President’s Corner

Charlie Clarke, FA President

The spring semester is in full throttle and there are several FA themes to be reviewed.

Several term and annual faculty have recently inquired as to how they will be notified of renewal for next year. The College practice is not to formally notify, unless there is a no renewal. If the College is not going to renew, informal notification is usually given before the deadline. The contract requires notice of non-renewal be not less than 6 months before the end of your appointment (Article 54-II-B-5). This means you must be notified by December 31st for 10 month teaching faculty and February 28th for 12 month professional staff. So no news is good news! If you are presently a tenure track faculty member going into your 6th year, you are officially tenured as of 9-1-06. Faculty in non-ranked positions (Annual Faculty) after five consecutive, one year, full-time appointments (provided satisfactory evaluations and department recommendations) receive three-year appointments commencing in their 6th year. Our present high level of successful renewal, tenure and three year appointments is a testament to our excellent hiring and mentoring practices.

Last spring the FA survey research committee (Angel Andreu, Charlie Clarke, Bethany Gizzi, and Celia Reaves) designed, administered, and has now analyzed a survey of all FA members. The survey and future plans will be discussed at the March 6th FA membership meeting at college hour. This meeting will occur simultaneously at both the Brighton and Damon campuses. (See text box at right)

The FA leadership never releases actual survey results to the membership but we do discuss important themes. For example, the application of salary increases for the teaching faculty and the professional staff. There appears to be general agreement among the membership that we return to (continued on page 2)
the salary distribution model in which we pair equal percentage increases with proportionately higher dollar increases for 12 month professional staff.

Some survey response patterns left us with further questions to be explored in subsequent surveys. For example, preventative dental coverage.

There is also substantial interest in paid parental leave. Given the surge in the number of new faculty in typical child bearing ages, we have to figure out how we might respond to this niche interest. Additionally, health care benefits, including those for both current and future retirees, are overwhelmingly important to the membership.

We will be negotiating our next contract two years from now. The Faculty Council is committed to planning for this challenge now. During the next year we will be carrying out several mini surveys on probability samples of the faculty. High levels of participation are critical for valid survey results. We encourage you to mindfully participate if selected.

On an up note, we have successfully resolved our grievance over the reduction of Professional Development funds for the 2005–2006 year. During April 2005, the level of PD funds generated through conversion credit bumped into the contractual cap of $475,000 (Article 47 pp 51-52). We were not formally notified by the College in a timely way that this had occurred. We discovered that the College had failed to notify the impacted academic departments of their right to reconvert the extra conversion students into possible workload credit. After several discussions and review of past practice, it was decided that the College would waive the cap for this year and restore the PD funds for the 2005–2006 year. We still have to discuss with management how this issue will be dealt with in the future. All departments should find their share of PD funds have been increased as of early February.

Finally, we continue to struggle with implementation of a reporting and recording system for flex time and additional compensation, particularly as it relates to new time sheet design. The College changed the time sheet without first negotiating such changes with the FA. We presently have a grievance on hold regarding this. We are presently discussing an updated time sheet and attempting to reach an agreement on recording professional work required beyond the normal workday workweek. The FA expects there should be an accurate and user friendly way of monitoring and, if necessary, compensating such required extra time. We are hopeful of a successful resolution of this issue in the near future. Any professional staff member experiencing difficulty receiving flex time or compensation for work required beyond the normal workday/workweek should inform the FA. We promise confidentiality and prompt intervention. We can not monitor the implementation of the contract without timely and reliable information.

Great Services and Perks for Members

The following NYSUT (New York State United Teachers – our state union affiliate) programs are available to both members and agency fee payers. In many cases, payroll deductions can be arranged through NYSUT to occur here in our MCC Payroll Department. There are so many benefits available – it’s worth your while to check out the AFT and NYSUT web pages. This can easily be done on our webpage: www.monroeccedu/go/FA.

If you choose to use any the benefits described, and you’d like to share your experience with other members, please let us know.

– Marlene Goho
New NYSUT Barnes & Noble Discount Available

Member Benefits has endorsed a new discount program through Barnes & Noble.com. The program provides a base discount of up to 40% off list prices on all eligible products and a NYSUT Member Benefits bonus discount of an additional 5% off the online price of all eligible products. For purchases exceeding $25, shipping is free. This NYSUT discount is **NOT available in Barnes & Noble retail stores.**

There’s just one way to access this information: by using the NYSUT.org website. Go to http://www.nysut.org. You’ll see the left-hand blue menu, under “member services” select “member benefits.” Once selecting this you’ll see an ad announcing B&N – click “more” at the bottom of the ad, and you’ll be onto the next page where the link appears at the bottom of the page.

NYSUT indicates that in some cases, the link will not show up on your computer. If this is the case, contact NYSUT Member Benefits at 1-800-342-9810, and they’ll be happy to assist you.

NYSUT Wrap Plan Life Insurance Available

The Wrap Plan is a life insurance plan that Future Planning Associates has marketed through NYSUT Member Benefits for more than six years. Wrap Plan gives NYSUT members an opportunity to supplement existing insurance plans and may be obtained without any medical exams or blood tests. Members who are actively at work can receive a total of $200,000 of coverage regardless of pre-existing conditions and past health histories.

The FA has authorized NYSUT vendor Future Planning Associates, in partnership with Transamerica Financial Life Insurance Company, to send our members information on this benefit.

This information will be sent to your home. Remember, NYSUT members are eligible for payroll deductions through the MCC Payroll Department.

NYSUT Offers Free Social Services to Members

The NYSUT Social Services has been providing advocacy and personalized attention to members since 2000. This benefit is a confidential benefit offered to all NYSUT members. NYSUT’s Social Services Department mission is to improve the quality of members’ lives by offering social service support and advocacy.

When a member calls NYSUT Social Services, one of NYSUT’s highly trained and experienced Social Services’ staff members will be available to discuss the member’s unique situation and concerns and then give the member reliable information and referrals for professional assistance in the member’s own community.

This is a service provided by NYSUT, FREE OF CHARGE. The service is also available to retirees. According to NYSUT, some of the issues dealt with over the past year have included: Alzheimer's, assisted living, care giving issues, crisis intervention, disabilities, Employee Assistance Program, employment, financial, geriatric care managers, home care, homebound services, hospital stays, mental health/substance abuse services, nursing homes, pensions, retirement living, support groups, job-related stress, safe hospital discharge and appropriate follow-up services, plus many more.

NYSUT Social Services can be reached several ways: call 1-800-342-9810, ext. 6206, or via email at socsvcs@nysutmail.org.

The FA also has brochures available for both current members and retiree members. Please contact Sonja Lenhard at extension 2019 for a brochure.

- Marlene Goho
FIRST FA HOLIDAY PARTY
A GREAT SUCCESS!

The FA Membership Committee is proud to report that our first Holiday Party on December 2, 2005 was a great success! We had approximately one hundred people, including MCC faculty and staff, as well as spouses, partners, family and friends. The evening began with cocktails, appetizers and dinner, during which we visited and shared laughs with friends and colleagues. After dinner we enjoyed music, dancing and karaoke. At first there were only a few brave souls on the dance floor, but before long the dance floor was packed and everyone seemed to be having a great time. If you missed the party, we hope you will plan to attend our next one. Look for announcements and ticket sales during the fall semester. You won’t want to miss it!

Check out the fun we had:

Mark Sample started the night off with a rousing rendition of “Mack the Knife.”

Ellen Mancuso enjoying the music!

A few couples showed off their moves. Mike & Marlene Goho left & Christopher Otero-Piersante & Angelique Stevens below.
We even did the Electric Slide!

Deb Smith, Marilyn Christian, Barb Robinson, Joan Smith & Charlene Rezabek

Yona Koter, Reuven Koter, & Bill Drumright

The ENG/PHL department had a good showing: Ann Tippet, Mike Doolin, Lynn Bartholome, Carl Silvio & Elizabeth Johnston

Paul Wheeler, Mike Goho, Kathy Baxter, Sonja Lenhard & Todd Lenhard

Randy & Charlene Rezabek

Patty Drumright, Diane Dehond, Ellen Mancuso & Gloria Anderson

John Foster, Marilyn Andolino, Lou Andolino & Lauren Pivnick

More Karaoke! Christopher Otero-Piersante, Bethany Gizzi & Charlie Clarke

More dancers!
Looking to save money?

These discount programs endorsed by New York State United Teachers Member Benefits will save you money!

**Simply Certificates**
Perfect for gift giving! Gift certificates purchased from Simply Certificates online or by phone are discounted 10 percent for NYSUT members and agency fee payers. You must identify yourself as a NYSUT member to receive the discount. Note: This discount is not valid at Simply Certificates retail locations.

Certificates are accepted at hundreds of participating restaurants, day spas, resorts, golf courses and ski areas. Merchants are located in many areas within New York, as well as in many other states and D.C.

**Working Advantage**
If you like to save money on entertainment, then this program will interest you. Purchase discounted tickets for movie theaters, video rentals, theme/amusement parks, skiing, Broadway shows, museums and special family events through Working Advantage.

You can order tickets through the mail, Internet or phone. You must identify yourself as a NYSUT member and use the special NYSUT identification number: 704689984.

**Lifeline**
If you have an older relative living at home, Lifeline can give both of you peace of mind. It’s an easy-to-use personal response service that ensures older adults living at home get quick assistance whenever it is needed, 24 hours every day.

A push of a button dials a monitoring center and establishes two-way voice communication. A Lifeline Personal Help Associate communicates with the individual, assesses the situation, summons appropriate help and follows up to ensure help arrived. Lifeline also allows the user to answer the phone without rushing and risking a fall. Additionally, it can give reminders about medications, appointments, etc.

NYSUT members receive discounted pricing. Note: Some communities may offer Lifeline through hospitals or service agencies. You should check with these facilities for availability and pricing.

**How to Access**
For information about these programs, contact NYSUT Member Benefits: (800) 626-8101, e-mail: benefits@nysutmail.org, or online: www.memberbenefits.nysut.org.

For information about contractual expense reimbursement/endorsement arrangements with endorsed programs, please call NYSUT Member Benefits.