Don Williams at Communications@mccc-union.org

Adjunct faculty bring a wide diversity of backgrounds and experience to community college teaching. But the nature of their working conditions doesn't foster much interaction with other faculty at their colleges. Sometimes we only know the full extent of members' accomplishments after their deaths.

Such is the case of Neil Cronin who passed away on Jan. 9. After a varied career in business and academia, he retired to Cape Cod and began a 25 year career as an adjunct at Cape Cod Community College where he taught business courses as well as Ancient History and Medieval History. His obituary detailed a life rich in experience that he could bring to his students.

Born in 1931 in New York City, Cronin attended Iona College on a track scholarship, but was also an outstanding student who participated in a range of scholastic and social activities. During summers he played baseball in the Cape Cod League. A magna cum laude graduate, he was directly hired as an instructor at Iona College and Iona Prep School. He continued his education earning an MA and Ph.D from Fordham University.

In 1957 he moved into the business world starting as a systems analyst at Statistical Tabulating Corporation and later becoming CEO of ITT's Educational Services with offices in the U.S. and France. He finished his business career as CEO of Berlitz School with offices in 26 countries where his multilingualism was a great asset.

A surprising revelation to many colleagues in the obituary was that during his 25-year business career, Cronin accepted covert assignments in Bulgaria, China, and Iran from an unnamed federal agency. After a narrow escape from Iran in 1978, he decided on another career change and accepted a position as academic dean at the College of New Rochelle in New Rochelle NY. There he stayed until his retirement to Cape Cod.

His obituary also detailed a wide range of community activities that he engaged in from writing columns for the Cape Cod Times to creating and performing in educational programs on local-access television. He also organized popular tours of Europe for the community.

Mr. Cronin exemplifies the wealth of experience that adjunct faculty bring to their students and the college communities. ■

Know Your Day Contract

February 2016

- Feb. 10** Summary evaluation rebuttals due (p.51)
- Feb. 15** First year professional staff evaluation conference (p.52)
- Feb. 20** Course materials returned (p.51)
- Feb. 28** Preferred schedules and courses submitted (p.42)
- Feb. 28** New full and part-time hire list due MCCC

March 2016

- March 1** Notice of non-reappointment (first through fourth year) (p.38)
- March 5** Proposals due for unpaid leave of absence for fall semester (p.27)
- March 15** Dean's recommendations for Title change due (p.59)
- March 15** Unit Personnel Practices recommendations for tenure due (p.40)
- March 30** Department Chair evaluations (p.67)
- March 31** Fall assignments to faculty, fulltime schedules to chapter (p.42)

NOTE: *Dates may vary depending on the first day of classes. Most of these dates are "last date" standards. In many instances the action can be accomplished before the date indicated. Page numbers refer to the printed 2012-2015 contract. ■*

Jim Rice . . .

Continued from front page

A. Falcone of Walnut Creek, California along with five children: James A. Rice of Northbridge, Dierdre A. Carlson of Auburn, Julianne Rice of Jamaica Plain, Brian A. Rice of Oceanside, California, and Zachary J. Rice of Dedham.

The MCCC is gathering donations from individual members in Rice's name for the Quinsigamond Community College scholarship fund. It will pass them on to the college as coming from MCCC members. This will let the Rice family know how much MCCC members appreciated Jim's work and will allow members to deduct their donations.

Send checks to
MCCC Office
Attn: Rice
27 Mechanic St. Suite 104
Worcester, MA 01608-2402
Make checks payable to:
QCC Foundation ■

DIRECTORS' NOTES

The January meeting of the MCCC Board of Directors focused largely on budget and fiscal issues.

- Treasurer Phil Mahler presented the proposed budget for FY 2017 developed by the Finance Committee. This was the first of two times the budget comes before the Board for discussion before being voted upon to recommend to the April MCCC Delegate Assembly. The budget suggested alternative spending reductions that anticipate a possible adverse Supreme Court decision on agency fees.
- Charles Webb from the firm Alexander, Aronson & Finning presented their report on the annual audit of the MCCC. Webb went over some details of the process and said that it was "a clean unqualified audit." ■

MOVING?

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