COVID Catastrophe

So much happened so quickly. A few campuses were on Spring Break the week of March 9, when later in that week they decided to extend the break for another week. By March 15, Gov. Baker had ordered closing of non-essential businesses and life as we know it changed.

Individual colleges started going their own ways, maintaining that they were not under the Governor’s order. Union leadership stepped in immediately to prevent individual campus solutions and negotiate a statewide agreement, so that all MCCC unit members are treated equally.

President Wong along with Day Negotiating Team Chair Claudine Barnes and DCE Day Negotiating Team Chair John McColgan along with MTA Field Reps held lengthy discussions with BHE’s Human Resources Director, Mike Murray, and the College Presidents’ Attorney, Carol Wolff-Fallon on March 20, reached a tentative agreement.

The Union agreed that for the most part Faculty would be required to teach remotely. On-line learning has specific contractual definitions and rules. Remote learning can take many forms from conducting group presentations using internet applications like Facebook and Google Hangout to a fully on-line modality.

Professional Staff situations are much more complicated. Some members may be able to do all of their work remotely, others may be required to come into the buildings. Detailed provisions were worked out about sanitary precautions and use of sick time.

The full agreement is available on the MCCC Website http://MCCC-union.org.

Below are some of the key general provisions that the BHE/Community Colleges have agreed to with the MCCC:

• Nothing agreed upon between the statewide or chapter relative to responding to COVID-19 shall be deemed as precedential.

• No MCCC Day or DCE faculty unit member shall be required to teach on-line during this crises but agree that the faculty shall engage in remote learning consisting of multiple teaching modalities.

• MCCC members are not required to sign any college created telecommunications agreements.

• Faculty do not need to update their course syllabus to accomplish notification of these course changes.

• The BHE/Community Colleges agree to continue to pay part-time employees for the foreseeable future.

• Professional Staff unit members’ period of evaluation shall end on February 29, 2020 and will not be evaluated on work performed for the remainder of the Spring 2020 semester.

• Student evaluations shall not be conduct or considered by the Colleges for the Spring 2020 semester. No Faculty evaluations will cover work in the Spring 2020 semester performed after February 29, 2020.

• The BHE/Community Colleges agree to provide notice to MCCC employees of any positive and presumptive cases of COVID-19 at a College through the College’s existing notification processes.

• The BHE/Community Colleges will make available supplemental cleaning and/or sanitizing supplies to all unit members assigned to the college’s campus(es).  

Delegate Assembly Re-Scheduled for Tuesday May 26, 2020 at noon; To Be Held Via Remote Technology

With activities suspended by Gov. Baker until at least May 4, it was impossible to carry out the annual Delegate Assembly on the scheduled April 25. So the MCCC Board of Directors voted on March 31, to reschedule the mandatory annual meeting to begin at noon on May 26, 2020.

The meeting will be conducted remotely using the Zoom platform. This system is primarily internet-based, and while people can participate by phone, the system has limited capacity.

Noon was selected so that professional staff can participate during their work hours. Article 2.07D in our collective bargaining agreement allows, “Leaves of absence with pay may be granted for officers, delegates or alternates of employee organizations for the purpose of attending conventions of their organizations.”

Many members are already familiar with Zoom in their shift to working and teaching remotely. President Wong has purchased 150 participants for the Assembly, and more are possible if needed. The Board of Directors and Executive Committee have already conducted several meetings using the system and are getting more adept at using it.

Delegates will need to provide a personal email address in advance. These are needed in order to “invite” participants to securely log on. Understandably, members are reluctant to give up this information, and

Continued on page 3
MCCC News

REPORT OF THE MCCC NOMINATIONS & ELECTIONS COMMITTEE

Steve Zona, Quinsigamond, Chair
Billy Jackson, North Shore
Candace Shivers, Mount Wachusett
Sherry Sausville, Springfield Technical
MCCC ELECTIONS 2020
MARCH 26, 2020

RESULTS

TOTAL ELIGIBLE VOTERS 4,264
Total Ballots Submitted 366

PRESIDENT
Margaret Wong * 335 votes
SECRETARY
Ellen Pratt * 161 votes

VICE PRESIDENT
Rosemarie Freeland * 315 votes
DeAnna Putnam 148 votes

* Elected

MTA DELEGATE ASSEMBLY
The 32 Candidates below are elected per MCCC policy when the number of candidates is less than the number of openings.

Aisha Arroyo, Middlesex
Jacqueline Coogan, Bunker Hill
Lisa Connelly Cook, Quinsigamond
Emilio E. Cruz, Quinsigamond
Joanna DelMonaco, Middlesex
Patrick Faellia, Massasoit
Rosemarie Freeland, Greenfield
Renae Gorman, Springfield Technical
Gail Guarino, Cape Cod
Stacie Hargis, Middlesex
Kathy Holmes, Northern Essex

Susan A. Hutchinson, Middlesex
Paul Johansen, Berkshire
Kamara Kay, North Shore
Mark Linde, Massasoit
Kate M Martin, Cape Cod
Mary McEntee, Greenfield
Genevieve Morse, Middlesex
Javad Moulai, Roxbury
Nicholas Papas, Middlesex
Marsha Parinussa Flynn, Northern Essex

* Elected

SECRETARY
DeAnna Putnam, Bunker Hill
Liz Recko-Morrison, Berkshire
Ashli Ree, Middlesex
LaTasha Sarpy, Bunker Hill
Kerryn Snyder, Massasoit
Robert Tarutis, Mass Bay
Trudy Tynan, Holyoke
Paul Weeden, Massasoit
Donald Williams, North Shore
Margaret Wong, Quinsigamond

TREASURER
Henry “Chip” Bradford * 306 votes

NEA REPRESENTATIVE ASSEMBLY
The 9 Candidates below are elected per MCCC policy when the number of candidates is less than the number of openings.

Emilio E. Cruz, Quinsigamond
Gail Guarino, Cape Cod
Kathy Holmes, Northern Essex
Kamara Kay, North Shore

Genevieve Morse, Middlesex
Marsha Parinussa Flynn, Northern Essex
LaTasha Sarpy, Bunker Hill

Trudy Tynan, Holyoke
Margaret Wong, Quinsigamond

Summer School Conundrum

Gov. Baker’s current order to close schools until May 6 is already very close to the start of Summer Session. And there is the possibility that the order will be extended into the beginning of the first summer session.

Some colleges in our system are already investigating putting summer courses on to some form of remote learning. An enormous strain will be put on faculty to modify courses that are on a compressed schedule. And the will have to do it in a short time.

While campuses are approaching this on an individual level, any solution to the summer session should be done in accordance with the Distance Learning Agreement.

But if the bans on group gatherings and maintaining personal distance continue, there may be no alternative to remote learning. The Union will be monitoring this to insure members are treated fairly.

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

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/
MCCC Well Represented at Higher Ed. Advocacy Day

On March 2, a week before everything started closing up, MTA was able to conduct a well attended Advocacy Day. Students, staff, faculty and administrators were all part of the gathered activists who would visit legislative offices to promote increased funding for higher ed.

The date MTA was able to secure for the event was unusually early in the budgeting process, but, given the health crisis, the date was fortuitous. Advocates were able to get their message to the legislators.

Primarily, the focus was promoting the Cherish Act that calls for almost $600 million in new support for the 29 public colleges and universities over five years. In the first year there are three objectives.

Reducing student debt so that students can graduate debt-free by building on the Student Opportunity Act. Adjunct justice was an issue being addressed in a bill (H.S.1347/H.2322) that would secure health insurance and job security. A third thrust was advocating for the reducing the burden of capital debt on campuses. The state has been requiring colleges to pay for construction out of their operating budget, forcing them to raise student fees and reduce full-time staff.

Community colleges had a separate bill to advance, called the SUCCES Fund. This bill... asks for $14 million additional funding to community colleges for helping students succeed through wraparound support services to help their largely low-income population.

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MTA Annual Meeting of Delegates

May 2, 2020 • 9am – 12pm

As always, our number one priority is keeping all MTA members and staff safe. In that spirit, the Board of Directors held a special meeting on April 7 and has approved an agenda that can be managed in a shorter time period. The Annual Meeting will begin at 9 a.m. and end by about noon on May 2. Though our Annual Meeting will be shorter this year, the business conducted is vital, and your virtual attendance is important. The agenda includes:

• Voting on the MTA budget for the coming fiscal year
• Conducting elections for President, Vice President, Executive Committee, the Board of Directors, and the Retired Members Committee
• Presenting an Issues Forum on the MTA All In Blueprint Project
• Recognizing outstanding educators, students and education allies

The Board adopted special rules for the 2020 Annual Meeting regarding the alternative nomination process for MTA President and Vice President. Information on the special rules will be provided to delegates. Consideration of MTA Bylaws, Standing Rules and Resolutions will be deferred to the Annual Meeting in 2021.

Know Your Day Contract

April 2020

April 6 Dean’s leave of absence recommendations due (p. 30).
April 15 Dean’s tenure recommendations due (p. 46).
April 15 Title changes announced (p. 70).
April 20 Patriots Day holiday (p. 25).
April 25 Professional Staff unused vacation days in excess of 480 hours (64 days) converted to sick leave at end of last pay period in April. (p. 24).

May 2020

May 1 President’s tenure recommendations and sabbatical notification due (pp. 38, 46).
May 1 Last Day of classes. Faculty submit college service and student advisement form (p. 57).
May 21 Tenure decisions due (p. 45).
May 25 Memorial Day observed.
May 30 Professional staff College service and student advisement forms (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. Cited page numbers are from the 2018–2021 Agreement.

NSCC Chapter Presses for Voice in President Search

Back in early December, and after a few years of growing employee dissatisfaction, the North Shore Chapter joined a few other chapters to vote “no confidence” in the college President Patricia Gentile and the college’s senior leadership. At the same time Pres. Gentile announced her own retirement.

The two actions were not related, as Gentile had informed the college trustees last summer that she would be leaving. But the coinciding of the events spurred the chapter to demand a significant voice in the search for a new president.

The Board of Higher Ed. has recommendations for the constitution of presidential searches, but the Union members have pushed to give faculty and staff a greater voice in the process.

At a union meeting at the end of February, the Trustees Chair, J. D. LaRock and hear concerns linked in a video conference to answer questions from the chapter members. He had agreed to a mediation process whereby the union leaders could express their concerns about management at the college.

On April 6, chapter members participated electronically as the Trustees interviewed an interim president candidate, Nate Bryant who is a senior administrator at Salem State University. Chapter President Norene Gachignard said, “I know Nate Bryant and would have endorsed him before today’s interview.”

There will still be a search for a permanent College President, and the chapter intends to keep involved.

The North Shore Community College Chapter held a well attended meeting across two campuses where they were able to express their concerns with the chair of the college Board of Trustees. (photo by Don Williams)