



December 2025 E-News Issue

STCC VOTES SWEEPING “NO CONFIDENCE”

The local chapter of MCCC at Springfield Technical Community College has taken the bold move to vote “No Confidence” in their College President, Cabinet leadership, and the Board of Trustees. On Friday, December 5th, Chapter President Renae Gorman delivered a comprehensive seven-page document with a scathing list of particulars that detailed the motion and described the “cumulative effect” of management’s behavior as follows:

- A collapse of trust in institutional leadership,
- A breakdown of shared governance,
- A chilling effect on communication,
- Erosion of morale,
- And a campus environment increasingly defined by fear, opacity, and disengagement.

[Press coverage at MassLive](#), which accompanied the announcement to College leadership on December 5th, reported that STCC’s College President, John Cook was already planning his departure next summer. However, the Union made it clear that the problems with management go beyond President Cook, specifically outlining complaints about the Chief Academic Officer, Chief Financial Officer, and Vice President of Student Affairs. The Union is also holding Cabinet members and the Board of Trustees accountable for a lack of intervention and oversight. The impressive motion and list of particulars can be accessed [HERE](#).

With Gorman’s leadership, the local chapter at STCC is demonstrating collective power, which is the only way to resist rampant administrative negligence and overreach plaguing many of our campuses.

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MCCC Calendar



“STATE OF OUR UNION” TOWN HALLS SCHEDULED AT EACH CHAPTER DEC-FEB

→ Schedule posted on the MCCC website [HERE](#).

9-10 Jan - Higher Ed Labor United Bargaining Summit UMass Amherst - [REGISTER](#)

23-24 - MTA Winter Skills - MCCC-STRATEGY SESSION - [REGISTRATION OPEN](#).

2 Feb - 6:30pm - Ground Hog Day Zoom Rally!

5 Feb - 4pm - MCCC Election Nominations close - [MORE INFO HERE](#).

25 April - MCCC Delegate Assembly

9 May - MTA Annual Meeting ~ Boston

DCE Contract Ratification Materials Coming Soon!



STCC Chapter President and members show solidarity. L to R: Joseph Maciaszek, Steve Sinkwich, Kelson Ettienne-Modeste, Renae Gorman, Kyle Kraus and Amanda Berthiaume

Tentative Agreement Reached in DCE Bargaining

After fourteen months of fraught negotiations, in the end, with the support of silent reps and collective actions taken by Union members, raises finally met the Governor’s sparse parameters for a two-year agreement as follows: Spring ‘25: 3.5%; Fall ‘25: 2.25%; Spring 2026: 2.25%. The new DCE contract will run retroactively from September 1, 2024 through August 31, 2026.

The Organizing Committee launched a contract action email campaign during the final weeks of negotiations, which was approved by MCCC President Claudine Barnes and VP Joe Nardoni. Once MCCC Board of Directors signed off, members emailed college presidents with individualized letters from each chapter. We are confident this action is what turned the tide and allowed for the TA to be reached. The letters are available [HERE](#).

In the coming weeks, DCE members will receive ratification materials. More details will be posted on the MCCC website when the time comes.

Kudos to the team on reaching this milestone on the long journey toward fair pay and benefits for adjuncts. We must stay the course as we look toward the next round coming in 2026 when we’ll be to strengthening our bargaining power with coordinated efforts between the DAY and DCE teams and the Organizing Committee.

ALL MEMBER STRATEGY SESSION

MCCC CAMPAIGN FOR FAIR PAY & FAIR WORK CONDITIONS

SATURDAY ~ 1/24/26

MTA WINTER SKILLS ~ BOSTON

2026 presents a unique opportunity for MCCC to win a life-changing wage increase, but it will take intentional strategy & action. Bring a colleague, and let's map out our success.



[FREE REGISTRATION](#)



Bristol Sets the Bar for Organizing this Fall



Above: Close to fifty members of Bristol's chapter standout in solidarity on Discovery Day, November 5, 2025. This was a pinnacle moment after weekly standouts during the Fall semester.

Bristol chapter organizing has reached new heights this semester with a full squad of member organizers, including Deb Anderson, Colleen Avedikian, Rebecca Benya-Soderbom, Laura Hogan, Amy Marden, and JP Nadeau. Their focus and commitment was marked by weekly standouts, a successful virtual town hall, and collective action in response to the dismissal of a tenured faculty member.

Bristol's Fall 2025 organizing efforts are on the heels of a major collective action in the Spring '25 semester, with a significant vote of no-confidence and a well-attended board of trustees meeting. Chapter President, Mike Geary, delivered a legendary "mic drop" address to the trustees accompanied by a large number of union members, reporting the unanimous triple-threat vote of no-confidence in Bristol's Vice President of Human Resources, the VP of Student Services and Enrollment Management, and the VP of Academic Affairs.

The summer months did not slow them down. The chapter organizing committee (OC) set out in September to orchestrate weekly standouts. Together, they assessed the needs of the campus and what was realistic. They launched a "constituency series" that started with standouts in support of librarians, moved on to advisors, and included standouts at each satellite campus. On Tuesdays at 12:20pm, members gathered to draw attention to their union siblings, standing in solidarity and building momentum toward their culminating t-shirt action on Discovery Day, when folks showed up and stood in solidarity, including new members, long-time members, and retirees.

According to Bristol's MCCC Chapter Director, JP Nadeau, their collective actions this Fall were a way to make "displeasure evident in respectful ways to indicate what members feel about administrative actions with which they don't agree." Following suit, over thirty members met to support a tenured faculty member during their pre-dismissal hearing this Fall. Most wore black and lined the hall where administrators had to pass for the proceedings. The affected faculty member posed for pictures with members and sent a letter of

gratitude to the union for supporting them through such a challenging ordeal.

Some long-time union members expressed that this was the first time they had taken part in a major collective action. Bristol's organizing efforts are truly building momentum and unifying their chapter.

In December, Bristol held a virtual State of Our Union Town Hall, facilitating five breakout rooms, each with a moderator and note-taker. The meeting stressed the importance of collecting information on chapter issues to assess how they connect to our broader state-wide cause. The groups were balanced with members representing full-time faculty, professional staff, and adjuncts. Informative discussions allowed members to share their experiences and make connections. Moderators made sure to include voices from all constituencies, drawing them into the conversations. The response was so positive that Bristol is planning a follow up meeting to identify patterns and brainstorm solutions, something that they did not have time for during the town hall. They also plan to categorize concerns by what are contractual matters, local matters, or legislative initiatives, in addition to determining what actions can be taken by chapter members.

Bristol's OC squad is doing a remarkable job of organizing, and their work demonstrates how building relationships strengthens our chapters. They are putting all of the organizing training into practice, and it shows.



One of Bristol's "constituency series" standouts during the Fall '25 semester.

"We tried to tune-in to our culture and made decisions about initiatives we thought would be more likely to be successful."
~ JP Nadeau

DAY Negotiations Team Call for Applications!

Apply to be on the Day Contract Negotiating Team (aka the Bargaining Team)

The MCCC is beginning the process of forming a team to negotiate a successor Day Collective Bargaining Agreement. The team negotiates with the employer over wages, hours, and conditions of employment. The current one-year contract, although ratified recently, expires June 30, 2026. This is an opportunity for members to shape the working conditions affecting nearly 2000 Day Contract members for the next three years and beyond. The team will be made up of at least five (5) Day Contract union members plus the MCCC President and Vice President ex officio. Preferred applicants will represent the diversity of the collective Day bargaining unit that includes full-time faculty, part-time Day unit faculty, and all full and part-time professional staff.

Team members have traditionally been provided with reassigned time to allow them to meet regularly. Additionally, being on the Negotiations Team is counted as college service. Bargaining generally requires at least a one-year commitment. Please note that while our team meetings will primarily be held via Zoom, negotiations with management will be conducted via a combination of Zoom and in-person meetings.

Application Process

Interested Day Unit MCCC Union Members should send a letter of intent and a CV (resume) to MCCC President Claudine Barnes at mcccpresbarnes@gmail.com.

The following information should be included in your letter:

- Full name
- Non-college email
- Phone number
- Community College/Division/Department in which you do your Day Contract work
- Statement about why you would like to be on the Day Contract Negotiations Team. Also include any bargaining experience, leadership roles you have held, and any past or present union activities you have taken part in (e.g., attending chapter meetings, serving on the Organizing Committee, attending the Delegate Assembly, etc.)

Deadline: January 5, 2026

Applicants will be interviewed via Zoom on January 6 and 7, 2026 from 9am-noon.

**MCCC
Nominations
Election
are
OPEN!**



NOT. OUR. FRIENDS.

In the days afterwards, I learned Worcester's MTA constituents' meeting was always held in the back room of El Basha on Park Ave. It being my first such meeting as a Strategic Action Committee (SAC) rep, I was not sure if the lights were always so dim, the mood so noir, or the spanakopita so inaccessible through a tangle of empty chairs – if Mayor Joe Petty was always there to crack a joke to the table full of elected officials about how they should spend some money in his city – if Mayor Petty always stopped at the bar on his way out – if the former president of a local to remain nameless, several drinks deep by the time I arrived at 4:30, always staggered table to table to remind us union members that "these people are not our friends" in not so hushed tones.

When I am not in the backroom of El Basha, I'm professional staff at Quinsigamond Community College (QCC) and an active member of MCCC.

Three of us from the central MA region attended the constituents' meeting that evening in our blue, "Fair Pay" shirts. We three made such an impression that the agenda was upended to allow us to speak first. And we did, about the need to streamline contract funding, pass an adjunct "bill of rights," regain the right to strike, and align community college wages to states with comparable costs of living. As I spoke, I couldn't help but notice all the empty chairs, imagining how many blue shirts we could have filled this room with.

Afterwards, Senator Jamie Eldridge thanked us for our advocacy and announced he was recently made chairperson of the Joint Committee on Revenue. Being in this position, he asked that we consider the state budget and how the state would raise the revenue for our asks in a progressive manner. Clearly, we were being told to temper our expectations.

I thought it odd that I, a state employee who is not on the Joint Committee on Revenue, had to determine how Massachusetts was to raise these funds. Even odder, considering the Fair Share Amendment, passed in 2022, taxes the state's highest earners to generate a surplus of \$2 billion toward public education funding – more than enough to cover a wage equity adjustment. Oddest, that Gov. Healey passed \$1 billion in tax cuts the following year, eating into that progressive stream of revenue, creating fertile ground for public sector austerity, and endangering free community college.

To me, the obvious solution is to reverse the Healey tax cuts, pass the MCCC legislative agenda and fully fund our community colleges. Schools like Quinsig are engines of economic mobility for working people. Removing barriers to education and workforce training would surely pay huge dividends for state revenue down the line. If this is so obvious to me, what is lost on the chairperson of the Joint Committee on Revenue?

Then I remembered a certain tipsy guest's advice at that same constituent meeting. "These people are not our friends."



James Lincoln is a professional staff member in the enrollment services division at Quinsigamond Community College and SAC coordinator for the QCCPA.



Berkshire Union members show their true colors this Fall!

A CUP OF JOE



**MCCC VP
Joe Nardoni**

A Message of Hope for the Holidays

As we head towards the holidays and our colleges' winter breaks, I would like to thank all of you who have answered our calls to action on behalf of wage equity for all of our members, both full and part-time: Silent Bargaining Reps for both of our contract negotiations; Leads and members of the Organizing Committee and the fine work you are doing in building our power through activating our membership; everyone who contacted their legislators, asking that they pass our wage equity bill; everyone who wrote letters in support of our Legislative Agenda, attended public hearings online or at the State House, speaking our truths, or attended Regional meetings with our legislators; our MCCC Board, who oversees all of our work and keeps our union working for you; MCCC Secretary Colleen Avedikian who not only keeps track of our Board and Executive Committee meetings but also throws herself with passion and commitment into chairing our Personnel committee and still finds time to represent her college on our Organizing Committee and SAC; MCCC President Claudine Barnes, who has gone above and beyond in her advocacy for and service to our members and has been the best working partner I have ever worked with; new leaders like our Organizing Committee Co-chairs, Stacie Hargis and Angelina Avedano; chapters who are waking up to their own power, showing others the way, like Massasoit and Bristol; and the honor and opportunity you have given me to serve you as we work together to achieve a life-changing wage equity adjustment that will not only improve our own lives, but also raise up our students' lives through gaining a well-rounded education.

As you all take your well-deserved breaks, for however long they are, given your role as faculty or professional staff, I ask you to do this one thing: Remember what and who we are fighting for. We are fighting to change our lives right now and into the future, with a long-overdue wage equity adjustment. The kind of adjustment that means you can be home with your families more; the kind that means you can pay off your student loans and maybe have some left over for a family vacation; the kind that means you can afford to send your children to college, so they will have the leg up on living a good life you had as a college graduate; the kind that means you can help your parents deal with the inevitable changes of aging; the kind that will free you from having to rely on your college's food bank; that will free you from relying on transportation that is always on the verge of breaking down; that will free you from having to decide whether to buy food or pay for health insurance in these times of stupidity and moral turpitude in Washington; the kind that will free your closest friends at work who you know are struggling from the debt burdens of their lives so they can rise up to a better life, one that provides the dignity that ought to come to anyone who works for the betterment of others, one that every single one of us has already earned by how hard we work for our students' success.

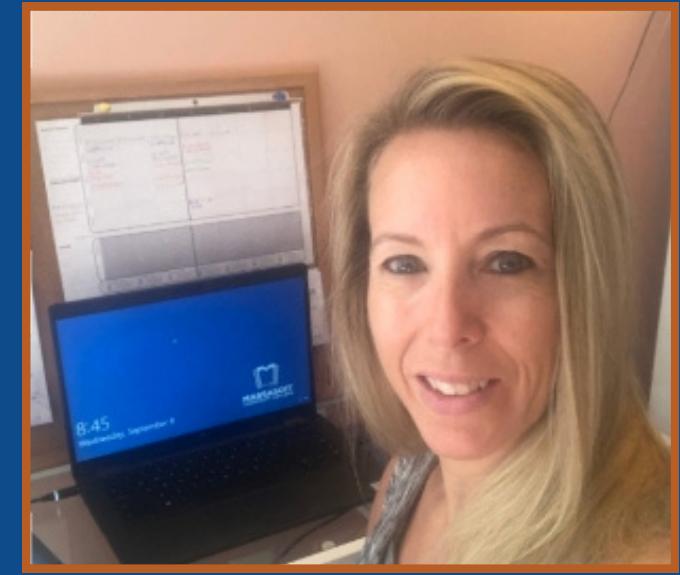
My wonderful colleagues, use this break to be present with the important people in your lives and let it renew your spirit so you can choose to return to campus, determined to raise your voices and raise up your colleagues. Join and continue the work to ensure we get our wage equity study completed and implemented during our upcoming contract negotiations. Choose to be a part of our movement for economic justice for all of our members. Be the one who says, "let me help," and when you do, we will be one step closer to winning.

Conceive it, Believe it, Achieve it! We will not be denied!

Joe Nardoni
MCCC Vice President

"I was shocked at the salary that was offered. There were long days of discussion and debate with my husband over whether we could afford for me to take my dream job at a 30% pay cut.

Ultimately, I decided to follow my dream. I love my job, but it has cost me and my family dearly."



Lauren Dalton, Faculty @ Massasoit CC and soon to be Assistant Professor and Program Coordinator, Early Childhood Education Department at Middlesex CC

My name is Lauren Dalton and this is my first day of school picture! I remember how excited and scared I was on this day. It was September of 2020 and I was about to begin my first semester as a full-time professor of Early Childhood Education at Massasoit Community College during the pandemic. I spent over 20 years working as a teacher in Early Childhood Education and 12 years teaching Kindergarten, Integrated Preschool, and serving as the Early Childhood Coordinator for a public school district but it was always my lifelong dream to be a teacher educator.

When I applied for the position and was offered the job, I was shocked at the salary that was offered. There were long days of discussion and debate with my husband over whether we could afford for me to take my dream job at a 30% pay cut. Ultimately, I decided to follow my dream. I love my job, but it has cost me and my family dearly. I have two grown daughters and a young son. My husband is a self-employed construction company owner. Since accepting this position, we have incurred significant debt in the form of college loans for my daughter, home equity loans, and credit card debt as a result of using these sources to get by. Like many of my colleagues, I work three other part-time jobs to try and make ends meet. I work doing training workshops in the evening and I teach as an adjunct professor at Massasoit and another MA community college. I am teaching the equivalent of 2 full-time faculty jobs. This leaves little time for me to spend with my young son. Even more frustrating is that although I get one paycheck for both my full-time and adjunct teaching, only my full-time salary will count toward my retirement which will have to provide for both me and my husband.

But enough about me, let's talk about my students! I'm so happy that MassEducate has provided an opportunity for more students to access higher education especially since there is a major workforce shortage in Early Childhood Education and Care in Massachusetts. Childcare centers are struggling to find qualified staff to educate and care for children during the critical early childhood years when 90% of brain development takes place; and without childcare, parents cannot work and this hurts the overall economy.

My students typically work at least part-time while attending school and rely on nights and weekends to complete assignments. I want to go above and beyond to help create a professional early childhood workforce that provides quality early childhood experiences that will shape the lives of the children and families they serve for years to come. But . . . I am exhausted. My students deserve better. My family deserves better. I deserve better. It's time for the state to step up and pay Community College educators a living wage.

Organizing HQ at <https://mccc-union.org/>



Organizing Committee (OC) Buzz

Mobilizing NOW! Join the Movement.

- By request, above is the Union Power Playlist at the Spotify icon.
- The OC held Saturday training on 10/4. Members strategized building chapter support, attracting new members, and planned for the State of Our Union Town Halls. [Read more on p. 8.](#)
- Community College educators need a 70% wage increase to get in line with state and national standards. The road towards a transformative campaign is long, and we need to strategize what the year ahead looks like on the path towards winning. OC, please attend the MCCC strategy session to build the plan to win in 2026 at **MTA's Winter Skills Conference**. **Registration is free for ALL. All chapter Presidents receive complementary lodging. This is how we get strong enough to win what we deserve! REGISTER NOW.**
- OC Squads are hosting State of Our Union Town Halls Dec-Feb to assess chapter concerns, build membership, and organize actions in the coming months. **POST YOUR TOWN HALL INFO HERE.**
- We are successfully building squads, but the OC still needs team leaders. Email angelina@mccceducator.org.
- **Calling OC Members to be a part of the DAY Bargaining Negotiations Survey Committee. This critical team drafts the statewide survey that will inform the Bargaining Team at the negotiation table. Contact your Chapter President.**
- **OC, PLEASE CONSIDER APPLYING TO BE ON THE DAY BARGAINING TEAM.**
- Come to Winter Skills to learn more about the Bargaining Certificate Program.
- Let's form a student engagement team in 2026 to strategize student support for our coordinated campaign. Interested? Contact [Angelina](#).
- **SAVE THE DATE FOR OUR GROUND HOG DAY ZOOM RALLY 2/26 @ 6:30PM.**

IT AIN'T FREE!

Recent reports of meetings with legislators cause me to reconsider our message. For over a year, Union members have expressed frustration with the lack of foresight and follow-through when it comes to the state's "free" community college initiatives. While Governor Healey celebrates the promise of free college education, the price that education workers are paying every day is being ignored.

Meanwhile, pressure is rising on our campuses as we struggle to recruit and retain professional staff and faculty. Stretched to the breaking point, we continue to meet the needs of students who believe in the promise of "free" community college. But honoring these promises is not possible without swift and substantial action from our legislators, adjectives not typically used when it comes to state responses to the needs of community colleges.

During Healey's declaration of support for the BRIGHT Act, she boasted, "Massachusetts is the number one state for education." This rings hollow to those of us in the field fighting for equitable wages, manageable workloads, and fair contracts.

The concept of "free" community college generates good PR for our leaders. However, the reality is that we are the ones paying the price in ways that are debilitating and unsustainable. If depleting our expertise, intellectual and emotional labor, and devotion to students was not enough, we're told that in order to sway the powers that be, we must expose intimate details of our lives, engaging in a kind of adversity "porn" that is equally exploitative.

Repeatedly sharing our stories to nodding heads, polite smiles, and sympathetic words from senators, reps, and their aides, is one more demoralizing burden to bear. But we're told our stories make all the difference. So, we bare our souls and the shame of unpaid bills, food and housing insecurity, increasing concern for our students, and the toll on our mental health.

We can all agree on the benefits of increased enrollment from free community college initiatives, but let's not forget that critics were wary from the beginning that we lacked the funding and infrastructure needed to ensure their success. Skeptics were assured that Fair Share was our best option for advancing higher ed, but here we are staggering under the burden, having to take time away from our classrooms, student services, and advising caseloads to plead with decision-makers who are far-removed from our realities as we try to live and work and make a difference in our students' lives.

Wage inequities for higher ed workers must be addressed to remedy the crisis we are facing, especially if Massachusetts is serious about the promise of free community college. Yet, there is no bill that would provide immediate, targeted relief. We did manage to secure a place in the State budget for a wage study to look at comparative salaries and cost of living data (data our unions already researched and provided, by the way). But now, we wait as the wheels of bureaucracy grind us down semester after semester. And yes, we will continue to go above and beyond to meet ever-expanding student needs.

How many ways can we tell the same tales when they are unable to cut through political noise to express our dire circumstances of ballooning workloads and deflated wages? The bill for "free" community college is due; and it ain't free.

Decision-makers listen, but say they need a concrete "ask," something actionable. Okay, how about valuing education workers who are bearing the cost for these higher ed initiatives? Massachusetts has invested in the students. They're planning to invest in the buildings on our campuses. If we are a state that truly values higher education, then our leaders must invest in the work community college educators do - not simply exploit it for political gain.

Platitudes about the importance of free community college are not enough. Our leaders must show they intend to follow through on their promises not only to students, but to the education workers who support them. Here are the actions that must be taken without delay:

H.2185/S.1365 | An act to provide fair wages to employees of public institutions of higher education and H.2820: an act streamlining collective bargaining

Valuing higher ed means hiring more full-time education workers and paying ALL of us a living wage. The longstanding "Governor's parameters" on wage increases for community college educators reveal how our labor is devalued and exploited. This, along with the convoluted processes we endure to receive monies that have been contractually agreed upon is unjust.

H.1429/S.940 | An Act Promoting an Adjunct Bill of Rights

Valuing higher ed means providing fair wages and benefits to our adjunct professors and offering unimpeded pathways to full-time positions. Community colleges rely on these professionals to teach nearly 70% of classes yet treat them as second-class citizens.

H.1426/S.949 | An Act to provide green and healthy public colleges and universities and address their deferred maintenance needs

Valuing higher ed means making sure community colleges are safe and healthy for our students and for those of us who are working to support them. It means accepting responsibility for deferred maintenance and investing in our facilities intentionally and comprehensively.

[Continued on p. 7](#)

Spotlight

Dr. Mya T. Bowen and Dr. Sharlene Malcolm
Co-Presidents, MCCC Roxbury Community College Chapter



Dr. Mya T. Bowen, Chapter Co-President, Roxbury CC.



Dr. Sharlene Malcolm, Chapter Co-President, Roxbury CC.

This month's Spotlight features the collaborative leadership team guiding the MCCC chapter at Roxbury Community College. Dr. Mya T. Bowen and Dr. Sharlene Malcolm serve together as Co-Presidents, and their partnership strengthens advocacy, communication, and shared governance for faculty and professional staff at RCC.

Dr. Mya Bowen is an Associate Professor of Information Systems Technology who brings a deep commitment to equity, digital literacy, and student success. She balances an evolving set of institutional demands while staying attentive to the needs of students and colleagues. She finds her greatest enjoyment in supporting student growth and empowering faculty to thrive professionally.

Her involvement with MCCC has grown over several years. She stepped into leadership with a strong belief in transparent advocacy and fair working conditions. Her leadership style is collaborative and solutions focused, emphasizing clear communication and shared decision making. She works to ensure that members have accessible spaces for engagement through open forums, consistent updates, and follow through on chapter commitments. One example of successful action under her leadership involved coordinating collective advocacy around contract interpretation and faculty rights. The effort succeeded because of timely communication, member mobilization, and a strategy grounded in contractual language and policy. Dr. Bowen remains committed to strengthening representation across the chapter and ensuring that working conditions support high quality education.

Dr. Sharlene Malcolm brings a student centered and community grounded perspective to the chapter's work. She is the Program Chair of the Business Department and Professional Studies Division and an Associate Professor of Business, teaching courses in Business, Business Law, Marketing, and Entrepreneurship. With a Doctorate in Business Administration in Business Leadership, she brings a research informed approach to both her academic work and her leadership. As a Boston native and proud RCC alum, she is closely connected to community engagement efforts. She has expanded partnerships with local organizations, grown internship and capstone opportunities, and supported initiatives that encourage entrepreneurship and small business development in the Roxbury area.

Dr. Malcolm entered union work when she joined RCC as a full time faculty member five years ago. Her dedication to shared governance and strengthening faculty representation has guided her path. She also serves as Faculty Assembly President and is committed to ensuring that faculty voices help shape institutional decisions. Her leadership is rooted in listening, clear communication, and service. Recently, she and chapter leadership responded to concerns about proposed changes to the Advising Team. Through early communication and steady advocacy, they secured clear assurances from HR, reinforcing member trust and demonstrating the importance of collective action.

Together, Dr. Bowen and Dr. Malcolm bring a strong, thoughtful, and unified leadership presence to the RCC chapter. They are inspired by RCC students, grounded in community, and committed to building an inclusive and collaborative environment where members feel supported, heard, and empowered.



Spotlight is researched and written by Colleen Avedikian, MCCC Secretary and Professor of Sociology at Bristol Community College.

Colleen Avedikian is a Professor of Sociology at Bristol Community College, where she has taught since 2014. A native of Lawrence, Massachusetts, she earned a master's degree in Sociology from Northeastern University and a Ph.D. in Educational Leadership and Public Policy from the University of Massachusetts Dartmouth. Her doctoral research focused on adjunct faculty organizing at public universities in the United States.

Dr. Avedikian has previously served as Secretary and Vice President of the Bristol Community College chapter and has served as MCCC Statewide Secretary since 2022. She is the current Chair of both the MCCC Personnel Committee and the Bylaws and Rules Committee. In addition, she represents the Bristol Chapter on the Strategic Action Committee and serves on the MCCC Organizing Committee. Colleen resides in Westport, Massachusetts, with her husband, Dan Avedikian, Professor of Mathematics at Bristol CC, and their son, William.

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enews list
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MASSACHUSETTS COMMUNITY COLLEGE COUNCIL



Massasoit Professional Association wears union blue on Professional Day. L to R: Lauren Dalton, Henry DiCarlo, Angelina Avedano, Christina Bermingham, Lisa Coole, Brian Schilling, Kimberly Griffith, Patricia Ball, and Julie McNeill-Kenerson.

IT AIN'T FREE!

Continued from p. 4

H.2812/S.1817 | An act to provide fair and affordable public retiree benefits

Valuing higher ed means providing basic dignity in retirement to those who have devoted their lives and work to public education. It means treating elders the way you wish to be treated.

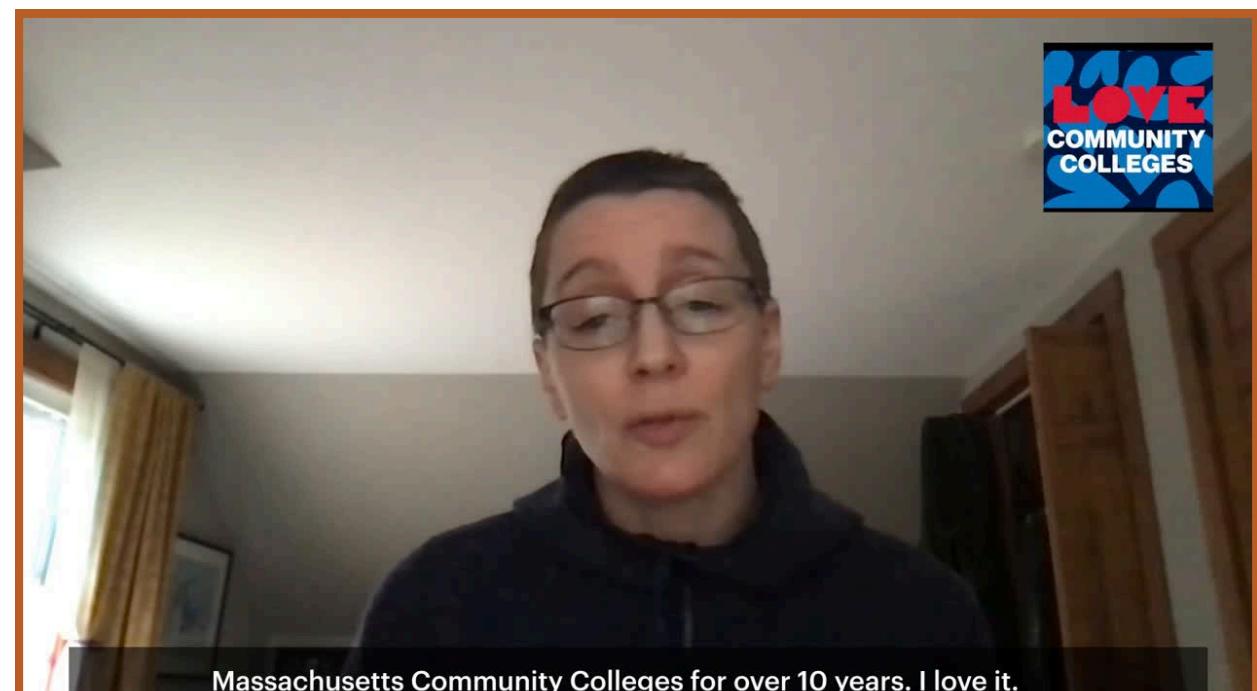
H.2078/S.1311 | An act uplifting families and securing the right to strike for certain employees

Valuing higher ed means ensuring a system that is fair and expedient, and when it is not, affording us our right to collective action in the form of strike. Without this right our expertise and professional labor is little more than servitude.

These are concrete and actionable items that need the immediate attention of state officials.

Finally, we must have full advocacy from our Community College Presidents and administrators in order to fulfill the promises we are making to students. They are quick to remind us that our students are our number one priority. However, undercutting programs and student support services with austerity narratives and putting forward meager offers during contract negotiations tells education workers all they need to know. We are sacrificial lambs on the altar of student success, and that is a price that is too high to pay.

Angelina Avedano
Co-Chair of MCCC's Organizing Committee
Professor at Massasoit Community College



SARAH FROM MASS BAY CC



GCC members gather to meet with legislators.

Western Massachusetts Educators Meet with Twelve Legislators

By Phyllis Keenan

Western Massachusetts Educators met with nine representatives and three senators over three evenings. Legislators met packed houses at Springfield Technical Community College (STCC) and Greenfield Community College (GCC) and online at Berkshire Community College (BCC).

Massachusetts Community College Council (MCCC) faculty and staff spoke of the positions cut at their colleges and to the need for more advisors and success coaches. As enrollment has increased at community colleges with Mass Educate and Mass Reconnect, caseloads for success coaches and advisors are too high, causing the students to not receive enough support. This affects student retention to complete courses and to enroll for the next semester. With the success of enrolling more students, legislators need to allocate more money to hire more professional staff like success coaches and advisors to see that the free community college investment pays off.

This can be addressed in HB4375, an act to preserve and advance Massachusetts' competitiveness in discovery, research, and innovation for a vibrant economy ("DRIVE"), and ensure that this bill includes funding to cover federal cuts to student services like TRIO.

As faculty and staff gave examples of how the delay in receiving their last raises impacted them and their colleagues at community colleges, the legislators nodded their heads. We thanked the educators for their advocacy to get the raises into supplemental budgets. Since the delay in raises has happened many times and takes a lot of time for the legislators advocating for timely paid raises, faculty and staff requested the legislators support H2820/S1364, an act streamlining state employee collective bargaining that deems collective bargaining agreements to be approved thirty days after their submission to the Legislature unless they are withdrawn by the governor or rejected by a vote of the Legislature. It also allows for existing funds that are held in reserve account to be used to fund the collective bargaining agreements.

Adjunct faculty and students from PHENOM (Public Higher Education Network of Massachusetts) spoke on the need for more full time faculty positions. Adjunct Faculty spoke to the need for higher pay, along with the need for health care and retirement benefits. There are multiple adjunct faculty bills which are being reworked into one bill.

At Greenfield CC, there was a display of armored mudballs and a request for passage H3438/S2115: to designate the Jurassic Armored Mud Ball as the official sedimentary structure of the Commonwealth. Greenfield CC has armored mud balls on their campus.

The twelve legislators supported the MCCC legislative agenda and expressed their appreciation for the large turn outs at the Western Mass. community colleges of STCC, BCC, and GCC.

Phyllis Keenan serves on the DCE Bargaining Team. She is the Adjunct Faculty Rep to the GCC Executive Committee, Strategic Action and Organizing Committees. Phyllis also works 5 hours/ week, organizing and advocating for higher ed legislation, as an MTA Higher Ed Senate District Coordinator for Western Mass

Phyllis has been an Adjunct Math Professor at Greenfield since 2003, mostly teaching Developmental Math and Math for Nursing and STEM, and Math for Liberal Arts. She also has taught Adult Basic Education, Workforce Development Math in Franklin and Hampshire County Jails, and middle school math. Phyllis enjoys teaching adults skills to be competent in math; thereby changing how they see themselves as learners who can learn math and achieve their goals.





MASSACHUSETTS COMMUNITY COLLEGE COUNCIL

COMMUNITY BLOG

Member Voices

"GCC's Day Contract Book Club: Empowerment Through Education"

by **Claire Lobdell**



Claire Lobdell is former Director and President of the GCCPA and has worked at GCC for eight years as a librarian and archivist. Her research and teaching interests include digital privacy, interactive online information literacy, teaching with primary sources, and oral history.

As we all know, our contracts make for dense reading and can be tough to parse for those without a legal background. In an effort to better understand the contract, as well as build a network of contract experts in departments across campus, the Greenfield Community College Professional Association (GCCPA) ran a Day contract "book club" in Fall 2024. A group of about 10 participants met for an hour weekly. Fortified by homemade baked goods, we talked through approximately an article of the contract per week. If we had things we were still unsure about at the end of each meeting, we made a list of questions that we sent to our MTA rep and/or chapter president for further clarification.

We saw several unanticipated positive outcomes from the process. Following a discussion about the different types of data the college is required to provide to the union—for example, the seniority lists and other employment data we're supposed to receive by October 15—members of the book club decided to start a chapter Data Advisory Committee. This committee now reviews our contractually mandated data, as well as things like the college budget when our Chief Financial Officer releases it. If the committee notes errors in the seniority lists (which there almost always are), they notify the affected members. I was our chapter vice president during the book club and unexpectedly became president in January 2025 when our then-president resigned to take an interim deanship. Thanks to a semester's worth of detailed discussions about the contract, I felt much more prepared than I otherwise would have for the leadership role.

The GCCPA doesn't intend for this to be a one-off experience; there will be a new book club starting Spring 2026 to read the new Day contract and we're hopeful it can be an annual occurrence. We also hope we can convene a similar DCE contract reading group. I encourage every chapter to start one; the better we know our contracts, the better we can advocate for ourselves and our colleagues.

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MCCC gears up at 10/4 training in Worcester

OCTOBER'S IN-PERSON ORGANIZING TRAINING

This Fall, members requested a Saturday training in order to accommodate Professional Staff who could not attend last summer's training sessions held during the week. On October 4th, approximately twenty rank and file members came together to prepare Fall organizing on our campuses. MTA Field Organizers, Colleen Fitzpatrick, Maria Hegbloom, Thomas Lee, and Charlotte Kelly supported the MCCC by leading sessions like Organizing 101 and 1-2-1 Conversations, geared to help chapters envision what collective action and organizing could look like on our campuses. These sessions supported one of the main priorities of MCCC's Organizing Committee (OC), which is to strengthen our membership in numbers and engagement.

Attendees also brainstormed the "State of Our Union Town Halls" that are currently taking place (December, January, and February) as we prepare to mobilize around our coordinated Day, DCE, and Legislative campaigns. In order to win fair wages and working conditions for members, we ask everyone to continue the momentum the OC is building by attending MTA's Winter Skills conference, where the MCCC will take a deep dive into our organizing strategy for 2026. A lot is on the line. The only way we'll win is to come together to educate, organize, and mobilize.

MCCC Organizing Strategy Session

MTA Union Skills Winter

Conference

Jan. 24th 2026 ~ Boston

[Free Registration HERE](#)

MCCC Board of Directors:

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