President’s Corner
Charlie Clarke, FA President

Upcoming Faculty Council Elections
In this issue of FAN we announce the annual process of electing officers to serve on Faculty Council. If you are considering running for a position on Faculty Council, I encourage you to consult our Bylaws on the responsibilities of officers (www.monroecc.edu/go/FA) and also to call or stop by the FA office if you have further questions. The timetable for elections is included in the text box (right). Please note we’ll have our first membership meeting of the semester on March 31st. Further nominations will be accepted and we will be discussing upcoming FA business and member concerns. Elections will be held on April 28 at both the Brighton and Damon Campuses. Our staff will arrange for mail ballots for our members at the PSTC and Applied Technology.

The State Budget Crisis
On the state economic front, the news that I received at last week’s NYSUT’s Higher Education Committee is bleak. There is currently an estimated $9.1 billion deficit in the 2010-2011 state budget if cuts and additional revenues are not enacted. This is coming on top of a December, 2009 midyear cut ($130 per FTE) in the current state budget reimbursement rate. The deficit appears to be structural and may last until

Faculty Council Elections Schedule

March 17 – Nominations for officers are now open. Written nominations should be sent to the FA, 7-205 by March 30.

March 31 – 12 Noon, College Hour in 8-300 with video streaming to Room 4-151 Damon

Agenda
• Written nominations announced
• Further nominations accepted, closing nominations
• Member Concerns/Other business

April 7 – Candidate’s Statements Due

April 14 – FAN is published with candidate’s statements

April 28 – Balloting at Brighton & Damon-Mail Ballots Due to the FA Office

Election results will appear in the Tribune.

(continued on page 2)
state finances, especially in the area of public higher education. Community colleges are facing a 15.5% cut in FTE funding from 2008-09 levels. This is occurring at a time of record enrollments.

At the local level, Monroe County contributes the lowest percentage of all New York State community colleges to MCC. However, our conversations with several county legislators indicated an unwillingness to significantly increase the County contribution until the MCC fund balance is lowered. Fund balances are meant to accommodate stormy days and we are facing a crisis of funding. MCC’s significant fund balance will be quickly diminished if we do not improve state and local funding. Even though we are better positioned than most other community colleges to confront the gathering economic storm, we must act now. It is in our interest that each Faculty Association member contact their state and local representatives to “stop the drop” in education funding. The current strategy of cutting education funding is equivalent to a farmer eating their seed before planting season. It is ironic that during the Depression, New York State expanded education funding and expanded the state college system.

You can easily contact your state representatives by going to NYSUT’s web site www.nysut.org and clicking on Legislative Action. The more faculty who take the few minutes to send a fax or craft a personally mailed letter, the more likely that the economic development driver of education will be sustained. The agency of the Faculty Association, NYSUT*, and the AFT** will be effective only with every member weighing in with their voice!

*NYSUT: New York State United Teacher’s (FA’s State Affiliate)
**AFT: American Federation of Teachers (FA’s National Affiliate)

FA Lobbies in Albany on Higher Education Issues

Marlene Goho, Administrative Director, FA

Our FA Legislative Action Committee* has recently returned from two days of higher education lobbying in Albany on March 1-2. The trip was sponsored by our state affiliate, the New York State United Teachers, for higher education locals like the MCC Faculty Association. Prior to meeting with our legislators, we met in a group session with other faculty from community college locals, SUNY four-year colleges and CUNY (City University) colleges to review the state budget crisis and its impact on higher education.

On March 2 we called upon our legislators to discuss the dire financial situation in New York State and its affect on higher education. We visited with Assembly members Joseph Errigo, Susan John, Brian Kolb, David Gantt, Joe Morelle, Bill Reilich and David Coon, and with Senators James Alesi, Joseph Robach, and Mike Nozzolio. While they listened to our concerns regarding the restoration of community college funding, they didn’t offer much reassurance.

We focused on these crucial issues:

- State aid: We urged the legislators to restore the proposed cut of $285 per FTE student in state base aid, vital to helping campuses preserve services and programs.

- We urged our legislators to reject the privatization of SUNY! The privatization of SUNY comes from the Governor’s Executive Budget and is called the “Public Higher Education Empowerment and Innovation Act.” It has an impressive sounding name that could easily be construed as something very positive. For the most part, the legislators we spoke to were not well informed on this issue.
From what I’ve read, there seems to be widespread support for the Governor’s initiative, including support from the SUNY Chancellor and University of Buffalo. However, the Act is short on details as to how it would be helpful to students! Consider these points:

- Under the Governor’s plan, SUNY would have the authority to raise tuition without legislative approval.
- SUNY would have the authority to impose differential tuition that would vary by campus and program.
- SUNY would have total autonomy in areas of leasing of state-owned campus properties, procurement of contracts for services, and the establishment of public/private joint ventures and partnerships.

The reason given in the Governor’s budget for these changes is to provide SUNY with more flexibility and less regulation, making it more competitive.

However, SUNY was established as a public system of higher education to ensure New York residents an affordable and quality education. Right now, qualified high school and community college graduates are being denied admission in increasing numbers each year. According to our state affiliate, “SUNY has greatly shifted the discussion of its priorities away from access and quality to concepts such as economic development and public/private relationships.” Students finishing at MCC with hopes of transferring to a SUNY college will be competing with other students outside of NYS for the programs and slots available at each campus.

I fail to see how this is helpful to the residents of NYS. The affordable and quality education that many of our own children (mine included) have enjoyed and profited from may be gone. So, the bottom line is the approval of this initiative would move the SUNY system “closer to that of a private college.”

- We also spoke about how the Governor’s budget cuts pursue an unbalanced approach for dealing with the state’s finances, especially in the area of higher education,
- We urged our legislators to oppose all reductions and changes to TAP eligibility standards.

As Charlie mentioned consider sending a personal letter (which works best) or consider a phone call or fax. Also, our FA website will soon be updated with regular legislative news (www.monroecc.edu/go/FA). *This budget crisis isn’t going away soon.* Please consider learning more and becoming more informed.

Charlie Clarke, Marlene Goho, Ellen Mancuso, Paul Wheeler, John Wadach, Jeff Kiggins, Brenda Smith (EOP)

**FA Mediation Project**

*Attention All Unit Members!*

The FA offers a private, confidential, and safe way to resolve interpersonal conflict in the workplace through the use of trained (faculty and professional staff) mediators. Mediation is strictly confidential and a process that treats all participants respectfully. Mediation is an opportunity to engage in addressing interpersonal conflict with no paper trail and no involvement from superiors, union or administrators. If you find yourself in need of this service, please contact:

Professor Patricia Kress
FA Mediation Project Chair
262-1546 (Damon)

Marlene Goho, Adm. Director
292-2528 (Brighton)

*All inquiries and mediations are confidential*
NOMINATIONS FOR FACULTY COUNCIL
Nominations are now open for eight (8) positions on the Faculty Council for 2010-2012. Nominations are also open for delegates to the spring, 2011 NYSUT Representative Assembly. Please refer to the FA Bylaws (www.monroecc.edu/go/FA) for the responsibilities of the Faculty Council Officers and Chairs. Contact the FA at Ext. 2524 or 2528 with questions. You may submit your own name, or with their permission, names of colleagues.

Please Note: Faculty Council members meet every other Wednesday from 3-5 p.m. Please be sure you are aware of this time commitment when running for office.

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<th>Term</th>
<th>Officer Position</th>
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<td>Secretary</td>
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<td>*Delegate(s) to the NYSUT Representative Assembly</td>
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*The NYSUT Representative Assembly is held annually. Delegates to the Representative Assembly consider proposed amendments to the NYSUT Constitution and Bylaws, resolutions and other business, which might be brought to the RA, according to NYSUT constitution provisions or policy.

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