

I hope you and your family had a happy albeit cold, snowy holiday. To new faculty/librarians, I would like to welcome you to our membership. If the MSCA/Salem Chapter can be of assistance please call us at extension 6366.

Since the last newsletter we have a new Governor and Lt. Governor. And following the inauguration there have been many rumors about reorganization, consolidation, centralization, streamlining, early retirement packages, cuts, etc. Right now that's all they are, rumors. Some things have happened – The Board of Higher Education Vice-Chair Peter Nessen has been appointed chief education advisor, a position that Governor Romney has indicated that he would like elevated to cabinet level. Mr. Nessen has been on the Board of Higher Education since 1993. The Governor announced the state is facing a budget deficit of up to \$600 million dollars and asked the legislature for powers to reduce aid to cities and towns and higher education. The amount of the deficit has been in question for some time – recall that in December we were not going to meet revenue projections, then on the last day we exceeded the monthly forecast – go figure!

Another known item, within the state budget over one-third of spending is mandated by law. The result, less than two-thirds of the budget is discretionary spending and Higher Education is in this pool. At Salem State about 64% of our \$55.6 million budget is state appropriated, the remainder comes primarily from college fees and tuition. As we have experienced in the past, cuts mid-way into an academic year can cause tremendous disruptions in college operations, especially if the cut is up to ten percent (10%) as has been reported.

In reviewing a PowerPoint presentation used during the campaign by Governor Romney and Lt. Governor Healy the higher education bullets include: remove patronage and politics from higher education system, restructure financial relationship between Commonwealth and higher ed, standardize or centralize administration and common functions, create an integrated public higher education system out of the current hodge-podge, link curriculums to articulated regional economic needs, empower community college system to own job training, and to create cabinet-level position of Secretary of Education to coordinate all state education spending under one direct report to the Governor.

As the process of funding public education seems to change frequently, it is important to let our elected officials know that spending money on a strong state public higher education system is not a cost but an investment. It adds revenue, in the long run, to the state.

The MSCA Board of Directors will meet with the Council of Presidents on Thursday, January 16<sup>th</sup> to discuss issues of mutual concern. Immediately

following this joint meeting, the MSCA Board of Directors will meet to discuss action(s), if any, we should recommend at this time.

Within this climate of fiscal woes, both our day and evening contracts are up for renewal. The day contract expires on June 30, 2003 and the evening contract expires on August 31, 2003. For the day contract currently six days have been reserved for discussing the distance learning and intellectual property rights issues. Bargaining begins with the employer, the Board of Higher Education, on February 10<sup>th</sup> in hopes of resolving those two issues by March 17<sup>th</sup>, the date the main contract negotiations are scheduled to begin.

On February 3<sup>rd</sup> the bargaining team will meet at Salem and will attend our Chapter Meeting. Members are encouraged to attend and ask questions, and offer suggestions on all issues of bargaining. In addition to this meeting, members are encouraged to complete a bargaining survey that will be distributed shortly.

The DGCE contract talks will also start this semester. Thanks to all those members who spent the time to complete the DGCE survey – the results will be used to formulate our proposal.

On a positive note, congratulations to English Professor Nancy Schultz who has won a National Endowment for the Humanities Fellowship Award for academic year 2003-2004. Well done!

#### **“Merit Pay”**

Recently unit members were awarded “merit” pay. At Salem there were three levels of “merit”.

55 members received \$1,840.54  
96 members received \$1,200.01  
98 members received \$ 749.87  
40 members received \$ -0-

This year’s merit pool was 1.75% of the statewide payroll. The Chapter Office has a list of each recipient, the amount of each award, and the reason for it. Any member who would like to see this document may stop in during normal business hours.

#### **Chapter Meeting**

There will be a Chapter Meeting on Monday, February 3<sup>rd</sup> at 11:00 a.m. in the MLK room, Ellison Campus Center.

Members of the Day Bargaining Committee will be available to hear your input, concerns, and to answer questions about the upcoming negotiations. All units members are encouraged to attend.

### **Committee Appointments**

The following members were recommended by the Executive Committee to serve on the committees indicated.

Curriculum Committee:	Robert Wang, CHE
Graduate Education Council:	Maureen McRae, NUR
College-Wide Assessment:	Allan Shwedel, EDU
Strategic Planning Council:	Margaret Andrews, LIB and Lawrence Goss, GEO

### **DGCE**

Effective January 1, 2003 new rates of pay (per credit hour of instruction) for teaching in the DGCE program are as follows:

Visiting Instructor:	\$ 928
Visiting Senior Instructor:	\$ 944
Visiting Assistant Professor:	\$ 977
Visiting Associate Professor:	\$1,026
Visiting Professor:	\$1,074

For those who teach in the graduate program the stipend is one hundred and seven percent (107%) of the above.

### **Contracts Available**

Day and evening contracts are available in the union office, room SB-205B, during normal business hours - Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, and Friday from 8:15 a.m. to 1:15 p.m.

### **E-Mail**

New unit members please call Mary Buckley, Chapter Secretary at extension 6920 and let her know your Salem State e-mail address. At various times the Chapter sends information to its members via the e-mail system.

### **Salem Chapter/MSCA Executive Committee Meeting**

There will be an Executive Committee meeting on Tuesday, January 21<sup>st</sup> at 2:00 p.m., Essex County Room, Ellison Center.

The agenda will include a discussion on the MSCA Board meeting, PeopleSoft, and Honors Committee. This meeting is open to all members.

### **DID YOU KNOW...**

that the grievance procedure provided by the collective bargaining agreement consists of three steps? Step I is considered informal and involves a written notice to the Vice-President of Academic Affairs briefly describing the subject of the grievance. A grievant must file this notice within ten working days of the alleged violation of the contract. A hearing is then held with the Vice-President, who considers the grievance, weighs the requested remedy, and makes his or her determination within five days. If the grievant is unsatisfied with the outcome, then he or she can proceed to Step II within seven working days by filing the complaint with the President. A formal hearing is held with the President within fourteen days after the complaint has been filed. Within thirty days of the initiation of Step II, the President shall provide the grievant a written decision, which must set forth the facts of the grievance and the reasons for his or her determination. If the grievant is unsatisfied with the President's decision, then within fourteen days Step III, which is resolved through arbitration, may be initiated by the Association.

If for any reason you believe that your contractual rights have been violated, please call the local Chapter of the MSCA, ext. 6366.

Maggie Vaughan