

MCCC



News

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Reversing Course: A Campaign for Student Success

An issue that has been bubbling on campuses for years has now boiled over into the public sphere. The increasing use, and some argue overuse, of part-time faculty has reached a point where it is being noticed by a number of constituencies nation-wide.

The American Federation of Teachers (AFT) has produced a study on the current use of part-time and contingent faculty and has a campaign to reorder the balance. (The report can be seen at www.aft.org/higher_ed/

DCE Contract Tentative Agreement Ratification Vote

The DCE Bargaining Team has reached a tentative agreement with the employer. The materials including a summary of contract changes will be mailed in mid-November and must be returned by December 10.

index.htm.) The study found that, nationally, part-time and contingent faculty teach over 50 percent of all college courses. The AFT plan seeks to shift the ratio of full-time tenured faculty to contingent faculty to a 75/25 percent split.

Contingent faculty are those who are on limited duration appointments whether full- or part-time. Part-time, or adjunct faculty, are typically contingent, but some have limited reappointment rights.

In the Massachusetts Community College System there are very few full-time contingent faculty, but there are huge numbers of part-time, adjunct faculty. Over 70 percent of the instructors in our system are adjuncts.

The trend of increasing use of adjunct faculty has been going on for 40 years. According to Jack Schuster in his 2008 book *The American Faculty*, in 1969 part-time faculty were about 22 percent, in 1987 they were 52 percent, and by 2003 they were about 70 percent.

Adjunct faculty have always made a significant contribution to college instruction. They bring in professional expertise for specialized courses, and they provide instruction when enrollments temporarily surge. They are qualified to teach their subjects, but the very nature of being part-time has been shown as detrimental to student success.

The increase of part-time faculty in Massachusetts community colleges has been accompanied by a decline in full-time faculty. In 1994 there were 1603 full-time faculty in the system; for the fall 2009 semester there are only 1497. Yet student enrollments have increased significantly. According to the Mass. Department of Higher Education, over the last decade alone enrollments have increased 30 percent.

A number of studies have investigated the effects of the increasing use of part-time and contingent faculty. And the findings are cause for alarm. One study by Daniel Jacoby, published in the *Journal of Higher Education* (Nov/Dec 2006), found a direct correlation between increased use of ad-

adjunct/contingent faculty and lower student graduation rates.

Jacoby cites the finding of a study by R.G. Ehrenberg and L. Zhang (2004) that for every 10 percent increase in the use of adjuncts there was a 2.65 percent reduction in graduation rates.

Another study by Dr. Audrey Jaeger showed that adjunct faculty are far more likely to teach entry-level, "gateway," courses that are typically taken by large numbers of students. Her article published in *Academe* (2008) said, "Students who had between 76 and 100 percent of first year credits with contingent faculty were significantly less likely to persist than their counterparts with the least exposure (25 percent or less) to part-time instructors."

Student engagement is another area affected by overuse of adjunct faculty. Studies have shown that an environment where students become more engaged in college life makes them more active participants in their studies. Faculty who are only paid to come in and teach classes with no offices and limited assurances that they will be teaching the next semester are themselves unlikely to engage in larger college life, let alone to engage students outside of class.

The AFT study does not blame the adjunct faculty themselves for the lowered persistence of the students they teach. It is the conditions of their employment that is the detrimental aspect.

Full-time faculty do much more at the colleges than just teach classes. They hold office hours, advise students, serve on governance committees, attend department meetings, develop curriculum, participate in professional development, and mentor new faculty. With reduced numbers of full-time faculty, tremendous strain is put on the

colleges' staffs to provide adequate services to students.

Massachusetts community college adjuncts are paid only for teaching their courses, and at that, paid at a much lower level per course than full-timers. Per contract, adjuncts are not paid to hold office hours, advise individual students, advise student clubs, attend department and other college meetings, or participate in on-campus training activities. They are rarely provided with adequate office space, computer equipment, or professional development.

Many adjuncts juggle schedules from a number of colleges trying to make a living, and they have no time to give outside of class as they commute from one campus to another.

Moreover, they have limited job security. The best they have is the guarantee of one course at a college where they have achieved seniority

rights. But they have no guarantee of consistent semester-to-semester income. They have no employer provided health insurance, and they have a pension plan that is a spurious way for the state to avoid paying Social Security—which may in fact cause a reduction in their SSI entitlement.

These conditions put adjunct faculty in a decidedly second-class position. Students pay the same tuition and fees for courses regardless of the employment status of their instructors. Students may not be aware of their instructors' status, but they are not getting the same services from adjunct instructors who receive little material support from the colleges.

The primary reason for colleges using adjunct faculty is cost savings. The Delta Cost Project, an initiative of the Lumina Foundation, released *The Growing Imbalance: Recent Trends in U.S. Postsecondary*

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MTA leaders briefed the MCCC Board of Directors on the state's economic picture. From left Arthur Pippo, MTA Director of Higher Education; David Borer, MTA Executive Director-Treasurer; Anne Wass, MTA President; and Paul Toner, MTA Vice President. (Photo by Don Williams)

Promote College Excellence: Reverse Faculty Hiring Trends



Donnie McGee,
SAC Chair &
MCCC Vice President

On September 29th, the Joint Committee on Public Higher Education heard testimony on a bill designed “to maintain faculty and college excellence in the Commonwealth.” This bill, H 1110, was filed by Representative Steven D’Amico of Seekonk. It asks that 75 percent of all state-supported higher education courses be taught by full-time faculty - by the year 2015. The proposed legislation also provides prorated pension and health insurance benefits to part-time faculty who teach at least 50 percent of the established teaching load at these institutions over a 12 month period.

This bill could not come at a better time. State colleges need full-time faculty in far greater numbers if they are to serve students effectively. Student enrollments have skyrocketed. Classrooms and parking lots are filled to the max. Community colleges, in particular, are bursting at the seams as they struggle to balance the needs of students and the workforce with quality instruction and adequate student support. Unfortunately, college excellence is in no way achievable given the current level of dependence on part-time faculty at these colleges.

Professional studies emphasize that increased use of part-time faculty has a negative impact on student retention and graduation rates, especially in developmental and “gateway” courses. (See page 1 story.) But colleges ignore this research. Student enrollments at community colleges have increased by nearly 11 percent in the past year and more than 30 percent in the last decade. Yet full-time faculty numbers remain unchanged overall. Instead, part-time or “adjunct” faculty have been hired in record numbers on every campus.

Last fall at Bristol Community College, 477 part-time faculty were teaching credit courses, compared to only 104 full-time faculty. At Bristol and her sister community colleges, student success is further jeopardized since the greatest concentration of adjuncts is often found in developmental and gateway classes like mathematics and English. Despite such concerns, the reliance on part-time hires continues unchecked.

The problem is not with the part-time faculty, but with a statewide system that supports neither the adjuncts hired to teach at these colleges nor the students enrolled in their classes. H1110 aims to reverse these hiring practices because, in the long run, they are detrimental to our entire system of public higher education.

The colleges themselves do not consistently orient or prepare newly hired adjunct faculty for their teaching roles with community college students. Part-time faculty hires, even those new to the system, may receive class assignments within a week or less of the start of a class. Last minute hires may not be mentored by their colleagues, may have minimal teaching experience, and may have little understanding of the diversity or the needs of the students in their classes. A comprehensive and transparent search process is not mandated for part-time faculty. Rarely are they fully vetted by a professional committee of their peers – as is required of full-time faculty hires.

Increased student enrollment with no corresponding increase in full-time faculty hires impacts the entire academic community. Full-time faculty are required to advise students as well as teach, coordinate programs, develop curriculum, and participate in shared college governance. Full-time faculty are able to meet with students throughout an academic year. Part-time instructors do not advise students. Nor do they assume the other non-teaching responsibilities required of their full-time faculty peers.

College professional staff are pressured to fill the advisement void. But this does not solve the problem. Advisement

work is then parceled out to temporary advisors who are not always familiar with programs, courses, prerequisites, campus policies, student needs, and appropriate referrals for students. Students are too often left to make academic decisions on their own. Research repeatedly demonstrates that comprehensive advising is crucial to retention and student success, especially with non-traditional college students.

Current hiring trends also foster the creation of an entire underclass of professionals who lack adequate pay, job security, health insurance coverage, and/or a retirement safety net. Many qualified adjuncts teach 50 percent or more of an established full-time faculty workload; they deserve prorated benefits, better pay, and a professional path forward. H 1110 would provide for such support and promote a possible career path for these professionals.

Unfortunately, community college presidents are willing to gamble with the integrity of these colleges and the success of our students in order to survive. Given the state’s chronic underfunding of public higher education, administrators have finally found a way to address persistent revenue shortfalls and keep colleges operational. Presidents simply keep the admission doors open, hire more part-time faculty as needed, and increase student fees when revenues are lacking. Thus, a huge incentive exists for colleges to push for increased enrollment and rely heavily on part-time faculty – even if it flies in the face of student success.

Community colleges are sitting on the edge of a great precipice. The continued reliance on part-time faculty in such overwhelming numbers can only spell disaster for students, colleges, and communities. The state needs to take notice and take responsibility for funding public higher education. These negative hiring practices must be reversed. Enactment of H 1110 is a crucial first step toward stopping this downward spiral and promoting faculty and college excellence. ■

Reversing Course: A Campaign for Student Success . . .

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Education Finance that showed instructional spending by colleges per full-time student has remained stagnant, while non-instructional and non-educational spending has increased.

MCCC Nominations Opened November 2

Nominations for MCCC offices, and delegates to the MTA Annual Meeting and NEA Representative Assembly will open on the MCCC web site Nov. 2. Paper nomination forms will be printed in the MCCC News November and December issues. Nominations close Feb. 4, 2010.

Every year delegates to the MTA and NEA meetings are elected. Now there are two positions for Part-time/adjunct At-large Directors that are elected annually.

Every two years the positions of MCCC President, Vice President, Treasurer and Secretary are also up for election. Nomination for these positions and the At-large Directors require member signatures.

New rules will be in effect for delegate nominations this year to ensure that those nominated do, in fact, plan to attend the MTA and NEA meetings. ■

Official recognition of the problem has come in several forms in Massachusetts. The Board of Higher Education has passed a resolution that advocates moving to the recommended 75/25 split of full-time/adjunct faculty over the next decade. The contract for the state college faculty union

(MSCA) calls for a cap of 15 percent of sections being taught by adjuncts during the day, although enforcement at some campuses has been problematic.

Many career programs at community colleges have high levels of full-time faculty mandated by their certifying bodies.

Nursing and Allied Health programs have very few adjuncts. And the Board of Higher Ed. itself required higher levels of full-time instructors in Criminal Justice programs a few years ago because of quality issues.

Most recently, the narrative for the Department of Higher Education’s budget proposal for fiscal year 2011 makes the statement, “the shift from the use of full-time tenured faculty to adjunct or part-time faculty – coupled with larger class sizes and the elimination of programs – has resulted in significant erosion of quality.”

But at the same time the funding system encourages the use of part-time faculty. Because the colleges are allowed to keep all tuition and fees generated by adjunct-taught courses (tuition for full-time taught courses reverts to the state), there is a clear incentive for the colleges to prefer using adjuncts. The state cuts their budgets. The colleges hire adjuncts to compensate for some of the shortfall. And then the state cuts their budgets again because the colleges are able to limp along with the part-timers.

The unions believe that the trend has gone too far. Adjuncts are their members, also. The Reversing Course Campaign looks at a long-term effort to reset the balance, so that its impact on current adjuncts would be small. Meanwhile it has the potential to greatly benefit the many adjuncts who desire full-time positions.

The ultimate beneficiaries of this campaign are the students. Community college students need the greater attention that full-time, tenured faculty can provide. The studies show that the short-term cost benefit of using part-time faculty has long term negative effects on students. ■



MTA Consultant Miles Stern led a session at the Fall Conference on DCE contract issues, DCE Grievance Coordinator, Joe Rizzo sits in the foreground.

(Photo by Don Williams)

Second Stimulus Necessary To Avoid Disaster in FY 2011



Joe LeBlanc,
MCCC President

It looks like we will survive this fiscal year without significant layoffs thanks to \$62 million in additional monies from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA).

For now, we will be able to serve nearly 100,000 students (a 10.8 percent increase from Fall, 2008) with 1,497 full-time faculty, down from 1,524 a year ago. For now, Berkshire, Bunker Hill, Holyoke, Middlesex, Quinsigamond and Roxbury community colleges will manage their 12 percent or higher increases in student headcount. For now, our colleges will manage a 32.1 percent increase in new undergraduate transfer headcount, more than double the system's 15.4 percent average.

For now, we will preserve our open admissions policy that provides access to 98,531 students, more than half the

students in our public higher education system of 188,567 students. And we will do it all with about a quarter of the total state support provided to the system.

ARRA rescued our system last year with \$54 million to fill the higher education funding gap. This year, ARRA has sent \$168 million to public higher education. While the funds have largely been spent on infrastructure improvements – an appropriate use of onetime federal funds – the latest round of ARRA funding is saving jobs today. Without ARRA funding, positions would be cut, courses would be canceled and fees would be hiked again in the spring semester.

Other state government services are under siege and no state program is escaping the cuts. Managers will soon be taking furloughs of up to nine days. Gov. Patrick's latest 9C budget cuts slash environmental law enforcement by \$511,937, home care services for the multi-disabled by \$404,739, the Mass. Commission for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing by \$343,567, Sexual Assault Nurse Examiner (SANE) and Pediatric Sane programs by \$1 million, suicide

prevention and intervention by \$350,000, teenage pregnancy prevention services by \$500,000, infection prevention programs by \$100,000, school-based health programs by \$1.5 million, smoking prevention programs by \$500,000, Services for Children and Families by \$5.7 million, support services for people at risk of domestic violence by \$503,172, adult, homeless and emergency support by \$7.1 million, community programs for the mentally retarded by \$1.5 million and One Stop Career Centers by \$2 million.

These are desperate times that call for wisdom and action. President Obama is asking us to produce more college graduates and our work is called critical to the economic recovery, but it will be impossible to fully participate in achieving this grand vision without another round of ARRA funding in FY '11 and billions in new federal support in the next decade.

A second stimulus bill will save millions of public sector jobs and preserve vital state services. Such wisdom and action will help us survive this present crisis while serving our students, our communities and our nation. ■

Dude, Where's My Profession?



Don Williams, MCCC
Communications
Coordinator

The increasing use of adjunct faculty at community colleges is dramatically changing the profession. And it is not a change for the better. Increasingly college instruction is seen as

a part-time job. And the very nature of a job being part-time says that it is not a job that is seen as vital.

When I started teaching at North Shore Community College 30 years ago, I was aware of only one part-time instructor teaching day courses in the English department. There were maybe a dozen adjuncts teaching evening classes (one class each), and at the time evening students were predominantly working full-time, older, and didn't

need additional services. The English department had 12 full-time members.

Now, 30 years later, enrollments are way up (30 percent in just the last decade according to the DHE), but my department has just 13 full-time members. There are 43 adjunct English faculty, teaching over 70 sections—mostly required college composition courses. These are the foundation, or "gateway," courses that students build upon in their later courses. Instructors of upper level courses need to assume that specific topics have already been covered, and these are the kind of topics we discuss among ourselves.

But we full-timers don't interact with the 43 adjuncts. Each of us knows a few who have been around a long time. We've also met a few briefly in passing, but most we never see. Some teach for a semester and are never seen again. Few of them are on campus when the department meets, and they shouldn't have to make a trip to the campus when they're not being paid for it. Even if they could all attend, the college only has a limited

number of rooms that would hold 56. So collegiality is only a reality for the full-time faculty.

We rely on a lot of resources to teach these days. Full-time faculty members get at least a shared office, a telephone, their own computers linked to a printer, plus other technologies are issues based on special needs. Adjuncts are provided with a vastly lesser amount of support. My college has just one, designated adjunct office that's about 200 square feet, with four computers—for over 350 adjuncts! The college has made some other space available for adjuncts, but they don't resemble an office.

With no place to park their coats, adjuncts carry all their things around with them like the homeless. They have to meet with students in hallways and student lounges. Is this any way to treat a professional? And most adjuncts have to provide their own computers, equipment, and internet. They are treated like second-class citizens, and that is not missed by the students.

What does this kind of treatment say about the status of the profession we are engaged in? It doesn't say "respect." It doesn't say you're valued. It doesn't say that what you're doing is deemed important. Faculty struggle every day to make their subjects relevant to their students. They struggle to get students to take their studies seriously. This is even more difficult when the colleges don't show all faculty the same respect and support.

I know that our community college presidents won't be happy with some of the information in this issue of the *MCCC News*. But the fault is not primarily with them. The state – both executive and legislative branches – has found easy budget balancing by neglecting higher education. Facing budget cuts, the presidents keep the doors open by replacing full-time faculty with adjuncts. It is a national trend and not unique to Massachusetts.

But with bleak budgets for the near future, will colleges continue to use more and more adjuncts? Where does it stop? Will we all be adjunct someday? It is time to Reverse the Course, and reach a reasonable balance between full- and part-time faculty for the good of the students, of the colleges, and of the profession. ■

MCCC Fall Conference

The MCCC Fall Conference saw new faces mix with long time union activists to learn more about the union and the conditions of the state, to network and to organize.

MTA President Anne Wass was the keynote speaker. She gave the group a rundown of what MTA has been doing about the challenges facing educators and public employees. She shared issues from the K-12 sector that she felt were important for higher ed. members to be aware of as well as issues more directly pertinent to college faculty and staff.

There were some of the breakout sessions that have been perennial favorites at previous conferences. One focused on issues for DCE faculty with MTA Consultant Miles Stern and DCE Grievance Coordinator Joe Rizzo. Another dealt with contract issues for full-time faculty and staff led by MTA Consultant Katie D'Urso and North Shore Chapter President Tiffany Magnolia. There was a round table of chapter presidents with Joe LeBlanc, and there was the always popular retirement session with Ed McCourt from MTA and Kevin Cairra from the Mass State Retirement Board.

A new session this year was Organizing the Wellstone Way. Named for the former Senator Paul Wellstone, this is a system for organizing groups to bring about positive change. In an effort to get members more engaged, MTA has been adopting this method and encouraging locals to use the method to develop their members.

The session was conducted by Tiffany Magnolia, who has participated in Wellstone training at the MTA Summer Conference. The system encourages leaders to have one-on-one conversations with members to find their concerns, interests and needs. Building on interpersonal connections, members are better able to organize and more effectively move their agendas.

Ken Takvorkian of Mt. Wachusett Community College led a session that demonstrated the use of clickers in the classroom. The clickers, also known as Classroom Response Systems, are electronic devices similar to a television remote control that allow students to instantly give feedback in a class. Use of clickers has been shown to

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MCCC President Joe LeBlanc, left, met with chapter presidents at the MCCC Fall Conference. (Photo by Don Williams)

DIRECTORS NOTES

At the September 25 meeting of the MCCC Board of Directors the following actions were taken:

- The Board voted to accept the Nominations and Elections Calendar proposed by the Nominations and Elections Committee.
- The Board voted to appoint Steve Russell (NECC) and Margaret Wong (QCC) to the Officers Ad Hoc Committee.
- The Board voted to appoint Sharron Gillies (QCC), Roberta Albano (STCC), and Carol Giaquinto (STCC) for two-year terms to the Nominations and Elections Committee..
- The Board voted to appoint Karen Cox (QCC) to the Finance Committee.
- The Board voted to appoint Roberta Albano (STCC), Caroline Schwarzwaldner (NSCC) and W. Brooks Smith to the Strategic Action Steering Committee for academic year 2009-2010.
- The Board authorized the ORP Ad Hoc Committee for academic year 2009-2010.
- The Board authorized \$400 from reserves to purchase a table for 10 attendees to the Labor Education Center Dinner sponsored by the Labor Education Center at UMass Dartmouth.
- The Board approved a policy to reimburse MCCC officers and coordinators for online backup services from approved providers.
- The Board approved a new write-in policy for nominations for delegates to the MTA and NEA annual meetings. Write-in candidates will have to submit a form by the close of voting with the same information that pre-election nominees put on the nomination form.
- The Board authorized a \$1000 donation from reserves to the Abe Sherf Scholarship fund at North Shore Community College. ■

Know Your Day Contract



November 2009

Nov. 21 Unit Personnel Practices Committee established (p. 38).

Nov. 26 Thanksgiving Holiday.

Nov. 27 Professional Staff must use one of the three off campus days (p. 46).

December 2009

Dec. 1 Applications due for Sabbatical Leave beginning July 1 for professional staff or Fall semester for faculty. (p. 24).

Dec. 22 Last day fall semester can end (p. 44).

Dec. 25 Christmas (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. 51).

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 2006-2009 Agreement. ■

Visit The MCCC Online!
<http://mccc-union.org>

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.

MOVING?

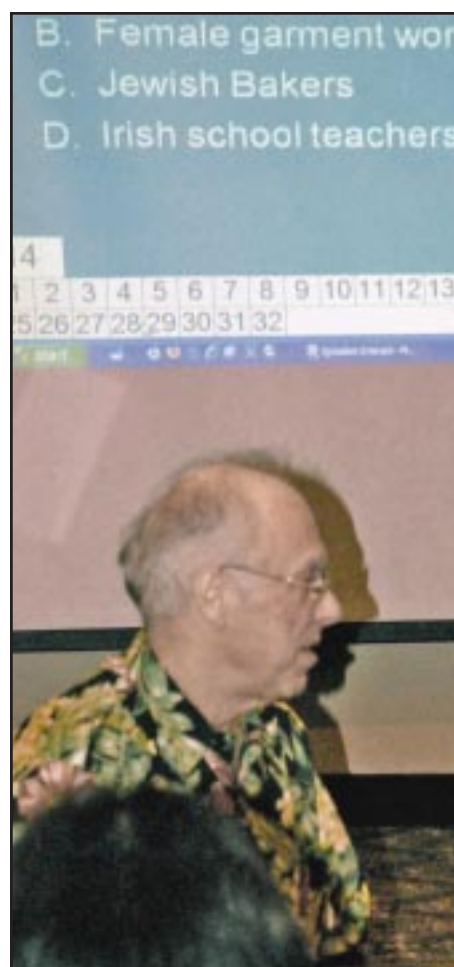
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Call the office at 1-877-442-MCCC toll free or go online at <http://mccc-union.org/ChangeMyAddress/>

MCCC Fall Conference . . .

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Prof. Ken Takvorkian of Mt. Wachusett Community College demonstrated the use of clickers to engage students in classroom activities at the MCCC Fall Conference. Participants in this workshop did a union trivia quiz to see how this technology can be used as a teaching tool. (Photo by Don Williams)

increase students' attention and interest and to increase retention of lecture material.

As a demonstration Takvorkian created a union quiz show where participants used the clickers to answer questions about the MCCC and the labor movement. After each question was posed and responses from the clickers recorded, participants were able to discuss the answers. Everyone could see the group's answers on a projection from the instructor's computer. They were able to

see how many knew the correct answer and discuss why it was correct.

MTA Benefits, the branch of MTA that offers discounts on things like hotels, mortgages, car and homeowners insurance provided \$10 gift certificates for winners of the quiz show. They also gave four \$100 door prizes that were awarded at the end of the meeting.

The winners were Charlotte Belezos, RCC; Chris Hoeth, BrCC; Pam Donahue, NECC; and Ken Takvorkian, MWCC. ■



Winners of the MTA Benefits door prizes at the Fall Conference. From left, Charlotte Belezos, RCC; Chris Hoeth, BrCC; Pam Donahue, NECC; and Ken Takvorkian, MWCC. (Photo by Don Williams)



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