Page 2

Page 4

MCCC News



The Official Publication of the Massachusetts Community College Council / Volume 5, Issue 8 / May 2004

Lemieux and Butler Awards



Geri Curley 2004 recipient of Raymond C, Lemieux Award

Lemieux Recipient

Geraldine "Geri" Curley is the recipient of the Raymond C. Lemieux Memorial Award for distinguished service, presented at the 2004 annual MCCC Delegate Assembly. The award recognizes service to higher education and the labor movement in the quest for improved working conditions and high standards of professional excellence.

Curley has been a professional staff unit member at Bunker Hill Community College for 20 years where she is Mathematics Coordinator in the Center for Self-Directed Learning.

She has been extremely active in MCCC affairs for many years. The MCCC director from Bunker Hill for 12 years, Geri has been elected an at-large member of the Executive Committee for three terms. She is a member of the critical Finance Committee and also a member of the Nominations and Elections Committee.

Furthermore, Geri is the Executive Committee Representative to the DCE Grievance Committee where she provides input on decisions to take grievances to mediation and later to arbitration. On the local chapter level she has been the Strategic Action Coordinator, Membership Chairperson, day and DCE Grievance Coordinator.

Political action is another area where she demonstrates her commitment to the union. She regularly serves on MTA candidate endorsement teams and has been active in many campaigns of endorsed candidates. She is well known by her town's senator and representative.

Ted Ridout, Bunker Hill chapter president, said of Curley, "In all positions she has shown an extraordinary commitment and vigilance. She knows the issues. She is engaged always."

Raymond C. Lemieux (1931-1987), Professor of Economics at STCC, 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.

The award recognizes members who demonstrate the following char-

- 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.



Ned McGuire 2004 recipient of Jon G. Butler Award

Butler Recipient

Ned McGuire, chapter president at Massachusetts Bay Community College, has been awarded the 2004 Jonathan G. Butler Award for outstanding chapter president. McGuire is a learning specialist in the writing center at Mass Bay.

The past year has been has been a very challenging one at Mass Bay. There were layoffs of faculty and staff members along with reductions in work year for staff members. Many of the affected members were chapter officers, and these actions were interpreted by some as an assault on the union.

On top of these personnel issues, Mass Bay's Framingham campus had a continuing problem with air quality and hazardous materials. Management was not addressing this problem effectively, requiring constant prodding by the association to solve the unhealthy conditions.

McGuire, in only his second term as chapter president, stood up to what former

MCCC president and current Mass Bay director, Tom Parsons, labeled "an overwhelming and difficult college adminis-

In nominating McGuire for the award, Parsons said, "Despite the continuous pressure from the administration, Ned kept the membership focused on the unethical salary cutbacks of professional staff and unwarranted layoffs. At the same time he did not relent on the health and safety issues at the Framingham cam-

Many people on campus believe that the announced retirement of the college president was related, at least in part, to the effective defense of union members' rights that McGuire led.

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. 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.

Statewide Grievance Over Classification

A state-wide grievance over the way colleges are determining the pay levels of new hires is being pursued by Dennis Fitzgerald, MCCC Day Grievance Coordinator.

of New Unit Members

The classification system that the MCCC fought hard for and waited years to have completed and implemented has very specific criteria for setting the salaries of faculty and staff. Fitzgerald has discovered that colleges are completely ignoring the system and others are merely "eyeballing" the credentials of new hires to decide what to pay them.

Information has been received from the majority of colleges in the system showing the names of recently hired faculty and staff, the salaries they were hired at and their M002 or M004 forms (the forms called for in the Classification Study) if they were filled out—if not, then the member's degrees and prior experi-

Recently hired unit members are being notified by their HR departments that the union is requesting the information. These members should not feel that the grievance is being directed at them-it is directed at the colleges for not paying new hires at the appropriate salary level.

It is essential to maintain the integrity of the classification system. Although the classification of professional staff unit members is complicated, the system for faculty is very simple. But protocols for all positions have been negotiated and should be followed.

The union is concerned that the classification system will begin to fall apart and the gains made through the system in exchange for teaching the fifth course will be lost.

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

Strategic Action

State Support Stagnates in Period of Record Enrollments

Lousy budgets to be delivered on time



Joe LeBlanc, MCCC Vice President

Once upon a time Massachusetts fully supported its system of community colleges. In that era, our students were taught by fulltime faculty with adjuncts teaching only a few courses during the day and continuing education

courses in the evening. It was an era when Pell Grants actually covered the full cost of attending a community college.

After a decade of uneven support and two years of the worst budget cuts to public higher education in the nation, the Commonwealth now assists its community colleges in fulfilling their increasingly diverse missions. Full-time faculty and professional staff numbers have dropped from 2028 in 2001 to 1980 in 2002 to 1750 today.

Our students are more likely than ever before to be taught by a growing and unmanageable number of part-time faculty. More than 3,500 contingent faculty teach from one to five courses each semester. Their salaries don't come close to proration. They do not keep office hours, advise students or serve on committees. Our students are paying higher tuition and fees and are receiving less and less in return.

But surely the end of the budget crisis is in sight. Not so, according to House Ways and Means Chairman John Rogers (D-Norwood) who says the deficits will persist for at least another two years. In such an environment, it's not hard to imagine a future where our colleges will be transformed from state-supported to state-assisted to state-located institutions.

For FY 05, the Commonwealth's system of public higher education will be cut by about \$16 million or about the expected national average of 1 to 2 percent. Community colleges are being cut by 1 percent, but \$2.9 million in workforce development funding is expected to give us level funding — perhaps this is about the best we can expect in an era when health care costs are outpacing revenue growth in a largely jobless recovery.

Where's the public outcry and sense of outrage? The public benefit we provide seems largely invisible these days. Legislators praise our colleges and their

Maria Estella Carrion 1

missions, yet budgets stagnate. With numbers of high school graduates expected to peak nationally in 2008-2009, we can expect our enrollments to soar over the next several years.

In an era of lousy budgets, we must propose alternative (and better) higher education budgets along with accountability, access and enrollment measures. It isn't enough to oppose further erosion in state support for our colleges. We must also propose and help to set the agenda for the future of our colleges:

• To begin, it's time to stop the bleeding. No more cuts. Period.

• It's time to plan to make our system of public higher education the best funded in the nation by 2010. The recently named Senate Higher Ed. Task Force is a good start, but let's get the House involved in this conversation also. Just where are those scores of House members who are graduates of our public colleges and U.Mass? And let's make sure we involve faculty and staff in this conversation about our future.

• It's time to tie budget increases to benchmarks for hiring the best and brightest full-time faculty. The Academy has lost thousands of years of experience over the last decade. What better time than now to hire a new generation of faculty. What

TOTAL

better time than now to fully support our public colleges in their drive to create an enlightened and well-trained citizenry and workforce.

After closing the \$1.5 billion budget gap with \$650 million in one time funds, including \$340 million in from the rainy day funds, the \$23 billion budget next moves to the House where action is expected before this column goes to press. In fact, look for the Senate to whip through the budget process this year by mid-May as both branches work together to enact the budget by June 21. For the first time in many years the Governor will receive the budget before July 1, allowing the legislature plenty of time to override vetoes before they break for the Democratic National Convention and a busy campaign season.

Our Political Action Committee will next step into action. With the help of longtime MCCC Strategic Action Committee activist and retired Cape Cod Community College faculty member Dr. W. Brooks Smith they will be organizing campaign receptions to support our legislative friends. Your attendance at a series of summer and fall events will promote your enlightened self-interest and empower us all.

Election Results

DAY DCE TOTAL

45.75

38.25 148.25

401.75

As the vote tallies below show, all of the incumbent MCCC officers retain their positions for the next two years.

NEA – 33 Delegates

The MCCC is entitled to 97 delegates to the May 21-22 MTA Annual meeting, and there were less than that number elected through nominations and write-in votes. The Annual Meeting is being held this year at the John Hines Civic Center in Boston.

For the NEA Representative Assembly the MCCC is allotted 33 delegates, but only the top 15 vote getters will have their attendance funded by the MCCC. The NEA-RA will be held July in Washington, D.C.

MTA – 97 Delegates

MCCC Statewide Election Thursday, April 1, 2004

President

Rick Doud

Charles Chisholm 110

490 Vice President 416 74 407 76 483 Secretary 415 76.5 491.5 Treasurer NEA – 33 Delegates TOTAL Dennis Fitzgerald 337.75 Nahum Sherf 313.5 Susan Dole 306 James Rice 291.5 Phyllis Barrett 289.75 Roberta Albano 274.75 Sandy Cutler 274 Peter Flynn 272.75 Geri Curley 271.75 Carol Mathison 270.75 Joseph Nardoni 266.25 Carol Giaquinto 263.75 Pamela Donahue 258.75 15 Kenneth Takvorian 258 17 Christopher Hoeth 255.5 18 19 Kenn Anania 254 Daniel Fitzgerald 252.25 20 Betsy Smith 252.25 Charles Chisholm 252 23 Robert Gillies 248.25 Frances Winter 243.5 Henry Camillo 228 Sharron Gillies 217.75 26 Nancy Tufo 6 Paulette Howarth 2 Mohamed Zefzaf 2 Thomas White 1.25 Michael Bathory 1 M. Bourbeau 1

34 Kit Carpenter 1

8	Anna Gaillet 1
9	Geoff Galbraith 1
0	Stan Hitron 1
1	John Jacobs 1
2	Abbie Jenks 1
3	Jill Keller 1
4	Daniel LaRose 1
5	Francis Leary 1
6	Tom Maclachlan 1
17	Joseph Murphy 1
8	Mary Nelson 1
9	Mark Palermo 1
0	Nahum Sherf 1
51	Karen Thomas 1
52	Michelle Valois 1
3	Ann Wiley 1
4	Sheila Willard 1
55	Maureen Woolhouse 1
6	Diana Yohe 1
7	Alfred Baptista 0.25
8	Hope Benne 0.25
9	Richard Boulware 0.25
0	Orikaye Brown-West 0.25
1	Kenneth Dunn 0.25
2	Ann Evans 0.25
3	Peter Lee 0.25
4	John Lynch 0.25
5	Thomas McChesney 0.25
6	Richard McGuinness 0.25
7	Robert Stoddard 0.25
8	Desmond Tynan 0.25
9	Frederick Walsh 0.25
ИТ	TA – 97 Delegates TOTAL
	Dennis Fitzgerald
2	Philip Mahler 345.25
,	Rick Doud 344.75
	Joseph LeBlanc 339.75
,	Susan Dole
)	Donald Williams 326.25
7	Phyllis Barrett 325.75
3	James Rice 324.5

1 VI I	A = 97 Delegules	IUIAL
9	Joseph Rizzo	
10	Peter Flynn	
11	Sandy Cutler	
12	Carol Mathison	316.75
13	Arthur Neuner	316.5
14	Geri Curley	316.25
15	Caroline Schwarzwalder	315.25
16	Thomas Salvo	315
17	Carolyn Tetrault	315
18	Christopher Hoeth	314.75
19	Richard Ponticelli	
20	Roberta Albano	314.25
21	Carole Dupont	314.25
22	Tom Maclachlan	314.25
23	Elizabeth Williams	314.25
24	David Houle	314
25	Catherine Adamowicz	313.25
26	Christina Coolidge	
27	Donnie (Diana) McGee	312.5
28	Pamela Donahue	311.5
29	Jan A. Nettler	
30	Joseph Nardoni	
31	Daniel Fitzgerald	
32	Kenn Anania	
33	John Jacobs	
34	Ron Coelho	
35	Kenneth Czuchra	309.25
36	Paulette Howarth	
37	Douglas Buckley	
38	Richard Nagle	
39	James Tressel	
40	Michael Nutter	
41	Mark Palermo	
42	Lynn Kleindienst	
43	Clare Lamontagne	
44	Lois Martin	
45	Robert Gillies	
46	Kenneth Takvorian	
47	Henry Camillo	
48	Sheila Coelho	
49	R. Michael McSweeney	306.5
50	Hazel Piper	
51	Jacqueline McColgan	
52	Frances Winter	
_	Trainees William	

MT	TA – 97 Delegates	TOTAL
53	Theresa Glanville	304.5
54	Alex Boch	
55	Sharron Gillies	303.75
56	Kenneth Dunn	303.5
57	Eileen Kelley	303
58	Roberta Passenant	302.5
59	Carol Giaquinto	
60	Edward (Ned) McGuire	301.5
61	Martin Comack	298.75
62	Annette Guertin	294.25
63	Nancy Tufo	8
64	Tom White	
65	Alex Asare	
66	Michael Bathory	1
67	Stuart Eisenberg	
68	Andrew Ellis	
69	Clark Grain	
70	Gail Guarino	
71	Stan Hitron	
72	Jill Keller	
73	Allan Kohrman	
74	Daniel LaRose	1
75	Francis Leary	1
76	Joe Modugno	1
77	Mary Nelson	1
78	Robert Reidl	
79	Karen Thomas	
80	Sheila Williard	
81	Maureen Woolhouse	
82	Mohamed Zefzaf	
83	John Daly	0.5
84	Alfred Baptista	0.25
85	Hope Benne	
86	Orikaye Brown-West	0.25
87	Christopher Dea	
88	Donald LeBlanc	0.25
89	Peter Lee	0.25
90	Thomas McChesney	
91	Richard McGuinness	0.25
92	Frederick Miller	0.25
93	Betsy Smith	0.25
94	Robert Stoddard	0.25
95	Desmond Tynam	0.25
	-	

President's Message

May 2004...



Rick Doud, MCCC President

As I write this Newsletter it seems as if spring has finally arrived. The Boston Marathon is about to be run, both Boston winter sports team are in the playoffs (I hope that is still true when you read

this!), and the Red Sox have renewed their rivalry with the Yankees. As I was reading the news this past week I was reminded of the Yankee legend, Yogi Berra, and one of his famous "Yogisms": "it's déjà vu all over again".

It's "déjà vu again" as the Governor continues to show his contempt for public sector employees. In recent weeks he has proposed drastically reducing state employee pensions, as well as stripping away collective bargaining rights in public higher education contracts. On a positive note, it seems as if neither of these proposals will be given serious consideration by the legislature. However, these proposals, combined with his administration's refusal to submit legislation to fund our points payments leaves no doubt about the governor's stance on the value of public higher education

It's "déjà vu again" when the recently released FY 05 House Ways and Means budget continues the trend of state house budget cutting when it comes to higher education. The proposed budget calls for a 2% cut in funding for state colleges, and a 1% cut in funding for community colleges. While this cut is much smaller than those of the last two years, cutting community college budgets continues to be a very short sighted approach to the commonwealth's fiscal woes.

As we all know Massachusetts has led the nation in cutting funding for public higher education over the last couple of years. At a time when the need for economic growth that comes from investing in community colleges has never been more necessary, the state continues to reduce our funding. The legislature must act to restore funding for public higher education in the Commonwealth by raising taxes.

It's "déjà vu again" as the MCCC along with the other higher education Unions continue to fight attacks by the Governor and his attempts to destroy our pensions and collective bargaining rights. We again will work with the College Presidents to convince the legislature that at a bare minimum college budgets be level funded, along with a commitment to significantly increase funding in the very near future. Most importantly, we will continue our best efforts to receive funding for the classification points due us retroactive to April 1, 2003.

We will continue to push for a new three year collective bargaining Agreement that contains both a cost of living increase as well as payments for classification points. We will not rest until we achieve these goals. As Yogi Berra also said: "it ain't over 'til it's over". Until we receive a fair contract offer and the retro monies due to our members, "it ain't over."

In Solidarity,

Directors' Notes

At the March 26 meeting of the MCCC Board of Directors the following actions were taken:

- The Board voted to name Geri Curley as the recipient of the Raymond Lemieux Award and Ned McGuire as recipient of the Jonathan Butler Award.
- The Board approved proposals for additional at-cost release sections from three campuses: two sections for a new chapter president at North Shore; two sections for a new grievance coordinator at Bristol; and two sections for a new vice president at
- The Board received the report of the Bylaws Committee and listened to a presentation from Betsy Smith of Cape Cod supporting her proposed bylaws change. The proposed change was to give DCE members a full vote in MCCC elections rather than the current fractional vote. The Board voted to support the recommendation of the Bylaws Committee not to recommend the proposed amendment to the Delegate Assembly.

Report Your Dental Insurance Concerns

Anyone having concerns about the Met Life dental plan should report them to:

> Abe Sherf 402 Paradise Road Swampscott, MA 01907 Fax or Phone 781-592-1330

PAC Corner

Watch this space for news about your Political Action Committee

Thanks to our chapters for their generous support to the PAC in this important election year:

- Cape Cod
- Greenfield
- · Middlesex
- Northern Essex
- North Shore

Our PAC has recently supported our members attending events for

- House Assistant Majority Whip Tom Petrolati
 - Senator Rob O'Leary
 - Senator Steve Baddour

Contact us if you would like to attend a local event in support of your state representative or senator.

We'll see you at the MCCC Delegate Assembly on May 8!

Signed,

Frank Leary and

Thlema Halberstadt, PAC co-chairs Phil Kennedy, treasurer

Research Coordinator Vacancy Announcement

Per policy a vacancy is announced for the position of Research Coordinator effective July 1, 2004.

This is a Professional Staff Coordinator unit position. It provides a stipend and reassigned time opportunity.

The MCCC Research Coordinator collects, maintains, archives, analyzes, and reports on data related to day and DCE contract maintenance, bargaining, professional development, organizational operations, member benefits, economic and other data related to employment in community colleges statewide and nationally.

The primary responsibility is to maintain all contractually mandated data, to analyze this data, and to report on it as needed to the day and DCE grievance coordinators, the Board of Directors, and bargaining teams.

This coordinator works to get the job done efficiently and with minimal supervision, taking direction from the president. This position reports to the President or the President's designee.

Writing and oral expression skills, computer applications and ability to work with MCCC leaders required. Knowledge of Day and DCE Collective Bargaining Agreements preferred. Knowledge of basic statistics desirable. Compensation and expenses are per MCCC policy and the MCCC-PCA Agreement.

An initial appointment is for two years. See http://www.mccc-union.org Research Coordinator for a full job description and application procedure.



Attending the annual North Shore chapter legislative breakfast at the Danvers campus Ted Speliotis (D. MCCC member Greg Reppucci and Representative Brad Hill (R, Ipswich),

Know Your Day Contract

May 2004

May 1 President's tenure recommendations and sabbatical decisions due (pgs. 30 & 18)

May 8 MCCC Delegate Assembly 2004 **May 15** Faculty submit college service and student advisement form

May 20 Tenure decisions due

May 31 Memorial Day celebrated

May 30 Professional staff College service and student advisement forms due May 21-22 MTA Annual Meeting, Boston

June 2004

Applications for sabbaticals for spring 2005 (pg. 17) June 1

Professional Staff summary evaluations due (pg. 42) June 1

Sabbatical requests to committee (pg. 18) June 15

Last day for Professional staff pre-evaluation conferences (pg. 42) June 30

June 30 Evaluation of Part-time faculty in third appointment

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.

PROPOSED MCCC BUDGET

July 1, 2004 to June 30, 2005

out, 1, 2001 to out to, 2000				
EXPENSES PERSONNEL				
Payroll 240,982				
Payroll Taxes & Interpay 21,231 Course Release 140,000				
Consultants				
Meals: Individual				
OFFICE Rent 500				
Condominium Expense 35,000				
Condominium Depreciation 9,500				
CHAPTERS Dues Polysto 46 222				
Dues Rebate 46,223 Office Support 27,190				
Newsletter 5,000				
Strategic Action 5,000				
CONFERENCE MCCC Delegate Assembly 4500				
MCCC Fall Leadership 4,500				
Exec. Cmt. Retreat 1,200				
MTA Summer Leadership 4,000 MTA Delegate Assembly 15,000				
NEA Representative Assembly 12,000				
COMMITTEES				
Meals: Committee				
CONTRACT ENFORCEMENT				
Arbitration Services 13,000				
Mediation Services				
INTERNAL SUPPORT Equip Purch, repair, service 8,060				
Office Supplies 17,835 Postage 21,000				
Postage				
Prof. Development 5,000				
Prof. Memberships 1,850				
Subscriptions				
TELEPHONE Voice				
Voice				
Fax				
Internet 8,028				
MISCELLANEOUS				
Advertising				
Depreciation & Insurance 8,600				
Donations & Misc Exp				
Amortize Investment Cost 26,500 TOTAL Expenses \$846,645				
INCOME				
Day Dues 478,598				
2,075 Day Members				

MTA Support/Grants 72,000

Investment Income 30,689

TOTAL Income \$846,750

3,924 DCE Members



A joint meeting of the Day and DCE Negotiating teams was held on April 1 to discuss issues related to both contracts. Standing (from left to right) Joe Rizzo, DCE Grievance; Joe LeBlanc, MCCC Vice President and Day Team chair; Phil Mahler, MCCC Treasurer, Day Team; seated Dennis Fitzgerald, Day Grievance; John Palmer, DCE Team chair; Don Williams, DCE Team; Patrick Seyon, DCE Team; Michelle Gallagher, MTA DCE Consultant; Gail Stuart, Day Team; Kathleen McDonough, Day Team Photo by Jane Arnold-DCE Team

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://www.mccc-union.org/ChangeMyAddress/



Members of the Springfield chapter executive committee enjoy pizza while conducting a recent chapter meeting. The chapter provides pizza form members at their lunch time meetings. From left Carole Dupont, Roberta Albano, Sandy Cutler, Carol Mathison, Lynn Kleindienst and Ken Czuchra. Note the chapter's web site displayed on the screen.



MCCC News http://www.mccc-union.org

_ ...

Editor: Donald R. Williams, Jr.

> President: Rick Doud

Vice President: Joseph LeBlanc

Secretary: Phyllis Barrett

Treasurer: Phil Mahler

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



Betsy Smith of Cape Cod speaks to the MCCC Board of Directors in support of her proposed bylaws change.

HELP US HELP YOU!



Fund the Contract Now

The state signed our Union Contract and agreed to increase your yearly salary based on a point evaluation scale. Yet they continue to renege on funding this agreement. We must take action now! The core integrity of the process of collective bargaining is in jeopardy. We must compel the state to honor their obligation.

To ensure that your Political Action Committee has the resources needed to get your message heard — please make your contribution today, for:

□ \$25 □ \$35 □ \$50 □ Other

Please make your personal check payable to: $\label{eq:MCCC-PAC} \begin{picture}(20,0) \put(0,0){\line(0,0){100}} \put(0,0){$

27 Mechanic Street, Suite 104 • Worcester, MA 01608–2402

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 summer session or the fall 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 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 to withdraw their money at the end of each semester and put the money into private pension plans.

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 (or better yet pay down higher interest rate loans).

You may be told that you are not allowed to withdraw the money, but that is not the fact. When the semester is finished adjunct faculty are no longer employed by the state, and therefore eligible to withdraw their pension contributions. (It 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.

To the Editor

At the end of March, I spoke before the MCCC Board of Directors about my proposal to change the by-laws to give adjuncts a full vote, rather than the 1/4 vote that we currently have.

In response, and as justification for not fully enfranchising us, the Directors commented that adjuncts were not invested enough in their campuses, did not pay enough dues or work hard enough, would not bother to vote anyway, and if they did vote would take over the union.

If, like me, you believe that those are spurious arguments expressing groundless fears and indefensible prejudices, I urge those of you who will be at the MCCC general meeting in May to treat adjuncts like colleagues and comrades by voting in favor of my proposal to give us a full vote. Together we can make a difference.

Sincerely,

Betsy Smith, Ph.D.

Adjunct Professor of ESL

Cape Cod Community College