

MCCC



News

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MCCC Stays Active Through Summer

Although classes may be reduced during the summer MCCC members used the break to participate in two annual union events: the NEA Representative Assembly and the MTA Summer Conference.

This year the NEA-RA was held in Chicago during its usual 4th of July week schedule. NEA is the nation's largest union with over 7 million members, and the RA is its highest governance body. Bylaws, resolutions, and the budget are the primary actions the RA takes, but there are also speeches, award presentations, and the opportunity to network and share experiences with colleagues from throughout the nation.

MCCC delegates to the NEA-RA are elected every spring, and the top 15 vote getters are provided with funding to at-



MCCC participants in MTA's Emerging Leader Program were joined by President Joe LeBlanc at the Williamstown Summer Conference. Participants are, from left, Paul Weeden, Massasoit; Debbie London, Mass Bay; Donna Wright, Massasoit; President LeBlanc, Northern Essex; George McDermott (with his service dog) and Mark Bashour, both of Quinsigamond.

(Photo by Don Williams)

tend the event. Some members are also selected and funded through MTA and NEA positions they hold.

The MTA Summer Conference has traditionally been held at Williams College in Williamstown, Mass., and it is held the first or second week of August. Because of its in-state location this conference is easier for more members to attend, and about 30 MCCC members attended this year.

The Summer Conference runs for four days and provides a variety of professional development and union building activities. Most of the professional development is focused on k-12 teaching, but some are applicable to higher ed. There are a number of union related sessions

including ones for new presidents and for experienced presidents, training on grievance procedures and on the rights of fair representation, plus information sessions on legislation, personal development, and retirement planning.

MTA runs its Emerging Leaders Academy (ELP) for the week at Williamstown. This program has been led for many years by MTA's Michelle Gallagher and now assisted by Miles Stern, who is also an MTA consultant who is currently assigned to the MCCC.

The program brings together members who have decided to get more involved in the union. Some are relatively new employees and others have been around for a while, but all have decided

"Mark Your Calendar"

Oct. 4

State House Events

Optional Retirement Plan
Lobby Day Program
(12 noon, Room 437)

Public Service Committee
Hearings (1-4 pm, A-2):

*ORP Bill (S. 1912)

*Contract Funding Bill (H. 2981)

Oct. 19

MCCC Fall Conference

4:00-9:00 P.M.
Courtyard by Marriott
Marlborough, MA

that the union is important and that they want to contribute more. The leaders bring the participants through team-building and organizing exercises that are integrated into a campaign for President and Vice President of the ELP to be elected by all the conference participants.

MCCC members made up a significant component of this year's class, with five participating, and with one, George McDermott from Quinsigamond, running for vice president. Joining McDermott were Mark Bashour also from Quinsigamond, Debbie London from Mass Bay, and Paul Weeden and Donna Wright from Massasoit. Although McDermott did not win the vice presidency, the MCCC team all gained a winning attitude.

The primary events for higher ed. members at the conference are held on Wednesday, and first among them is an open meeting of the Higher Education Leadership Council (HELCC), a group made up of the presidents of all the MTA higher ed. locals. The MCCC is the largest single local in the MTA, there are two locals at the state universities, but there are several at the UMass campuses ranging from professors to custodians. MCCC President Joe LeBlanc is the current serving chair of HELCC.

Discussion of a recent request by the state to reopen all state collective bargaining agreements dominated the meeting. MTA's Acting Director of Higher Ed., Donna Sirutis, explained what she knew about the offer that was made informally at a meeting on July 26.

Sirutis explained that when the state demanded to reopen the agreements last

Continued on page 4



MCCC members gathered at the NEA Representative Assembly in Chicago for a quick photo. From left, Vice President Donnie McGee, Bristol; Margaret Wong, Quinsigamond; Tom Kearns, Massasoit; and Candace Shivers, Mt. Wachusett.

(Photo by Rosemarie Freeland)

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Promotional Professors



Don Williams, MCCC
Communications
Coordinator

We are in an era where the public sector is held in low esteem where the public has lost faith in the efficacy of government and has been persuaded that cutting the funding for public programs and turning it over to the private

sector will improve those services.

Although some of us may not buy in to this prevailing ethic, maybe it's time we face the reality and embrace it. Our community colleges are already embracing it in a variety of ways. For years some have contracted out campus security, custodial services and bookstores to private companies. Others contract out their IT services.

Recently two colleges have entered into agreements to farm out educational services to outside entities. The Princeton Review initially started with Bristol Community College and then Northern Essex

before turning over its higher ed. services to Kauffman Scholastic Inc. (KSI).

The state strong-arms the colleges into being entrepreneurial by cutting their budgets while expecting them to provide all the services they have always provided. So the colleges have to squeeze the students, look for corporate sponsors, and to partner up with private entities.

The salaries of our adjunct faculty have been privatized from the beginning of Divisions of Continuing Education in the 1960s. And now the state is pushing the colleges to pay some of the full-time faculty and staff raises out of their operating budgets, which had previously been cut.

So here's my plan—at least for faculty: To start an advertising agency that specializes in placing corporate promotional images on college faculty. They could be subtle like product placements in films or overt like the massive decals on race cars. It would depend on the product or the professor's preference.

A placement could be as simple as wearing a pin or button with let's say the Apple computer logo or just by visibly using a Mac in front of your class. Lab science faculty already wear lab coats that are a perfect medium for all kinds of

messages, and who's to say we all can't wear similar coats when teaching other subjects?

Naturally, as a commercial endeavor compensation will be on a "merit" basis; that is whoever sells the most earns the most. This will be a blow to sense of Union equity and fairness, but those ideas seem to be lost in the public already.

So faculty who have larger classes get more exposure and, so, are more valuable. Popular faculty will be more valuable. Faculty who teach courses in fields where a lot of expensive equipment is purchased, like computers, or engineering, or culinary arts might be more valuable. And faculty who teach in programs where the graduates have high employment and earnings potential may be more valuable.

If you teach Philosophy seminars you're probably out of luck.

I don't want to leave out our professional staff members, they are seeing more and more students, so they have some earnings potential as well. They could be issued a desk name plate on a stand that has a window above their name that electronically displays a cycle of ads, kind of like the barrier behind home plate at Fenway Park. Unfortunately, some staff don't see enough students directly, but

maybe they could have sponsors for their email or voice mail recordings. "I'll be out of the office this week for vacation and enjoying refreshing Coca Cola products."

I see another business opportunity in creating a rating agency like Nielsen or Arbitron to determine the value of particular professors for placement. But student privacy issues will be a complication. If the business looks profitable enough, though, congress might be persuaded to relax FERPA regulations to allow access to student records for market research purposes. We'll give up privacy for jobs.

My company Promotional Professors, (someone already has the name Promo Professors...Rats!) is currently seeking venture capital because we need to get up and running quickly before the colleges catch on. They could make an all-college deal with one sponsor as European soccer teams do, with everyone wearing the same promotional garb.

I thought about selling this idea to the colleges, but collective bargaining agreements would be an impediment. As an entrepreneur, I want to move more quickly than unions allow. But if the recent decline for public unions continues, they might not be an impediment for long. ■

Contract Reopener Redux

August has become contract time. For the third time in three years, the state has come to the MCCC with a contract modification offer. Last year and the year before there were strong-arm demands to accept contract modifications with little opportunity to negotiate.

This year the situation is a little different, and the union has a little more leverage, but not much. Last year's agreement was to delay the raises promised to all state union employees in the previous year's contract by 364 days. Moving the 1.5 percent increase from July 1, 2010 to June 30, 2011.

But as a concession to the unions, the state agreed to an accelerator clause that if revenues exceeded certain expectations then the effective dates of the raises would be earlier.

As things turned out, when the fiscal year ended, revenues had surpassed the benchmarks to a level that called for the raises to go into effect six months earlier than scheduled. MCCC Day-Unit members did receive the raises on June 30, but because of the accelerator clause MCCC members are owed around \$450 of retroactive pay. And the next general increase would be due Dec. 30 of this year instead of June 30, 2012.

The state Office of Employee Relations (OER) called in all of the unions at the end of July and offered a two-year contract extension with a 3.5 percent pay increase if the unions would agree to drop

the accelerator clause provision in the current language. The meeting was hastily called at a time when many principals, such as Commissioner Freeland, were on vacation. MCCC President Joe LeBlanc was able to attend.

OER claimed that they were approached with this proposal by one of the unions. NAGE the National Association of Government Employees was the first to agree to the plan, and they were joined by Service Employees International Union (SEIU) Local 509 and some AFSCME units. These unions negotiate directly with OER, and their contract funding process is less convoluted and more certain than it is for higher ed.

Calculations by MCCC Grievance Coordinator Dennis Fitzgerald showed that while the proposed plan would slightly lessen members' take-home pay over the current contract period, over the proposed extended contract period members would have earned more and would have a higher base pay than currently expected.

OER had wanted the higher ed. Unions to accept the plan by Aug. 30. Given the short notice at a time when many of the significant players were not available, this timeframe was unrealistic.

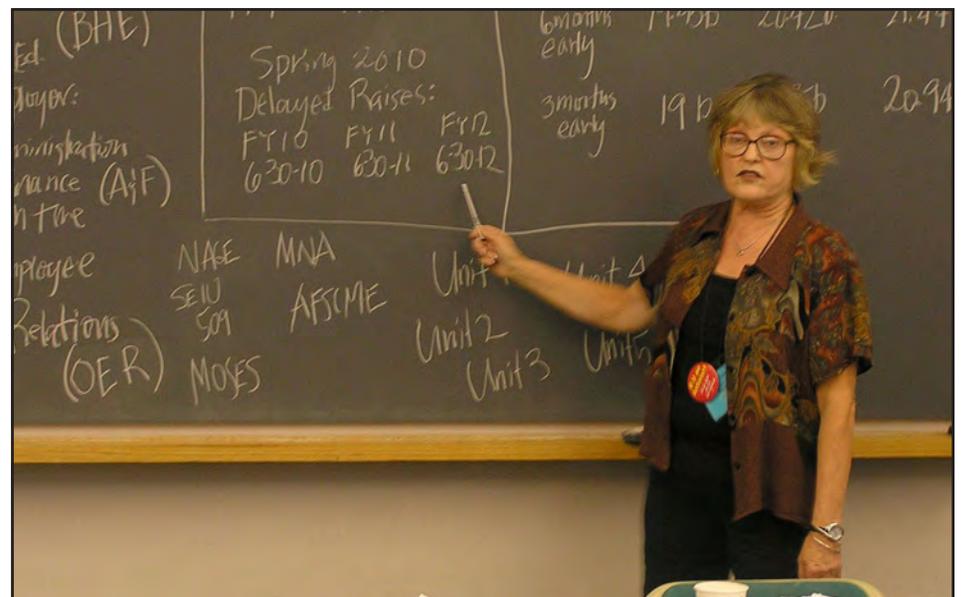
At this point, however, there is no written proposal, and many provisions are still unclear. If the unions do not accept the new proposal, then the colleges would have to pay the accelerated payments out of their already reduced

state appropriations. The community college presidents meet this month and they will be discussing their response to OER's proposal.

The union has many concerns that need to be addressed as well. The proposal has a number of conflicts with the collective bargaining law, Chapter 150E. The state has worked around some of these restrictions in the past, but the state controls the laws and the unions can only comply or go to the courts if things do not work out as planned.

How the 3.5 percent raises would be paid out would need to be negotiated, and on OER's timeframe there would be little opportunity for negotiations. There are also questions as to whether funding for the contract extension through the legislature is secure.

Discussions continue, and as this semester progresses more details should be clarified. Overall the proposed plan would appear to be a benefit for union members, but too many details are up in the air for a quick resolution. ■



At the Higher Ed. Meeting at the Williamstown Summer Conference, MTA's Acting Director of Higher Education Donna Sirutis explained the recent request by the state to reopen the Day Collective Bargaining Agreement. (Photo by Don Williams)

Advice for New Members – Be Yourself But Be Careful



Joe LeBlanc,
MCCC President

Starting a job, career or even a course at a new college is stressful. You have a million things to do and working in a unionized environment adds one more layer of complexity to your work life. Our contracts - one for day and mostly full-time faculty and professional staff and another for part-time faculty - are not an easy read. So, to help you get off to the successful start, let me share some of my story about my early days in our system.

I was hired to teach English and Journalism at Northern Essex in 1988 at step 6 for about the same money I was making at my previous job. Within the first couple of weeks, our local chapter treasurer handed me a contract and asked me to join the union. I immediately signed the card and authorized payroll deductions, becoming a member of the Mass. Community College Council/Mass. Teachers Association/National Education Association.

For the next few years, I minded my own business, mostly shut my mouth and focused on my job. I taught my full-time load - four courses - kept my office hours, advised the college newspaper, attended department, division and all college meetings and did MORE than is required in our collective bargaining agreement. I ignored workload formulas. I accepted college

governance assignments and worked at least 60 hours a week, including semester breaks. After all, the newsroom technology upgrade couldn't wait until the next semester. If I didn't do it, who would?

In my early years I never read much of our day contract, but I did attend local union meetings. Colorful characters led our Northern Essex chapter: Jim Bradley, Joe Rizzo, Jack Aronson, John Guarino, Pam Donahue, Peter Flynn and others. Every month, they ranted against the college president and his dastardly team, raged about the never-ending state budget cuts and screamed and hollered about the latest outrage against our union and its members. It was all serious, principled and also good fun. After all, fighting for fairness in the workplace is fun and pursuing justice is definitely joyful.

Mixed in with the local political brinkmanship were lessons for everyone. I learned about our GIC health insurance and appreciated my union's efforts to fight off the Commonwealth's attempts to increase our out-of-pocket contributions. I learned about our retirement system in the days when a defined benefit plan was our only option - one that promised a dignified retirement. I learned why our salaries were frozen. My salary stayed at step 6: \$26,500. Rank changes provided no salary increases. I hoped more money was coming, but would it?

Tenure arrived with another rank change. I was a full professor, a very poor full professor. I chafed at the injustice and began to speak out. Why were we taking another zero year? Why weren't the rank changes funded? Why were we negotiating across the board salary increases and

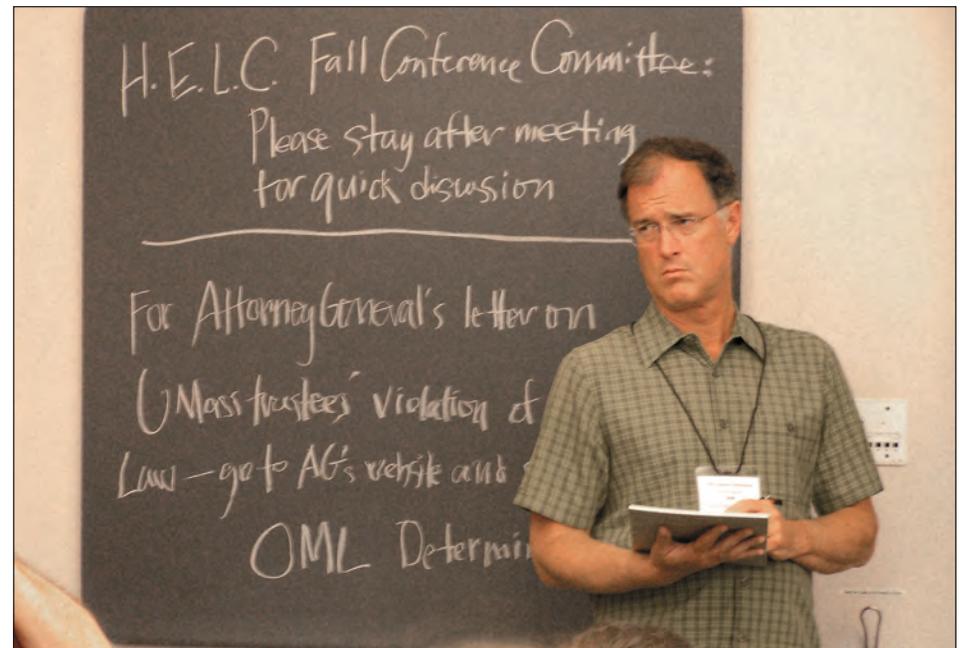
widening the gap between senior and junior members?

I read my contract. I learned about our workload articles. I insisted on my contractual rights while working to be an excellent teacher and full participant in the life of my college.

I volunteered to serve on my local union's executive committee. I ran for chapter secretary, president and was elected to serve on the MCCC's board of directors and our statewide executive committee. My tenure as a professor of English and more recently as president of our statewide union has been surprising, chal-

lenging, always interesting and sometimes joyful.

I wish you all the joy possible as you begin your new job. Thank you for joining our union. In your early years, please make an effort to attend union meetings. Learn. Stay informed. Ask questions, but save the speaking out and fighting for justice for your post-tenure years. As e.e. cummings advises, "to be nobody but yourself - in a world which is doing it's best, night and day, to make you everybody else - means to fight the hardest battle any human being can fight, and never stop fighting." ■



MCCC President Joe LeBlanc chairs MTA's Higher Education Leadership Council that is made up of the presidents of all the MTA higher ed. locals. At the Williamstown conference pictured here the meeting was open to all higher ed. members.

(Photo by Don Williams)

**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. ■

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 ■

Dear Editor:

In the Summer MCCC News, the article on the MTA Annual Meeting briefly mentioned a motion by Trudy Tynan of Holyoke to revise our MCCC dues structure so that actual dues levels become roughly the same percentage of earnings for both full-time and part-time members. While details of the proposal were not provided, some figures from Treasurer Mahler were mentioned: To balance reductions of \$16 to \$55 for only one-third of adjuncts, full-time MCCC dues would have to increase by \$53.

These figures serve to prove the point made by Ms. Tynan that lower earning members are paying MCCC dues at a much higher percentage of their earnings than are full-time members. In fact, the figures show that there are a large number of such lower earning members because a relatively small dues reduction for some part-time members gets equated by Treasurer Mahler to a considerable increase for all full-time members.

Whether you are a part-time or full-time member, I hope that you support making the "significant amount of consideration" that may be required by Ms. Tynan's proposal because it may result in a change toward fairness in your MCCC dues.

Les Zenack
MassBay Community College

[Ed. Note: Full-time faculty and staff all pay the exact same dues regardless of their earnings, so to maintain the MCCC operating expenses they would all see the same increase. Also under Tynan's proposal some part-time members would also see a dues increase and others would see no change at all.] ■

Know Your Day Contract

September 2011

- Sept. 2** Earliest classes may begin (p.45).
Sept. 5 Faculty office hours must be posted (p.44).
Sept. 9 Course materials (Form XIII-E2) for Fall 200 X must be distributed to students and submitted to supervisor before end of drop/add period (p.49).
Sept. 15 Unit members receive notice of accumulated sick days (p 17).

October 2011

- Oct. 1** Tenure eligibility list distributed (p.38).
Oct. 1 Sick leave bank open (p.17).
Oct. 2 Furnish employer with dues to be deducted per employee (p.14).
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.50).
Oct. 10 Columbus Day holiday observed.
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.

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. Page numbers are from the 2010–2013 Collective Bargaining Agreement, which is being distributed on campuses this semester. It is also available on line at mccc-union.org. ■

MCCC Meetings Calendar 2011-2012

YEAR	MONTH	EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE	OTHER EVENTS	BOARD OF DIRECTORS
2011	AUGUST	3	MTA Summer Conference 7–11	24
2011	SEPTEMBER	16		23
2011	OCTOBER	7	MCCC Fall Conference 19(eve)	21
2011	NOVEMBER	4		18
2011	DECEMBER	2		–
2012	JANUARY	4		20
2012	FEBRUARY	3		24
2012	MARCH	2	NEA Higher Ed Conf. TBD	30
2012	APRIL	6	MCCC Delegate Assembly 28	20
2012	MAY	4	MTA Annual Meeting 11-12	–
2012	JUNE	1		15
2012	JULY	–	NEA-RA 1-6	–

MCCC Stays Active *Continued from front page*

year and asked the unions to defer their raises for 364 days (keeping them in the same fiscal year—barely), they promised that they would accelerate the payout schedule by three or six months if state revenues exceeded certain target levels. After the tax receipts have been calculated, the state has exceeded the six-month target, and now owes employees retroactive raises to Jan. 1, 2011.

In an effort to postpone those accelerated payments, the state Office for Employee Relations (OER) had already made agreements with unions it negotiates with directly to maintain the original payout schedule, but offered an additional year (or two) at the end of the current contracts with a 3.5 percent increase. It was intimated that otherwise that year would probably end up a zero year. [See Contract Reopener Redux in this issue.]

There were a variety of questions about the offer. First, Sirutis explained that there was no written proposal, so the details continue to be vague. Chapter 150E, the law governing public collective bargaining requires that contracts not exceed three years, so would this proposal even be legal? If it is a separate 1-year contract will it then have to be separately funded, and could we be stiffed on it? Will the colleges have to fund the raises? Sirutis said these were all points that had to be clarified legally.

MTA President Paul Toner said he would like to talk to Jay Gonzalez, Gov. Patrick's Secretary of Administration and Finance to get to the core of the offer.

Cathy Boudreau from Massasoit said, "I'm concerned about what this kind of offer says about the sanctity of the collective bargaining process."

Max Page from UMass Amherst, and the Higher Ed. member of the MTA Executive Committee, said, "This represents a further disinvestment in higher ed. by putting additional burden on the col-

lege budgets to fund the raises." He also expressed disappointment with the administration's disregard for the collective bargaining process.

MTA lobbyist Sean King gave a presentation on MTA's legislative actions relating to higher ed. He said one primary focus was keeping bills we support alive as they move from the hearing stage to a floor vote. He reminded attendees that the legislature ends formal sessions in July of an election year (like 2012), so if bills are not acted upon by then, they are likely to die and have to be refilled in the next year's session.

King named a number of bills MTA is working on. First is a bill to reform the state pension system, and King said it is essential that the employee side of the issue must be heard in the legislature. MTA and other labor groups are promoting a bill to put restrictions on ballot initiative petitions like the recent ones to end the income tax or reduce the sales tax. It is too easy to get these on the ballot, and although they usually lose, it costs unions a lot of money and effort to fight them.

There are two bills filed by MTA relating to the Optional Retirement Program (ORP). One is a refined version of the one MCCC pushed during the last legislative session, that would allow participants who felt that they were misinformed a chance to change to the state system. (Senate 1912) Another bill is being pushed by the state college union (MSCA) to allow librarians to join the ORP (Senate 1352).

There are three bills dealing with adjunct faculty. One would put the state on a path to have a full-time/part-time ratio of 75/25 percent over the next decade (House 1244). Another bill would allow part-time members to participate in the state's health insurance program, the Group Insurance Commission (GIC). And another would provide a better pension a

better pension system than the current OBRA plan.

Another item on the MTA political agenda relates to a court decision that invalidated "evergreen language" in collective bargaining agreements. These clauses keep the contract language in effect until a successor agreement is negotiated. Gov. Patrick is filing a bill to protect this provision in contracts. And MTA is still hoping to change the collective bargaining law to streamline the process by clarifying dates and processes and simplifying the funding process and political influence.

King said that if these are things people want to have happen they need to get active. He urged members to get involved in MTA's Campaign for Our Communities that will develop member involvement in the political process.

Finally, the conference was not all business. There were a variety of entertainment events, from nightly movies, the famous Williamstown Theater Festival, and a number of receptions thrown by various MTA groups. The last night features a Higher Ed. Reception sponsored by the MCCC and other higher ed. locals which was followed by "The Bash," a live band-fueled dance that always lasts to the wee hours. ■



MCCC News

<http://mccc-union.org>

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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

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