

MCCC News

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Springfield Redux

The saga of the suspended programs of study at Springfield Tech. has come full circle to partial restoration thanks in large part to the efforts of MCCC members.

On January 25 the STCC Trustees voted 7 to 3 to restore five of the seven discontinued career programs: biomedical engineering technology, biotechnol-

Pres. Cook originally cited for closing the programs. And costs continue to be a concern. It was estimated that the operating budget for the five reinstated programs is \$500,000.

Responding to inquiries from chapter president Renae Gorman, Pres. Cook informed her that the college had received \$6 million in “flexible” funds



ogy, civil engineering technology, dental assisting, and landscape design and management.

Two programs, automotive technology and cosmetology remain suspended, but the trustees have indicated that they will continue to examine them. Costs of equipment and facilities are more significant for these programs.

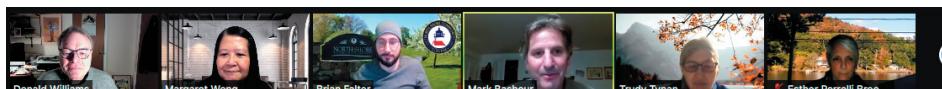
In a news release to television Channel 22 WWLP, college President John Cook said, “The college will work to reinstate programs after open, transparent, and public conversations with college stakeholders about needs and resources.”

Costs were the principal reason

under the federal Corona response and relief Supplemental Appropriation Act (CARRSSA). How flexible these funds are is not clear and questions remain as to whether they can be used for facilities improvements and if these funds pay salaries, does it affect the state employee status for personnel?

It is hoped that clarification on CARRSSA spending will be available in time for planning the college FY2022 budget. While the five programs are bringing back some of the faculty, chapter director Tom Smith told the MCCC Board that not everyone has been called back with enrollment uncertainty cited as the reason. ■

MCCC Delegate Assembly
Saturday, April 24, 2021
 To be conducted over Zoom.
 Delegates must be elected by
 their chapters.



President Wong and Vice President Freeland hold regular Wednesday evening MCCC Office hours where members can have direct access to the MCCC leadership. It was through this venue that the STCC program closures were first revealed to the Union, and an immediate response was formulated with some of the participants. The rapidity of the response was key in reversing the closures. Invitations to participate in the office hours are sent out through chapter presidents.

MCCC Election Cancelled

Normally union members would be gearing up for the odd-year election of two Part-time/Adjunct At-large Directors and delegates for the MTA Annual Meeting and the NEA Representative Assembly.

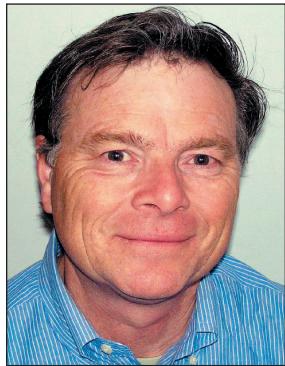
But this year no election will be conducted because the number of candidates nominated was less than the number of delegate slots for both the MTA and NEA. Under a policy established a few years ago, in cases such as this, the nominees are declared “as elected.”

In the case of Part-time/Adjunct At-large Directors, who are elected for

one-year terms, there were no nominees. MCCC election policies require director candidates to submit a nomination form with 10 original signatures by the close of nominations. With the COVID-19 restrictions in place, securing the signatures was a very high hurdle for part-time MCCC members.

According to our policies, in June when the current Part-time/Adjunct At-large Directors’ terms end, the MCCC Board of Directors will appoint two members to the positions. Anyone interested in serving should let President Wong know of your interest.

Community Colleges in the News



Don Williams,
MCCC Communications
Coordinator

Times are really difficult for community colleges. While all of higher ed. is affected by the declining youth population, we are getting hit especially hard. And this may be bringing a range of proposals to address the decline.

A January 19, 2021 piece on the PBS News Hour said, "The decline in first-time enrollment at community colleges was a staggering 21 percent — with Black, Hispanic and Native American first-year students recording even steeper drops, between 28 and 29 percent."

Massachusetts' numbers may be a little better than these national numbers, and definitely there are differences between our 15 campuses. But our numbers are not far off.

We are facing a lot of changes, and we'll be hearing many voices with ideas on how to address the problems. The Feb. 1 *Boston Globe* devoted a full page to two voices. One was President Valerie Robertson of Bunker Hill CC, who suggested a number of ways students could make college more affordable by going to a community college.

The other voice, Marcella Bombardieri of the Center for American Progress, put forward a more radical approach to

cut what she said was a \$605.8 million shortfall in Massachusetts' community college funding through imposing a local community tax. An interesting but flawed solution.

As ideas about community colleges get tossed out, it's important for us to be in the conversation. We rarely have our voices heard in the debates about what we do. President Margaret Wong and retired MCCC member Susan Jihrad made our voices heard in response to the *Boston Globe* op ed pieces about community colleges.

The major Boston papers don't pay us a lot of attention, and when they do cover us, it's not usually positive. Because major (and minor) political and administrative officials read them they are important and have a lot of influence. Getting letters to the editor published is one way to get our perspective out to those people.

But smaller-market papers also have significance. And as the experience at Springfield Tech shows, these papers can have impact especially for an individual campus outside of Boston. Even for statewide issues the local/regional press is an important venue to influence individual legislators.

It's a fact that President Wong has a greater chance of getting a letter printed on a community college issue. But opinions of local area residents and politicians constituents have an even greater chance of publication. Do if something comes up about your college or community colleges in general, consider writing a letter of support. ■

MTA Services Reorganization

MTA provides the MCCC with a variety of services, but the most direct assistance is in the form of Field Service Representatives.

MTA has been undergoing restructuring over the past couple of years, in part a response to the Janus decision, and one of the changes was folding the separate Higher Ed. Division into the K-12 Field Services Division. Although the two divisions provided local MTA unions with the same kind of services, the way they delivered the services was quite different.

Historically, the MCCC was provided with one dedicated rep. for the Day Unit contract and a half-time rep. for the DCE Unit shared with the similar State Universities' DCGE Unit. These people would cover all 15 MCCC chapters.

MTA's reorg plan was to move to

regional representation, with field reps assigned to mixed higher ed. units within a rep's area. A given rep could potentially serve MCCC, state university and UMass unions. MCCC leaders preferred the old model and were concerned that, among other issues, communication would be very difficult.

MCCC's leadership pushed back on the plan and used our MTA Directors Rosemarie Freeland and Joe Nardoni along with President Wong, the Executive Committee and the MCCC Board of directors to urge a restart on the reorg. We are the largest local union within MTA, and our large percentage of adjunct members makes our field organizing needs exceptional.

They were successful in a large way. MCCC will get three dedicated field ser-

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LETTERS

Public higher ed funding is duty of the state, not strapped communities

Boston Globe – February 10, 2021

In her Feb. 1 op-ed "They have a big local impact — and deserve local funding," Marcella Bombardieri rightly notes the value of community colleges to the economy and in providing opportunities to students who otherwise may not have access to higher education. But she is wrong to ask strapped communities to pay for these colleges. It's the state's duty to support public higher education.

All three sectors of public higher education — community colleges, state universities, and the University of Massachusetts system — have been underfunded for decades. Spending per student has fallen nearly one-third as compared with 20 years ago. As a result, we've seen skyrocketing tuition and debt, exploitation of adjunct faculty, and crumbling buildings that rely on student fees to be rebuilt.

Bombardieri's argument that the solution for more revenue for community colleges rests in local funding sets up our colleges and students for failure.

We already see the inequities in funding for public pre-K-12 schools, which rely on local tax revenues. There isn't an appetite for Proposition 2½ overrides in our communities, and expecting a degree of cooperation among municipalities to "chip in" for community colleges is naive.

Turning to cities and towns to pay for community colleges allows the state to ignore its obligations, and it will be our students paying the price.

MARGARET WONG
Worcester

The writer is president of the Massachusetts Community College Council and a professor of English at Quinsigamond Community College.

As a retired community college professor, I was thrilled to see two op-eds on Feb. 1 touting the benefits of community colleges and suggesting ways to make them more affordable ("Steps to take to make higher education more affordable," by Valerie Roberson; "They have a big local impact — and deserve local funding," by Marcella Bombardieri).

Community colleges are a long-underappreciated and - underfunded part of our state's education system, serving far more of our state residents than the more famous private colleges. On shoestring budgets, they provide two years of low-cost, high-quality education to students who go on to transfer to four-year public and private colleges as well as job training in nursing, fire science, culinary arts, radiologic technology, and countless other programs.

However, I strongly disagree with Bombardieri's suggestion that community colleges be funded in part through local property taxes. This method has resulted in vast disparities in funding between primary and secondary public schools in high-income, largely white cities and towns and lower-income communities of color, such as Roxbury and Lynn.

What's more, it is only partially true that community colleges
Continued on page 4

Research Report

MCCC Research Coordinator Hilaire Jean-Gilles gave his Spring Semester Report to the MCCC Board of Directors over Zoom at their January meeting. This report focuses on membership and hiring practices based on information from the MCCC central office, the individual colleges and the DHE.

One of the major aspects of Jean-Gilles' job is to monitor compliance with the Classification system's salary placement for new hires by analyzing all of the M002/M004 forms for all new hires in the community college system.

With a total of 112 forms last year, 61 were within \$1,000 of the classification amount. Cases where the salaries exceeded the recommended amount numbered 43. A few of the hires were given salaries over \$10,000 of the classification level and one was over \$22,000. Three hires were under the recommended amount. Jean-Gilles made a special note that 14 percent of these new members hold Ph.D.s.

Under the terms of the 2001 Classification Study, colleges can pay new hires above the recommended salary level to reflect market conditions and demand. Almost all of the people receiving salaries larger than called for were in either medical or STEM subject areas where it is difficult to attract qualified candidates.

MCCC Day Grievance Coordinator Dennis Fitzgerald scrutinizes the M002/M004 forms to insure that the justifications for the higher amounts comply with the rules. The MCCC fought a hard fight to achieve pay fairness and fights hard to preserve the system we've won.

Jean-Gilles' statistics showed the shifting characteristics of MCCC employment across the state, presented with several tables and graphs. Union membership is one area of concern, especially since the Janus Supreme court decision.



MCCC Research Coordinator Hilaire Jean-Gilles made his spring report on membership trends to the MCCC Board of Directors at their January meeting.

(File Photo by Don Williams)

Without the agency fee requirement, it is especially important to reach out to recruit non-members. The DCE Unit has historically had a lower rate of Union membership and Jean-Gilles' figures show that trend continuing.

Non-membership is also growing within the Day Unit, and that is especially concerning given the MCCC's reliance on full-time dues to fund its operations. While full-time membership is still in the 90 percent range, the data shows the importance of reaching out to newly hired faculty and staff, whether full-or part-time to join the union.

One graph showed a slow, steady decline in Full-time MCCC employment from 2317 to 2213 since the enrollment high point in 2012. Professional staff continue to grow as a percentage of full-time members compared to faculty. Staff now make up over half the day unit where they used to be about one third. While full-time faculty remain at about 1400, which has been a relatively stable number for years.

Adjunct faculty numbers have dropped significantly in the last year with enrollment declines.

As a special request from the Board, Jean-Gilles presented a chart comparing the number of full-time faculty to non-unit administrators, and the numbers were revelatory. The numbers of administrators were high throughout the system, but at three campuses they out numbered faculty. The campuses were: MassBay, Northern Essex and Roxbury.

The data Jean-Gilles gathers is vital for the MCCC to plan and organize union members to overcome our weaknesses and maximize our strengths. ■

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/

The charts below from the Research Report reflect the data from Fall 2020.

DCE Union Members Compared to Non-members

College Names	DCE members	DCE non-members	Total DCE unit members
Berkshire Community College	16	24	40
Bristol Community College	164	81	245
Bunker Hill Community College	217	195	412
Cape Cod Community College	61	40	101
Greenfield Community College	41	34	75
Holyoke Community College	93	60	153
Mass Bay Community College	111	61	172
Massasoit Community College	103	70	173
Middlesex Community College	191	97	288
Mount Wachusett Community College	78	59	137
North Shore Community College	102	79	181
Northern Essex Community College	87	33	120
Quinsigamond Community College	205	120	325
Roxbury Community College	30	36	66
Springfield Community College	63	50	113
TOTAL	1562	1039	2601

Full-time Union Members Compared to Non-members

College Names	Full-time members	Full-time Non-members	Total Full-time unit members
Berkshire Community College	64	12	76
Bristol Community College	161	26	187
Bunker Hill Community College	188	53	241
Cape Cod Community College	89	4	93
Greenfield Community College	78	5	83
Holyoke Community College	164	17	181
Mass Bay Community College	76	28	104
Massasoit Community College	152	14	166
Middlesex Community College	171	3	174
Mount Wachusett Community College	110	12	122
North Shore Community College	166	15	181
Northern Essex Community College	133	42	175
Quinsigamond Community College	187	6	193
Roxbury Community College	50	16	66
Springfield Community College	159	12	171
TOTAL	1948	265	2213

Full-time Faculty and Staff Members by Chapter

College Names	# FT Faculty Fall 2020	# FT Prof. Staff Fall 2020	# Full-timers Fall 2020
Berkshire Community College	57	23	80
Bristol Community College	116	61	177
Bunker Hill Community College	148	99	247
Cape Cod Community College	67	26	93
Greenfield Community College	51	24	75
Holyoke Community College	116	57	173
Mass Bay Community College	72	32	104
Massasoit Community College	106	54	160
Middlesex Community College	111	60	171
Mount Wachusett Community College	61	57	118
North Shore Community College	119	62	181
Northern Essex Community College	79	67	146
Quinsigamond Community College	135	58	193
Roxbury Community College	40	23	63
Springfield Community College	124	108	232
TOTAL	1402	811	2213

Charts continued on page 4

MTA Retirement Counseling

Retirement consulting is one of the benefits of MTA membership, and it is being provided in the person of MCCC retiree Ed McCourt.

He did this for many years prior to his own retirement from full-time teaching at Mass Bay Community College and now continues with more time available for providing services to members. With a wealth of experience, he can help guide members through the complicated process of retiring.

Over the last year, McCourt has been especially busy helping members to negotiate the retirement process. Retirement incentives on certain campuses have played a role in this. Other higher ed. members have told him that pandemic-related fears have prompted their decisions to retire.

With the closing of all MTA offices in March of 2020, monthly face-to-face, **retirement consultations** in both Quincy and Worcester were replaced with “virtual” consultations by phone or through Microsoft’s Zoom-like app, *Meet*. The new arrangement has worked well, especially as members may now be served regardless of where they reside.



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

For this spring 2021 semester, two sessions are available each month. On each occasion, ten, forty-minute consultations are available. Regular announcements go to chapter leaders. I rely on these folks to disseminate this information.

For those just now hearing about retirement consultations, these sessions assist members in securing answers to retirement questions as they relate to individual’s specific situation. For example:

- *Given my age and my service, when is the best time for me to retire?*
- *I’ve heard that members may be able to “buy back” service. Might I have a buy back opportunity?*
- *I’m involved with the Section-60 option for transfer into the MSERS?*
- *Where I am in this process?*
- *Why take option “C” instead of Option “A” or “B”?*
- *How will my Social Security benefit be affected by my State pension?*
- *Where will I stand with health insurance in retirement?*
- *Will I be going into Medicare?*
- *As I move toward retirement, what, if any options, exists for me to enhance my retirement benefit?*

Since fall, the sign-up process has been streamlined. Members click on a link register for an available time slot. Registration requires a member’s name and email, a best phone contact, the member’s campus affiliation, the member’s MTA number (on the membership card) and preference for a call or online *Meet* session. Once completed, a confirmation email is generated.

Members interested in being placed on a list for on-going availability updates may email McCourt at emccourt@massteacher.org ■

MTA Services Reorganization...

Continued from page 2
vice representatives who will be assigned to campuses on a regional basis. Possibly the best of both plans, this will relieve a rep of travelling across the state while providing the local chapters with familiar people who are focused on their situation.

Bret Seferian will continue to be the point person for the entire MCCC. He will directly serve the five northeastern chapters. Colleen Fitzpatrick, who has been with the MCCC for a while, will be serving the five southeastern chapters. And a new to MTA rep, Tyler Rocco will be serving the five western campuses. Although new to MTA, he has higher ed. experience from working at UMass.

This arrangement would seem to combine the best of several plans. It gives the MCCC field reps dedicated to and familiar with our two contracts and with the unique structure of 15 campuses from Pittsfield to Hyannis, while not requiring the inefficiencies of an individual travelling the entire state regularly. ■

Public higher ed funding...

Continued from page 2

serve predominantly low-income students. There are many middle- and upper-middle-class students who attend these schools. Some are high-achieving high school students who find their high school classes stultifying, while others are unsure what they want to study and thus choose not to spend huge tuitions for their first two years of college.

The best way to fund community colleges equitably (as many states have done) is to have the state provide sufficient funding for all its 15 community colleges. This funding could be obtained through such measures as a graduated income tax, as upper-income earners have flourished during the pandemic, while lower-income communities, particularly those of color, have been crushed.

SUSAN JHIRAD
Medford

The writer is a retired chair of the English department at North Shore Community College. ■

Know Your Day Contract

February 2021

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

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

March 2021

March 1 Notice of non-reappointment (first through fourth year. (p. 45).

March 5 Proposals due for unpaid leave of absence for fall semester (p. 31).

March 15 Dean’s recommendations for Title change due (p. 70).

March 15 Unit Personnel Practices recommendations for tenure due (p. 46)

March 30 Department Chair evaluations (p. 79).

March 31 Fall assignments to faculty, fulltime schedules to chapter (p.49).

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. ■

The chart below from the Research Report reflects the data from Fall 2020.

Continued from page 3

Full-time Faculty Compared to Administrators by Chapter

College Names	# FT Faculty Fall 2020	# of FT College Administrators Fall 2020
Berkshire Community College	57	33
Bristol Community College	116	75
Bunker Hill Community College	148	110
Cape Cod Community College	67	58
Greenfield Community College	51	33
Holyoke Community College	116	80
Mass Bay Community College	72	91
Massasoit Community College	106	81
Middlesex Community College	111	115
Mount Wachusett Community College	61	103
North Shore Community College	119	84
Northern Essex Community College	79	110
Quinsigamond Community College	135	112
Roxbury Community College	40	59
Springfield Community College	124	25
TOTAL	1402	1169