

FAN

Faculty Association Newsletter

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MONROE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

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<http://www.monroecc.edu/go/FA>

President's Corner

Charlie Clarke, FA President



Faculty Council

Congratulations to the newly elected members of Faculty Council (See article, this edition of FAN). More than representatives, they are a resource, who can assist you in finding answers to contract related questions. Each biweekly Faculty Council meeting has a regular agenda item entitled "member concerns". This is the time when Council members bring your issues of concern for consideration.

Inquiries Regarding State Retirement Option

Several members have inquired whether or not there will be a State sponsored early retirement incentive this year. NYSUT sources in Albany indicate a retirement incentive this year is still a possibility. At this time, we can't predict what a final bill might look like, but interested members should "be prepared" in case a late bill is passed and signed.

You should be aware the College has no obligation to adopt the incentive. For example, the loss of experienced faculty could keep the incentive from being offered. The final decision would be made by the Board of Trustees and need approval from the County. Although there are no firm details and using the 2002 incentive as a reference, members in the 'defined benefit' retirement systems (TRS and ERS) might receive one month additional service credit for each year worked up to a maximum of 36 months. Those in the defined contribution program (TIAA-CREF) might receive one month's salary for each year worked up to a maximum of 45% of one's salary with 36 years of service. If such an opportunity was offered, the College must consult with the FA and meetings would be held to explore details.

Salary Equity

Many faculty have consulted with us to see if they are favorably influenced by 'salary equity'. Michael Goho and I are working diligently with Sherry Ralston to confirm who will receive salary equity adjustments for next year. As soon as the numbers are confirmed both the College and the FA will notify those favorably affected in late June. Please feel free to contact us with any specific questions that you have regarding your present or future eligibility.

(continued on page 2)

Charlie Clarke, President; **Taine Vinci**, Vice President; **Scott Vrooman**, Secretary; **Chris Otero-Piersante**, Treasurer; **Michael Goho**, Teaching Director; **Tim Tatakis**, Teaching Director; **Randy Rezabek**, Professional Staff Director; **Paul Wheeler**, Professional Staff Director; **Bethany Gizzi**, Membership Chair; **Patricia Dano**, Adjunct Chair; **Angel Andreu**, Grievance Chair; **Joe McCauley**, Contract Chair; **Ellen Mancuso**, Legislative Chair; **Lauren Pivnick**, Benefits Chair; **Jeanne Hinkelman**, Institutional Chair; **Kathy Baxter**, Damon Campus and Site Extension Director

Graduation/Convocation

On a final note, graduation and convocation is scheduled for June 1st. It is a time in which we witness and celebrate our student's accomplishments. It is the College's pivotal celebratory event that FA member's are required to be present or utilize their personal time should they not be present (Art. 47, Section J). The FA also hosts a fun annual post-graduation party which is open to members, our civil service brothers and sisters and management. Further details will be forthcoming regarding our venue of celebration this year.

Faculty Association Plans to Sponsor Mediation Program

Patricia (Pat) Kress, Asst. Professor, Psychology, Mediation Chairperson

Christopher Otero Piersante, Asst. Professor, English/Philosophy

When was the last time you experienced conflict with one of your colleagues? Perhaps you thought it might just go away, but one thing led to another, and then hurt dissolved into gossip, loyalties into divisiveness, and kindness into vindictiveness. Maybe it became even bigger: perhaps your chair, dean, director, VP, and union had to get involved. Time and energy were wasted during meetings, and your credibility started to become tarnished.

All too often in such situations both parties come too late to a common awareness: external forces may have crafted a resolution that was political rather than redemptive. Any opportunity for the disputants themselves to come to their own mutually agreeable solution was wasted.

If you have faced a situation like this, you know something about how long it takes to heal those wounds. Yet you might ask yourself, "What other choice did I have?"

The FA is working on another option. We are working to establish a mediation program to help meaningfully resolve member-to-member conflict before the situation escalates. Our mediators will provide members with one more choice to resolve conflicts before others start making choices for them.

Our goal is to provide a safe environment where a trained mediator from the membership will help conflicting parties begin to dialogue. This will create an opportunity for feelings to be exchanged in privacy, within the presence of a neutral party, and away from the biases of management and the union. Disputants will be aided in developing their own mutually agreeable solutions. The process will be completely confidential.

Mediators will be members from our own FA. These mediators will undergo extensive training through Cornell University's School of Industrial Labor Relations. Our goal is to provide mediators who will be neutral, insightful, and discrete.

Right now, the FA is interested in identifying members who would make good mediators for non-contract disputes among the membership at MCC. *Do you know of two or three colleagues who would make good mediators? Do they meet the criteria?* (See text box) If so, please take a moment to send your suggestions to Pat Kress, via email at pkress@monroecc.edu

Once individual's names are put forward, screening would take place by the FA Mediation Committee (Pat Kress, Marlene Goho, Paul Wheeler and Jeanne Hinkelman). Those selected and agreeing to the training would begin this summer at the Cornell University ILR School in Rochester. Training will be held for six days, two days a week, from 9-4 p.m., over three weeks. Upon completion, the FA will maintain a list of mediators who will be assigned to assist individuals contacting the FA office for assistance.

(continued on page 3)

Mediation Program...*(Continued from page 2)*

Look for more up-coming on mediation. We look forward to hearing from you and getting our project up and running. If you have questions, please feel free to contact Pat Kress at the Damon Campus or Marlene Goho at the Brighton Campus.

Are you a possible mediator?

A Good Mediator:

- Has excellent “people” skills.
- Has excellent verbal and listening skills.
- Can take an impartial position.
- Has respect for the parties.
- Is trustworthy.
- Is dependable.
- Keeps information strictly confidential.
- Remains calm under pressure.



Perhaps you'd make an excellent mediator. Do you know colleagues who meet these criteria? If so, forward your name or the name of a colleague (with their permission) to Pat Kress, Psychology Department, at pkress@monroecc.edu.

VOTE/COPE

The “Voice Of Teachers in Education and the Committee On Political Education”

Ellen Mancuso, Legislative Chair, Faculty Council

She was 57 years old, a divorced mother of two with a grandchild on the way. After 25 years of factory work she found herself unemployed, realizing she was just moments away from the homeless that walked the streets. She had lived pension-less and paycheck to paycheck but had worked hard all of her life. Every minute of everyday she worried what would happen when unemployment ran out. Now she found herself in a job program at MCC working to avert all disaster by getting a degree. As she struggled to get on the tall stool to access resources in the library, she explained her plight, and had to write her first paper since high school.

We may or may not know students like this, but struggling students are a part of our population. For them, we are their lifeboats and perhaps one the reasons that some of us decided to work in higher education. But this student, like many others, is funded in part by New York State. The state, however, has received an F in higher education funding and is not keeping pace. In an effort to improve New York's report card, NYSUT (New York State United Teachers, our state affiliate) lobbies our State Legislators on higher education issues. Each year our union strives to bring the state funding of community college education to the mandated level of one-third. These efforts are fueled by **NYSUT's Vote Cope Campaign Fund**. As Faculty Association members, we may not all agree with the philosophy of political action, but we can probably all agree that adequate funding of education is important. ***We want our voices from Rochester*** heard in Albany and with our Vote-Cope funds support pro-education candidates through grass-roots lobbying. We care enough about these issues and our campus to stand tall, stand together, and contribute to NYSUT's Vote Cope Campaign. Now we are asking you to do the same. Do not let our voice be a whisper but instead be a megaphone of action on behalf of our students.

In the next few weeks, you will be receiving additional information and a request from Charlie Clarke, Faculty Association President and Ellen Mancuso, Legislative Chair to contribute to our Vote Cope Campaign. We ask that you please contribute \$1 per pay period*. If you can contribute more, that's even better! Every \$1 counts.

Editor's Note: NYSUT and VOTE/COPE are non-partisan and contributions to VOTE/COPE are voluntary in nature. Members' dues are never used for political endorsements or political activities.

**Vote/Cope deductions are handled through our MCC Payroll Department.*

Working in a Union Environment

Brigette Martineau, Instructor in Mathematics

I've asked newer faculty to react to working in a union environment. Here is the second in our series.

- Charlie Clarke, FA President

I have never worked in a unionized workforce before working at MCC. Prior to working at MCC my exposure to unions consisted of taking a class on Labor Management at McGill University and living through the numerous strikes that are ever occurring in Montreal (For example, bus drivers, postal workers, blue collars, daycare workers, hockey players...) I remember everybody's life being negatively affected by these labor conflicts. At that point in my life, a union sounded just like strike and complications. When I first started at MCC, I made a decision of learning what it meant to work in a unionized environment. I wanted to learn more and understand the underlying processes of working in a union. So I decided that going to a Faculty Association meeting would be a good starting point. I was shocked to find out that we were not allowed to strike. I was also surprised by the apathy of the FA members as there was almost nobody at the meeting. I kept going out of curiosity and also because I wanted to learn how a union works. My goal is to be able to make up my mind on what I agree and disagree with. I want to be able to take decisions based on facts, not on impulse. I believe that the MCC's FA can fulfill this role for me.

Members Elect Officers for 2006-2007

Marlene Goho, Administrative Director, FA

Balloting for Faculty Council officer positions took place on April 25 and April 26. The results are as follows:

Secretary	Patricia (Pat) Kress	Psychology
Treasurer	Christopher Otero-Piersante	English/Philosophy
Teaching Director	Tim Tatakis	Biology
Contract Chair	Joe McCauley	Business/Economics
Damon/Site Director	Kathy Baxter	Student Services-Damon
Prof. Staff Director	Paul Wheeler	Purchasing
Legislative Chair	Ellen Mancuso	ETS Libraries
Membership Chair	A/H/P/S	Randy Rezabek
ETS Instructional Technologies	Angel Andreu	Institutional Research
Institutional Chair	Christine Casalnuovo-Adams	Admissions
Adjunct Director	Patricia (Patti) Dano	PE/Health

Delegates elected to the 2007 NYSUT Representative Assembly include: Angel Andreu, Bethany Gizzi, Lauren Pivnick, Taine Vinci, Ellen Mancuso and Chris Otero-Piersante. Alternates elected include: Kathy Baxter, Randy Rezabek, Paul Wheeler, Bill Drumright, Judi Salsburg Taylor.

A special thanks to the following persons: **Roxanne Saxton** (Nursing) and **Judi Salsburg Taylor** (Transitional Studies) who counted the ballots; **Kathy Baxter**, our Damon elections coordinator; **Sonja Lenhard**, our absentee ballot coordinator, and the great poll watchers who volunteered time to assist with balloting! (*A special thank you goes out to the Mathematics Department who volunteered the most pollwatchers!*) Thanks to all who assisted!

Note: Faculty Council consists of 16 positions. The terms for the positions of President (Charlie Clarke), Vice President (Taine Vinci), Teaching Director (Mike Goho) and Benefits Chair (Lauren Pivnick) expire on June 30, 2007.

Save money on books, movies and more.

Maybe it's reading a bestseller like "Marley & Me: Life and Love With the World's Worst Dog." Or maybe you missed the remake of "King Kong" or want to see a clip on the movie's special effects. Maybe you want to two-step to "Tim McGraw's Greatest Hits." Or maybe you just want to surprise your child with Harry Potter's Wand.

Whether it be books, textbooks, DVDs, videos, music, gifts, games, toys, prints or posters, NYSUT members can receive a special discount when purchasing these items through the NYSUT Member Benefits-endorsed Barnes & Noble.com online bookstore. The special NYSUT discount also applies to items from B&N.com's sale annex.



Barnes & Noble.com's prices are already discounted up to 40 percent. You, as a NYSUT member, receive an **additional five percent** off these discounted prices when you access the bookstore through the link off the Member Benefits Web site, www.memberbenefits.nysut.org. When you add an item to your shopping cart, your discounted price will show.

Shipping is free when you spend \$25 or more, and most products are eligible for "Fast Delivery," which is three business days or less. See the site for details.

This offer is only available through the Member Benefits Web site. This offer is not available in Barnes & Noble retail stores.

Member Benefits endorses other discount and travel programs that can help save you money - see their Web site at www.memberbenefits.nysut.org, e-mail benefits@nysutmail.org, or call toll-free (800) 626-8101.

Entertainment savings include Simply Certificates discounted gift certificates; Working Advantage discounted movie tickets, movie rentals, theme parks, Broadway shows, online shopping, sporting events and more; and Six Flags discounted admissions to participating parks.

Travel savings include Carnival, Holland America and Princess cruises through Carlson Wagonlit Travel/Cruises; and car rentals through Alamo, Avis, Budget and Hertz.

Peace-of-mind savings include Lifeline Personal Response & Support Services, The Buyer's Edge discount buying service for major appliances, furniture, automobiles and more; HEAT USA heating oil program, and the recently endorsed Equifax Credit Watch™ Gold 24/7 credit monitoring service.

For information about contractual expense reimbursement/endorsement arrangements with providers of endorsed programs, please call NYSUT Member Benefits or refer to your NYSUT Member Benefits Summary Plan Description.