

MCCC NEWS

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To Romney: "We Say Fight Back!"

Chanting slogans like "Romney says cut back; we say fight back!" and "1, 2, 3, 4 let's go knock on Romney's door," about three dozen MCCC and AFSCME members marched on Gov. Romney's home in Belmont on Nov. 6.

Organized by members of the Roxbury Community College chapter, and joined by members from Bristol, Mass Bay, North Shore and Northern Essex, the event was designed to bring the issue of the vetoed funding of the 2003 pay steps and stalled contract talks directly to the governor.

The members marched a mile from Arlington, over busy Rt. 2 through the luxurious Belmont neighborhood to Romney's home, carrying signs and chanting the entire way. Bristol members brought their masks of the Edvard Munch painting *The Scream* to emphasize the horror of the contract situation. Many participants also wore academic robes to enhance the visual message.

Roxbury chapter president Richard Eells used the bullhorn to give a scathing speech about the Romney administration's anti union agenda. He pointed out that while Romney has given raises of three percent to administrators, he refuses to give anything to the people who actually do the work. He said, "As a businessman Romney should know the importance of contracts and keeping up your end of the bargain."

Not surprisingly, the absentee governor was not home. But the event got two-day coverage by the *Globe* and one-day pieces in the *Herald*, WCVB-TV and WNAC-TV. There is no question that the governor got the message. One of his sinister blacked out SUV's pulled up and spokesperson Eric Fehrstrom emerged to make a statement to the assembled press.

The Romney team takes moves right out of the Bush playbook: Keep repeating half-truths and misstatements and people will believe it. In his statements outside

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MCCC members protest outside of Gov. Romney's Belmont home.



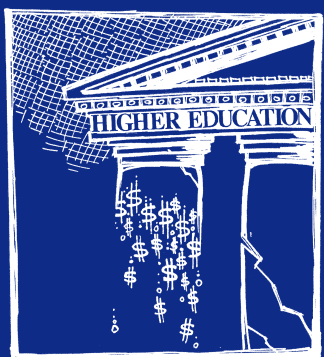
Richard Eells, Roxbury Community College Chapter President, (in hard hat) speaks to the protesters and press.

Classification
Appeals
Information
For Members
Hired Since 2001
See President's
Column Page 3

As of Dec. 1, 2004
884 Days
Without a Raise

NON-PROFIT ORG.
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Promises To Keep



TELL MITT!

DCE Contract Sent to Members

As this newsletter is going to press, the MCCC is organizing a Dec. 13 and 14 ratification vote for a new DCE contract.

The DCE Negotiating Team had the overall objectives of gaining more professional status for adjunct faculty, achieving some parity with full-time faculty and making policies and practices more consistent across the campuses. Pay raises were naturally a major objective.

The team began meeting in Nov. 2003, and the first order of business was to conduct a survey of the members to determine bargaining priorities. Increased pay was the overwhelming number one priority with benefits coming in next. Unfortunately, the health insurance and retirement benefits desired require legislative action, and were not bargained at the table. As a benchmark for raises, the state college union (MSCA) won 9 percent over three years.

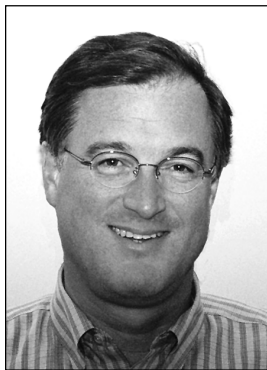
If ratified, the three-year contract will run from Jan 1, 2005 – Dec. 31, 2007. It calls for raises of 2, 3 and 3 percent in the spring semester for each of those years, It also includes a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) for a 2 percent raise in the fourth year if a successor agreement is not negotiated before the expiration of the contract.

The team was disappointed that it could not achieve the kind of language changes it had hoped for. Absent that, they had hoped to gain parity with the state college pay raises of three percent per year. Management was not willing to give raises retroactively, so with raises possible for the Spring 2005 semester, the team decided to let the members decide on their own. The team sent the contract to the membership with no recommendation.

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MCCC Newsletter
27 Mechanic Street, Suite 104
Worcester, MA 01608-2402

Gov. Romney's Promises To Keep



Joe LeBlanc,
MCCC Vice President

It's tempting to go into a deep funk over the thought of the continued empowerment of the political right in Washington. Governing our Divided States of America may prove challenging to President Bush, who is soon likely to be squandering his political capital on social security privatization and tax cuts for the wealthy at home while sinking deeper and deeper into his quagmire in Iraq.

In Massachusetts, the situation is a bit different. It involves seemingly endless frus-

tration and conflict for our members and a potential quagmire for Gov. Mitt Romney. After his drubbing at the polls on Nov. 2, the Governor is acting like everything is fine when it's not. Voters are asking questions like "What has he done?" or "Where are all those new jobs he promised?" or "What's this week's photo op?"

Higher education faculty and staff are hoping he'll accept an ambassadorship to Mongolia. They're asking, "What's he going to do to us next?" Our members have gone several years without a salary increase, and unions like the MSCA report nothing but bad news at the bargaining table with insulting salary offers and union busting language demands.

All is not well in the Commonwealth's system of public higher education. Public colleges have lost hundreds of full-time faculty to early retirements. After using Billy Bulger as the Scapegoat of 2002 to score

political points, Gov. Romney seems content to take our public colleges down a road to mediocrity. With thousands of Big Dig leaks to be plugged (You've probably noticed his latest scapegoat, Matt Amorello) and income taxes to be cut and a campaign for the White House to be planned, he's just too busy to be bothered much with governing.

Midway through his term, the Governor does indeed have promises to keep about creating a world class system of public higher education. In the face of such opposition to our dreams for our colleges and our students and our professions, confrontation with the Governor may be inevitable in the months ahead.

Indian writer Arundhati Roy tells us it is possible to confront such negative forces and prevail. Speaking about "How to Confront Empire" at the World Social Forum earlier this year in Brazil, she said, "Our strategy should be not only to confront

Empire, but to lay siege to it. To deprive it of oxygen. To shame it. To mock it. With our art, our music, our literature, our stubbornness, our joy, our brilliance, our sheer relentlessness..."

We may be asking you to confront the Governor in the months ahead. If we do, we will be relentless and we will prevail. Roy advises us that the majority of good people can and should "come up with a million ways of becoming a collective pain in the ass." She tells us "another world is not only possible, she is on her way. On a quiet day, I can hear her breathing."

But let us put such thoughts aside for now. Perhaps the Governor will turn away from his potential quagmire. Perhaps he will start the new year a changed and wiser man eager to put this great state and our system on track again. In the meantime, I wish you much peace and joy during the holiday season and a happy new year. ■

Fight Back...

Continued from Page 1

Romney's home, Fehrstrom said, "the governor prefers to put money into student aid and buildings rather than retroactive raises to teachers." According to the National Conference of State Legislatures, Massachusetts has cut higher ed. funding in two of the last three years. Cuts of 2.6 percent and 21.5 percent in the previous two years are hardly offset by a 5 percent increase in the current year.

In her statements to the *Globe*, Romney spokesperson Shawn Feddeman repeated what the governor himself has often been heard saying, "I don't know what they're complaining about; they just got a 15 percent raise." The inaccuracy, of course, is that UMass faculty got such raises but state and community colleges have had zero. And UMass is still waiting for their retroactive money.

The march had originally been planned for Oct. 30, and many more members had committed to attend, but foul weather and the Red Sox having their parade that day caused the rescheduling. In the end the weather was very cooperative, and the circumstances were ideal for press coverage.

Much credit goes to the original organizing committee of Ruth Kiefson, Alex Asare and Mustafa Mohamed, and to RCC Director Clark Grain who brought the plan to the MCCC Board of Directors for support. MTA Consultant Katy D'Urso helped to secure parade permits and parking rights and MTA communications did a great job doing the promotional work to get the press to come.

The entire Roxbury chapter should be commended for taking the initiative and leading the MCCC to the next level of action. In retrospect, Eells said, "Great event. Everyone who went was glad they did it. It's about time we held Romney's feet to the fire. And we'll be back." ■



Write Us

The MCCC News welcomes your letters and opinion pieces. Text may be edited for space and appropriateness. Not all submissions can be published. Mail to:

Donald Williams
North Shore Community College
One Ferncroft Road
Danvers, MA 01923

or email
Communications@mccc-union.org

Call for Nominations

Raymond C. Lemieux Memorial Award

Raymond C. Lemieux (1931-1987), Professor of Economics at Springfield Technical Community College, was a Massachusetts Community College Council treasurer, negotiator, grievance coordinator, and Health & Welfare trustee. His service and dedication to higher education, to the Massachusetts community college system, and to the MCCC / MTA / NEA immeasurably enhanced the lives of those around him.

Purpose

The purpose of the award is to recognize an individual whose service, leadership, and dedication have contributed significantly to the Massachusetts Community College Council.

Nominee Qualifications

To be eligible for this award, an individual must meet the following criteria:

- service to higher education and the labor movement in the quest for improved working conditions and high standards of professional excellence.
- demonstration of leadership in MCCC and higher education.
- exemplification of the concerned and caring approach of Raymond C. Lemieux, much of whose life was dedicated to the betterment of faculty and professional staff.

Who May Nominate

Any MCCC Board of Director or Chapter President may nominate by completing a nomination form which can be obtained from the MCCC.

Jon G. Butler Memorial Award

The Jon G. Butler Memorial Award for outstanding Chapter President was established in the Fall of 1984 in honor of Jon G. Butler, former chapter president at North Shore Community College, former MCCC Research Coordinator, and an outspoken and active proponent of unit members' rights.

Purpose

The purpose of the award is to recognize the Chapter President(s) whose leadership, acts, or support have made a significant impact on MCCC unit members.

Nominee Qualifications

Individual nominees must be current MCCC Chapter Presidents.

Who May Nominate

Any MCCC Director may nominate by completing a nomination form which can be obtained from the MCCC. ■

Opinion

By Ruth Kiefson, Roxbury Community College

The demonstration against Governor Romney at his house on November 6th, led by RCC, and the one at U Mass Dartmouth led by faculty from UMD and Bristol CC, are actions that are leading the way for the higher ed unions. After two years without a raise and without a contract, and with a 22 percent cut in funding for higher education, this turn toward militancy is long overdue.

Militant actions require rank and file participation and therefore empower the membership, giving us an opportunity to express our anger towards those who are responsible for attacking our jobs, our students, and our living standards. Two weeks after the demonstration, at RCC's November chapter meeting, we broke into small groups to generate ideas as to how to maintain pressure on the state. The rank and file energy was still flowing!

As we take into account our recent history, we must conclude that the State is well on its way to taking back the 51 million that our last contract cost them. We got six months retroactivity for reclassification rather than three years, increases in our health premiums, a 20 percent increase in workload, which led to an overall decrease in the number of faculty positions, and only a 20 percent backfill of full-time jobs lost to early retirement. The increase in workload resulted from the leadership's decision to allow the reclassification study to be linked to the contract negotiations, which was never supposed to happen; and also after the membership had made it clear at the onset of negotiations that a 5th course was not a negotiable demand.

The weak position we find ourselves in today came about because our primary strategy has been to rely on the legislature to vote on our behalf, to rely on the courts to rule on our behalf, and to put our trust in the hands of fast-talking union lobbyists and

lawyers. Our leadership was following this strategy when they recommended that we ratify our last contract even without the Memorandum of Agreement being part of the contract, as though we could trust the state to play fair.

Even today, our leadership is encouraging us to be hopeful that the legislature will overturn Romney's veto when they reconvene in January. But the simple fact is this: whether or not the legislature votes in our favor, we will *still* have a fight on our hands. Romney is playing hardball because he is out to destroy our union.

We must recognize that the attacks on our living standards and our students' quality of education are not going away. The only way we can defend our interests is to stop operating within a framework defined by management. Our strongest weapon is to strike. It is for this reason that the legislature and the courts, who are biased towards management, have declared strikes by public employees to be illegal.

We must not give up our strongest weapon, because then our only alternative is to cozy up to management. And you can be sure they will never cozy up to us, even as they bleed us dry. We are not the only ones who need to learn this important lesson. All the public employees in the State are in the same leaky boat as we are in. We need to begin the process of joining with them to plan to shut down the State in a general strike. Management can't fire us all, especially if we get students, parents, and clients on our side, opposing the budget cuts.

In every union chapter, we need to examine our strategy with a critical eye. Then, we need to heed the words of James Connolly, the Irish Revolutionary, "The great only appear great because we're on our knees. Stand up." ■

Know Your Day Contract

December 2004

- Dec. 24** Last day fall semester can end (p. 34)
Dec. 25 Christmas (p. 16)

January 2005

- Jan. 15** Sabbatical recommendations from committee to president (p. 18)
Jan. 18 Earliest date for professional day (p. 34)
Jan. 19 Martin Luther King Day (p. 16)
Jan. 20 Earliest date classes can begin (p. 34)
Jan. 23 Summary evaluations for part-time faculty due (p. 43)
Jan. 28 Faculty schedule changes due to chapter presidents

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. ■

President's Message

December 2004...



Rick Doud,
MCCC President

appeals process for so called "new hires" and prospectively for all future unit members.

On October 15th all parties signed an MOA outlining a new appeals process. At the insistence of the BHE, the MOA calls for two committees, one to hear appeals and the other to make recommendations to the Chancellor concerning "global issues"—i.e. issues that affect not just an individual

but rather a group of faculty or professional staff. Both the MCCC and the college Presidents have named the same individuals to both committees in order to expedite the process. The committee has met only twice so far, but has accomplished quite a bit.

All unit members hired after July 2001 (these are unit members not officially classified by the outside consultant) will be receiving a home mailing from their college Human Resource department soon. Each individual will receive his or her personal salary calculation in grid form (see pages 111-112 of the *Agreement*) based on academic credentials, experience, seniority, etc. If the unit member believes there was a mistake made, he or she will be instructed to make an appointment with the college HR director and try to resolve the situation. If, after that meeting the individual still believes the salary to be incorrect, he or she can the appeal directly to the new appeals committee on a form to be included in the mailing.

Also, beginning this spring, all new hires will receive the same salary grid in-

formation within 30 days after hire, and be afforded the same appeals process as described. This procedure should resolve most of the difficulties that have surrounded the issue of how new hires are initially placed on the classification salary structure.

In addition, the committee has forwarded to the BHE their first recommendation concerning a global issues appeal. The committee's recommendation is that the BHE "prospectively clarify that the definition of 'experience' listed in the classification specification for each 'senior' position in the classification study includes related internal and external experience." Currently, the system only counts internal experience when classifying senior positions.

We hope that the BHE will adopt this recommendation so that MCCC professional staff who are currently performing the work of a senior position and who will meet the experience requirement when their related internal and external experience are combined will be immediately promoted to the senior position and pay grade. The committee hopes to meet with the BHE in

December to discuss this issue. As the committee continues to meet, they will be looking at other global issues that surfaced during the first round of appeals.

The final piece of this classification puzzle is beyond the scope of this committee and needs to be immediately addressed by the BHE. For a classification system to have any equity, market updates must be done on a regular basis. The current salary grid is based on 1997 data. Colleges are finding it nearly impossible to conform to the classification grid using the minimum salary point values set almost eight years. The MCCC, the college Presidents, and the BHE know that salary updates are vital, but so far the BHE has been unable or unwilling to make this happen.

The MCCC will do everything possible to pressure the BHE to do market updates regularly. Without regular market updates, the equity promised by the classification study will never become a reality.

In Solidarity,
Rick

Editorial Comment

Responsibilities of Union Membership



Don Williams, MCCC
Commun. Coordinator

degree of autonomy in our jobs that carries over into our attitude towards the union.

The MCCC has made incredible strides over the past five years in organizing its business operations. We have a skilled office staff, own our own office space and we even have our own, highly placed lobbyist. All of these are good things. They provide us with a solid underpinning and a consistent, on-going presence.

But a union's strength is not in its staff, but in its members. And we are in a situation that demands all the strength we can muster. We need to work together and encourage each other in what ever activities we decide to do. We need to use our collective creativity to come up with significant and innovative actions to advance our cause.

The march on Romney's house, detailed elsewhere in this issue, is a great example. The action originated at the chapter level. They thought it up; they organized it; they promoted it. They used the resources of MCCC and MTA to make it happen. The Bristol chapter has been active in doing similar activities.

Every chapter is different. Each has a unique locale, unique political environment and unique membership character. It's difficult for the MCCC leadership to come up with one script for everyone to follow. But we all share a common objective. And we all, each and every one, have a contribution to make in reaching that objective.

As the fight toughens to get a new contract and to get the fair compensation promised by the classification study, the commitment of every member will be tested. Think about what you can do. Pass on ideas to your chapter president and director. Write letters to the editor, in fact bombard them

Organizing and motivating members is a challenge for every union. But a union like ours has special problems: we don't generally work together in groups, we don't work the same schedules, and we

with letters when Romney's misstatements are presented.

I have seen worse times in my 25 years teaching in the system, but I don't think I have ever been as offended as I am by the current situation. We waited years to get the classification study, and accepted major work-load increases in order to get the system. Three years later the state has totally turned its back on the promises of classification. Hold aside the market updates and the 75th percentile promise, they can't even give us the measly 1 percent for 2003!

In July the *Globe* reported that the economy was slow and that nationally raises were averaging *only* 3.3 percent this year and 3.5 for next. Gov. Romney authorized 3 percent raises for state managers, and most community colleges gave their non-unit employees these raises. Two weeks ago the legislature was authorized for raises of 4 percent over two years based on a formula pegged to the growth in personal income in the state.

So everyone is getting raises but us. You should be outraged. You should be ready to tear down the buildings. You should be ready to march on Boston. But some campuses can barely get work-to-rule together.

We need to be creative. We need to be original and try new ideas. But more than that, we need to be united and committed to action. ■

Proposed Bylaw Changes

The deadline for submitting proposed changes to the MCCC Bylaws and Standing Rules is no later than Feb. 2, 2004.

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

DCE Contract...

Continued from Page 1

Management's initial pay offer was minimal and completely unacceptable to the team. They insisted on a key language change before they would increase the pay offer. What they wanted was the removal of contractual appointment rights (referenced as Article 16 in the Full-time contract) eliminating any hiring preference for DCE faculty to full-time jobs. The Union prevailed in keeping some of the language, so that only those Article 16 grievances alleging a violation of a procedure referenced in the contract shall go to arbitration. All other Article 16 grievances will go to mediation only.

The original language had become problematical after the president of Quinsigamond Community College appealed an arbitrator's decision to the courts, and the court decided that a collective bargaining agreement could not supersede a president's professional judgment in determining whom to hire. This took a lot of teeth out of the old contract language.

Another thing management wanted was the ability to use email for many communications, saving them both time and money. The union had wanted more consistency of forms. The resolution was a committee to separately negotiate how this will be implemented by year three of the contract. The contract provides parameters for the final policies that include assurance that all members will be provided with college email and access to computers.

This has some benefit for the Union in that the electronic communication will streamline communication of membership lists, dues deductions and forms. For individual instructors, it will ensure that everyone gets communications at the same time, address changes will not be a problem and communications can easily be saved. In the end, the Union may prevail in getting forms more consistent across the campuses.

The Union achieved some improvements in contract language. First, pay will be made at a minimum of three equal periods in 15-week semesters, rather than the current twice per semester. Colleges paying more frequently should continue the existing pay schedule.

Secondly, the pay for under-enrolled courses will be on a *pro rata* basis rather than the current *per capita*. This may seem small, especially since many mem-

bers always assumed that *pro rata* was the standard. Under *per capita*, colleges set a dollar amount per student, which eliminates the differential between the four pay steps. *Pro rata* will give instructors a proportion of their pay preserving the steps.

The team had hoped to standardize the minimum enrollment numbers for full pay, but this had several obstacles. There was a very wide range across the campuses from 10 at Quinsigamond to 18 at Springfield Tech. To reach a compromise Union members at the colleges with lower numbers would lose, and the colleges were adamant to keep their prerogative.

Without specific minimum numbers specified, the colleges retain the right to raise the minimum enrollment for full pay. This leaves the chapters to fight changes at the campus level, and members would be advised to prepare strategies to thwart such actions at their campuses.

Also, the time to appeal a Step One grievance is increased from 10 to 20 days. And a standard form for classroom observation was agreed upon.

Finally, the Union secured language that would give instructors the right to accept an under-enrolled course up until 10 days before the start of classes. This would prevent colleges canceling a course sooner than that and reassigning it to another willing instructor. There is also language that guarantees that refusing to agree to teach a course if it is under enrolled cannot affect the initial assignment of courses.

Bargaining for this DCE Unit is difficult because the membership is extremely diverse and dispersed. Of the 4082 members who teach under this contract, approximately 500 are full-time day faculty and staff. About another 1000 are adjunct faculty whose only employment is teaching. The rest are people with other employment, retirees or others who only want to teach one or two courses.

The DCE Team recommended that the MCCC work on a long-term plan to better organize the DCE unit and to prepare a plan of attack for negotiating the next contract. The first step to that organizing may come in fighting off increases to minimum enrollment numbers at the various campuses. If members would uniformly refuse to accept under enrolled (and underpaid) classes, the colleges would have to seriously reconsider their policies. ■

Unemployment Benefits and OBRA Pension Withdrawals

Unemployment

Adjunct faculty are entitled to unemployment compensation during semester breaks, even if you are scheduled to teach a course for the winter/spring semester, you are still eligible for unemployment benefits during your break in teaching because this only constitutes an offer of employment.

Although your personal experience may be that the course(s) you traditionally teach always run. Overall, given the nature of community college courses, there is no guarantee that a course you have been offered will run. Therefore adjunct faculty in our system are eligible for unemployment benefits unless other ongoing employment makes them ineligible.

If you have any difficulties in applying for unemployment compensation, contact Joe Rizzo, MCCC DCE Grievance Coordinator by email at Grievance-DCE@mccc-union.org or by phone at (603) 898-6309. MTA will provide union members with an attorney to represent you at the Department of Employment Security.

OBRA Withdrawals

Adjunct faculty who are required to participate in the state's OBRA Pension are advised that they can withdraw their money at the end of each semester. The money can be used for any purpose, but even if used for investment, there may be better pension plans available.

The OBRA is not the same as a 401k plan, and many financial planners are not aware of its particulars. In short, OBRA

contributions are placed into a low rate savings account and, therefore, do not provide any additional financial gain beyond what you as an individual can do by withdrawing the funds and putting it into your own savings account.

Some colleges have told adjunct faculty that they are not allowed to withdraw the money, but that is not true. When the semester is finished adjunct faculty are no longer employed by the state, and therefore are eligible to withdraw their pension contributions. This is the same reason adjunct faculty are able to collect unemployment benefits over semester breaks.

You can get more information by visiting the MCCC website www.mccc-union.org and clicking on the link under DCE and Part-time. You can also call the fund administrator, ING, at (877) 457-1900 to get more information and to service your account.

As always you should consult a financial planner in making financial decisions. However, be sure that your financial advisor is fully aware of the OBRA policies. ■



Romney protesters gather for final words from Ruth Kiefson after the march.



Season's Greetings and Best Wishes
for a Happy, Healthy, and Prosperous New Year!
your MCCC leadership team

Massachusetts Community College Council Nomination Form - 2005

A candidate must file this form (or a copy) with the MCCC Elections Committee by Thursday, February 3, 2005, 4 p.m. **Nomination papers that arrive late will not be accepted.**

Check all that apply:

MCCC DELEGATE

MTA Annual Meeting Delegate
(Boston May 13 and May 14, 2005)

NEA Representative Assembly Delegate*
(Los Angeles, California July 1 - July 6, 2005)

Name _____ SS # _____

Full Home Address _____ Tel # _____

College _____ Tel # _____

Unit membership: Full Time Part Time Day DCE
For ALL Candidates: Black Asian Pacific Islander Caucasian
 Hispanic - Chicano Native American

Visit the MCCC Web Site http://www.mccc-union.org to fill out on-line or download this form	OR	Mail a completed document to Roberta Passenant (Elections Chairperson) MCCC 27 Mechanic Street, Suite 104 Worcester, MA 01608-2402
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Signature _____ Date _____
(Signature may be typed)

Deadline: MUST BE RECEIVED by Thursday, February 3, 2005, 4 p.m.

*Bio or Statement for NEA Rep. Assembly Candidates only (Optional) - 50 word limit (1 word per box)

Instructions

1. Type or print clearly using both upper and lower case letters as you expect the final statement to appear.
2. Insert no more than one word per box except when combining letters (ex. MCCC) or hyphenated words.
3. Insert punctuation in the same box immediately after the word you want it to follow.

MCCC News
<http://www.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. 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