

MCCC News



The Official Publication of the *Massachusetts Community College Council* / Volume 19, Issue 1 / September 2017

Hold the Date— Thursday, Oct. 26 MCCC 2017 Fall Conference

Doubletree by Hilton Hotel
Westborough

Informative workshops,
wonderful dinner, speakers,
raffle, socializing.

Look for registration
materials on the MCCC
website.

No charge for attending—
Agency Fee members are
invited.

DCE Bargaining—Time for Action

After more than a year of bargaining, the DCE contract negotiation team enters the Fall semester determined to conclude a new contract before the end of the year. The major sticking point, and the most difficult issue to be negotiated, is money. To date, management's financial offer is a zero percent increase for the second and third years of the new contract. This is unacceptable.

The contract expired a year ago. There was a 4 percent raise last January as an "outside year" of the last contract, which management is calling part of the new contract. We reject that idea and are seeking increases for this and the next two years. We continue to seek Equal Pay for Equal Work, which means a substantial increase in compensation to draw adjuncts closer to the Day faculty compensation on a per course basis.

State law requires that DCE courses be taught "at no cost to The Common-



Bristol Community college members joined President Diana Yohe in demonstrating for a successful resolution of the DCE Contract. From left, Susan McCourt, Alan Pearlmuter, Jen Boulay, Karl Schnapp, Pres. Yohe, and Paul Robillard.

wealth," and it allows that the colleges keep all the tuition and fees paid for courses taught under the DCE contract. We have data that shows that, year after year, more and more of the revenue from DCE courses is being spent on college expenses other than instruction, such as paving parking lots, exercise equipment and administrative salaries.

MCCC is putting pressure on management to loosen the purse strings. We've been collecting petition signatures and case studies of the hurdles adjuncts face as they try to survive on low DCE pay and no benefits.

The bargaining team will be meeting more frequently with management as the

Fall semester begins. Management was dragging its feet in the Spring, claiming its calendar was full. So we have pushed to set aside regular Wednesday sessions in the Fall for bargaining. This should speed up the process.

But DCE members should be ready to act, too. A Bargaining Support Team has been in place for the last year and we plan to organize upcoming on- and off-campus activities and media events to ramp up the pressure. We are organizing standouts at all upcoming on-campus bargaining sessions to let management know we mean it.

Our efforts are not limited to bargain-

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WANTED: Day Bargaining Team Members

The MCCC will soon begin the process of forming a team to negotiate a successor Day Collective Bargaining Agreement. The team negotiates with the employer over wages, hours, and conditions of employment. The current contract expires June 30, 2018.

This is an opportunity for members to shape the working conditions affecting over 2,200 day contract members for the next three years and beyond.

The team is made up of 5 Day Contract members plus the MCCC President and Vice President ex officio.

Preferred applicants will represent the diversity of the collective Day bargaining unit that includes full-time faculty, some part-time faculty, and all professional staff—both full- and part-time. We will be seeking a diversity of

skill sets from business/finance/math to sociology/English, etc. Prior bargaining experience and/or training is a plus but is not required as training will be provided.

Team members have traditionally been provided with reassigned time to allow them to regularly meet. And as a joint labor/management committee, the bargaining team is also counted as college service time. Bargaining generally requires at least a one-year commitment. Applications are due by Wednesday, October 25, 2017, but will remain open until all five team members have been approved by the Board of Directors.

For information or to submit a letter of interest contact: MCCC President Diana Yohe President @mccc-union.org ■

Last Print Issue

This issue of the MCCC News will be the last print issue mailed to members in 2017.

In an effort to save money our Union has decided to print and mail only two issues of the newsletter per year.

Starting this year, we will mail a print issue to every member's home address at the start of each semester: September and February. We will continue to produce eight issues per year, and the other six issues will be sent to chapter presidents to distribute through their campus-based email lists.

As before, all issues will be available on the MCCC website in .pdf format. ■

How Can We End This Divisiveness?

By Vice President Jeff Seideman

The union must be falling apart! What else could anyone think after a year and a half of attacks on the president and myself? The attacks started when we dared to run for office, increased after we'd been elected, continued when we took office, have been raging for the last year and now there's one more in this issue of *MCCC News*.

What we have here are what the Trump administration likes to call "alternative facts." Everyone else calls them lies.

Here are real facts. Despite all the unsubstantiated allegations, the union is rolling along just fine. Contracts are being negotiated and defended, full timers just transitioned into a favorable salary grid system, grievances are being filed, conferences and all sorts of meetings are being held, committees are hard at work and there's an omnibus bill before the legislature with 106 co-sponsors (the most we've ever had for a higher ed. legislative proposal!) that would give adjuncts health insurance and pensions, parity pay, priority hiring, reduced Smart Plan contributions and a state match.

Yes, things are okay, but they could be better. Communication between leadership and the members could be better if some chapter presidents didn't stand in the way. DCE bargaining could be better if the board showed more support. The union could be more transparent. Infor-

mation that should be on the website is being blocked. Collaboration could be improved. And on and on.

All the negativity comes from an entrenched group on the Board of Directors, and their pals in some chapters. They are fearful of the growing influence of adjuncts and somehow think that improvements in adjunct pay and working conditions will hurt full timers. As I reported earlier this year, they even proposed legislation (thankfully, it went nowhere) that would have put many adjuncts out of work.

They're wrong about adjuncts and the dynamics of the situation. This is not a zero sum game. But it is a power struggle.

The president and I are determined to work for all our members – full timers, part timers, professional staff and adjuncts. All our members – including agency fee payers – do valuable work and deserve respect and support from our union.

How did we get to this place of hostility and impasse? The answer goes back 40 years to the founding of our union when our governance structure was established.

When the union was first formed the vast majority of employees were full timers. They saw each other in the hallways and offices of the community colleges, frequently ate lunch together, and developed social relationships. When

union meetings were called, they were scheduled at times that most could attend. Members voted for chapter candidates they knew and had no reason to think their needs wouldn't be met by a Board of Directors drawn from this structure.

This system remains in place today.

But times have changed. Adjuncts now teach between 70 and 85 percent of all classes at the 15 community colleges. They make up 70 percent of our membership and contribute 40 percent of the union's revenue.

Adjuncts are just like full timers in the classroom, but their organizational relationships are very different. Unlike full timers, adjuncts come in to their schools, teach their courses and leave. It takes years for adjuncts to get to know even a handful of their full time colleagues. Because they teach throughout the day and into the evenings and weekends, adjuncts are rarely in the school when union meetings are held. Their participation rates in elections are low.

To increase participation and strengthen the democratic process chapter elections are supposed to offer absentee ballots. Frequently, that doesn't happen.

The one electoral area in which adjuncts are on equal footing with full timers is statewide elections, when everyone receives their ballots and voting instructions at their homes via postal mail. Then, adjuncts' greater numbers can influence elections.

The net effect of these different elec-

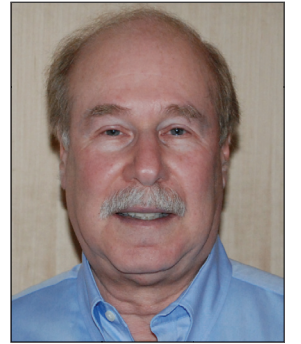
toral models?

You have the president and vice president of the union, elected to lead the union by the majority of statewide members. But they sit on a board where a clique advocating for their own self interests control the vote.

There's room for compromise, but the Old Guard resists. They could recognize that the union has changed and advocate for adjuncts with as much vigor as they do for full and part timers under the Day contract. Or, they could recognize the need to compromise and change the bylaws to share power with the president. Neither has happened or is likely to happen.

So we're at a stalemate that can only end when Old Guard members are replaced with a new generation of leaders. The disenfranchised members of each chapter must join together to unseat the directors who consistently vote against their interests. It won't be easy, but it's doable. A statewide caucus for just this purpose is already forming.

When that happens the attacks on the union's elected leaders will end, pressure to split the union will subside, and we can begin to form a more democratic, transparent union that advocates for all its members. ■



Jeff Seideman,
Vice President

One Adjunct's Perspective On Delegate Assembly

By Carol Gray, Adjunct / Part-Time Director to the MCCC Board

I offer you my summary of our union's Delegate Assembly in April:

- No-confidence motions were brought against the President and Vice President. This was no surprise for those of us on the Board who have watched the Board's old guard spend countless Board hours trying to charge, discipline and otherwise thwart the new leadership ever since the election last spring. The new leadership was elected with adjuncts voting in three times their normal numbers, voting 3 to 1 for the new leadership.

- No evidence was presented before the no-confidence vote against the Vice President. When the no-confidence motion was introduced against President Diana Yohe, one delegate stood up at the microphone in frustration, exclaiming "Isn't there going to be any evidence? Do we really make decisions like this with no evidence? Some opinions were offered, but in my view no substantive evidence was offered to establish any improper conduct. One delegate commented to me that she thought about getting up to the microphone to accuse Diana of being

a witch; her point being: this is a witch hunt.

- I and others requested roll call votes on the no-confidence motions, meaning delegates' names would be on their votes. Those bringing these motions opposed any roll call votes, preferring anonymity.

- Numerous 'charges' against the President pertained to the DCE bargaining team. One DCE Bargaining Team member spoke against the no-confidence motion saying she, as a witness to Team activities, strongly disagreed with the allegations.

- After the divisive no-confidence motions passed, I made a motion asking the Assembly to urge the MCCC Board of Directors to do full mediation of all issues dividing the Board, as urged by the Massachusetts Teachers Association (MTA), our parent union. The MTA even said it would pay all costs of such mediation. The Board, led primarily by the old guard, voted against full mediation, opting instead for very limited mediation not including the "charges" against the President and Vice President.

- One of the primary functions of the MCCC Delegate Assembly is to vote

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The Shape of Things

By Doug Wilkins, Greenfield CC Chapter President

Our union has a simple structure: each college elects one of their members to represent that college on the Board of Directors. Rose Freeland is our duly elected representative. Also on that board are a president, vice president, treasurer, and secretary, elected by all of the members in the union. In addition, there are two members elected by the Adjunct and Part-time Professional members to represent them. The Board of Directors governs the union based on a set of bylaws.

The bylaws are determined by an annual meeting, called the Delegate Assembly, made up of members according to the size of each college. The larger colleges have more delegates than the smaller colleges (GCC being a smaller college). All bylaw changes have to pass by a 2/3 majority. That is the largest meeting of our union, and this year the attendance was a record. The Delegate Assembly defines our union.

So, you have all seen many e-mails from the union president, Diana Yohe, the union vice president, Jeff Seideman, and from one of the two elected adjunct/part-time professional reps, Carol Gray.

It seems as though, to me anyway, that they seem to not understand our union structure. All three have said in some form or another, and repeatedly, that they have a right to do what they want, outside of the Board of Directors, and that the Board of Directors does not represent the members! You have seen the e-mails, you have seen the rhetoric.

That was the setting for the Delegate Assembly. There were many from a significant majority of the 15 colleges that are VERY upset with the way that the current president and vice president are driving our union. There were also many that were in support of the current president and vice president. That came to a head at the Delegate Assembly. We, the union members that believe in the union bylaws and in our union, voted in favor of "No Confidence" motions for both the president and the vice president. Both of those motions passed by a large majority (about an 80-50 split, or more).

Some complained that those motions took away from our union business. My strong feelings are that little would have passed at the Delegate Assembly that was controversial, since neither "side" had the 2/3rds needed to pass a bylaw.

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Renewing Our Commitments

By Diana Yohe, MCCC President

Our union needs to recapture the energy, the spirit, and the commitment that enabled the labor movement to play a key role in shaping our country; in giving dignity and respect to workers through advancing working conditions, wages, and benefits; and bringing a better quality of life to families.

Our work is education. Most of us entered community college teaching and academic support because we are passionate about the mission of improving lives through education...one student at a time. Quality public education is something people had to fight to win, and our unions (MCCC/MTA/NEA) have been – and continue to be – central to that fight to provide the learning and working conditions needed for student success and to provide the schools our communities deserve.

Members=Power. As a union of members, we need to renew our commitment to democracy, to civility, and to working together for the common good. This past year, we have been caught in a cycle of recrimination among a small inner circle within the Board focused on attacks. Most members want an end to the squabbling and want the leadership at all levels – president, vice-president, secretary, Board of Directors, chapter presidents – to focus on union solidarity and on advancing our work as education professionals.

After 38 years of full time teaching, I ran for statewide MCCC President because I wanted members' voices to be heard, because I wanted us to advance equality for adjuncts, and because I value openness and transparency. And, despite the political distractions within leadership, we have succeeded in accomplishing many of these goals this past year:

- New, previously unengaged members have become involved and are now serving on statewide committees and many were first-time attendees at the MCCC, MTA, and NEA Delegate Assemblies.
- Our DCE bargaining team is strong in its commitment to achieve a contract that respects the work and contributions of our adjunct faculty. Our bargaining process is more transparent; members, for the first time ever, have been invited to observe negotiations!
- A DCE bargaining support team was created to work with Chapter Presidents to provide ongoing member support for contract negotiations.
- The Day contract was finally signed and printed well past ratification, and the

Day contract Salary Grid was brought to a successful ratification vote despite almost impossible timeline constraints.

- Resources were expended to develop and strengthen chapters weak in member involvement, to provide stipends to members to attend conferences and workshops, and to support leadership training forums for local chapter presidents and for members seeking greater involvement in their union.
- A new and improved MCCC website was launched, providing ease of use

Renewed commitments are needed not just for the MCCC but for all public sector unions as we are about to face an unprecedented attack on our very existence.

and the ability to be viewed on multiple devices from computers to smartphones.

- We entered into social media with the creation and launching of an MCCC Facebook Page.
- A Fall Conference open to all unit members at no cost is scheduled for October 26. Workshops of interest to members are being planned.
- The Bylaws and Rules Committee brought forward 13 new bylaw proposals to the Delegate Assembly in April despite the proposals not being acted upon.
- The Nominations and Elections Committee took over the statewide elections process and heard an appeal on a Spring 2017 chapter election that failed to provide absentee ballots; the Committee's decision was that a new chapter election be held in Fall 2017.
- A Blue Ribbon Ad Hoc Committee was formed to review our MCCC policies on reassigned time/stipends given to Board members and others (currently valued at \$3,423 each) to ensure that member dues are being used responsibly and that there are accountability measures in place; a report is due to be presented to the Board in August or September.

Renewed commitments are needed not just for the MCCC but for all public sector unions as we are about to face an unprecedented attack on our very existence. It is almost certain that the Trump Supreme Court (in the Janus case) will issue a decision that will abolish agency fee provisions for all public sector unions nationwide in an attempt to destroy unions by requiring unions to provide many of the benefits of the contract but without requiring non-members (agency fee payers) to pay anything for the services

they receive.

If we are to survive the attacks, we need to renew our commitment to the core value of unionism: to bring economic justice to the workplace and social justice to our nation. Our power as a union is in our MEMBERS collectively standing together in solidarity to advance respect for our profession and to advocate for our students; it does not reside in top-down leadership.

We need to come together, talk with each other, and democratically decide

what matters to us. As individuals, power resides with management. As a union of engaged members, we hold shared power and have to be taken seriously. We have seen this past year, through the work of MTA, that "when we fight, we win."

MTA is launching an "All In: Building Union Power" campaign: "Public education is under assault. The threat of privatization is real. Public educators must speak out. We must use the power of our collective voices to promote and protect the ideals that are vital to helping students learn and succeed."

The campaign requires grassroots member organizing through member-to-



Diana Yohe,
MCCC President

member conversations. For MCCC, with our vast system of 15 community colleges spread across the state and with our diversity of students and over 7,000 members, the challenge is to develop member communication networks on each of our college campuses with a cadre of trained members willing to pledge to talk with twenty other members.

I will be visiting chapters this year and working with chapter presidents in developing this network. If we can do this, we will be a far stronger union – for enforcing our contracts, for winning better contract terms, and for putting our issues on the political map. I am willing to travel across the state to meet with members to discuss shared values and how we can build power to bring about better contracts (currently negotiating DCE but Day negotiations will soon begin), to achieve equity through legislation (HB.639), and to get financial resources for our colleges through the Fair Share Amendment. Members interested in greater union engagement may also contact me directly at president@mccc-union.org or by calling 508.947.5822. I want to meet you; your voice matters! ■

DCE Bargaining . . .

Continued from front page

ing. For example, we worked with the MTA to develop House Bill 639, called the "Faculty Restoration and Equity Fund," which is now before the Joint Committee on Higher Education. H639 calls for pay parity, access to health care and a state pension, a state contribution to the Smart Plan, and priority hiring for adjuncts.

In recent bargaining sessions, some of the issues on the table have been:

Sick Leave: we have improved the conditions for using sick leave, but language has not been finalized. Lab instructors do not get equal treatment for their lab-hour, sick-time computation. The good news is that management has dropped its insistence that only deceased members can cash out their unused sick leave. Now you can get it upon retirement – while you're still breathing.

Job Postings: The union had been asking for preference in full-time job openings, but management was adamantly opposed. The union continues to demand more timely assigning of courses for adjuncts to give them adequate time for preparation.

DCE MACER improvement: A number of college presidents do not participate in Management Association Committee for Employee Relations (MACER) meetings. The union has asked for stronger language covering MACER with a train-

ing provision so that the meetings can be more productive.

Timely pay for stipends: Oftentimes faculty is owed extra pay for special project work, stipends, committee work and other added compensation. We reached agreement that payments will be made within two pay periods or sooner.

Professional Development: More than 10 months ago the bargaining team filed an information request for how the different colleges handle professional development for adjuncts.

There are a number of other issues still on the bargaining table. They include proper office space and notification of dangerous conditions, tuition waivers, employer contributions to retirement, proper posting of job vacancies, guaranteed minimum pay for under enrolled classes and determining the length of a semester.

There's still a lot to do. Nevertheless, we believe all of these issues can be negotiated by the end of the year. But to do it we'll need an engaged membership showing their support at every bargaining session, support of the board for appropriate actions and the cooperation and assistance of chapter leadership at all campuses.

To keep up with bargaining activities, read the *Bargaining Updates* published on our website and distributed by chapter presidents soon after every session. ■

The Shape of Things...

Continued from page 2

Also, I firmly believe that until our president and vice president work WITH the Board of Directors instead of trying to circumvent them, our union has little chance of accomplishing much. We, the majority of the Board and the members at the Delegate Assembly, tried to send the president and the vice president that

message—that was the purpose of the no-confidence vote. I fear they ignored it.

Please be careful about information that does not come directly from me. I have and will continue to forward all communications to you, but at least I can call into question any misinformation contained in those missives. I will always leave you to be the judge. ■

MTA Summer Conference-Organizing

A few dozen MCCC members joined MTA higher ed. and K-12 members at the annual Summer Conference during the first week of August at UMass Amherst. The conference offered a variety of workshops and training programs, but the higher ed. track focused specifically on political action and organizing.

Organizing and activating members has become an increasingly important activity for our union as threats to take back legal protections for unions by conservative politicians has been growing. Traditionally union-favorable states like Wisconsin have enacted "right-to-work" laws, which prevent public employee unions from collecting "fair share" fees from people who don't want to join the unions that represent them.

Cases are coming through the federal courts that threaten collective bargaining laws in states like Massachusetts. Agency fees, such as the ones we have, prevent "free riders" (employees under collective bargaining agreements who pay nothing for the efforts unions make to secure and maintain contracts). We need to organize to maintain solidarity no matter what happens nationally.

The **ALL IN: Building Union Power** campaign is MTA's response to this threat, and MTA Director of Higher Ed., Suzanne Wall, explained the initiative to the gathered members. Research has shown that when members reach out to other members one-on-one, in person they are much more engaged and committed to their union.

MTA locals like the MCCC will be encouraged to devise their own approaches. But the essence of the plan is to identify local issues, or "hot topics," that can galvanize members like contract negotiations, and through individual conversations to get members to commit to action.

Jennifer Proffitt, president of the United Faculty of Florida spoke about the efforts her statewide union engaged in to get their members engaged. Florida does not allow

agency-fees, so faculty are not required to give financial support to unions. But they have been able to increase membership through activities like ALL IN.

One issue that galvanized the Florida Faculty was the issue of guns on campuses. Faculty were decidedly against the threat that the state legislature proposed to repeal a ban on firearms on college campuses. Proffitt and UFF organized over the issue and were successful in defeating it. She said that unions need to be, "transformative and not transactional. We need to tell new members why it's important to be part of the collective." That's the only way things like the gun ban can be achieved.

MTA is also gearing up an important political action campaign. Although 2017 is not an election year, our union is part of a coalition pushing for what has been called the "Fair Share Amendment" or the "Millionaires Tax" that would amend the state constitution to allow for more than one income tax level. This amendment would add an additional 4 percent surtax on personal incomes over \$1 million per year.

With state revenues limited by past tax

cuts, an anti new tax governor and a tax-phobic legislature, the state has \$3 billion less than it used to have. Presenters noted that this has caused a 31 percent decrease in per student funding since 2001. Tuition increases to students and increased use of adjunct faculty has been how the colleges have survived the cuts. Without new revenues this process is sure to continue.

Currently the amendment has broad public support, but the unions supporting it are expecting a deluge of opposition advertising from wealthy individuals and business groups. MTA sees this as an important follow-up to the successful campaign to defeat Question 2 in 2016.

The current flat income tax rate is highly regressive, as is the sales tax. An amendment changing the current constitutional restriction on the income tax is seen as the only way to build more fairness into the state's revenue stream.

Our unions face many challenges in the next few years and the Summer Conference gave MTA members a good start to make the necessary changes to overcome them. Watch for MCCC to ask you to be involved in strengthening our union. ■

Santiago Is New MTA Consultant



Catherine Santiago was hired by MTA last Spring and has been assigned to the MCCC as our Field Service Representative for the Day Unit.

A native of Springfield, Santiago is a graduate of UMass Amherst and Northeastern University Law School. For the past six years she worked in a similar position with the California Faculty Association that represents 26,000 faculty and librarians in the California State University system.

Santiago said, "I'm very excited to work with the MCCC as my father and sister are both graduates of Springfield Technical Community College." ■



Jennifer Proffitt, President of the United Faculty of Florida, gave a presentation to the Higher Ed. members at the MTA Summer Conference on how her union organizes their members in that "right-to-work" state. (Photo by Don Williams)

One Adjunct's Perspective...

Continued from page 2

on Bylaw proposals. 13 Bylaw Proposals were before this Assembly. With one hour left before the 5 pm deadline for vacating the meeting room, Greenfield's chapter president, Doug Wilkins, moved to adjourn the Assembly. The group adjourned though only two of the 13 bylaws had been acted upon.

Our union seems to have forgotten how to respectfully disagree; instead, the old guard brings "charges" and ends meetings to avoid debate on substantive issues. The "no confidence" motions at the Delegate Assembly and repeated efforts in the Board room to undermine the current leadership has meant that our union is neglecting its fundamental roles as a union from the discussion of bylaw proposals to supporting adjunct faculty by actively backing the DCE Bargaining Team and their demand for pay equity for adjunct faculty. I hope the new academic year will bring more solidarity from our union. ■

Know Your Day Contract

October 2017

- Oct. 1** Tenure eligibility list distributed (p. 44).
- Oct. 1** Sick leave bank open (p. 21).
- Oct. 2** Furnish employer with dues to be deducted per employee (p. 17).
- Oct. 6** Supervisor shall return Course Materials to faculty members by end of fifth week of semester. Members have 14 calendar days to respond to supervisor's concerns (p. 61).
- Oct. 13** Columbus Day holiday observed.
- Oct. 15** Notice of termination at end of fifth year or later (p. 44).
- Oct. 24** Dean's recommendations for Title change due (p. 66).
- Oct. 24** Accrued professional staff vacation time in excess of 64 days (480 hours) converts to sick time. This now occurs twice per year, falling on the end of the last pay period of April and October (p. 24).
- Oct. 30** Last day to opt out of sick bank (p. 21). (Note: membership in sick leave bank is automatic upon first October of a member's employment.)

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. Cited page numbers at right are from the 2015-2018 Agreement. ■



MCCC News

<http://mccc-union.org>

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