

# MCCC News

MTA/nea 208

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## Day Team Calls for Contract Action

**W**ith the DCE Contract out for ratification, the MCCC is turning its attention to settling the Day contract that expired June 30, 2018.

The negotiating team chair Claudine Barnes had issued a Bargaining Update stating that they had made progress on a number of smaller issues over the summer when people's schedules were more flexible and meetings could be more frequent. With the start of the semester, the ability to meet is more limited and progress slower.

But the progress has also been stalled by management's intransigence on several large issues. There are some significant demands specific to Professional Staff Unit Members (PSUMs) and others specific to faculty. None of them are acceptable to the team. Most importantly, the state is imposing a rigid raise structure of 2 percent/per year over the 3-year duration of the contracts for all unionized state employees.

Speaking for the team at the MCCC Board of Directors' meeting in October, Treasurer Gail Guarino said, "They're being really bulldog about it." The governor's finance people have shown that they will not approve any contract with raises larger than 2 percent.

This was a major problem with improving equity in the DCE contract and has been a problem for other higher



*Members of the Day Negotiating Team met to work on negotiations at the MCCC Office. From left, Gail Guarino CCCC, Chairperson Claudine Barnes CCCC, Rosemarie Freeland ex officio, Margaret Wong ex officio, Tom Kearns MaCC, Latasha Sarpy Cooper BHCC, and Meghan Callaghan BHCC. (Photo by Don Williams)*

ed. units. Delays in funding the MSCA (state university union) are rumored to be because of this issue.

The team asked the Board to approve setting up an *ad hoc* Day Contract Action Team with a member from each campus to coordinate member action to fight off the take backs from management. It was approved.

What are the take backs?

For PSUMs the most significant demand management has is to change the way vacation days are accumulated. Currently Staff members can accumulate up to 64 vacation days. Article IX F 3 states, "Unused vacation days in excess of four hundred eighty (480) hours [sixty-four (64) days] shall be converted to sick leave as of the accruals at the end of the last pay period in April and October of each year." Management wants to change this to 50 days.

Director and librarian from Mt Wachusett Community College, Ellen Pratt said, "This is so unfair. While they say there are no blackout days for taking vacation, it is very difficult take them." This is a complaint across the 15 campuses. The colleges can deny vacation requests and members end up losing days they could take off on a planned basis and accumulate sick time that is more restricted.

By converting vacation time to sick time, management is cheating the member out of as much as 80 percent of the vacation day's value. Unless someone has a serious illness and needs the accumulated sick time (and don't forget we have a Sick Leave Bank to help those folks), they get a buyout of 20 percent of their accumulated sick time upon retirement. It is a nice benefit that

discourages absenteeism, but it is not fair compensation for denied vacation.

The accumulation of sick time became an issue in the public sphere when President Daniel Asquino of Mt Wachusett retired and cashed in 1250 unused sick days for \$266,060 and an additional \$68,079 in unused vacation time, coming to a total buyout of \$334,000. This raised calls for legislation to limit the accrual of sick time.

It is a dilemma for PSUMs, even with the current 64 day cap, who are denied vacation and forced to convert the unused days into less valuable sick days. Other higher ed. units that negotiate with the DHE have accepted the 50-day limit. So this demand may not go away.

Barnes reported at the November Board of Directors meeting that the other units were given significant time to

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## MCCC Nominations Now Open

**Nominations will be accepted for the following positions:**

- Adjunct/Part-time At-large MCCC Directors (2)
- MTA Annual Meeting Delegates  
Boston, May 3-4, 2019
- NEA Representative Assembly Delegates  
Houston, TX, July 2-7, 2019

**Nominations Close Thursday, Feb. 7 at 4 P. M.**

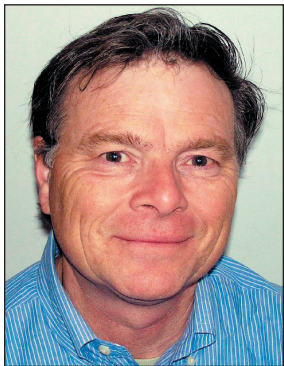
**Election will be conducted online. Materials will be mailed out the first week of March with unique member IDs and PINs.**

**Voting will close Thursday, March 21 at 4:00 P. M.**

Forms are available on line at the MCCC website:  
[www.mccc-union.org](http://www.mccc-union.org).

**DCE Contract  
Ratified**  
**Yes Votes 1129**  
**No Votes 207**





Don Williams,  
MCCC Communications  
Coordinator

# Achieving Unity Despite Challenges

The results of the DCE contract ratification are in with a better than usual response rate of 31 percent. The strong “yes” vote of 1129 to 207

(85 percent approval) was significant despite a concerted “vote no” campaign conducted by email.

The MCCC has faced many challenges over the past few years. External pressures like declining enrollments,

four years of a “no new tax” governor who sees public salaries as a means to balance his budgets, and stresses on the governance of community colleges.

The Janus decision has also threatened public employee unions by putting stress on budgeting by creating uncertainty on membership levels, and therefore income. The MCCC was forced to implement a draconian budget for this fiscal year at least, forcing hard decisions that can’t please everyone.

And then there are the internal tensions that have been playing out over the past few years. By having two contracts—Day and DCE—that both cover teaching, but with very different faculty benefits and pay, there is certain

to be some conflict. Exacerbating the situation, declining enrollments are also hitting adjuncts much harder than full-timers.

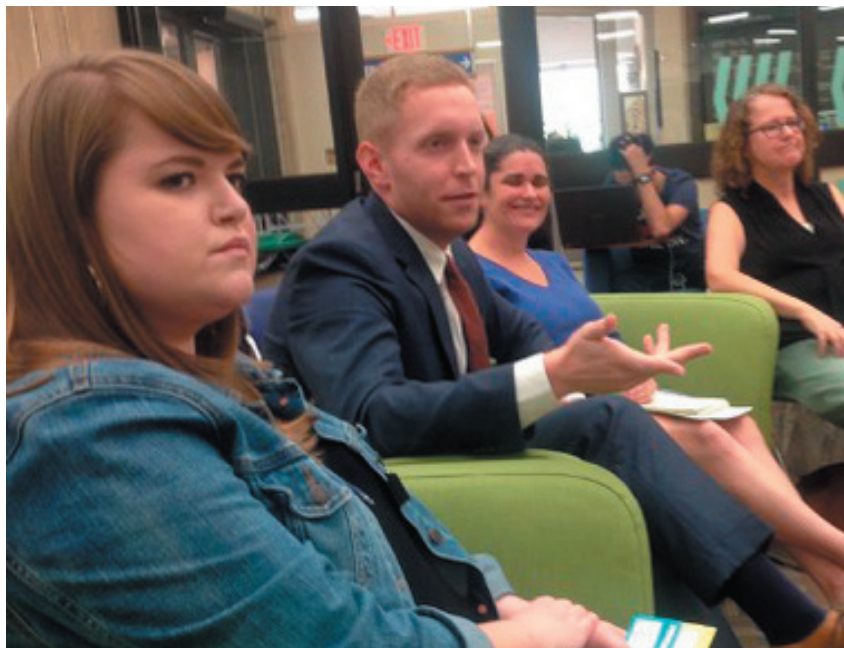
We are all underpaid compared to other segments of higher education in the state. And no one is more underpaid than our MCCC adjuncts. The lack of benefits for adjuncts is also very frustrating and for some people tragic. I can understand why some people are angry. And the union is an easier target for their ire than the state’s administration.

Our DCE Bargaining Team worked tirelessly for over two years trying to bring equity for adjuncts. They tried many avenues to achieve this. They had some success in small benefits like tuition remission. But they were confronted with an obdurate management team that took marching orders from the governor’s office to not give

a penny more in salary increases than 2 percent per year. This wasn’t even a cost of living increase with inflation running at about 2.5 percent.

The state administration puts forward one, unified position on our contracts. It’s a top-down structure these days. We are a democratic organization with many different perspectives, and people have a right to express their opinions. Tensions arise between the various positions, but we can express them without rancor.

We are all in this together. And we are stronger when we work cooperatively across the two contracts. We are already working under an expired Day contract, and the new DCE contract will be expiring in less than two years. A unified MCCC will present a much more powerful adversary at the bargaining tables. Let’s all work together in that end. ■



Holyoke Chapter sponsors discussion of unions and their history in Holyoke. From left to right, HCC Chapter President Stephanie Marcotte, Holyoke Mayor Andrew Morse, Chapter Secretary Jennifer Adams, coordinator of library services, and Patricia Duffy, an aide to state Rep. Aaron Vega, D-Holyoke. (Photo by Trudy Tynan)

## Talking Unions with the Mayor

Holyoke Mayor Andrew Morse led a discussion on unions and their history in Holyoke in a recent program jointly sponsored by the Holyoke Chapter of the MCCC and the college library.

The Sept. 27 event, which attracted near 80 faculty, staff, students and community residents, was the brainchild of Chapter President Stephanie Marcotte and Chapter Secretary Jennifer Adams, coordinator of library services. In addition to Morse, Patricia Duffy, a legislative aide to state Rep. Aaron Vega, D-Holyoke, fielded student questions. Vega is a graduate of HCC.

Many of the students who came to the meeting knew little about unions and the talk gave chapter leaders an opportunity to explain the importance of unions and the union movement. As might be expected of people just entering the workforce, students had questions and concerns about seniority. Holyoke, which was built as a planned industrial city powered by water from its canals and the Connecticut River, has a long union history. It’s mills initially made textiles and then paper products. The legal pad was invented in Holyoke. ■

## Day Contract Action ...

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use their “excess” accumulated vacation time. Management also promised that staff members would not face unreasonable restrictions and be able to actually use their vacation time.

Another management proposal would change the amount of PSUM comp time that can be accrued before converting to getting paid for the time. Again, as with vacation time, restrictions exist for actually using the comp time.

The MCCC is demanding that Classification appeals for PSUMs be able to go to arbitration. Currently the Appeals Committee is dominated by management representatives who almost never accept an upgrade, despite the lack of upgrading the 20-year-old Classification Study to recognize the new tasks that

PSUMs take on. The MCCC also want salary grid improvements, especially for PSUMs.

For faculty the demands focus on use of learning management systems (LMS). Whatever system a college uses, be it Blackboard, Canvas, Moodle or other, the proposal is that all faculty will use the campus system. They want mid-term and final grades entered in the system—and be evaluated on it!

They also want faculty to use the LMS systems for advising and be evaluated on that as well. These systems have some significant problems and the quality across platforms is wildly inconsistent.

Guarino had said, “They couch these demands in terms of ‘improving student

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## Visit The MCCC Online! [www.mccc-union.org](http://www.mccc-union.org)

The MCCC website is the best and most up-to-date source for late breaking developments important to Day and DCE Unit members in addition to being a valuable resource for MCCC contact information, bargaining and legislative updates, contracts, committee assignments, bylaws, local chapter leadership, calendar of meetings and events, and the MCCC News newsletters (current and past).

Find links to NEA, MTA and MCCC on Twitter and Facebook.

Bookmark the site for frequent referral.

There is a “Members Only” area with additional information. You log on to that with the same credentials as your MTA Members account. Don’t have an account? Create one using your membership card info at MassTeacher.org.



# Enrollment vs Funding

Declining enrollment. This is what is driving most of the administration's decisions these days. I have been in the system long enough to have seen this movie before. When money is tight, what is available tends to be spent on three things: 1) hiring more administrators, 2) hiring expert consultants, and 3) adopting new technology. Interestingly, when enrollment is up, and revenue is flowing in hand over fist from all those student fees and tuition from DCE courses, the dollars are also spent on hiring more administrators and more consultants, and adding more technology.

As a result, our community colleges are choked with non-education-based administrators focused on generating the right optics and metrics to justify their hire, piles of unheeded reports from expert consultants, and expensive technology systems, many of which are outdated and obsolete and cannot talk to and often undermine each other. The colleges' decades-long inability to get out of the cycle of spending money on this tripartite promise-land means money not spent on support for faculty and education professionals who work directly with students. In this newest round of declining enrollment, there is indication already that the colleges will once again be dedicating scarce resources to generating optics, metrics, and reports, and purchasing technology instead of where they should be going – to directly support teaching and learning.

Take for instance one resource-starved staple of teaching and learning: the office hour and faculty office space. Upwards of two-thirds of all courses at the community colleges are now taught under a contract that neither requires nor compensates instructors for holding office hours so that students can

have reliable access to their professors outside of class. Even if instructors teaching under the DCE contract wanted to offer, voluntarily, office hours to better serve their students (as many do), they are usually provided with no office space in which to do so. Much has been written about this abysmal new status quo of dedicated adjunct professors holding office hours in hallways, stairwells, and parking lots. Less has been understood about how this failure to dedicate resources to teaching and learning makes our students feel about themselves.

My suggestion on how to address the issue of declining enrollment is this: re-focus the colleges' resources on teaching and learning. Back fill the full-time positions of retirees with and hire more full-time faculty and professional staff. Make the learning environment such that students have a chance to develop rapport with all their classroom instructors, by, for example, providing office space and compensation to adjunct faculty to offer office hours, and getting the names of all instructors into the course schedule by the time students start registering for classes, so that students have a chance to take another course from an instructor with whom they have connected. Make sure that the students' advisors, and other front-line education support professionals (reference librarians, financial aid officers, learning coordinators, etc.) have the suitable physical spaces and resources they need to fully serve the students who seek them out.

It is the focus on teaching and learning, and not the pretense that our students are our customers, that has the potential to draw students to our community colleges. If resources were focused primarily on supporting our direct interaction with students and not

allocated as an afterthought, our community colleges might have a chance to stop serving as the punch line of jokes in poor taste about personal missteps. And fiscally responsible college-bound high school students might more seriously consider attending their community's colleges for their general education requirements before they transfer to their more debt-generating choices.

Right now, the *Massachusetts Teachers Association* is gearing up to fight for increased funding for our public schools, including our public higher education institutions. In workshops on this initiative, participants have been asked to imagine how they might want to spend this money. This is a good exercise. We need to be ready to advise on how we think the money should be spent. Otherwise, should more funding materialize, we will find ourselves with more misguided metrics,



Margaret Wong, MCCC President

unhelpful reports from experts, and yet another piece of software that will once again fail to deliver student success as promised.

In solidarity,  
Margaret Wong ■

## Are You a Union Member?

As a member of the MCCC bargaining unit, you are covered under the union contract and receive assistance with matters covered by our collective bargaining agreement (union contract).

Over 95% of full-time faculty and staff in Massachusetts' community colleges belong to the union. MCCC membership also gets you membership in the Massachusetts Teachers Association (MTA) and National Education Association (NEA).

If you are not currently an MCCC union member we invite you to join and support our efforts to improve working conditions for faculty and staff. As a union member you receive a number of benefits and protections that are not available to non-members. These include:

- A \$1,000,000 liability policy through MTA's parent union the NEA
- Free legal advice and representation for work-related matters such as unemployment compensation appeals from our parent union MTA
- Assistance in defraying legal costs incurred in defending against charges of crimes alleged to have occurred in the course of your employment from the MTA
- Complimentary life insurance from the NEA. (<http://www.neamb.com/insurance/nea-complimentary-life-insurance.htm>)
- Free or reduced prices on everyday merchandise and admission for museums and events through MTA Benefits ([mtabenefits.com](http://mtabenefits.com)).
- The ability to serve on union committees, to vote in union elections, to run for union offices, and to vote in contract ratifications.

For more information about the benefits of MCCC/MTA/NEA membership, visit the MCCC website at [www.mccc-union.org](http://www.mccc-union.org)

To join the union you can call the MCCC office in Worcester (508) 890-6688 or go online at the web address [www.mccc-union.org/STORE](http://www.mccc-union.org/STORE).



MCCC President Margaret Wong and Secretary DeAnna Putman joined members of the Massachusetts State College Association (MSCA) in solidarity as they demonstrated at the October Board of Higher Education meeting asking the Board to act on funding their contract that was ratified in May. (Photo by Don Williams)



# UMass Lowell Adjuncts Reach Agreement

After 3 years of bargaining the members of the UMass Lowell adjunct faculty have successfully ratified an agreement that brings their salaries and benefits more in line with those of their adjunct counterparts at UMass Amherst and Boston. Members will see an increase in pay by a reported 18.1 to 19.3 percent as well as benefits for senior adjuncts.

Union of Adjunct Faculty UAW Local 1596 represents about 475 adjuncts, about 45 percent of the total faculty. They have stated that UMass Lowell adjuncts make a base pay of \$4,400 that is 30 or 40 percent less than adjuncts at the Boston and Amherst campuses with no opportunity to get benefits. They fought a hard fight with no contract since July 2015.

The Lowell Sun reported, "The raises will be doled out over three years with the bulk taking effect the first day of 2019, according to the university. Adjunct faculty who teach the fine arts, humanities, social sciences and educa-

tion will receive an extra 1 percent raise that day."

Going forward all members will receive a 2 percent increase on September 1 of 2019, 2020, and 2021. This is the same level of raises that all of the state unions, including both of the MCCC units, have faced as a limit. For the Lowell adjuncts the January 1, 2019 is where the inequities with the other UMass adjuncts is addressed.

In press releases the union reported some of the provisions:

- Senior faculty will receive a 10

percent differential over base pay.

- Faculty will be able to achieve senior status more quickly, by dropping the total number of courses a faculty member must teach to be eligible.

- Senior faculty who teach at least six 3-credit courses per school year will be eligible to participate in the state retirement and GIC health insurance. This will be reduced to five courses per year in 2020.

- Adjuncts who teach at multiple campuses and universities will receive a 10 percent cancellation fee when UMass

Lowell cancels courses.

This was a great victory for the UMass adjuncts that they fought hard to achieve. But it should be noted that they went a few years without raises and there was no retroactive pay for that period, like the MCCC DCE contract has. Also, the UMass system has a board of trustees that have much more independence from the governor, with many sources of funding, so they have typically had more leeway in labor agreements than those under the Board of Higher Education. ■

## Free Life Insurance for Union Members

Members of the MCCC are also members of the National Education Association, and as an NEA member you are automatically covered by the NEA Complimentary Life Insurance (formerly known as NEA DUES-TAB) term life insurance. It is a guaranteed benefit for Active and Life members. All you need to do is register your beneficiary.

The free program offers \$1,000 of term life insurance, up to \$5,000 (depending on years of membership) of accidental death and dismemberment coverage, and up to \$50,000 of AD&D insurance for any covered accident that occurs while on the job or serving as an association leader.

To register your beneficiary or to obtain more information call 1-800-637-4636, or go to: <http://www.neamb.com/insurance/nea-complimentary-life-insurance.htm> ■

## Day Contract Action ...

*Continued from front page*

learning outcomes." But to faculty this is an intrusion on academic freedom and needless intervention by management. It was pointed out that at least one campus has administrators assigned "co-teacher" status in the LMS and have access to what the faculty member does in the system.

The Contract Action Team will work on a plan to fight back the management

demands and push for the best financial package. Chapters will be looking for volunteers to get involved. It is a limited time commitment to coordinate actions on campus that can make a big difference in bringing negotiations to a fair conclusion.

*(Note: this article combines discussions that happened at both the Oct. and Nov. MCCC Board of Directors meetings.)* ■



### MCCC News

<http://mccc-union.org>

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*The MCCC News is a publication of the Massachusetts Community College Council. The Newsletter is intended to be an information source for the members of the MCCC and for other interested parties. Members' letters up to 200 words and guest columns up to 400 words will be accepted and published on a space-available basis. The material in this publication may be reprinted with the acknowledgment of its source. For further information on issues discussed in this publication, contact Donald Williams, North Shore Community College, One Ferncroft Road, Danvers, MA 01923. email: [Communications@mccc-union.org](mailto:Communications@mccc-union.org)*

### Write Us Letters to the Editor

Only submissions by MCCC unit members will be accepted. Letters should be no more than 200 words in length. The author must include name and chapter affiliation, which will be published with the letter. Authors must provide the editor with contact information in the form of either email address, mailing address or telephone number. Letters will be published on a space available basis and may be edited for length and appropriateness. Not all submissions can be published.

#### Guest Columns

Guest Columns should be no more than 400 words in length. Columns by authors who are not MCCC members may be accepted. The author's name and affiliation will be published with the column.

#### Mail to:

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

#### Or email:

[Communications@mccc-union.org](mailto:Communications@mccc-union.org)

## Know Your Day Contract December 2018

- |                |  |
|----------------|--|
| <b>Dec. 1</b>  | Applications due for Sabbatical Leave beginning July 1 for professional staff or Fall semester for faculty (p. 27).  |
| <b>Dec. 22</b> | Last day fall semester can end (p. 52).  |
| <b>Dec. 24</b> | <b>Last Day of classes</b> Faculty submit college service and student advisement form (p. 51).   |
| <b>Dec. 25</b> | Christmas (p. 24).   |
| <b>Dec. 30</b> | Professional staff submit documentation of performance of duties and responsibilities including, but not limited to a log of student advisement, if appropriate, and college service activities (p. 59). |

*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.* ■

### 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://mccc-union.org/ChangeMyAddress/>



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