

MCCC



News

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## Union Wins “Off-Grid” Hiring Arbitration

On Feb. 13 Arbitrator Tammy Brynie issued a decision upholding the Union’s position on a dispute dating back to fall 2006. At that time Holyoke Community College hired 19 new MCCC members, and 15 of them were given salaries above what the classification system specified.

Arbitrator Brynie found that the college violated contractual provisions for placing new employees on the salary schedule and ordered that the college follow specific provisions in the future to comply with the contract. The decision was not everything the Union wanted, but it solidly affirmed the importance of the classification system.

MCCC Grievance Coordinator Dennis Fitzgerald passed out copies of the decision during his spring report at the Feb. 20 Board of Directors meeting. He explained the background and the significance of the Arbitrator’s decision.

In order to maintain the integrity of the classification system, colleges are required to send the MCCC all of the M002 and M004 forms used to calculate salaries for newly hired faculty and professional staff respectively. These forms are not always sent in a timely fashion. But when MCCC Grievance Coordinator Dennis Fitzgerald received the Holyoke

forms and reviewed them he noticed the violations.

Four HCC members, who were hired between 2003 and 2005, also noticed that the 2006 hires received higher salaries despite having lower classification points scores. Three of these members filed grievances in May 2007 and the chapter filed a fourth on behalf of all of the members.

The MCCC put tremendous effort in the mid 1990s into establishing a rational system for determining faculty and professional staff salaries. At that time there was a 28-step salary schedule that had no criteria for determining where a new hire should be placed, leaving much discretion to the colleges.

Under the old system there was no method for members to move up the salary schedule, so people essentially remained frozen at the step at which they were hired at. This led to wide pay disparities, both within individual colleges as well as between colleges, causing great dissatisfaction among the membership.

What the Union had wanted was a system similar to those most K-12 teachers have where there are 12-18 steps and members regularly move up the steps, reaching the top in less than 20 years. The MCCC and the college presidents submitted to the governor a joint proposal that detailed the new compacted pay schedule. This schedule and cost was

within the parameters mandated by the governor. The governor and Office of Administration and Finance rejected the Joint Submission and insisted on commissioning a study by outside consultants that resulted in the current, complex system of points for degrees, academic rank, experience and seniority which takes 40 years for a member to reach their highest pay.

Despite the classification system’s flaws, it did provide a rational, predictable system that substantially boosted the starting and existing salaries of faculty and professional staff to levels comparative to those in 10 similarly situated states. Unfortunately, by underfunding the system the state has not upheld its part of the bargain. Raises have barely covered the small annual seniority steps and the MCCC payroll has fallen at least 15 percent below the promised benchmarks of the peer states.

Starting salaries proscribed by classification are becoming less competitive, but this is true for all MCCC employees. Some colleges have found it difficult to fill faculty and staff positions in some areas. In 2006 MCCC Research Coordinator Hilaire Jean-Gilles found that 70 percent of new hires were paid above the classification levels. The average varied from as little as \$17 to as much as \$19,000.

The Classification Study allows colleges to hire people above the classifica-

*Continued on Page 2*

### Mark Your Calendar Annual MCCC Delegate Assembly April 25, 2009

Registration 8:30-9:30 AM  
Call to Order 9:30

**Crowne Plaza Worcester**  
10 Lincoln Square  
Worcester, MA 01608  
Phone: (508) 791-1600

Delegates will also receive a Delegate Packet, with reports and the proposed budget at least one week before the meeting.

Chapters are allotted one delegate for every 10 members. The MCCC By-laws state that “each chapter shall elect its own delegates.”

Chapters should begin recruiting members to ensure full representation of the membership.

#### DIRECTIONS

From Mass Pike take Exit 10 to Route 290E, take Exit 17 - Rte. 9. Take a left at top of exit. At 2nd set of lights at bottom of the hill, go left onto Worcester Center Blvd. Hotel is on the right.

From Route 495 take Exit 25B, Route 290W. Take Exit 18 - Rte. 9. Turn right at Lincoln Square/Worcester Center Blvd. Hotel is on the right. ■

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## DCE Team Reports Contract Status to Board

The DCE Negotiating Team gave a formal presentation on the status of negotiations to the Board of Directors at its February meeting.

The team has been meeting since Feb. 8, 2008; and it has been negotiating with the Employer’s team since Apr. 15, 2008. Progress had been slow up to December, but bargaining meetings have become more frequent and more productive since then.

Team Chair Diana Yohe, using a prepared PowerPoint presentation, first went over some background data such as the members of each team and the previous as well as scheduled future meeting dates. She pointed out that overall the team was working towards parity for adjunct faculty with full-time faculty.

She covered the few items that have been tentatively agreed upon so far and then discussed the several items where proposals and counter-proposals have been made. Compromises have been made by both sides on different issues, which represents progress, but the teams have not yet reached the point where both sides are in agreement on a full tentative contract that could be presented to DCE unit members.

Economic issues were saved for last. The team shared their calculation of what

would constitute equal pay per course with full-time faculty. It is a rough calculation because of the complexity of comparing the full-time classification pay structure with the four pay steps for ad-

adjuncts. The calculation recognized that 25 percent of the full-time workload is non-instructional; however, other factors complicate the calculation.

*Continued on Page 2*



Members of the DCE Negotiating team with the PowerPoint presentation for the Board of Directors. Pictured here (front row from left), Gail Guarino, Team Secretary; Donnie McGee, MCCC VP; Carole Dupont, STCC; (back row) Joe LeBlanc, MCCC President; Diana Yohe, Team Chair; Don Williams, Team Spokesperson; Miles Stern, MTA Consultant. Not pictured, Richard Devine, Team Vice Chair; Patrick Lochelt, NECC; Betsy Smith, CCCC. (photo by Rick Doud)



# Politics, Partnerships, and Public Higher Education



Donnie McGee,  
SAC Chair &  
MCCC Vice President

“All politics is local.” These oft-quoted words of former Speaker of the House, “Tip” O’Neill, are often referenced, but not so often heeded. At crisis time, concerned citizens and constituents are quick to criticize or seek support from

legislators, but too often they are not willing to partner with legislators to make government work. Nor do residents typically thank or praise lawmakers when government works well. The government of the people, by the people and for the people too often operates without input from the people – until crisis time or the next election. We must change this modus operandi. Educators must be involved.

In these busy and challenging times, all of us can find good reasons for not making time to connect with legislators. We struggle with balancing work, home and other commitments. Many think our

civic responsibility begins and ends with electing qualified individuals. Educators would rather focus attention and energy on students and academics than get involved with politics. But get involved we must.

The politicians need our input and our expertise if we want them to understand and respond effectively to the problems and the possibilities on our campuses. It makes no sense to elect legislators and then not let them know what is working and what is not. College operating budgets depend on state funding. State lawmakers and the governor enact legislation each year that affects the integrity of our colleges and the quality of our professional lives. We must speak out for public higher education, and we need support from elected officials.

As MTA’s Cathy Fichtner often says, “Politics is a contact sport.” To that end, the MCCC joined the Public Higher Education Network of Massachusetts (PHENOM) in support of a Legislative Call-in Day on February 26. Representatives and the Governor were contacted by educators, students, alumni and administrators from across the state. They discussed the impact of funding cuts on college campuses and the related aca-

demical challenges. Legislators need to know that educators cannot do more, and certainly cannot do as well, with fewer resources. Nor should students be paying more to get less at these institutions. Educators and students were engaged in important conversations.

The statewide Call-in Day was a first step towards establishing the political partnerships that we, as educators, must forge. The MCCC Strategic Action Committee will be setting up in-district meetings this spring with legislators, so that educators and their Representatives or Senators can further discuss campus concerns and explore steps towards positive resolution. Educators should be asking legislators as well how state funding from the American Recovery and Investment Act will be used to support public higher education throughout the Commonwealth.

Our legislators readily agree that support for state colleges and universities is a key priority, but such agreement has failed to provide campuses with consistent or sufficient funding streams for nearly 10 years. As students struggle to afford college and part-time faculty and professional staff replace full-timers in alarming numbers, the fallout from such

chronic underfunding is apparent on every campus.

Unfortunately, budget policy decisions for more than a decade have forced legislators to be reactive instead of proactive in their yearly budget balancing acts. Plagued by structural deficits, Massachusetts consistently lacks the revenues needed to support infrastructure demands, healthcare costs, aid to cities and towns, and public higher education. Political conversations need to address the state’s chronic structural deficit problems as well as the fundamental importance of public higher education to any economic recovery.

Educators must not only hold politicians accountable, but also be willing to partner with them to resolve the challenges our campuses face. Colleges are under severe stress as they struggle to do more with less, yet they are criticized when at-risk students fail to complete their academic goals. When state funding is slashed on college campuses, the ability to serve students diminishes dramatically. It is imperative that educators join hands with the politicians and all those concerned if we want the current crisis in public higher education to be resolved. ■

## DCE Team Reports . . . . Continued from Page 1

Yohe shared the Employer’s initial salary offer and the Union’s counter proposal. These are far apart, but some of the unresolved issues have financial implications and until those are resolved, the Employer is reluctant to put new salary numbers out. It is common in negotiations to resolve the financials at the end.

MTA Consultant Miles Stern then took over the presentation to talk about the continued organizing of the DCE Unit. This has been a major thrust of the MCCC for over two years starting with the formation of the DCE Ad Hoc Adjunct Committee, the inclusion of two at-large part-time/adjunct directors to the Board be-

ginning this academic year, and an organizing training session in February 2009 hosted by MTA staff Richard Sanders and George Lucas. Consultant Stern pointed out that contract negotiations are a good focus for short-term organizing that can be built upon for longer term goals such as increasing full-time employment recommended in the “Reversing Course” study.

The goal of the DCE team is to have a presentable proposal to offer to members by mid-spring. The achievement of that goal requires the diligent good faith efforts of both sides and a strong DCE member unit committed to the goals of bargaining. ■

## Union Wins . . . . Continued from Page 1

tion salary, as the study states, “if the community colleges experience recruitment challenges due to market conditions or diversity concerns.” It goes on to say, “These exceptions should be fully documented and placed in the new employees’ personnel files.”

At Holyoke there was little to no documentation to justify the employees’ enhanced salaries and no evidence that the College President had reviewed and approved the documentation as required. Citing the simple fact that 15 out of 19 hires were exceptional is itself an indication that the contract was violated, Arbitrator Byrnie stated that the college “failed to demonstrate recruitment challenges,

diversity considerations or market factors.”

Because management willfully created “internal inequities,” the union proposed that the college be ordered to “adjust the salaries of all bargaining unit members upward in order to establish internal equity.” If not that, then a strongly worded statement be issued demonstrating a contract violation.

The college proposed, “a reduction in salary for the new hires or to redline salaries for any faculty whose salary is determined to be arbitrarily or capriciously established above the classification salary until all employees are at the proper level.” The Arbitrator rejected the employer’s remedy because it would have driven an enormous wedge between these new members and the Union. The college would have punished MCCC members for its own misconduct.

In the end, the Arbitrator made a strong statement by finding Holyoke Community College guilty of contract violation and set out a series of specific requirements for colleges to comply with when hiring an employee above classification salary.

Arbitration decisions are binding and do set precedence. So, although this specific decision was the result of grievances filed at Holyoke, the recommendations apply to all 15 community colleges. ■



Bunker Hill Community College students from Prof. Mike D’Entremont’s ESL classes regularly go to the State House for a civics lesson. This year they were able to meet Gov. Patrick for a very special experience. (photo by Mike D’Entremont)

## MOVING?



Please make sure the MCCC has your correct mailing address. This affects receiving the newsletter, elections, important mailings and notices.

Call the office at 1-877-442-MCCC toll free or go online at <http://mccc-union.org/ChangeMyAddress/>



# New Buildings Are Nice, But Our People Make The Difference



Joe LeBlanc,  
MCCC President

At first glance, the stimulus law looks great with lots of money coming our way. "Community colleges see stimulus bill as bonanza for their students," the Chronicle reports.

The U.S. Labor Department will soon receive \$3.95 billion for job training services. Working closely with local Workforce Investment Boards, community colleges will be allowed to charge the full costs of their services. Hint: this means more than tuition and fees and should provide much-needed dollars for new full-time faculty and support staff.

The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act contains more good news:

- Maximum Pell Grants will increase to \$5,350 in 2009 and \$5,550 in 2010.

- Tuition tax credit will increase to \$2500. Needy students – even those who do not pay taxes – will be eligible to claim up to \$1,000. Millions of community college students will benefit.

- Federal Work Study Program funding will increase by \$200 million.

- Research universities will reap most of the funds from \$8.5 billion for biomedical research, \$3 billion for National Science Foundation-related research, \$1 billion for climate change projects, and \$2 billion for Energy Department grants focusing on energy efficiency.

The law also provides \$53.6 billion for a State Fiscal Stabilization Fund. From this account, Massachusetts will receive more than \$800 million in general education aid. These millions can be spent to mitigate the effects of the recent and prospective cuts in state support to public higher education.

This budget relief may arrive just in time. The Governor and Legislature have already cut public higher education by \$35 million in FY '09. For next year, the Governor's House 1 budget proposes to cut it again to \$142 million below FY '08 levels. If our operating budgets aren't restored to at least our FY '09 levels (before this year's 9C cuts), we'll be forced to do more with less. Our colleges will act with student fee increases and layoffs to follow.

Last year, the legislature enacted a \$2

billion higher education bond bill providing the biggest boost to our system's infrastructure we've seen in decades. The new buildings and labs will be grand, of course, but new facilities do little good if they are understaffed or staffed with inappropriately high levels of part-time employees and adjunct faculty.

On opening day in January, several of my American Literature students said they had recently transferred from four-year institutions. One said he likes it better at Northern Essex CC and wishes it

were a four-year college. "I'm receiving an excellent education at a fraction of the cost," he said.

His kind words are appreciated, but these days our faculty and professional staff are fearful that more bad news is coming and layoffs are a certainty.

Governor Patrick, we've taken enough. We're asking you to restore our operating budgets. In the end, new facilities are nice, but it's our faculty and staff that serve our students and make a difference. ■



*Day Negotiations Committee members celebrate finishing their work in support of the Day Bargaining Team. The committee drafted the bargaining survey, examined the results from more than 1,100 respondents and forwarded recommendations for the demand package. The team is drafting its package and expects to begin bargaining after Spring Break.*

*Pictured here (front row from left), Paulette Howarth (Bristol), Jean Nicholas (QCC), MaryJane O'Connor (HCC), Katie D'Urso; (second row) Suzanne Van Wert (NECC), Laura Horgan (Middlesex), Jim Dutcher (HCC), Ellen Madigan Pratt (MWCC); (third row) Charlotte Belezos (RCC), Tom Kearns (Massasoit), and Robert Rogers (STCC). Not pictured Rosemarie Freeland (GCC), Mike D'Entremont (BHCC), Norene Gachignard (NSCC). (Photo by Joe LeBlanc)*



*Day Grievance Coordinator Dennis Fitzgerald goes over the Holyoke arbitration decision for the Board of Directors. (photo by Don Williams)*



*MTA organizer George Luse (top left) and Director of Affiliate Services Richard Sanders met with the Adjunct Ad Hoc Committee for training in organizing the DCE Unit for achieving short-term and long-term goals from effecting an improved contract this year to achieving the objectives of the "Reversing Course" study. The committee is comprised of adjunct faculty members from each chapter and is charged with bringing adjunct faculty issues forward and for bringing ideas back to their chapters. (photo by Don Williams)*



## DIRECTORS NOTES

At the February 20 meeting of the MCCC Board of Directors the following actions were taken.

- The Board approved a Finance Committee recommendation to capitalize equipment with a three or more year life expectancy and a cost of \$3,000 or more.
- The Board voted to donate \$2500 to the MCCC PAC.
- The Board voted to authorize an *ad hoc* committee to develop and present a proposal on teleconferencing/video conferencing equipment for the Curley Boardroom. The committee will do its work in the spring of 2009. [Note: volunteers are needed. If interested, contact President LeBlanc.]
- The Board voted to authorize an *ad hoc* committee of the MCCC Board of Directors and chapter leadership with representation from the Finance Committee and the Personnel Committee to review the job descriptions and salaries of the statewide officers. This review should include recommendations on the webmaster duties. [Note: volunteers are needed. If interested, contact President LeBlanc.] ■

## Know Your Day Contract

### March 2009

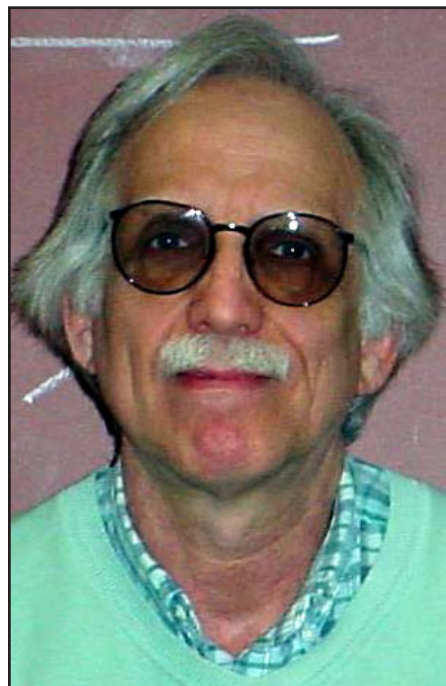
- March 5** Request leave of absence recommendations due (p.26)
- March 15** Dean's recommendations for Title change due (p.59)
- March 15** Unit Personnel Practices recommendations for tenure due (p.38)
- March 30** Department Chair evaluations (p.70)
- March 30** Preferred schedules and course submitted (p.32 )
- March 31** Department chair vacancies announced (p.55)

### April 2009

- April 6** Dean's leave of absence recommendations due (p.26)
- April 15** Dean's tenure recommendations due (p.38)
- April 15** Title changes announced (p.59)
- April 25** Professional Staff unused vacation days in excess of 480 hours (64 days) converted to sick leave at end of last pay period in April. (p. 22)

*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.* ■

## Candidate Statements

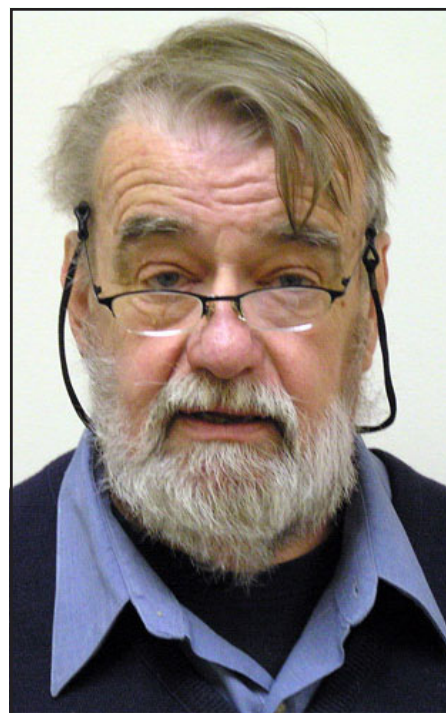


**John Cipora**  
Candidate for  
Part-Time/Adjunct Director

I'm delighted at the current forward-thinking social meme that posits that 60 is the new 40. This perspective gives me considerable hope that I may continue to have a positive effect as educator and mentor on another generation or two of students. While my current teaching, as an adjunct instructor of social sciences at Holyoke Community College, has been getting refined and, I trust, better and more creative over the past eight years. This pedagogical path snared me directly out of college, when I started teaching high school, and I have moved in and out of that world ever since, at levels from preschool to college.

The activist sensibility I learned at Brandeis in the late sixties provided me both a psychological and a sociological lens on the world, and on my place in it. My working-class roots have given point to this focus. My father had worked in the coal mines of western Pennsylvania prior to that war, and labored in steel mills after it. Seeing how such hard and demanding work sharply circumscribed the possibilities afforded my parents and so many others of their generation has given me a lifelong class-conscious, union-centered standpoint and worldview. My graduate work, both at UCLA and at UMASS Amherst (Ed.D., 2008), has served to give me a better understanding of issues of equity and equality that continue to inhibit genuine social justice here and abroad. This sensibility links neatly to my goals for myself as an MCCC Adjunct rep.

I hope to be able to continue to push for needed changes in the unfortunate trajectory the system of public higher education is taking, locally, regionally, and nationally. I know that the opportunities that were, decades ago, provided me are no longer widely available to young people today. It is one thing to know of these unfair (and insufficiently publicized) shifts in practice. It is quite another to act as responsive, responsible, and ethical stewards of public education. We as community college educators are well positioned to have substantive impact on public policy to address the glaring disparities that are eroding the academy. I intend to continue to advocate for equity and parity for contingent faculty as well as for our students, who are served as badly by the walmartization of public education as we are. ■



**John Farrenkopf**  
Candidate for  
Part-Time/Adjunct Director

- Union member since 1956 - DCE member since first contract.
- MTA member- NEA member- Gloucester public school union member.
- DCE rep for the night college-service on the union committee- appointed to board of directors-MCCC- Adjunct seat.
- Actively work to improve the lot of the adjunct.
- Actively involved with the union-management team -meeting monthly with the administration.
- Problem solver by choice.
- Need your vote to continue at the state level adjunct seat on the BOD.

Thanks in advance for your support. ■

## Your PAC Needs Your Help

The MCCC Political Action Committee—MCCC PAC—has been very effective over the past few years in advancing the issues of community college faculty and staff on Beacon Hill.

But political stature does not come without cost. Your PAC has made many contributions in the last election cycle, and it is important for all members to give their financial support, so that the PAC can continue to support you.

The PAC has been very active and it is important that the resources are kept at a level sufficient to fulfill its mission.

Upcoming legislative issues of importance include:

- Securing increased funding for community colleges
- Reforming Optional Retirement Plan for full-time faculty
- Preserving health insurance contribution level
- Passing part-time employee pension benefits
- Passing part-time employee health insurance benefits

Individual members and MCCC chapters can contribute up to \$500 annually.

Thank You, PAC Co-chairs Thelma Halberstadt and Frank Leary.

Send your checks payable to the "MCCC PAC" to  
Meg Kennedy, MCCC-PAC Treasurer  
MCCC Political Action Committee,  
27 Mechanic Street, Suite 104, Worcester, MA 01608



### MCCC News

<http://mccc-union.org>

*Editor:*

Donald R. Williams, Jr.

*President:*

Joseph LeBlanc

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Donnie McGee

*Secretary:*

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

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