

MCCC News

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MCCC Legislative Intern Earns Promotion

The MCCC has been sponsoring a legislative internship program for several years and has had great success with the program.

This year saw extraordinary success when Kate Miller, a student from Bristol Community College moved from an internship with Rep. Stephen Canessa (D, New Bedford) to a full-time position as an aide to Rep. Christine Canavan (D, Brockton).

Miller already had a B.A. from Boston University in International Relations, but she had enrolled at BrCC in the legal assistant certificate program. She was encouraged to apply for the MCCC Legislative Internship in conjunction with the college's co-operative Education Program by Prof. Diana Yohe, one of her instructors.

Prof. Yohe and MCCC Vice President Donnie McGee helped to get Miller placed with Rep. Canessa for a summer

2008 internship. Canessa was so impressed with Miller's performance that he asked her to extend her internship into the fall.

But a stroke of fate appeared in the form of an opening for a full-time legislative aide position. Miller applied and was hired to work in the office of Rep. Canavan. In a press release announcing the appointment Rep. Canavan said, "I've always believed that in order to be successful at my job, I need a great team. With the addition of Kate to my staff, the energy level of the office has just increased."

MCCC member Nicole Heaney, who coordinates the Bristol Co-operative Education Program said, "The MCCC internship is a great opportunity for students and coupling it with Co-op and seminar rounds out the whole experience."

The legislative internship program

sponsors up to four interns each semester (including summer) and is a great opportunity for our students to get first hand experience in government. It is also an opportunity for legislators to see some of our best and brightest students and the quality of education they receive.

MCCC interns have worked at many legislative offices, including those of former Senate President Robert Travaglini, Senate Majority Whip Joan Menard, Senate Minority Leader Richard Tisei, Sen. Ed Augustus, Sen. Robert Antonioni, Rep. Michael Costello, Rep. Lewis Evangelidis, Rep. Mark Falzone, Rep. William Galvin, Rep. Mary Grant, Rep. Kathi-Anne Reinstein, and Second Assistant Majority Leader Rep. Byron Rushing.

A \$500 grant is provided to offset the costs of travel, parking, etc. Students may work in Boston or in the legislators' district offices, which makes it more possible for students from the western campuses.

Vice President Donnie McGee is currently soliciting intern nominees for Spring 2009 and Summer 2009. She coordinates with the Legislative Education Office to select and place interns.

Spring Application Deadline: Jan. 30

Summer Application Deadline: Mar. 1

For more information, contact MCCC Vice President Donnie McGee at: Vice-president@mccc-union.org Cell 508-415-1513

Application materials are available on the MCCC website: <http://mccc-union.org>

Proposed Bylaw Changes

The deadline for submitting proposed changes to the MCCC Bylaws and Standing Rules Committee is no later than Feb. 2, 2009.

Proposals should be in printed format, double spaced (not hand written). They should include the following information:

- rationale for the proposed change;
- name of the maker of the proposal;
- campus (or MCCC committee/group) of the member making the proposal.

Proposed changes should be sent to

Bob Gillies
6 Wheelock Street
Oxford, MA 01540-2110
Email: bobg@qcc.mass.edu



Former MCCC legislative intern Kate Miller, seated center, with Rep. Stephen Canessa, whom she served as an intern. Standing from left are MCCC Vice President Donnie McGee, BrCC SAC coordinator Diana Yohe, and BrCC Co-operative Education Program Coordinator Nicole Heaney. (Photo by Sally Cameron)

MCCC Board Briefed on a Bleak Future

Two guests presented pictures of the conditions in the state at the Nov. 21 meeting of the MCCC Board of Directors.

MCCC lobbyist and former Speaker of the House Charles Flaherty gave a rundown of recent legislative activity and projections of what to expect in the future.

Flaherty said it takes no crystal ball to see tough state budgets for the next two years. State employees should expect to see increases in health insurance contributions that will be difficult to hold off. But he pointed out that the contribution level that is written into the underlying law is lower than the current levels. Increases over the past few years have been implemented through the budgetary process, which makes those levels temporary.

While he said that unions should still fight increases, as they constitute a reduction in pay, an increase through the state budget would be preferable to a more permanent change in law.

Flaherty also encouraged the union to continue to press for its issues despite the

tough economy. Saying "Don't be shy in asking for what you want," he said that sitting back would say that the issues were not important. Board members were impressed with the depth of knowledge and strategic thinking a lobbyist who is a former Speaker brings to the table.

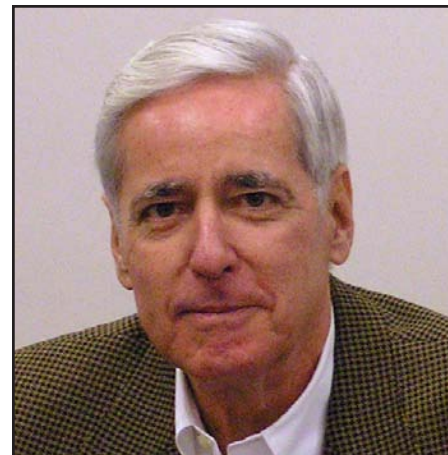
Donna Johnson, Chair of MTA's Higher Education Leadership Council (HELCC), also gave a presentation on the current status of higher ed. contracts. Virtually every union's contract has expired except the MCCC's.

After months of bargaining without an economic offer, 11 unions filed unfair labor practice charges against the state. After that the state did make financial offers of between 2 to 2.5 percent to the unions, but later these offers were rescinded.

Johnson said that HELCC was working with all the other state employee unions to hold a summit for planning a unified front for negotiations. She had hope that the National Association of Government Employees (NAGE) and the State Police Association of Massachusetts (SPAM)

who usually go their own way will join in solidarity.

The presenters did not picture the immediate future as bright, but there were seeds of hope in the way tough times can inspire new approaches and new alliances. ■



MCCC lobbyist and former Speaker of the House Charlie Flaherty gives the Board of Directors a snapshot of last years legislative activities and a preview of next year.

(Photo by Don Williams)

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And Promises to Keep...



Donnie McGee,
SAC Chair &
MCCC Vice President

The Winter Solstice is typically a time for reflection and renewal. With these darkening days of winter, though, the political and economic gloom around us is reflected in the grayness of the season. December's headlines are not pretty: Unemployment on the rise, Retirement savings plummet, State budget deficits grow.

Massachusetts is expected to face a budget shortfall of between \$1.7 and \$2 billion in the year ahead. Governor

Deval Patrick has issued preemptive budget cuts. Few state programs or services have been spared. Colleges and universities face serious challenges with the latest decree. Five percent cuts have left community colleges struggling to serve towns and cities adequately. While enrollment demands skyrocket, college funding is taking another plunge. As Frost's "darkest evening of the year" approaches, though, we cannot forget that there are "promises to keep."

Now is the time to reflect on Horace Mann's vision when he served Massachusetts as First Secretary of the Board of Education in the 1840's. He envisioned a

comprehensive public education system that would be paid for through taxation. He argued that increases in resources and teaching salaries are fundamental to the development of quality schools - which, in turn, would promote an effective democracy. Mann appreciated the diversity inherent in the public classrooms for which he advocated. He asserted education to be the great equalizer and insisted all children have access to good public schools.

Mann also argued it was in the self-interest of the business community to support public education. He knew that the wealth of towns and cities would increase with the education of their citizenry. Through universal education, he sought to diminish the gap between the rich and poor and the haves and have-nots. Horace Mann paved the way for the public schools that today serve all our communities.

More than a century later, a similar vision shaped the agenda of former Massachusetts Governor Foster Furcolo. He believed that public higher education should be accessible and affordable for everyone and insisted that colleges be state supported. His leadership sparked the creation of the current community college system, a system that today serves more than 110,000 students in 15 community colleges across the Commonwealth.

But the state budget axe has come down hard on public higher education at a time when more, not less, funding is sorely needed. For nearly a decade, Massa-

chusetts colleges and universities have struggled due to grossly inadequate state funding. These institutions are no longer state supported, but state assisted. This past year the Commonwealth again was given the unfortunate distinction of being 46th in the nation in terms of per capita spending on public higher education. Students have had to pay greatly increased tuition and fees while college employees are being challenged to do more with less.

The dream of quality higher education for all is being denigrated by a state budget plagued by revenue shortfalls, the inability or shortsightedness of legislative and gubernatorial leadership to address the crisis, and the lack of public outrage over the plight of these institutions. The current global economic climate and the forecasted downturns for the year ahead do not bode well for the integrity of our community college system.

Educators await change in the political and economic climate that has held public higher education hostage. We await the end to winter's dark days and somber tones. But we do not wait silently or without concern. We must not lose sight of the prize and the promise for those who walk through our college doors. The achievements of Mann and Furcolo remind us that education, including higher education, must be a right for everyone, not the privilege of a few. The challenges abound. Still, we have important promises to keep. ■

Professor Gillies Goes to Washington

Bob Gillies, one of two NEA Directors from the MCCC, has been appointed to NEA's Legislative Committee. This committee helps to determine NEA's agenda for bills in congress.

Gillies retired as full-time faculty member at Quinsigamond, and now he is an adjunct faculty member. As the only higher education member of the committee, he can ensure that higher ed. issues are not overlooked as NEA works with congress.

He reported on the various federal legislation successes of the last congress at the Nov. 21 MCCC Board meeting. Highlights of improvements for higher ed. included increasing the maximum Pell Grants to \$6000 (from \$4310) with annual increases of \$400 scheduled for each of the next five

years; authorizing scholarships, support programs, and counseling for community college students to help them stay in school; and protection of collective bargaining rights.

As a Fulbright Alumnus, Gillies had the honor of attending The J. William Fulbright Prize for International Understanding Award Ceremony at the State Department in Washington, D.C. Among the many notable people he had the opportunity to meet were Maya Angelou and Archbishop Emeritus Desmond Tutu. ■

NEA Director Bob Gillies had the opportunity to meet Archbishop Desmond Tutu at the recent J. William Fulbright Prize for International Understanding Award Ceremony.



WRITE US



The MCCC News welcomes contributions.

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
One Ferncroft Road
Danvers, MA 01923

Or email: Communications@mccc-union.org ■

Know Your Day Contract

January 2009

Jan. 15 Sabbatical recommendations from committee to president. (p. 25)

Jan. 19 Martin Luther King Day (p. 22)

Jan. 23 Summary evaluations for part-time, Day contract, faculty due (p. 52)

N.B. Most of these dates are "last date" standards. In many instances the action can be accomplished before the date indicated. ■

Visit The MCCC Online!

<http://mccc-union.org>

(Note: sometimes using www in the address doesn't work)

**Toll Free Phone:
877-442-MCCC**

The MCCC website is the best and most up-to-date source for late breaking developments. Additional documents of interest and import to Day and DCE unit members have been added.

The MCCC Webpage is a valuable resource for MCCC updates, job opportunities and linkage to the NEA and MTA resources available to MCCC unit members. Calendars of MCCC meetings, and committee assignments may be found there. Additionally, MCCC events and news are available, as well as "old news" in the form of archived newsletters.

Bookmark the site for frequent referral.

It's Time to 'Reverse the Course'



Joe LeBlanc,
MCCC President

Change must be supported by a foundation of morality if it's to have any genuine and lasting meaning.

The American Federation of Teachers has taken a hard look at the overuse and abuse of adjunct/contingent faculty. Its report titled "Reversing Course: The Troubled State of Academic Staffing and a Path Forward" provides a glimmer of hope even in this bleak economic environment. The research project presents data and offers a solution to this

continuing moral crisis that is eating away at the soul of our system of public higher education.

Research analysts at JBL Associates, Inc. tell us that adjuncts now teach a majority of the courses at America's public colleges and universities. This isn't a surprise to any of us. Since the early 1990's, the Commonwealth's community colleges have managed ever-increasing enrollments in a period of unstable levels of state support. How do they do it? By hiring more adjuncts, of course.

We're heading in the wrong direction. The Com-

monwealth began this fiscal year by cutting support to public higher education over the summer. Facing a \$1 billion deficit, the Governor cut it again in the fall. With another \$900 million deficit, the state is likely to cut our system again in the spring. Our colleges respond by increasing enrollments and by running additional courses taught by contingent faculty, whose course revenues stay in local coffers and increasingly privatize our public institutions.

Thousands of contingent faculty members teach a majority of courses at our colleges. The AFT report cites data that shows that adjuncts teach across all disciplines and are more likely to be women and under 35 or over 64. They earn lower wages "on limited-term contracts, without permanent appointments, equitable compensation or appropriate professional support." Citing 2005 data, the report says that out of 834,000 adjuncts nationwide, 391,000 were part-time and 146,000 were full-time non-tenure track.

The situation is critical at community colleges. In a typical semester, full-time tenured faculty teach an average of 4.77 courses while adjuncts teach 2.09 courses at individual institutions. MCCC data shows that many adjuncts teach at several colleges to survive, and more than 100 teach ten or more courses per year.

Some disciplines take a bigger hit than others. Contingent faculty teach 77 percent of Education courses

followed by Human Services at 71.6 percent, Humanities at 60.2 percent, and Fine Arts at 56.8 percent. Overall, adjuncts teach 57.5 percent of community college courses. Contingent faculty teach 38.4 percent of courses at public four-year comprehensive institutions and 41.8 percent at public research universities.

The report provides a model for change, a plan that would "allow institutional and state policy makers to calculate the cost of increasing the ratio of full-time tenured and tenure track faculty members in the classroom, and of moving toward pay equity for contingent faculty members."

The plan is rational. It is incremental. It respects the need to change the system gradually with the following long-term goals:

- Achieve a 75/25 percent ratio.
- Provide rata pay and benefits.
- Reach the hiring goals by "normal faculty turnover and the creation of new positions."
- Provide preferential treatment of qualified adjuncts in hiring for full-time positions.
- Create a permanent funding source.

The report dreams big. It urges us to gather data, discuss it locally and lobby for action at the local and state levels. Present staffing levels of contingent faculty are unacceptable and undermine our system. It is indeed time to reverse the course. ■

The Hope of Audacity

The past two years, since the election of Gov. Deval Patrick, have brought an increasing sense of hope. Culminating with the election of Barack Obama as president and a democratic congress, an era of hostility towards public higher education appears to be at an end.



Don Williams,
MCCC Communications
Coordinator

Gov. Patrick made some significant appointments, chief among them Fred Clark as Chairman of the Board of Higher Education. As a long-standing supporter of public colleges, Clark did much to mend fences with unions. He was willing to meet directly with union leaders and rank and file members of all segments to hear our issues.

For the MCCC, it was gratifying to see that he understood the promises made and broken over classification and the fifth course. More importantly, Clark vowed to support increasing pay to the promised 75th percentile or to reduce faculty course load.

But Clark is now gone, and the efforts to educate the new Chairman of the Board and Commissioner of Higher Education must begin. The economic crisis facing the state and the nation would seem to make this an inopportune time to be asking for financial support. For many of us this might be cause to sit back and hope for times to get better.

But hope alone won't solve the problems we face. The good words offered by politicians and appointed officials can be a mere palliative that cause us to only hope things will get better. But saying so doesn't make it so. "Just words?" was a question asked by both our governor and president elect as they spoke of their aspirations, but without action to back up their rhetoric the skeptics may prove to be correct.

The Patrick administration did increase funding for public higher education in its first year, but state support for our colleges and universities was still below 2001 levels. This year funding was down before the drastic 9-C cuts in the fall. So again, higher ed. has fallen behind, despite the significant role public colleges—especially community colleges—play in the Massachusetts economy.

We should not sit back and hope that conditions will

improve. We need to be audacious and keep pressing our agenda. The problems have not gone away: uncompetitive salaries, high workloads, excessive use of adjunct faculty and the abuse of those adjuncts, along with high tuition and fees, and low levels of support for students.

As educators we are communicators. Each one of us needs to communicate to the public and the appropriate officials the important contributions public colleges make to the economy. There will be many voices competing for the state's limited resources, and many of those voices have credible claims to those resources. But if the state is going to have a brighter future it will be through the advanced education of its citizens.

The national economic malaise has begun to hit private colleges. Our community colleges have already seen large enrollment increases. Applications are surging at our state colleges and university campuses. This will put huge strains on our system and its finances for the foreseeable future.

We need to be humble. We need to be respectful. But we also need to be audacious in making our case because no one else is going to speak up for the vital function of public higher education. ■

Changes at the Board of Higher Education

Gov. Patrick's reorganization of higher education may be confusing to MCCC members still. A recent reshuffling of personnel has confused things even more.

First there was the creation of a Secretary of Education, a position filled by Paul Reville. Below that are the Department of Education and the Department of Higher Education. The Board of Higher Education sets policy for the Department of Higher Education.

After a year-long search, a permanent Chancellor of Higher Education was recommended by the Board on Dec. 5, he is Dr. Richard M. Freeland. MCCC President Joe LeBlanc served on the search committee. Dr. Freeland was president of Northeastern University from 1996 to 2006 and continues to teach at Northeast-

ern and Clark University. Previously he spent 22 years at UMass-Boston in a variety of administrative positions.

In something of a surprise move, Chairman of the Board of Higher Education Fred Clark announced his resignation at the Nov. 21 Board meeting. Citing declining economic conditions in his commercial real estate employment Clark felt compelled to leave the unpaid chairmanship.

Dr. Charles Desmond was appointed by Gov. Patrick to replace Clark. A Fulbright Scholar, Desmond spent 30 years at UMass-Boston focusing on community collaboration and student affairs. Currently he is Executive Vice President of the Trefler Foundation, which is dedicated to improving urban public education in Massachusetts. ■



Donna Johnson, Chair of MTA's Higher Education Leadership Council (HELIC), explains what is happening with other higher ed. union contracts and how they plan to deal with the roadblocks.
(Photo by Don Williams)

