

MCCC News



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Wishing our members a healthy and happy New Year.



Massachusetts Community College Council

Margaret Wong *President*
 Rosemarie Freeland *Vice President*
 Chip Bradford *Treasurer*
 Ellen Pratt *Secretary*

STCC Good News

The saga of career program closings at STCC announced last June has taken a positive turn after the November 17 meeting of an ad hoc study committee of the college trustees recommended that most of the programs be restored for the fall of 2021.

College president John Cook, claiming that he had the authority, decided to close seven career technical programs at the end of the spring semester, laying off all of the full-time MCCC members in them. The trustees were notified at a later date, and the MCCC was not formally notified.

The MCCC found out about the closings by affected members from the Automotive Technology program joining in on an MCCC Office Hour held by President Margaret Wong and Vice President Rosemarie Freeland and described how they were called in one-by-one by management and notified about their terminations.

The union sprang into action, first the local chapter pushed back, and quickly the MCCC and MTA provided more organization and support. As noted in previous *MCCC News* issues, demonstrations were held, and press coverage from *The Springfield Republican* and

website MassLive.com brought regional coverage about the closings.

Chapter President Renae Gorman was allowed to plead the union's case with the college's board of trustees, and they stepped in to look into the closings. The ad hoc committee set the path for five programs to come back, but their recommendation is to the trustees' Ways and Means Committee.

I'm excited at the way this meeting turned out," Gorman told the *Republican*, "We are heading in a much more positive direction than we have been for months."

At the Dec. 21 MTA Zoom meeting "Public Higher Ed. 2020 Progress, 2021 Priorities" where the STCC situation was an example of progress, Gorman said, "This is a big win for us." But she added that funding needed to be found, and the numbers President Cook used to justify the closings needs to be investigated.

At that same Zoom meeting, MTA Max Page celebrated that there was \$20 billion in funding for higher education in the COVID recovery bill that congress passed before Christmas. At this writing, after some ups and downs, it has been signed into law. ■

MCCC 2021 Nominations Open

Nominations are being accepted for the following MCCC elected positions:

- Adjunct/Part-time At-large MCCC Directors (2)
- MTA Annual Meeting Delegates
Springfield, MA, April 30 and May 1, 2021
- NEA Representative Assembly Delegates
Denver, CO, July 2-6, 2021

Adjunct/Part-time At-large MCCC Director Candidates may submit a 250 word statement and a photo for the *MCCC News*. They must be submitted by close of nominations on Feb. 4.

Send to MCCC Communications Coordinator at
Communications@mccc-union.org.

Nominations Close

Thursday, Feb. 4, 2021 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.

NOTE: Write-in nominations will not be accepted for NEA-RA and MTA Annual Meeting delegates.

**Voting will close
 Thursday, March 25
 at 4:00 P. M.**

Nomination Forms are available on line at the MCCC website:
www.mccc-union.org.



Don Williams,
MCCC Communications
Coordinator

Happy New Year?

Have you seen the Match.com ad on television where a woman (named 2020) finds herself dating Satan? It is an apt metaphor for this past year. A year, I think it's safe to say, everyone would like to see fade into the rearview mirror at breakneck speed. We're all ready to swipe left on this one!

But after all that has happened in politics, public health, and social distancing, 2021 will also be a challenging year. For the first half, we will be still be dealing with a totally disrupted education delivery system.

The massive swing to on line learning has left many faculty and students in the dust. And professional staff have seen their working schedules totally disrupted. In some ways management has taken advantage of the

crisis to get things they have long wanted. When things get back to whatever a post-pandemic normal, it won't be like the old normal.

We will all have to be agents in bringing in about a new normal that protects the rights of all our members. It looks like both of our collective bargaining agreements could be in negotiations at the same time. Many unforeseen issues have come up during the pandemic, and it's likely that they will add to the complications of the process.

As a union, we will also be continuing as the last year at a distance with remote meetings that have limitations for organizing. And there will be a lot of organizing to do. Funding for state higher ed., especially for community colleges, has been woeful for years. MTA had worked up the "Fund our Future" campaign to secure budget increases, but with the economic crisis caused by COVID19, the campaign has taken a back seat.

Gov. Baker and the House leadership have for a long

time been opposed to tax increases, which lacking a significant federal funding increase, means there is little in the state budget to go around. While Speaker DeLeo is stepping down, his replacement Ron Mariano is cut from the same cloth, and is unlikely to push to raise revenue.

But it's not all bleak. President Joe Biden has voiced strong support for public higher ed., and having an active community college faculty member in the First Lady certainly raises our image—and hopefully our fiscal prospects.

As this is being written, the Georgia senate runoff has not yet happened, and it probably won't be resolved even on election day. But if the two Democrats win, and Biden has a slim majority in congress, things could start to move forward.

It's hard to be optimistic after all we've been through. But there is light at the end of the tunnel. Things can get better, maybe even better than before, but we will have to organize and work for it. ■

DCE Grievances Rising

MCCC DCE Grievance Coordinator, Joe Rizzo, gave his fall report to the Board of Directors Nov. 20 meeting over Zoom.

He pointed out that grievances were continuing despite the pandemic. Hearings were delayed in the spring waiting for conditions to improve, but in September mediations and other forums began holding hearings over Zoom or WebX at an increased frequency to cut the backlog.

Citing the extraordinary issues faced by all members he said, "DCE is no exception, but with all the difficulties that we are experiencing, it is somewhat surprising that there are not more disputes arising out of a drastic and abrupt shift from face-to-face to a virtual environment and fewer course sections available."

The switch away from face-to-face learning has been a central focus of problems. Rizzo pointed out that the Distance Ed. includes the following definition:

For the purposes of this Agreement, distance education is defined as instruction, education, and training conducted at sites separated by space or time, which may utilize technology to facilitate learning.

So virtually all instruction for this academic year comes under the DE Agreement, which contains requirements for paid training before an instructor is authorized to teach on line. Because on line students are often not limited by time or place, fewer sections of courses are being offered, this combined with enrollment drops, has limited course assignments for adjuncts.

Rizzo said, "There are reports that colleges are drastically reducing the

number of DCE sections. Rather than offering sections for students to choose and enroll, the college only adds sections once the enrollment in the existing sections reaches maximum enrollment."

He cited examples of the kind of problems arise. A long-standing English instructor at Springfield Tech did not receive a fall assignment because she had not been trained to teach online. She applied for the training but was not allowed to participate because they stated that they had plenty of online English Instructors. A similar situation occurred at North Shore involving more members. That case is now before the Mass. Department of Labor Relations.

In another Springfield case, a DCE member had an on line course that had students registered while a full-time instructor had a section of the same course with no students. The college asked the DCE instructor to give up his section to the Day instructor. The DCE instructor refused citing a breach of contract to take away his assignment. In response the college removed the students that had registered for his course and put them in the Day faculty's section. The DCE section was then cancelled.

Rizzo ran through a number of grievance cases from seven campuses that



Joe Rizzo, MCCC DCE Grievance Coordinator, gave his fall report over Zoom to the MCCC Board of Directors at the last regular meeting. Because of COVID, Distance learning issues were significant part of DCE member issues.

primarily revolved around discipline and non-reappointment. Not every job was saved, but some grievances were

resolved with the members receiving financial settlements that ranged from \$2,000 to \$20,000. ■



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

Higher Ed Funding Formula

At the last Wednesday evening MCCC Office Hour of 2020 President Margaret Wong turned over the presentation to Maria Hegbloom from Bridgewater State University, who represents Higher Ed. on the MTA Executive Committee. She explained that the committee established a working group to look at how the state funds higher education and work on a funding formula.

The Board of Higher Ed. may be coming out with its own formula, and we want to be sure our voices are heard. Hegbloom said, “They may have some good provisions, but they don’t share our values. One of the strengths of our plan is that it’s student centered”

Currently, funding on a per student basis is below 2001 levels. As President Wong pointed out, a tax cut that year “hurt us very badly.” Cuts that we have never recovered from.

Under former Commissioner Richard Freeland, the BHE developed a “Vision Project” that had some laudable goals. Its complex funding formula was implemented for community colleges from 2014–2016 that had a low base funding rate but contained financial incentives for colleges to reach certain goals.

The MTA working group pointed out the central problem with the old formula:

[I]t failed to include a plan for the overall increase of funding to these institutions, without which any formula fails

to actual address our current funding crisis. Additionally, while well-intentioned, the formula was only used for the distribution of new funds to the community colleges. This meant that it was used to distribute less than 10% of the sector’s overall funding. In fact, together these problems meant that under this funding formula the funding disparities between individual community colleges actually increased during the time of its use.

The working group holds the following principles:

- Higher Education is a Public Good – at the core of our work is the belief that all students deserve a quality, affordable, and accessible higher education because public higher education is public good.
- Equity for All – we believe that access to quality public higher education is essential for a more equitable society and that we must ensure that those students most in need are provided with the necessary funding to guarantee this access
- Ensure no Student Graduates with Debt – a public higher education system that requires students to take on debt that will burden them for decades after graduation is not an equitable system or a public good.
- Reverse and Prevent the Commodification of Education – many of our public colleges and universities are turning to private avenues to bridge their funding needs, but such pathways often come with strings that threaten the autonomy

of public institutions and ultimately limit student, faculty, staff voices.

- Provide Faculty, Staff, and Student-Workers with Fair, Competitive Wages
- Provide Exceptional Student Support Services
- Provide Equitable Access to up-to-date Technology
- Curtail Rising Administrative Costs

- Value all Disciplines Equally – students attending public
- Reduce the Burden of Capital Debt on Campuses

Besides Hegbloom and representatives from MTA and other higher ed. locals, the working group includes MCCC President Margaret Wong and Vice President Rosemarie Freeland and member Stephanie Marcotte. ■



Maria Hegbloom, Higher Ed. representative on the MTA Executive Committee, gave a presentation at President Wong’s MCCC office hour in December. She explained the work being done to develop recommendations for a fairer state higher ed. funding formula.

Actions to Stop & Reverse The Cuts



Demonstrations at STCC called attention to the program cuts and helped draw attention to the program closings and rallied support to reinstate them.

2021 Day Negotiating Team Appointed

The MCCC Board of Directors appointed a 2021–2024 Day Negotiating Team at a special December meeting. The current contract runs through June 30, 2021, and it was important to get the team in place before the spring semester begins so that members can arrange their schedules with their respective colleges.

The members represent a range of campuses and job titles. Besides the members listed below, President Margaret Wong and Vice President Rosemarie Freeland are members ex officio. The team members appointed are:

- Candace Shivers – MWCC - Faculty (Sociology)
- Claudine Barnes – CCCC - Faculty (History)
- Joanna DelMonaco – Middlesex CC - Faculty (Mathematics)
- Lisa Coole – Massasoit CC - Faculty (Social Sciences)
- Tamara Fricke – STCC - Professional Staff (Grants)
- Tiger Swan – QCC - Professional Staff (Librarian) ■



MCCC News

<http://mccc-union.org>

Editor:

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Vice President:

Rosemarie Freeland

Secretary:

Ellen Pratt

Treasurer:

Henry "Chip" Bradford

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

Visit The MCCC Online!

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.

MCCC Awards Nominations

The MCCC has four awards created to recognize the contributions of individual members who have made significant contributions to the Union in different areas. Awards are presented at the annual MCCC Delegate Assembly.

Nominations are due by March 1, 2021. Nomination forms and the candidate requirements are available on the MCCC website mccc-union.org.

Raymond C. Lemieux Memorial Award

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

Any MCCC Board of Director or Chapter President may nominate by completing a nomination form

Jon G. Butler Memorial Award

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.

Any MCCC member may nominate a candidate with a petition of five or more of that chapter's members

John A. Palmer III Memorial Award

This award recognizes an adjunct MCCC member whose service, leadership, and dedication have contributed significantly to MCCC adjunct faculty, as exemplified by the life of John A. Palmer III.

Any MCCC member may nominate a candidate by completing a nomination form

Donnie McGee Strategic Action

Recognize a member(s) who has shown exemplary service in the area of political and strategic action that has made a significant impact on MCCC unit members.

Any MCCC Member may be nominated by petition of 10 or more members.

DCE Negotiations

DCE Negotiating Team Chair DeAnna Putnam reported that they have begun meeting with management. They tried to get the union to agree to a status quo one-year contract at 0%. The team might consider a one-year contract with some very necessary improvements re: language and grievability, and the union presented contract language to that end. As of the Monday, December 21 meeting, the union rejected the idea of a one-year contract because Management offered us no incentive to consider it might be worthwhile.

The MCCC has submitted a number of information requests, among them a detailed report on how the colleges have been spending the CARES Act funds.

The next scheduled meeting with Management is January 5. ■



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Know Your Day Contract January 2021

Jan. 15 Sabbatical recommendations from committee to president. (p. 25).

Jan. 18 Martin Luther King Jr. Holiday (p. 21).

Jan. 29 Course materials (Form XIII-E2) for Spring semester must be distributed to students and submitted to supervisor before end of drop add period. (p. 54).

February 2021

Feb. 1 Summary Evaluation returned (p. 55).

Feb. 1 First Year Professional staff evaluations completed. (p. 57).

Feb. 1 Sabbatical Recommendations forwarded to boards of trustees (p. 27).

Feb. 10 Summary evaluation rebuttals due (p. 55).

Feb. 15 First year professional staff evaluation conference (p. 57).

Feb. 18 Presidents Day Holiday (p. 21).

Feb. 20 Course materials returned (p. 54).

Feb. 28 Preferred schedules and courses submitted (p. 45).

Feb. 28 New full and part-time hire list due MCCC.

NOTE: 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. ■