

# MCCC News

MTA/nea  
208

The Official Publication of the *Massachusetts Community College Council* / Volume 17, Issue 3 / November 2015

## Contract Action Heats Up

As Day contract negotiations drag on, the MCCC is ratcheting up activities to accelerate the process and bring about a fair contract soon. The sides are still far apart on both money and language.

At its Oct. 17 meeting, the Board of Directors passed a motion to urge chapters to go on Work-to-Rule. Within two weeks, ten chapters had voted to start the action. As of this writing 12 chapters are on WTR: Berkshire, Bristol, Bunker Hill, Cape Cod, Greenfield, Holyoke, Mass Bay, Massasoit, Middlesex, Mt. Wachusett, North Shore and Northern Essex.

Other chapters have scheduled meetings where they will consider the action.

Another action being urged is for chapter leaders to meet with their colleges' boards of trustees to explain the issues and ask them for support. To date, a few chapters have done this and some have had success in getting letters urging Commissioner Carlos Santiago and the Board of Higher Education to intervene and help bring about a fair contract soon.

Chapters are encouraged to reach out to student groups to explain why the union is taking actions and enlisting their support. Getting resolutions of support from students and coverage in the student press can help.

Some chapters are organizing visibility standouts using signs printed by the union, as well as hand lettered ones. Northern Essex is doing this on a regular Tues./Thurs. basis. Berkshire, Bristol, Holyoke and Greenfield have all done some kind of public actions.

Chapters should look for creative opportunities for visibility. The Greenfield chapter used a Halloween event for a



Northern Essex Community College members have been conducting standout demonstrations every Tuesday and Thursday to support contract negotiations.

(Photo by Peter Flynn)

Zombie Picket saying "Something scary is happening in community colleges." Others are organizing Thanksgiving related events.

The Contract Action Team is continu-

ing to produce support materials. More buttons are being produced, and stickers with a new, stronger message are being produced. More activities are being planned if progress isn't made. ■

## Fall Conference Honors Legislators

This year's MCCC Fall conference on Oct. 22 combined favorite sessions from previous years with some interesting new topics. There were breakout sessions on a variety of topics from general interest to specific groups such as chapter presidents and adjuncts. Over 70 MCCC members came together for an evening of training and organizational development.

Recognizing legislators who have supported community college issues has become an important part of the annual

conference, and this year's Friend of Community Colleges awards went to Representatives Michael Brady (D-Brockton) and John Scibak (D-South Hadley).

MCCC Vice President, and Strategic Action Committee Chair, Donnie McGee introduced Rep. Scibak explaining his position as House Chair of the Joint Committee on Labor & Workforce Development and noting his current co-sponsorship of two anti-bullying bills very important to MCCC educators: H. 1728 and H. 1771, and his deep commitment to higher education. She pointed out that he previously was an Assistant Professor of Special Education at Indiana University and currently is an adjunct faculty member at Westfield State University. His son and daughter-in-law are both Holyoke Community College graduates.

McGee thanked Rep. Scibak for his support on a range of issues but singled out his extraordinary leadership as House Chair of the Joint Committee on Public Service in passing the ORP pension bill. He discussed strategies with her that might get the DHE on board with the bill's passage.

In accepting the award, Rep. Scibak said that as the ORP legislation went through the process for three years, "it became personal for me." But he said the real force behind the bill was the tremendous mobilization of the MCCC.

He said, "Some bills hang around for 20 years—three years is like a flash in the legislature." He noted that Commissioner

*Continued on page 2*



Rep. John Scibak (D-South Hadley) showed support for MCCC contract negotiations as he received the "Friend of the Community Colleges" award.

(Photo by Don Williams)

NON-PROFIT ORG.  
U.S. POSTAGE  
PAID  
Permit No. 82  
Worcester, MA

MCCC Newsletter  
27 Mechanic Street, Suite 104  
Worcester, MA 01608-2402



## Conducting Work-to-Rule: Not Business As Usual

Work-to-rule is one of the few actions that public employees who are banned from striking can engage in. Whether your chapter has already gone on it or not, it is clear that negotiations for a successor to the 2013-2015 contract are not progressing at a satisfactory rate, and moving them along requires some kind of job actions.

The MCCC has not employed work-

to-rule since 2000 when members went over 1000 days without a contract. Many newer members have never experienced it. But even veteran members who have been through it many times can be confused about how to conduct it.

So what is work-to-rule? Basically, it is refusing to do any work that is not specifically required by contract. Of course, this

leaves much room for interpretation.

There are standard practices that the union has used in work-to-rule:

- no volunteering for additional duties
- attend meetings, but then vote to adjourn them
- no attending celebrations
- no activities supporting the administration
- no accreditation assistance
- no search committees
- no volunteer recruiting
- no volunteer tutoring
- no volunteer orientation work
- no college service work after the last scheduled class
- no participation in student activities unless officially assigned and consistent with past practice

Conducting work-to-rule does fall primarily on faculty simply because of the nature of their jobs and contract language. This does not mean that professional staff are not part of the process. Staff can do many things within the guidelines. If nothing else, staff should vote along with faculty to adjourn meetings.

Rigidly adhering to contract provisions is another part of this process. This means faculty should limit themselves to the contractual 18 advisees unless workload is reduced as per contract. Limit your preps to the contractual 2/3 split, and refuse to take on special, extra projects regardless of how enticing these might be.

Professional staff should stick to their contractual weekly workload. You should not accept work for comp time. And do not accept "other duties as assigned" unless there is a reduction in the stated duties on your E-7. If management insists upon your accepting any of the activities mentioned,

insist upon the directive being put in writing, comply and then file a grievance.

Members who are in their first four years, and do not have "just cause" protection are not expected to take risks in confrontation. But there are many safe activities they may participate in.

Another way to apply work-to-rule is to insist on every benefit provided by the contract. One of these is the mileage reimbursement. Many campuses have split campuses and they require union members to drive between them during the workday for classes and meetings. The reimbursement is at the IRS rate, but the distances traveled are usually short, so many members never bother to do the paper work. The dollars do add up. You are entitled to this money, and absent any pay raises you should get these small amounts. (See section 9.03F of the contract for the provision.)

It is also important that work-to-rule not be conducted quietly. Members should do everything they can to make it known to management, students and the public that, without a contract, business as usual will not go on. Chapters are encouraged to be creative in conducting activities. For example, during the last WTR the Northern Essex chapter had work-to-rule T-shirts made for all faculty and staff to wear. The union has had buttons made and is making new versions. Members can put signs on their office doors saying that work-to-rule is in effect.

Ultimately, the success of a work-to-rule action lies in union members using their imaginations to come up with ways to conduct it. Share your ideas. Help and support each other in making the action as effective as possible when the time comes to use it. ■

## MCCC Fall Conference . . .

*Continued from front page*

Freeland was opposed to the bill, but with commitment, obstacles can be overcome. "The message?" he said, "Never give up."

Contract negotiations were on many attendees' minds, and while the legislature has no role in contract negotiations, Rep. Scibak did comment on the funding process saying, "waiting for contracts to be funded is an embarrassment." He urged members to talk with their senators and representatives. In closing he took up one of the MCCC contract action signs and waived it to cheers of the audience.

Rep. Michael Brady was the other honoree. He was unable to attend, but his aide Al DeGirolamo was there to accept the award in his behalf. McGee noted that Rep. Brady has been on many committees that relate to MCCC issues and has been a strong supporter of many MCCC endorsed bills. He is a co-sponsor of H1055, An Act to Invest in Higher Education Faculty as well as current anti-bullying legislation that MCCC has endorsed. Most notably, he is the lead House sponsor on two bills endorsed by the MCCC that would provide adjunct faculty with pension and health insurance benefits. In accepting the award for Rep. Brady, Mr. DeGirolamo expressed the representative regrets, but that he was in a tight race for a Nov. 3 special election for the 2<sup>nd</sup> Plymouth and Bristol senate seat, and that he was committed to campaign activities. He ultimately won the seat.

He pointed out that Rep. Brady is a graduate of Massasoit Community College. And he understands the MCCC's issues because he was a classic community student who delivered bread in the morning before classes to pay for his education.

The awards were crystal bowls engraved with: the MCCC logo and legislator's name, followed by "MCCC Legislative Award, Friend of the Community Colleges."

Two groups of breakout sessions were scheduled before the awards and dinner and one session after, each with three presentations members could choose from.

Some were aimed at specific subgroups within the MCCC. Chapter presidents had two consecutive sessions where they could share issues and solutions they have encountered. Contract action was



*Rep. Michael Brady received the "Friend of the Community Colleges" award, but was unable to attend the MCCC Fall Conference.* File photo

a particular focus. The Adjunct At-large Directors, Carol Gray and Linda Grochowalski, held a listening session for adjunct and part-time members. MTA Consultant Bob Whalen joined by the Unit Professionals Committee explained how the union can back up professional staff.

Grievance Coordinators Dennis Fitzgerald and Joe Rizzo conducted their regularly, well attended presentations on Day and DCE contract compliance respectively. Fitzgerald had a particular focus on just cause provision with the tag line "If Tom Brady was a unit member." Rizzo's focus was on recent developments in the DCE contract application and governmental policies like unemployment benefits.

Two unique presentations were added to the standard breakout offerings. Parliamentarian Patti Legault-Frank gave a presentation on effective use of Roberts Rules of Order to help union members understand how to keep meetings focused and on track. MTA Consultant Courtney Derwinski gave a presentation on the evolution of education collective bargaining both in Massachusetts and nationally.

At the end of the evening Pres. LeBlanc made a point to thank the conference committee members Liz Recko-Morrison (chair), Gail Guarino, Trudy Tynan and Randi Zanca.

The conference was a great opportunity for members from across the state to learn about current trends, develop organizational effectiveness, and have some social time to build a more effective union. ■



*MTA Consultant Courtney Derwinski gave an enlightening presentation on labor history. She pointed out that the NRA is so effective in its political activity because of the intense shared passion of its members.* (Photo by Don Williams)



# Bargaining Enters A Messy Phase – Your Support Is Critical to Our Success

From North Shore to Cape Cod to the Pioneer Valley and the Berkshires, our chapters are voting to go on Work to Rule. Chapter leaders are speaking up at college trustee meetings and meeting with their college presidents. Trustee chairs and college presidents are writing to Education Secretary James Peyser and Commissioner Carlos Santiago to urge action.

Our collective bargaining agreement expired on June 30 with no end in sight. The situation is getting messy. Union picketers greet students and the public several times a week at Northern Essex. Our students understand. They wave and honk their horns in support. Members are moving to adjourn college meetings. College governance will soon be mostly shut down.

The student press is beginning to take notice. Their coverage highlights the unfairness of asking community college faculty and professional staff to settle for less than the 3.5, 3.5 and 3.5 percent increases bargained by their counterparts in state universities and the UMass system in 2014. To date, the state has offered 2, 2.5 and 2.5 percent in across the board raises that will worsen inequities between senior and junior members.

Students are asking their professors about the crisis. They're learning about Work to Rule, a job action that asks our members to do only what the contract requires. Our contract doesn't mandate

answering student emails in evening hours. Our contract doesn't require us to serve on extra college committees, to take on special projects or to attend endless other meetings connected to student outcomes assessment, retention rate studies, graduation rate analyses and other state priorities. Our members do more than our contract requires. We are deeply respectful of our students and our professions, but our generosity will be put on hold until we get a fair deal.

A fair deal means an equitable salary system. Our team would like to bargain a traditional salary grid that would parallel those used in elementary, secondary and most higher education systems. At a minimum, it would have columns and steps to reflect experience, academic credentials and rank.

Our present classification salary grid is a complicated, confusing mess. Points, a system that was designed to provide a small annual salary increase for earned seniority, experience, post-tenure evaluations and changes in rank haven't been paid in years. Point values are no longer equalized, and senior members' points are worth less than points for new hires. The system was created in the late 1990's to address inequities, but points have seldom been funded.

Management is pushing hostile ideas in its language package. It wants increased focus on student learning outcomes assessment. They propose connecting it to

faculty evaluations. Management also wants to require day unit faculty to teach online. They want day unit courses to begin as late as 6:30 p.m.

We are bargaining in good faith, but it's tough to negotiate a fair deal when the financial package was delayed for weeks and when our most important demands are pushed aside. Things are getting messy. They will get messier until the state agrees to a fair deal. ■



Joe LeBlanc, MCCC President

## MCCC Meets New MTA Higher Ed. Director

Robert Vodicka, MTA's new Director of Higher Ed. introduced himself to the MCCC Board of Directors at its Oct. 16 meeting.

He holds a BA from Pomona College and an MA from the University of Kansas, both in American Studies. In further graduate studies he did research on the vital importance of community colleges in public higher education. His union work started at Eastern Michigan University in Ypsilanti where he was an organizer for non-tenured and adjunct faculty with the American Federation of Teachers (AFT) local.

Prior to coming to MTA, Vodicka worked for the AFT in Washington D.C. where he worked on higher ed. issues and developed an organizing campaign for adjunct/contingent faculty.



He told the board that he is excited about the new job and sees organizing as one of the key activities he will be focusing on. ■



Parliamentarian Patti Legault-Frank explained the importance of adhering to parliamentary rules when conducting meetings in a break-out session at the MCCC Fall Conference.

(Photo by Don Williams)

## New Verizon FiOS discount for MTA members!



Members are now eligible to **save up to \$120 a year** on their Verizon FiOS TV, Internet and Home Phone services!

**SIGN-UP IS EASY:**

**[www.mtabenefits.com/verizonfios.htm](http://www.mtabenefits.com/verizonfios.htm)**

Verizon Connections: Discounts on qualifying bundles available to active qualifying members of participating organizations. Standard bundle agreements, eligibility restrictions and additional terms apply. Program and amounts are subject to change and may be modified or discounted at any time. Limit of one Verizon Connections discount per account.





# Know Your Day Contract

## November 2015

- Nov. 11** Veterans Day holiday.  
**Nov. 21** Unit Personnel Practices Committee established. (p. 39)  
**Nov. 27-28** Thanksgiving Holiday.  
**Nov. 28** Professional Staff must use one of the three off campus days. (p. 48)

## December 2015

- Dec. 1** Applications due for Sabbatical Leave beginning July 1 for professional staff or Fall semester for faculty. (p. 25)  
**Dec. 22** Last day fall semester can end. (p. 46)  
**Dec.** **Last Day of classes.** Faculty submit college service and student advisement form. (p. 51)  
**Dec. 25** Christmas holiday. (p. 23)  
**Dec. 30** Professional staff submit documentation of performance of duties and responsibilities including, but not limited to a log student advisement, if appropriate, and college service activities. (p. 53)

*N.B. 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. All cited page numbers are from the 2012-2015 Agreement. ■*

## 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](mailto:Communications@mccc-union.org)



## MCCC News

<http://mccc-union.org>

### Editor:

Donald R. Williams, Jr.

### President:

Joseph LeBlanc

### Vice President:

Donnie McGee

### Secretary:

Claudine Barnes

### Treasurer:

Phil Mahler

*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](mailto:Communications@mccc-union.org)*

# MCCC NOMINATIONS NOW OPEN

Nominations are being accepted for the following positions:

- \* MCCC Officers: President, Vice President, Treasurer and Secretary
- \* Part-time/ Adjunct At-large MCCC Directors (2)
- \* MTA Annual Meeting Delegates  
Boston, May 13-14, 2016
- \* NEA Representative Assembly Delegates  
Washington D.C., July 2-7, 2016

## NOMINATIONS CLOSE THURS., FEB. 4, AT 3:00 P. M. AND MUST INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING:

- \* Candidates for MCCC officers must submit an original nomination sheet with signatures of 50 active MCCC members. Candidates are allowed statements of up to 250 words with photo for publication in the March *MCCC News* sent to the MCCC Communications Coordinator by 2/4/15. ([communications@mccc-union.org](mailto:communications@mccc-union.org))
- \* Candidates for Part-time/Adjunct At-large MCCC Directors must submit an original nomination sheet with signatures of 10 active MCCC members. Candidates are allowed statements of up to 250 words with photo for publication in the March *MCCC News* sent to the MCCC Communications Coordinator. by 2/4/15. ([communications@mccc-union.org](mailto:communications@mccc-union.org))
- \* Candidates for NE-RA Delegates may submit a 50 word statement with their on-line nomination that will be printed and mailed with the election letter.

## ELECTION WILL BE CONDUCTED ONLINE.

## MATERIALS WILL BE MAILED OUT THE FIRST WEEK OF MARCH WITH UNIQUE MEMBER IDS AND PINS.

## VOTING WILL CLOSE FRIDAY, MARCH 25 AT 3:00 P. M.

Note: Members must be elected to the MTA Annual Meeting, but write-ins are accepted up to the closing date of voting. The top 15 vote recipients for the NEA-RA will receive financial support from the MCCC to attend the meeting in Washington, D.C. Write-ins are also allowed.

Submit your nomination on line at the MCCC website:  
[www.mccc-union.org](http://www.mccc-union.org).



Members who won \$100 door prizes at end of the Fall Conference are (from left) Phil Mahler, MxCC; Dina Veygman, BHCC; Casey Sullivan, QCC; Zahra Massoud, QCC; and Jefferson Fernandes, BHCC.  
(Photo by Don Williams)