

# MCCC News



The Official Publication of the *Massachusetts Community College Council* / Vol. 24, Issue 5 / February 2024

## Election Report—Candidates Deemed Elected

**B**ecause there were no challenging candidates for offices and there were fewer candidates than slots for MTA Annual Meeting delegates and NEA Representative Assembly delegates, MCCC Nominations and Elections Committee Chair Andria Schwartz cancelled the election using the “deemed elected” provisions in the MCCC Policy/Bylaws.

This saves the union from the expense of conducting an election with a mailing to all members. Below, we are running the campaign photos and statements of the

constitutional officers and the two part-time/adjunct at-large directors who represent part-time faculty and staff at the MCCC Board of Directors to give members a sense of what they have done and their visions for the union’s future.

For the April 26-27 MTA Annual Meeting of Delegates there were 25 nominees for the 66 seats allotted to the MCCC (*See page 3 for nominee names.*)

For the July 1-4 NEA Representative Assembly there were 9 nominations for the 22 delegate seats allotted to the MCCC. (*See page 3 for nominee names.*)

**President**  
**Claudine Barnes**



I am MCCC President Claudine Barnes, and I am asking for your vote for re-election. I have worked tirelessly over the last two years to support MCCC members especially around negotiations of all three of our agreements. We have made a great deal of progress with our wages, we have forged better working relations with college leadership, and we have a much greater voice with the legislature. But there is much work left to do and I am asking that you support me and trust me to continue doing this valuable work with you. I have been a strong and knowledgeable leader who will continue to guide the union with integrity, honesty, and transparency.

**Vice President**  
**Joe Nardoni**



I am proud to have served you these past two years as the MCCC Vice President and would be honored to serve you for a second term. In the past two years we have seen the need for and responded to the calls for more political activity than at any other time in my recollection as a member of the MCCC, and there is more work to do. Together, we have rejuvenated our Strategic Action Committee. We have established a higher profile in the Legislature and on both social and local media, because of your actions. But there is more to do.

We are the lowest paid education professionals in the state. According to the latest data from the World Population Review,

**Secretary**  
**Colleen Avedikian**



Hello, my name is Colleen Avedikian, and I am seeking reelection as the Secretary of the MCCC union. Throughout my tenure, I have consistently demonstrated my effectiveness and reliability in fulfilling the duties of the position. Members can trust in my ability to continue handling my responsibilities competently. An essential aspect of my candidacy is the knowledge that I have gained during the past two years. This experience has provided me with a better understanding of our union’s bylaws, policies and dynamics, making me well prepared to continue to serve.

I pride myself on being responsive, collaborative, and collegial, and I am willing to take

**At-Large Director**  
**Mark Linde**



Mark Linde, Adjunct Professor (Massasoit Community College), is a candidate for the two-year term representing part-time staff and adjunct faculty. He is seeking re-election to continue his work fighting for equal pay and benefits for marginalized union members who don’t receive either. Mark has been active as the chair of the MCCC statewide adjunct committee and his local Massasoit Professional Association (MPA). He regularly attends training and delegate assemblies of the MCCC and MTA. Your consideration for your vote is greatly appreciated. [mlinde61@gmail.com](mailto:mlinde61@gmail.com) (personal email), phone contact (508) 942-0917. ■

**At-Large Director**  
**Elizabeth Raposa**



I am running for At-Large Union Rep for DCE Faculty and Part-Timers. I have taught in the Theater Department at Cape Cod Community College since 2003. I also taught for several years at Bristol Community College.

In the past twenty years, Adjuncts have made a lot of progress thanks to our union. However, we still have a lot of work to do. Many of our adjuncts struggle to survive in a system that fails to provide any kind of financial security. I have been one of those throughout my college teaching career and I want to do what I can to improve conditions for adjuncts throughout our system.

**CANDIDATES’ STATEMENTS CONTINUE ON PAGE 4**

### MCCC AWARD NOMINATIONS DUE MARCH 1

- BUTLER AWARD FOR OUTSTANDING CHAPTER PRESIDENT
- LEMIEUX AWARD FOR OVERALL DEDICATION TO UNION
- PALMER AWARD FOR LEADERSHIP AND SERVICE TO ADJUNCT FACULTY
- MCGEE AWARD FOR EXEMPLARY SERVICE IN STRATEGIC ACTION

### ✓ Mark Your Calendar

**MCCC Delegate Assembly Via Zoom**  
**April 20, 2024**

**Chapters need to elect their delegates**  
**and report them by April 10.**



# Free Community College—Closer to Reality

A decade ago, the idea of free community college was starting to be discussed seriously. Then Tennessee became the first state to enact a limited form of free community colleges, followed in 2015 by the state of Oregon with a much more expansive program.

Now, 33 states have implemented some form of it. Massachusetts was late in the game when it implemented the relatively limited MassReconnect program last year. But the legislature followed up on that by an appropriation of:

*....not less than \$1,000,000 shall be expended to the Massachusetts Association of Community Colleges for the analysis and development of a free community college system, including recommendations for guidelines, regulations and implementation measures....*

The Massachusetts Association of Community Colleges (MACC)—the organization that represents the 15 community college presidents—released the initial report that was scheduled for December, and says that they will have the final report out in April as required. This report will also go to the Joint Committee on Higher Education “outlining final recommendations for the implementation of a free community college System.”

Containing 86 pages (including appendices) the committee overseeing the report included the MACC Executive Director, five community college presidents, several deans, admissions and financial aid officers. It also included people from the Department of Higher Ed and representatives from the business community.

Other significant advisory committee members were co-chairs of the Joint Committee on Higher Education Sen. Jo Comerford and Rep. Dave Rogers, along with staff members, and last but not least, bringing the system employees’ perspective, was MCCC President Claudine Barnes.

The report looked into existing free community college programs across the country and classified them across a spectrum of limited to universal. There are two theme program labels: “Reconnect,” like the current Mass program, are limited to older students and “Promise” and “Opportunity” programs that have different targets and provisions.

It looked at each state on a number of criteria, starting with the program requirements and limitations for participation, then looked at what costs are covered, and finally analyzed the results in college participation and completion levels.

One of the considerations was the order of how the benefits would be applied. Typically, most states use “last dollar” and a few use “first dollar.” To simplify,

first-dollar programs cover tuition costs before applying other financial aid, while last-dollar programs fill the gaps in tuition costs after considering other financial aid received. First-dollar programs generally provide more comprehensive financial support for students, allowing them to use other forms of aid for additional expenses. The majority of the other state programs go with “last dollar” coverage, which is usually less expensive to the state.

### Preferred Massachusetts Plan

Taking all the factors into account, the committee proposed its “Preferred Plan” with the less common “middle dollar” approach. The report stated, “Middle dollar sets an award amount which is converted to a grant for those who already have tuition and fees met by other programs such as Pell.” This would cover tuition, fees, books and supplies, and based on income, a maximum \$2,000 stipend that makes it a “middle dollar” plan.

The preferred plan recommended several eligibility conditions: must be a Massachusetts resident (including undocumented), must complete FAFSA, no age or first-time degree limits, no limit on high school GPA, and no income limit.

Students would need to take at least 6 credits and maintain a minimum 2.0 GPA. There would be no limit of funding for any academic program.

An alternative plan was also presented, called “MassReconnect for All” with an optional “Extra stipend for low-income” that would be similar to the Preferred Plan. The estimated annual cost of the base plan would be \$115 million. The “Extra stipends for low-income that could include the additional \$2,000 expenses for those in need would raise the annual cost to \$170 million.

### Impact on Faculty and Staff

The commission also looked at staff-

ing issues both in declining numbers and in the low salaries that make it difficult to hire qualified people. While full-time staffing has remained relatively stable, adjunct faculty numbers have declined precipitously. Salary comparisons show that full-time community college faculty in Massachusetts are paid well below those in the peer states, and that comparing the average salaries of faculty in their 4-year colleges in those states with the salaries in their community colleges, Massachusetts has the greatest difference. (See graphs in this issue.)

### Estimated Benefits

Using extensive data reported by other states, especially Oregon with its long experience, the report projects the benefits that Massachusetts could expect from implementing a free community college program.

The direct benefits would be increased enrollment at the 15 community colleges. While there has been a slight uptick in enrollments the last year or two, our colleges have been losing students for several years. And degree completions would increase slightly with

students who have been economically unable to finish will be able to graduate.

Over the longer term there are indirect benefits to the commonwealth as well as to individuals. Degree earners earn more money and that benefits them as well as increasing the tax base. Also the increase in certificate and degree holders helps to reduce the “skills gap” that can hold back economic development.

### Cost

The proposal projects costs for the preferred plan out for ten years, breaking out the costs of tuition and fees, books and supplies, and living costs. The annual costs range from \$176 million in FY2026 decreasing to \$160 million in FY2034. Pent up demand accounts for the higher

costs in the early phase of the program.

### Other Considerations

The proposal also recommended incorporating the wrap around services of the current SUCCESS program to support students and help to endure degree completion. It also looks at the staffing needs that the programs will create. It looks at increasing the numbers professional staff in support roles.

### Push Back

About two weeks after the plan was released, a Jan. 16 Boston Globe editorial criticized the plan, first by asserting that the lowest income students already see free community college because Pell Grants cover tuition and fees. Because of this the editorial said, “MACC’s preferred proposal would benefit wealthier students more than poorer students.”

They quoted Sandy Baum, a higher ed. economist at the Urban Institute, who said, “All this would do is make it free for those who can afford to pay.”

How four-year colleges would be affected was another concern the Globe expressed. The editorial cited a study that was presented at a recent meeting of the Board of Higher Education’s finance and administration policy by Oded Gurantz, an assistant professor at the University of Colorado’s School of Education. The 2017 study of the Oregon free community college program found that while the program enrolled some students who otherwise would not have gone to college, about half of those students who participated in the free community college program said they originally planned on attending a four-year college.

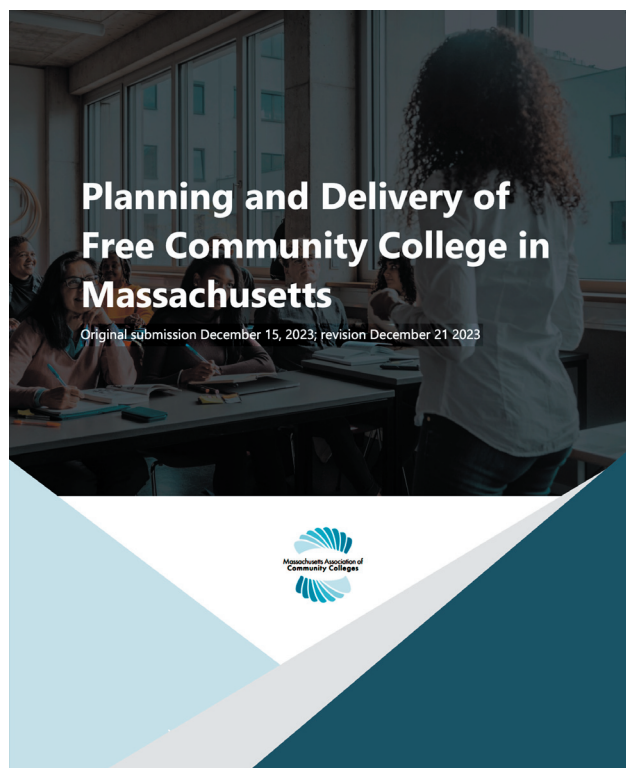
MACC predicts that four-year colleges would benefit from the increased students that would be transferring from community colleges, but the Globe countered that about 28 percent of students transfer and only 13 percent attain a bachelor degree. They assume that the students who otherwise would have started at a four-year school would perform the same as students who always intended to start at a community college.

The Globe was supportive of community colleges in general. They especially liked the SUCCESS grant program and they also encouraged simplifying the “fragmented and confusing” financial aid programs and making non-credit bearing courses like English as a Second Language free. Also, they recommended making the pathways to four-year colleges smoother.

### Making it a Reality

The commission aims to have the implementation plan completed for the

*Continued on page 4*



# An Opportunity Is Knocking- Let's Open the Door!

Recently, Max Page told HELC (Higher Education Leadership Council) that the Cherish Act is unlikely to pass the legislature intact, but indicated that there is strong interest in the Senate, spearheaded by Senate President Spilka and Senator Comerford among others, **to do something for community colleges this year.** They formed an Advisory Committee on Free Community College. The Committee has released an Interim Report which MCCC Communications Coordinator Don Williams has reviewed in our newsletter this month. You can ask your Board member for the full Interim Report.

I am going to focus on what the report says about our salaries. Their report uses the same information I shared with you over the last two years, showing how far behind California our faculty salaries were, with California having a slightly higher cost of living. The report notes some structural difficulties in obtaining similar data for professional staff that are well-known to the MCCC. I am unconvinced that this data mining will end up proving useful, because **the main issue with our salaries is not that they are low in comparison to California, but what that disparity means—that CC faculty in California have salaries that**

**average above their cost of living, while ours are more than \$30,000 below the cost of living in Massachusetts.**

The interim report points out we must invest in faculty and staff, by both increasing wages and numbers of FT workers in order to effectively establish Free Community College in MA, noting that the state should “ultimately consider a salary survey, with the intention of acting on feedback and potentially raising faculty compensation.” We do indeed need such a salary survey. However, the report’s initial stab at framing a solution presents an example that fails to adequately address the salary situation the writers of the report identified, and gives a false picture of what it will actually take to bring our average salaries up to where they should be. Their example suggests bringing our salaries up “to align with the Northeast average gap between two- and four-year salaries, which represents an increase of ~9-10% and “would entail an additional ~\$15 million annually to cover [FT] salary and benefits.”

This example is out of touch with the facts of our situation, because it neither addresses our equity needs in bringing high-quality diverse candidates from both inside and outside of NE to our colleges, nor does it come close to

the actual needs of our members. The reason noted in the report that people turn down jobs at our colleges is because they don’t provide salaries that people can live on in Massachusetts. The idea that raising our salaries by 10% will close the gap enough to get people to accept our offers is wishful thinking. Beginning faculty salaries would still be more than \$35,000 below the cost of living for a two-person family in Massachusetts, according to recent data compiled by the World Population Review, and the disparity would be even worse for many of our professional staff positions. In short, there’s no potential for success in recruiting and retaining faculty and staff with a 10% salary adjustment.

The latest numbers show that our salaries lag behind those of faculty in CA by more than \$47,000, and that our cost of living, according to the World Population Review, is 10.3% **higher** than it is in California. This is information that is part of a wage equity study being prepared by the MTA and which should be finished before the salary survey the Advisory Committee recommends in its report has properly begun. My advice is that the Advisory Committee should adopt the elements of the MTA study pertaining to community colleges once it is completed.



Joe Nardoni, MCCC Vice President

Complicating matters for us, the interim report fails to acknowledge that the only way to bring fairness to the salaries of our part time workers in the MCCC is to provide wage equity between FT and part time faculty and staff, according to the salary schedules and workload definitions of the DAY contract. There’s no point comparing salaries within a rigged system that artificially depresses the wages of part-time faculty and staff across the entire country.

That’s why it is so important to answer the call when your chapter organizes and holds in-District meetings with your legislators, as SAC is working on doing right now, to support passage of the Cherish Act, especially those portions of it which promote effective solutions to the salary and benefits needs of our members, while making it possible to offer Free Community College to all. ■

## Delegates deemed elected for 66 seats at the MTA Annual Meeting of Delegates

1	Colin Adams	Berkshire
2	Aisha Hsu Arroyo	Middlesex
3	Colleen Avedikian	Bristol
4	Dan Avedikian	Bristol
5	Claudine Barnes	Cape Cod
6	Cathy Boudreau	Massasoit
7	Bethany Croteau	North Shore
8	Torrey Dukes	North Shore
9	Brian Falter	North Shore
10	Peter Flynn	Northern Essex
11	Swan Gates	Cape Cod
12	Mike Geary	Bristol
14	Gail Guarino	Cape Cod
15	Paul Johansen	Berkshire
16	Phyllis Keenan	Greenfield
17	Kimberly Lakowsky	Cape Cod
18	Mark Linde	Massasoit
19	Kathryn Martin	Cape Cod
20	Ellen Pratt	Mount Wachusett
21	Candace Shivers	Mount Wachusett
22	Ron Weisberger	Bristol
23	Don Williams	North Shore
24	Margaret Wong	Quinsigamond
25	Randi Zanca	Quinsigamond

## Delegates deemed elected for 22 seats at the NEA Representative Assembly

1	Bethany Croteau	North Shore
2	Peter Flynn	Northern Essex
3	Swan Gates	Cape Cod
4	Paul Johansen	Berkshire
5	Kimberly Lakowsky	Cape cod
6	Ellen Pratt	Mount Wachusett
7	Candace Shivers	Mount Wachusett
8	Margaret Wong	Quinsigamond
9	Randi Zanca	Quinsigamond

## 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.



# Statements from Candidates

Continued from front page

## President

### Claudine Barnes

I have spent years in different union leadership roles in my CCCC chapter and at the state level fighting for *all* our members. I take on challenges, listen, fight for fairness, and fight for what is right. I have led negotiating teams, improved wages and contract language for faculty and professional staff including the implementation of salary grids, served as MCCC Secretary, engaged in strategic action, and have vigorously enforced our Day and DCE contracts in my chapter and in impact bargaining at all fifteen community colleges. I have served on the BOD and/or Executive Committee since 2004. I was a 14- year chapter president, have served on Day, DCE, and Distance Education MACER, and understand how to bring union members together with trust and a strong commitment to ourselves and to our students.

Thank you for your support and solidarity. ■

## Vice President

### Joe Nardoni

the cost of living in Massachusetts is 10.33% **higher** than it is in California, and the average salary of community college faculty in Massachusetts is **\$47,111 less** than the average salary of faculty working in California. **That cannot be allowed to stand.**

Our professional staff members deserve a corresponding pay increase. **We must act to ensure they get it.** Our adjunct faculty members and part-time professional staff deserve pay equity and access to health insurance and the state retirement fund. **We must act to ensure they get it.** We have a generational opportunity with the Cherish Act and the Free Community College Advisory Committee to right these wrongs. **Let's work together to get this done.** ■

## Secretary

### Colleen Avedikian

on additional tasks. I currently serve on the Bylaws Committee as well as on Joint Study. Furthermore, I am actively engaged at the local level, serving as the SAC representative for the Bristol Chapter.

One notable accomplishment has been chairing the Personnel Committee. In this role, I supervised the evaluations for our five coordinators and the MCCC office manager/treasurer. Additionally, I participated in the negotiation of a new contract for the coordinators.

Reelecting me as Secretary would ensure continued strong and dedicated leadership. My track record reflects my commitment to the success and well-being of the MCCC union and its members. I am ready to use my experience for the benefit of our union in the years ahead. Thank you for your consideration. ■

## At-Large Director

### Elizabeth Raposa

In recent years, I have also worked at the college as an Advisor, as a Contract Faculty teaching in Project Forward (our special needs program) and now as a part-time Enrollment Counselor for our Admissions Office. If elected I promise to listen to the concerns of my fellow adjuncts and to do whatever I can to make those concerns heard and to help activate changes whenever possible to bring equity and security to our adjuncts. ■



Like us at  
**mccc.union**

# Know Your Day Contract

## February 2024

- Feb. 15** Sabbatical applicants notified (p. 30).
- Feb. 19** Presidents Day Holiday (p. 27).
- Feb. 20** Course materials returned (p. 61).
- Feb. 28** Preferred schedules and courses submitted ((p. 51).
- Feb. 28** New full and part-time hire list due MCCC.

## March 2024

- 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, full time schedules to chapter (p. 51).
- NOTE:** Cited page numbers are from the 2021-2023 contract that is available on the MCCC website. 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. ■

# Ratification of Day/DCE Contract Draws Near

The 2023-2025 Day contract is out for ratification with the return date of February 23. While the union was not able to overcome the 2 percent limit for 2023, and management insistence on not negotiating over any language changes, the quick settlement of the contract was a positive change from the long delays over the past two decades.

Day members will be receiving the 2 percent retroactive to last July, and 4 percent will be due in July of 2024 and another 4 percent in January of 2025. The union hopes that ratification will be completed early enough to get the contract into the March funding stream and avoiding the kind of problems experienced funding the last contract.

Another positive provision of this

contract is an agreement to commence bargaining the 2025 contract 30 days after ratification or March 1, 2024, whichever is later. This is a huge change from the past where management often didn't begin to meet until the contracts had already expired, despite the union demanding to bargain months in advance.

The DCE negotiations are nearly complete and it faced most of the same management restrictions—minus the 2 percent limit—with two 4 percent raises and no language changes. This contract should be going out for ratification at the end of February or early March. Because the DCE contract is funded by the colleges, no legislative action is needed and the money can flow fairly quickly. ■

# Free Community College...

Continued from page 2

April date, which might be in time for legislative action. Ultimately any free community college program must be the legislature's plan. State revenues have been falling and budget cuts are being made, so there may not be appetite for spending the \$170 million on the preferred plan, regardless of how much support it has.

Plus, this is an election year, and the legislature ends its formal sessions in the summer, so any significant legislation for this session would need to be passed before they go on recess. MCCC members have recently witnessed the kinds of complications that can crop up in the

State House during last year's contract funding morass. Even bills with broad support can be stymied in the process. At the same time, they can move incredibly fast when they want to.

Once the final report comes out in April, the lines of support and opposition to this major change to our community college system will surely coalesce. No doubt, the MCCC will need to play a significant role in supporting the best possible outcome. Funding will, of course, be a major concern, and holding the state to the promise of dedicated education funding from the Fair Share Amendment that the MTA and MCCC strongly backed will be important. ■



## MCCC News

<http://mccc-union.org>

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Vice President:

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Secretary:

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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)*