

MCCC News



The Official Publication of the *Massachusetts Community College Council* / Volume 3, Issue 2 / October 2001

MCCC Fall Leadership Conference

About sixty representatives of the MCCC's fifteen chapters attended the Fall Leadership Conference on Monday, September 10th, at the Best Western Royal Plaza, Marlboro. The purpose of this annual meeting is to provide local leadership with updates, orient new leaders and strengthen bonds between leaders statewide. The meeting is hosted by the Executive Committee and Board of Directors.

Upon arrival attendees received a folder of materials for the meeting, including the Annual Plan, notes on the three *Trends* presentations, a copy of the new *Welcome to the MCCC* brochure, September *MCCC News*, and a newly minted limited edition MCCC mousepad.

The meeting convened at 4:00 p.m. with coffee and conversation, and opened

formally at 4:30 with a welcome by MCCC President Phil Mahler. Mahler recapped the accomplishments of the MCCC in the last few years, and presented, in projected overheads and hard copy, the Annual Plan developed by the Executive Committee in August. Mahler introduced the Executive Committee and the four MCCC Coordinators. He noted the presence of several new campus chapter presidents.

After brief words from Vice president Rick Doud, participants broke up into groups for spotlight presentations in smaller rooms from 4:30 until 5:30 p.m. MTA Consultant Michelle Gallagher presented on adjunct issues. Communication Coordinator Peter Flynn did a presentation on trends in Distance educa-

tion with overheads and fielded questions on the Distance Education Agreement, focusing the evaluation component that was completed and signed in Spring, 2001. Strategic Action Committee Co-Chairs Joseph LeBlanc (NECC) and Sandy Cutler (STCC) led a workshop on Strategic Action.

Dinner followed in the atrium.

After dinner, at 7:30, in plenary session there was a discussion of trends in higher education led by MCCC Vice President Rick Doud. Vice President Rick Doud had requested attendees to submit topics early in the meeting. Issues that emerged from this request included problems in implementation of the workload provision of the new agreement and issues important to our adjunct colleagues. ■

The MCCC expresses its sympathy to, and solidarity with, those who have suffered personal losses in the tragedy which occurred on September 11, 2001.

The MCCC shares your grief.

We deplore the unjustifiable violence which was visited on America that day.

We applaud the outpouring of heroic efforts and courage which these events have produced.

And we go forward, with hope, with the business of this organization to work toward peace, tranquility, and dignity in the workplace.

**MCCC Board of Directors
September 21, 2001**



Chapter Leadership attend September 10th Fall Leadership Meeting

Higher Education Leadership Committee Forum

On Friday, September 14 the Higher Education Leadership Committee (HELIC) hosted a forum with guests BHE Stephen P. Tocco, and Chancellor of Higher Education Judy Gill. Jay McHale, chair of HELC presided.

HELIC is a consortium of presidents of the bargaining units of Massachusetts higher education unions. Along with the MCCC, these include the Massachusetts State College Association (MSCA), representing faculty and librarians of the nine state colleges, the Massachusetts Society Professors (MSP) of UMass Amherst, the MSP of UMass Lowell, the Faculty Staff Union (FSU) of UMass Boston, and the United Staff Association (USA) representing staff at the UMasses.

BHE Chair Tocco made the opening speech. He proposed that the MTA, BHE and

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BHE Chair Stephen Tocco, HELC Chair Jay McHale, Chancellor of Higher Education Judith Gill

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2001 Chairs Awarded at STCC



STCC Professor, Margret Szumoski, awarded Deliso Chair

Springfield Community College has named two of its faculty the 2001 recipients of that college’s annual endowed chairs. The chairs are awarded annually in September with an amount of \$3000 each, divided between the faculty recipient, and that faculty’s department. In addition a symbolic representation of the honor in the form of captain’s chair imprinted with the STCC seal and the recipients name is presented.

The awards are an effort by the STCC Foundation Board to recognize and foster faculty excellence. Both endowed chair awards recognize teaching excellence and bringing together faculty and business and community in the recognition of the importance of teaching.

Faculty are nominated for an endowed chair by their colleagues at STCC, and are then invited to apply. Applications are reviewed by an award selection committee of the STCC Foundation. The 11-member committee is chaired by the Executive Vice President/Academic Affairs and consists of seven faculty members, one professional staff member, the Vice President for Grants and Development, and the Executive Director of the Foundation. The recommendation of this committee is decided upon by the Executive Committee of the STCC Foundation.

The Anthony M. Scibelli Sr. Endowed Chair was established in 1992, the college’s 25th anniversary year. This is the tenth year the award has been bestowed. As co-founder of STCC, State Representative Scibelli was instrumental in passing legislation and approving the funding, thereby authorizing and enabling the Massachusetts Board of Regional Community Colleges to acquire the Springfield Armory, then scheduled it to be deactivated, and to establish the only technical community college in the Commonwealth.

The Scibelli Chair was awarded this year to Nancy Rapaport, Professor of Biological Sciences.

Rapaport has been active in two grant programs at STCC. She worked with both



STCC Professor, Nancy Rapaport, awarded Scibelli Chair

middle school and high school students in the METRICS (Mentorship, Experimentation, and Tutoring Resources for Increasing Competence in Science) and Advanced METRICS programs which exposed students to scientific investigation with the goal of encouraging children from diverse ethnic and economic backgrounds to pursue careers in science.

Since Spring 1999 she has been chairperson of the NSF-funded STEMTEC (Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics Teacher Education Collaborative) Pre-Ed Task Force, a group that has put into place an eight-college pre-science teaching program. For two semesters she developed and ran a program to introduce STCC students enrolled in biology courses to teaching opportunities; the program may become a one-credit course. She has also regularly hosted area public school teachers and their classes in the biology labs, including most recently the Science Club from Ludlow and an advanced placement biology class from Springfield Central High School.

Rapaport has been an active volunteer in South Hadley public schools and been a member of the steering committee and volunteer water monitor/lab technician for the Mill River Watch program.

This was the college’s ninth annual Joseph J. Deliso Sr. Endowed Chair. The Deliso Endowed Chair was established in 1993. Deliso served as the first Chair of the STCC Advisory Board from 1967 - 1981 and became the first Chair of the STCC Board of Trustees, serving through 1985.

Assistant Professor of English Margaret C. Szumoski is the 2001 recipient of the Deliso Chair. Szumoski has an impressive resume including prolific publications of her poetry and writings and public service.

Remarkably, she has taught at the elementary, secondary and post-secondary levels, including a range of students spanning intellectually gifted of the suburbs to illiterate adults of third world countries. ■

HELC Forum...

Continued from Page 1

the Colleges join together in an effort to educate the general population about the great value for the dollar that Massachusetts gets in public higher education. He alluded to the successful campaign conducted by the University of Massachusetts.

Tocco also said that such a campaign must include systemic information - so that any person who wanted information about which state institution of higher education to attend could make an informed decision (ie. Why would one attend NECC rather than MBCC other than geographical reasons? - How do we distinguish the institutions?)

In questions following his presentation, State College representatives were most assertive. Those state college representatives asked questions regarding the relationship between the BHE and the union regarding the last round of bargaining. Tocco’s response was, “Let’s work together on those things that we can, and build a more positive relationship before the next round of bargaining.”

Tocco’s response to questions about the likely effectiveness of merit pay was that he believes in merit pay and uses it at his own company. He said that a fair merit pay system can be to the benefit of all - provided it is a fair system, which is his intention in the distribution of merit pay in state and community colleges. He said that he couldn’t do anything about those who oppose merit in principle. He felt that he and the colleges would take every measure to assure the merit system is fair and objective.

MCCC President Philip Mahler stood and addressed the gathering. He opened with a suggestion that the MCCC would be happy to work with the BHE on a public relations campaign for public higher education resembling the one initiated by UMass President William Bulger in his first years in that office.

Responding to comments by Gill and Tocco about teacher preparation Mahler noted that in other states community colleges play a role in teacher prep through teacher prep content and transfer programs. He opined that the Commonwealth would judge our higher ed system partially by what it does with teacher prep, when the shortage of K-12 teachers hits soon.

His emphasis, however, was on the plight of part-timers teaching in Massachusetts’ community colleges. He noted that while maximizing full-time positions was in the best interest of our system of higher education, our society seems bent on institutionalizing part time workers.

He remarked, “that the quality of the work environment for part-timers needs more consideration than in the past.” He noted that the MTA had filed bills to allow many adjuncts to get health insurance and participate in the state retirement plan. “Given that the average adjunct has been in our system for 7 years, this seems reasonable.”

He asserted that in hiring the Colleges should look seriously at the pool of part-time faculty ready, willing, and able to fill vacant positions.

Tocco responded by stating he was aware of the situation and the BHE was looking into things they can do to alleviate the situation. ■

Letters to the President

(Letter, slightly condensed, reprinted with permission of writer and President Mahler)

Dear President Mahler,
As a fairly new retiree from the Holyoke Community College faculty (mid-1998), I want to thank you and the MCCC for your willingness to persevere on my behalf in the lengthy negotiations that surrounded the classification Study (it started during the Eisenhower era, didn’t it?).

When I received my check in the summer for my retroactive pay from January 1997 to my retirement date, I was certainly

Continued on Page 3

Contractual Committees

- APPEALS - PROFESSIONAL STAFF:**
Will meet on the morning of Tuesday October 16.

APPEALS - FACULTY:
Will meet on the afternoon of Tuesday October 16.

CERTIFICATION AND LICENSURES
will meet on the morning of Thursday October 18

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT
will meet in the afternoon of Thursday October 18.

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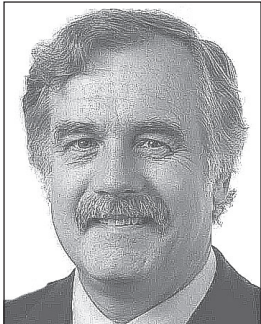
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MCCC President Philip Mahler as he addressed the HELC forum

President’s Message

October 2001



Philip Mahler,
MCCC President

I’m writing this in the immediate aftermath of the terrorist attack on New York and Washington. Which means I am writing in a state of shock and deep sadness at this profound tragedy, and the shock in which I find myself has led me to ramble a bit here.

First I have to say how sorry I am for those who lost their lives in these attacks, their families, and their colleagues. This tremendous loss touches many throughout New England. A community college in Manhattan served as a morgue, and then a command post. It may not be open yet, as you read this.

One has to ponder the fragility of our existence, and the blessings of peace and security that most of us enjoy almost all of the time. These may be gone now, and may not be part of what the next generation inherits.

In fact one has to ask what is the legacy of this generation to the next. I fear it includes less dignity in the workplace as companies downgrade retirement and health plans, turn full time positions into part time positions, and provide less access to health care. The World Health Organization ranked the U.S. 37th in the overall quality of health care that it provides. We are the only industrialized country that lacks universal health care. More than 42 million Americans have no health insurance. The Governor’s office periodically asks that

state employees with health coverage pay more for it. One way that state employees can help finance that tax cut, presumably.

There are threats to our full-time positions, and an over reliance on part time positions. This cannot lead to a quality system of public higher education in our Commonwealth.

Because it has become institutionalized, regrettably, the MCCC has come more and more to grips with the part-time situation. The MCCC has actually done a good job with adjunct salaries, though they are no where near what dignity in the workplace, and parity with their full-time colleagues, demands. But in terms of a professional working environment, and especially health benefits and participating in the state retirement system, we have a long way to go. And our part-timers, especially what I would loosely call career part-timers, lack the job security and related benefits that would make these positions worthy of those who fill them.

Despite the odds, our adjuncts do outstanding work in our classrooms, and our part-time professional staff do equally good work in their positions. Our overall system of higher education suffers greatly because of the contributions that part-time employees can never make to our institutions - governance, curriculum development, esprit de corps, advising - but in the classroom or in the library, the student is not short changed by our part-time colleagues. If we could bring many more of these colleagues into full-time positions, their contributions in these other areas would benefit us all, and especially our students and higher ed system. And maybe some part of our legacy to the next generation would be better than its current promise. ■

SAC update

Returning to “normal” on the political action front

The last few weeks have been filled with surprises. On the national front, other than the horrible terrorist atrocities, we have seen our inarticulate President flirt with eloquence and Secretary of State Colin Powell assure us that we are not about to begin a large-scale war. Speaking recently on a television news program, Powell said, “We’ve got to get back to work. We’ve got to get back to our ballgames. We’ve got to get back to our theaters. We’ve got to get this economy moving again. And that will be the best answer to what happened.”

Closer to home, the news becomes more routine. State officials are fretting about declining state revenues. House and Senate leaders work to craft a budget in conference committee, and we are told to expect a tough budget this year.

In fact, tight state budgets will be the trend for the next several years. Hundreds of millions of dollars in tax cuts passed in the last decade and a slowing economy are to blame. The result for our community colleges: fewer full-time unit positions and level-funded or declining state aid. Meanwhile, expect Republican-appointed trustees to hold the line on tuition and fees.

In a state with the highest percentage of college-educated adults in the nation, you might expect cries of protest and extensive press coverage over level funding higher education line items, but look again. Voter apathy prevails. Most citizens do not vote. Few can identify their representatives and senators. Fewer still contact their legislators. BHE Chair Steve Tocco looks to an advertising campaign to help improve our image. It seems the public and our legislature does not fully appreciate their public colleges and universities.

Political action can change that perception, offering the best hope for bolstering public higher education in tough times. In recent months, the Strategic Action Committee has lobbied for better college budgets and for a variety of MTA/MCCC-sponsored bills, all of which have been referred to the Rules Committee for further study. In coming weeks, SAC will work to pull the bills out of Rules. This will be difficult, and your calls to lobby for House bill #354 (the bill with the best chance of success) to provide part-time faculty with pension benefits will help make a difference.

We live in an era where political activism seems like some relic from the ’60s. Less than 25 percent of the public follows what happens in government unless it’s a crisis. As our political leaders advise us to get back to work and return to our “normal” lives, consider the following suggestions to help to make your union, the 15th largest labor organization in the Commonwealth, a better, more respected political force on Beacon Hill:

- Make calls to legislators when instructed by your local SAC rep.
- Get to know your legislator by visiting him or her at in-district office hours
- Attend campaign events for special election candidates this fall
- Examine the gubernatorial candidates for the 2002 election
- Push your college president and trustees to increase full-time hiring
- Work on your chapter’s Campus Equity Week activities
- Buy that new car. It’s good for you, the state coffers and the economy.

The MCCC’s Strategic Action Committee will continue to work with our lobbyist Charles Flaherty, MTA Governmental Services and you to maximize our clout on Beacon Hill. We’ll keep you posted with regular political action news updates as we struggle to get back to normal in these challenging times. ■

Technology in Writing at GCC

The English Department at Greenfield Community College has redesigned its curriculum for developmental and composition classes to incorporate a technology component. We have made this change in response to students’ need for computer literacy in a number of areas as well as the large gaps in access to computer technology and experience with computers. In order to prepare them for their other college classes as well as the contemporary workplace, we have changed the developmental and composition course to four contact hours per week to include instruction in word processing for composition and revision, use of electronic communication for academic work, research and documentation using electronic resources, and critical consideration of the impact of computer-mediated communication.

Undeniably, a great many of today’s students are to some degree “computer savvy.” In the past couple of years, however, we noted that much of their computer experience is limited to basic word processing, surfing the net, chatting with friends and game playing. Too few have had instruction in efficient and critical search methods, use of databases, critical evaluation of electronic resources, or proper documentation of those resources. More than ever before, students need tools with which to sort and evaluate the dizzying amount of information now available.

To meet this need, the English Department undertook a effort to gain funding for computer-equipped classrooms, redesign our curriculum and obtain institutional approval the changes, and provide training for all full-time and adjunct English faculty. Over the course of a year and a half for so, we accomplished these goals and began this semester with our “new” courses. This year, we face the challenge of ironing out the kinks and articulating the curriculum as our new cycle of courses evolves. Once our students have mastered the basics in our introductory courses, we can turn our attention to developing curriculum for the second tier composition courses. We hope to include consideration of areas such as hypertext, the changing nature of narrative, and multimedia communication.

In this electronic era, it is easy for our students to feel a compulsion to “learn computers.” Through our expanded offerings, we hope to turn such vague impulses toward more focused and thoughtful use of the computer as a tool for writers and thinkers. ■

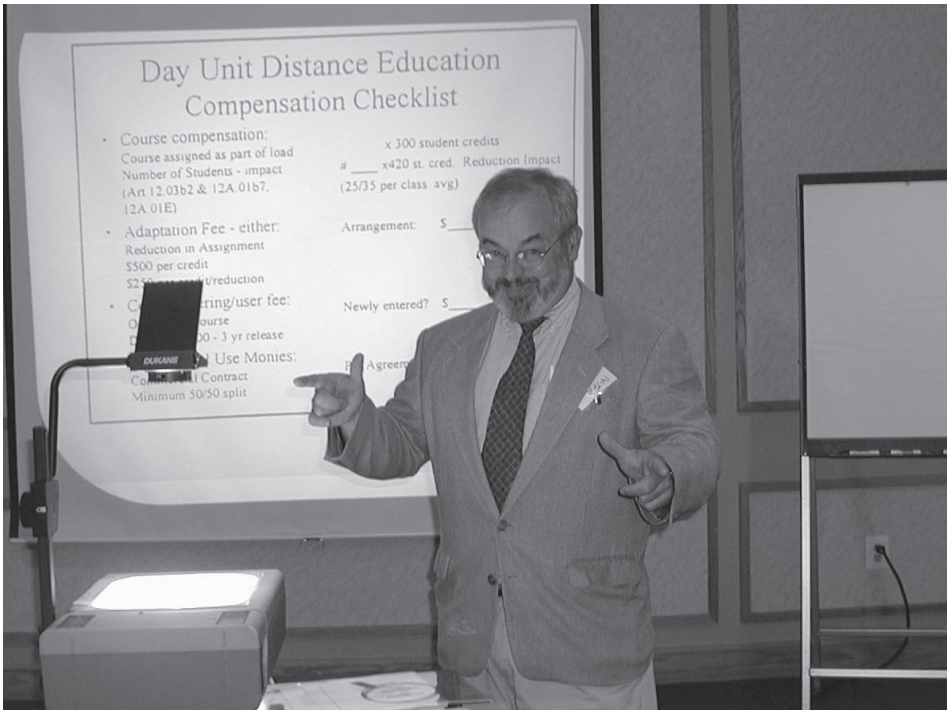
Letters to the President...

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pleased, but not surprised as I figured the money would be part of the package. At that point, the union could have packed it in and said, “Well, we got a decent settlement. Let’s move on.” Instead you took another step and got my retroactive pension money. When that payment came from the Pension Board in August. I was again pleased and a little surprised that it was obtained. At the same time, to my delight, I learned that the union had gone for extra yardage (excuse my sports metaphor) and convinced the Pension board to adjust my monthly pension payments henceforth to reflect my recalculated salary. Excellent! A Grand prize had been won!

But the best is yet to come: the increased monthly pension checks. I figure these additional payments over the next twenty years will total more than two wind-fall checks combined. While the future money won’t buy me a place in the Cayman islands or a hobby ranch in Montana, neither of which I long for, it will help me to sustain a modest lifestyle. For that I will be forever grateful to the negotiating team, the union leadership, and all the tenacity shown by both.

Sincerely yours,
Keirnan Murphy ■



MCCC Communications Coordinator Peter Flynn, Presenter;
Trends in Distance Education on September 10th

Know Your Day Contract

October & November 2001

- | | |
|----------------|--|
| Oct. 1 | President must notify candidates for tenure p. 30 |
| Oct. 7 | Deadline to request agency fee status p. 10 |
| Oct. 8 | Columbus Day holiday observed |
| Oct. 15 | Seniority list to Association President or designee p.53 |
| Oct. 30 | Last day to opt out of sick bank p. 13 |
| Oct. 30 | Schedule preferences due p. 32 |
| Oct. 31 | College shall notify sabbatical leave applicants for Spring semester p. 18 |
| Nov 12 | Veteran’s Day Holiday observed |
| Nov. 21 | Unit Personnel Practices Committee established p. 18 |

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. ■

MCCC Supports Campus Equity Week



A national coalition of teachers' unions has banded together to organize a joint one week program of activities to draw attention to the growing problem of inequities and exploitation of part-time faculty in campuses. The Massachusetts Teachers Association is a committed member of that coalition, and the MCCC has endorsed participation of its 15 statewide chapters in the event. The MCCC Board of directors has voted to produce 2500 celluloid buttons with the CEM logo to distribute to the chapters to encourage local action.

From October 28 through November 3, 2001, there will be a week of coordinated activities on campuses in the United States and Canada. Campus Equity Week - designed to educate campus communities, the public and policymakers - will focus attention on issues of fairness and quality of education. The message: teachers' working conditions are students' learning conditions and equal work deserves equal pay.

Showing of the film "Degrees of Shame" that educates viewers to the issues surrounding the colleges' abuse of part-time faculty, information tables, button wearing, and even theatre programs are among the methods chosen by various campuses in the coalition to demonstrate during the designated week.

The event has a website where a complete list of participants, and more information and history are available.

MCCC News

<http://www.tiac.net/users/mccc>

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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 Peter Flynn, Northern Essex Community College, Haverhill, MA 01830, e-mail pflynn@seacoast.com.

Campus Equity Week: Call to Action

Letter from the CEW Steering Committee

From October 28 through November 3, 2001, there will be a week of coordinated activities on campuses in the United States and Canada. Campus Equity Week - designed to educate our campus communities, the public and policymakers - will focus attention on issues of fairness and quality of education. Our message: teachers' working conditions are students' learning conditions and equal work deserves equal pay.

In addition to public education, the week of action will promote local organizing and encourage contingent faculty participation and activism. We are inviting anyone interested in promoting fairness for contingent faculty to begin making plans to take action during that week. Reach out to other groups on your campus and in your community and start determining what kind of events best address your local conditions.

Campus Equity Week will also take issue with declining labor standards and increasing use of temporary and part-time labor for all campus work. Campus Equity Week endorses the adoption of equitable labor policies and standards that encourage fairness and dignity for all members of the campus community. Campus Equity Week is part of a growing movement among working people from all walks of life seeking to address the inequities of contingent work. Campus activism is directly linked to that broader movement through the professional organizations, labor unions and member organizations of the National Alliance for Fair Employment that support Campus Equity Week and constitute its steering committee.

This campaign is highly decentralized and flexible reflecting what each local organization feels would work best in its community. This packet will give you a few ideas of the kinds of activities you could organize - from a rally to support local bargaining or organizing drives, a press conference, a teach-in, film showing, public forum, or presentations to governments. Even something as simple as setting up an information table on your campus can make a big difference in bringing your issues to the attention of your colleagues and students. Don't feel limited by what we suggest - be creative, and have fun with your events. It's up to you - as long as you do something!

The History

CEW is part of a long history of academic labor organizing. For the past two decades faculty in the US and Canada have struggled to organize local unions and have their issues addressed in collective bargaining. Their voice has been increasingly strengthened by the growing concerns of the major academic professional and disciplinary associations. In recent years, we've seen a general increase in all forms of union and advocacy organizing with the emergence of ambitious regional projects and successful legislative strategies particularly in British Columbia, Boston, California, New York, and Washington State.

Through a series of conferences, internet networks and growing support from faculty organizations, a leadership dedicated to building an international movement of contingent faculty has emerged. These developments took on new importance as increased activism on contingent labor in the broader economy, prominent media coverage, and a heightened awareness of corporatization made issues surrounding contingent labor central to public debate regarding the future of higher education.

CEW marks a new level of activity and political sophistication. For the first time all major faculty organizations have come together to encourage public education and faculty activism targeting every campus in the US and Canada. Join us October 28 to November 3rd and we will make some history we can call our own.

How It Works

A Steering Committee has been working hard to put together materials that you can use in your planning and events. We've established a website, www.cewAction.org, and an email discussion list so organizers can share information about their plans for the week, find inspiration and support, brainstorm creative ideas, and track down other groups working in their area.

Regional Coordinators will liaise with local and regional organizations to publicize the campaign, and keep track of events that are held or are being planned. They'll also develop contacts with local media and report progress to the Steering Committee.

If you have questions about the central campaign or would like to get in touch with the Steering Committee, you can contact the Central Coordinators: Flo Hatcher, (203) 392-7805; Pierre Ouellet (450) 971-4798, (514) 848-3691; Chris Storer, (650) 949-2287

Take Action!

This packet will give you a few ideas and resources to get you started. Material will also be available at our website, www.cewAction.org. Also, join the CEWaction listserv by sending a blank message to CEWactionssubscribe@topica.com.

The success of Campus Equity Week depends upon the energy, creativity and commitment of local organizers. It's up to you to make the campaign your own. But by working together, we know we can make our voices heard.

In Solidarity,
The CEW Steering Committee ■



*RCC Co-President Alex Assare
at Fall Leadership Meeting*

Crisis at Roxbury CC

Unit members at Roxbury Community College have been experiencing a period of great turmoil, reflective of what, by all reports, appears to be chaotic and deteriorating administration. Last summer's course offerings brochure was not completed until after the summer session had begun. Classes for the Fall, 2001 semester didn't begin until September 12th. Assignments for Day and DCE faculty have been late in recent semesters. Summer assignments were distributed the day before classes began. Complaints of unit members and others have been met with vituperation from College President Grace Brown.

On September 7th, the Boston Globe ran a front page story with a picture of Roxbury Community College's President Grace Brown, highlighting the news that a state audit revealed the college's mismanagement of 3.5 million in federal student aid funds. State Comptroller Martin Benison discovered that dozens of aid recipient files were incomplete and in disarray during a routine audit.

Only five years earlier Brown weathered a similar crisis when allegations of financial aid improprieties at RCC surfaced. At that time allegations that financial aid was given to unqualified students to boost enrollments, according to the September 7th Globe article by Patrick Healy.

Governor Jane Swift recommended that the college should be placed in receivership. When Brown's supporters rose to her defense, including the college's Board of Trustees, who had recently awarded her a substantial raise, protested, Swift relented.

Other events indicating administrative disorganization at RCC have occurred recently.

DCE faculty have determined that while their OBRA retirement fund payments have been deducted from their checks, deposits have not been made to Aetna by the college. This problem cropped up in 1999, was apparently resolved, but has reemerged.

MCCC Grievance Coordinator Joe Rizzo spent the entire summer fielding faculty grievances at RCC. He commented "Grievances at RCC fall in two groups. Some are chapter grievances related to issues like scheduling. Others are individual grievances prompted by perceptions of a lack of evenhandedness in treatment of unit members."

President Brown, in the Globe piece, dismissed faculty complaints as "baseless... stemming from their anger that she is now seeking highly qualified academics to teach at the college." ■



*Compliments of cartoonist Jawn Kloss, drawn for the California Campaign 2000.
More cartoons by Kloss on the CEW website*