

# Perspective

**Massachusetts State College Association Newsletter** 



Patricia Johnston, Editor

**NEA/MTA/MSCA** 

June 2003

## Health Insurance Premiums to Increase for State Employees

Patricia V. Markunas, MSCA President

As the proposed state budget for FY 2004 goes to the House and Senate Joint Budget Conference Committee, the coalition of public employee unions and its members are angry and disappointed over the failure of either the House or the Senate to maintain the current payment split for state employee health insurance premiums at 85% paid by the state and 15% paid by the employee.

Although both the House and Senate rejected the Governor's proposal that the state would pay only 75% of the least expensive health insurance plan in which state employees could enroll, both legislative houses have included increased payments for health insurance by state employees in their budget proposals.

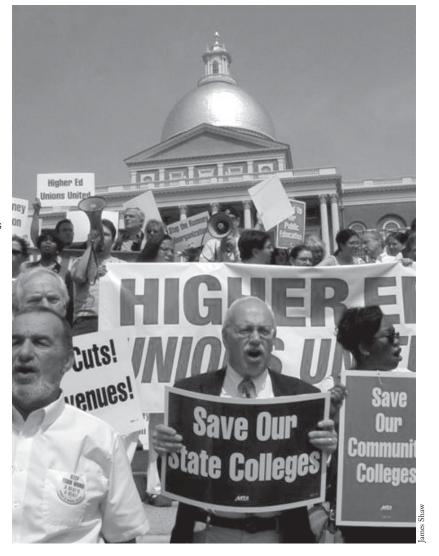
The House proposed an across-the-board increase of the state employee payment from 15% to 20%. The Senate proposed a tiered system based on employee salary levels. Complete information about the proposals, as well as a chart outlining the economic impact for state employees, appears on Page Three.

These proposals represent a significant pay cut for state employees. The need to restore state revenues — which have declined by \$4,000,000,000 because of 45 tax cuts enacted over the past 10 years — has never been more important. Please contact your local state senator and representative to urge their support for raising revenues and restoring our benefits.

As part of the consolidated amendment to the House budget on health insurance, the House included an Early Retirement Incentive Program (ERIP) for those state employees not paid through federal grants, trust funds and capital accounts. It provides five years of age, service, or a combination of both up to five years, similar to the ERIP implemented in 2001. The application period would be July 15 to August 15, 2003. Employees in higher education would have an effective retirement date of December 31, 2003.

The Senate budget proposal on ERIP provides the same five year benefit, but extends the program to include employees paid through grants, trusts, and capital accounts. The application window would be the same but the effective retirement date for higher education employees would be October 1, 2003 — an important discrepancy that must be resolved in conference.

If you have specific questions about your eligibility for these possible ERIP options, please contact your campus Human Resources Office, not your chapter president or MSCA officers.



MSCA Vice President Frank Minasian helped deliver the message to the Governor on April 29, 2003: the public demands quality public higher education.

## FY'04 Budget Goes to Conference Committee

As we go to press, this is the status of the FY 2004 budget as it will be considered by the budget conference committee. It is expected that the budget will be finalized and sent to Governor Romney by mid-June. This report has been modified from various reports prepared by Arline Isaacson of the MTA Governmental Services Division.

#### **Campus Budgets**

In the House budget, state college line items were cut 15.4% from the FY'03 budget. In the Senate budget, the state college line items were cut by 13.8%. However, the Senate budget includes tuition retention (section 59). The Board of Higher Education retains the legal authority to set tuition levels; consequently, both the MSCA Board of Directors and the state college Council of Presidents oppose tuition

Library and reference materials were zero funded in both budgets. Scholarship money was level funded with FY'03 in the Senate budget but cut by \$9,100,000 in the House budget.

## Composition and Powers of the Board of Higher Education (BHE)

Under Section 52 of the Senate budget, the BHE would have two non-voting members and nine voting members. The non-voting members would be the House and Senate chairpersons of the Joint Committee on Education. The voting members would consist of:

- the Commissioner of Education (ex-officio)
- 5 members appointed by the Governor
  - a) one of which shall be a representative of organized labor
  - b) one of which shall be a representative of the business community
  - c) one of which shall be an undergraduate student enrolled in a public college or university

- 3 members chosen to represent public institutions of higher education
  - a) one chosen by the state college presidents
  - b) one chosen by the community college presidents
  - c) one chosen by the chancellors of UMass.

Board members shall serve five-year terms (except for the student representative). The BHE chair shall be appointed by the Governor (as is the case currently). Terms for current BHE members shall expire on August 30, 2003. The new board shall include two of the current board members.

Under Section 53 of the Senate budget, the BHE loses its power to close or consolidate colleges without the authorization of the legislature. Under Section 56, the BHE can continue to establish guidelines for fees.

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## Information Concerning Certain Payments For AY 03-04

The current contract provides for the payment of all promotions effective 9/1/03, earned terminal degrees effective 9/1/03, and chairs stipends for the AY 2003-2004. In addition, a 1 percent (1%) professional development pool will be available on a per capita basis for eligible faculty and librarians. We estimate that the per capita amount available for professional development activities undertaken between 7/1/03 and 6/30/04 will be in the range of \$550-\$600.

Faculty and librarians will participate in Article VII activities (college governance) in consideration for these payments. These payments are independent of the status of negotiations for the 2003-2006 contract and all of the colleges have included these costings in campus budgets for the upcoming fiscal year.

If you have any questions, please contact your local chapter or the MSCA president's office.

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MSCA Communications Salem State College Salem, MA 01970 2 Perspective June 2003

# In the Association MSCA Board Votes to Oppose HE Reorg

As members are aware, Governor Romney filed two major bills to reorganize the executive branch of state government under Article 87 of the state's constitution. One bill, 600 pages in length, establishes, in part, a Secretary of Education and Workforce Development that would oversee both K-12 and higher education. The second bill, 12 pages in length, abolishes the president's office at UMass, allows the governor to appoint both the Chancellor of Higher Education and the Commissioner of Education, and reduces the term of office for members of both statewide governing boards to two years.

There were no specific reorganization proposals about the state and community colleges — no mergers, no closures, no privatization, no regional boards, no centralization of tuition and fees, and no changes in the employer or union representation. The full text of both bills appear on the state's webpage <www.state.ma.us>, which is linked through the MSCA webpage <www.mscaunion.org>.

The MSCA Board of Directors voted unanimously in mid-May to oppose both bills. On June 3rd, MSCA President Pat Markunas testified against both bills at hearings held by the Joint Committee on State Administration. Her testimony appears on the MSCA webpage, and letters to the editor of *The Chronicle of Higher Education* concerning reorganization appear on Page Three.

#### **MSCA Perspective**

A publication of the Massachusetts State College Association, the faculty and librarian union for the nine state colleges in Massachusetts. Write to us at: MSCAperspective@salemstate.edu

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National Education Association: www.nea.org

Massachusetts State Colleges Council of Presidents: www.mass-state-col.org

Board of Higher Education: www.mass.edu

Massachusetts Community College Council: www.mccc-union.org

The State Administration Committee issued an unfavorable report on both bills. On June 5th, the Senate voted largely along party lines to defeat both bills overwhelmingly. Under the provisions of Article 87, this means that neither proposal can become law.

## New Memorandum of Agreement Clarifies Email Status

Part of the Memorandum of Agreement signed April 25, 2003, between the BHE and MTA/MSCA outlined electronic mail policies on the state college computer systems. The new memorandum requires the colleges to provide email addresses and access for part-time faculty during the semesters they are teaching. Another passage describes the legal status of email conducted and stored on state computer systems. Because of its importance to members, it is quoted here verbatim:

"The parties recognize that a substantial portion of any information (including email and other communications and records of account usage) that is stored on a computer legally constitutes public records and is accessible as such to any person at any time."

While there are some conditions under which email correspondence on a state computer system may be considered confidential, this would apply only when the email is of a nature not considered a public record. The parties further agreed that "The Board and the Colleges shall not, in an arbitrary manner, selectively record or monitor the information transmitted or stored by unit members."

While information will not be actively monitored, this does not guarantee privacy to members. The agreement outlines many situations in which the college would have access to correspondence or provide access to other agencies. These include a variety of possibilities, from necessary maintenance and backup of the system to cooperation with law enforcement. In addition, the College may monitor and log individual usage data on a routine basis. Faculty and librarians should always be aware of the public nature of their state communications.



Thousands of supporters of public higher education converged on the State House in Boston, April 29, 2003.

WORKING

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FOR PUBLIC

## Mass Art Member Wins MTA Design Contract

MTA's publications will soon be sporting a new look. Lisa Rosowsky, Assistant Professor of Graphic Design at the Massachusetts College of Art, has redesigned the MTA's

logo. Rosowsky's design firm, Blue Studio, was one of six studios invited to bid for the job of designing a new visual identity system for the MTA's new campaign, "Working Together for Public Education." During the kickoff meeting, MTA committee members came up with a list of words key to describing the qualities and mission of the MTA: Strength, Action, Unity, Compassion. The final design reflects these four qualities, which together form a circle of mutual support and continuity. The committee was delighted with the design, which it felt captured a modern, fresh feeling while communicating the spirit of unionism and forward-movement needed during troubled times.

Rosowsky is the principal and founder of Blue Studio, a print-design firm which, since 1992, has specialized in design for arts, non-profit, and educational organizations. In 2002 she received the NEA's Excellence in the Academy Art of Teaching Prize.

## Stay Plugged In Over The Summer

If you visited the MSCA website <www.mscaunion.org> last week, you could find...

- the full text of the governor's proposal to reorganize higher education
- the latest on a proposed early retirement incentive program
- the testimony given to legislative committees by MSCA representatives
- spreadsheets with the budget numbers recommended by the Senate Ways and Means — and expert analysis from the MTA Governmental Services Division
- contact information for state and federal representatives
- the web edition of the day contract
- much, much more.

The MSCA web site provides timely information, specific to the state colleges, which you will not find in such detail or with such excellent analysis in your daily newspaper. Please check it regularly over the summer for coverage of higher education issues.

Many thanks to MSCA Webmaster Nancy George (Librarian, Salem State College) for her terrific work in keeping the site updated.

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## **Annual Cost of Insurance Under Alternate Contribution Strategies**

Fiscal Year 2003 Versus Fiscal Year 2004

	pay 15% of premium		If State pays 80%		If State pays 75%		If State pays 70%		If State pays 65%	
Plan	Employee Cost FY'03	Employee Cost FY'04	Employee Cost FY'04	Employee Cost Increase From FY'03	Employee Cost FY'04	Employee Cost Increase From FY'03	Employee Cost FY'04	Employee Cost Increase From FY'03	Employee Cost FY'04	Employee Cost Increase From FY'03
Indemnity w/CIC										
Single	\$1,097	\$1,124	\$1,463	33%	\$1,763	61%	\$2,063	88%	\$2,363	115%
Family	\$2,491	\$2,682	\$3,335	34%	\$4,015	61%	\$4,696	88%	\$5,377	116%
Commonwealth PPO										
Single	\$ 554	\$ 637	\$ 850	53%	\$1,062	92%	\$1,274	130%	\$1,487	168%
Family	\$1,302	\$1,501	\$2,001	54%	\$2,502	92%	\$3,002	131%	\$3,502	169%
Harvard Pilgrim HMO										
Single	\$ 521	\$ 572	\$ 763	46%	\$ 953	83%	\$1,144	119%	\$1,334	156%
Family	\$1,265	\$1,388	\$1,851	46%	\$2,313	83%	\$2,776	119%	\$3,239	156%

### Health Insurance Premiums: House Proposal

The final House budget includes an across-the-board increase in health insurance premiums for all state employees to 80% paid by the state and 20% paid by the employee. This is an increase from the current 85% / 15% split and represents a 33% increase for all state employees.

The original House Ways & Means Committee budget included the following five-tier system in which employees would pay more for their health insurance based on their salary. Although this tiered system was not included in the final House budget, it is expected that it will be reconsidered in the budget conference committee.

Tier	Salary	Employee Contribution	State Contribution
Tier 1	\$0-\$24,999	15%	85%
Tier2	\$25K- \$49,999	20%	80%
Tier3	\$50K- \$89,999	25%	75%
Tier 4	\$90K - \$ 109,9	99 30%	70%
Tier 5	Over \$110K	35%	65%

Retirees prior to July 1, 2003, will continue to pay the same percentage of their health insurance premiums in effect at the time of retirement.

### Health Insurance Premiums: Senate Proposal

The Senate budget creates a tiered system whereby state employees would pay more for their health insurance premiums based on their salary:

Tier	Salary	<b>Employee Contribution</b>	State Contribution
Tier 1	\$0 - \$49,999	15%	85%
Tier 2	\$50K-\$74,999	20%	80%
Tier 3	\$75K-\$99,999	25%	75%
Tier 4	Over \$100K	30%	70%

State employees retired prior to July 1, 1994 continue to pay 10%. State employees retired between July 1, 1994 and June 30, 2003 would pay 15%. Those retiring after July 1, 2003, would pay a premium amount based on the tiered system.

#### **Contracts Available In All Chapter Offices**

Copies of the 2001-2003 MSCA day unit contract and the 2000-2003 DGCE unit contract are available for all members from the local chapter offices. If you want a copy of either or both contracts, please contact your local chapter president or the MSCA President's Office at 978-542-7282 or <Pmarkunas@aol.com>. Both contracts are also available on-line through the MSCA Webpage at <www.mscaunion.org>.

## Chronicle of Higher Ed Features MSCA Responses

Reprinted from May 23, 2003, Pages B4, B17.

## An 'III-Conceived Plan' for Higher Education by the Governor of Massachusetts

To the Editor:

Thanks to Jeffrey Selingo for his comprehensive coverage of Gov. Mitt Romney's ill-conceived plan to reorganize higher education in Massachusetts ("Reform Plan or 'Corporate Takeover'?," April 18). As is typical, the focus on the flagship, the University of Massachusetts at Amherst, gave short shrift to some other important issues, which I would like to include here for *The Chronicle*'s readers.

First, Selingo quoted the statistic that Salem State College has "13 full-time academic administrators per 1,000 students." What was not reported is that the Bain & Company consultants counted all the secretaries and work-study students in our academic departments as academic administrators....

Second, the graduation rates are only for first-time freshmen. Students who transfer from one state institution to another are not counted as graduates from either institution. Over the past decade, the Massachusetts Board of Higher Education has imposed numerous policies to create a seamless system among public institutions to foster transfer rates, not first-time graduation rates.... Consequently, about 45 percent of Salem State's entering class each fall are transfer students, but their graduation from Salem State doesn't count for the same Board of Higher Education that implemented the system. This is crazy.

Third, the two state colleges that are most successful by the performance measures that the Board of Higher Education wants to make the basis for state appropriations — the Massachusetts College of Art and the Massachusetts Maritime Academy—are the two colleges slated to have their state support reduced....

The consequence of succeeding as a public college is to become privatized. There is no clearer message from the governor and his people than that quality belongs only in the private sector; any public college deemed to be as good as a private college must become one. What an incredible message this is for our students and our citizens.

#### Patricia V. Markunas

President, Massachusetts State College Association Professor of Psychology, Salem State College

Your article about cuts to the Massachusetts higher-education system proposed by Governor Romney does not present the true extent of what is being contemplated, especially its impact on the education of students. Simply put, Romney's budget reductions entail massive cuts to services essential to the mission of the academy and to the quality of life on the campuses....

My educated guess, as well as political betting, tells me that few or none of these proposals will ever be carried out and that they are simply bargaining chips in an attempt to garner public support for cuts....

What we must realize as a nation, in our states, and in our local communities is that courageous leadership is not displayed by swinging the budget ax indiscriminately, but by encouraging wise and informed use of all our resources, in the full sense of the word. Children, young people, and older students enhancing their professional credentials are certainly among our most prized resources. And when the financial resources are simply not sufficient for the human and social tasks at hand, our leaders must actually lead, rather than pander to, us as citizens, confronting us with the real cost of having fine systems of public education. *Stephen J. Nelson* 

Research Associate in Education, Brown University Visiting Lecturer in Education, Bridgewater State College

## FY'04 Budget Goes to Conference Committee continued from page 1

However, this section deletes the variable that fees shall not exceed 25% of total student charges for the state and community colleges.

Section 502 details how the Board of Higher Ed should develop performance measures in coordination with the colleges and the ways in which a college could be deemed to be 'underperforming'. Under Section 594, the BHE shall create the Massachusetts Public Higher Education Research Council to solicit and secure gifts, grants and contributions for research to identify and promote 'best practices' in the academic and management activities of public higher education. Under Section 595, the BHE shall convene a commission to research and make recommendations regarding the health, vitality and future direction of the state college system.

## Early Retirement Incentive Program (ERIP)

As indicated on Page One, both budgets include provisions for an early retirement incentive for state employees, with some differences in the incentives and the effective dates for application and retirement. More information will be provided on the MSCA website <www.mscaunion.org>.

#### Mass College of Art

In Section 556 of the Senate budget, Mass Art shall submit a proposal to the BHE establishing tuition rates and admission standards for the College. The proposal shall ensure that no less than 60% of the undergraduates are Massachusetts residents and that in-state tuition 'shall preserve affordability'.

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## Faculty/Librarian Spotlight

### MSCA's Russell Joins UNESCO Team on Loss of Iraqi Antiquities



John Russell on the citadel of Aleppo, Syria.

"The art history books will have to be rewritten to reflect the losses..."
—John Malcolm Russell, commenting on the impact of the theft of works of Near Eastern Art from the National Museum of Antiquities after a UNESCO sponsored visit to Bagdad in May (The Boston Globe, May 23, 2003).

In the weeks before American and British forces invaded Iraq,

John Malcolm Russell, Professor of Art History at the Massachusetts College of Art, joined other archaeologists and historians of Near Eastern Art to alert the U.S. government about the vulnerability of Iraqi historical structures and collections. Unfortunately, the greatest fears of Russell and other scholars of Near Eastern culture came true, as the National Museum of Antiquities and other major collections were looted in the wake of the American invasion of Baghdad in April. As news of the catastophe circulated around the world, Russell played a critical role in assessing the impact of the looting for numerous media souces, including The New York Times, The Boston Globe, CNN, National Public Radio, WBUR's The Connection, The MacNeil-Lehrer News Hour, and 60 Minutes.

Since April, Russell has worked tirelessly to gather data on the thousands of objects stolen from the National Museum and other collections in order to alert customs officials, dealers, and collectors in the international market for antiquities on the transport and sale of stolen artifacts outside Iraq. Russell traveled to Lyon, France, in early May for a meeting with international law enforcement figures. Shortly after, he visited Bagdad as a member of a cultural assessment team organized by UNESCO (United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization)



Head of an Akkadian Ruler c. 2300-2200 BCE, bronze. Formerly Iraqi Museum, Baghdad.

to assess the damage done to the National Museum, the National Library, and other collections.

Concern is growing that substantial looting is now underway at numerous archaeological sites throughout the country, which not only results in the likely removal of the work from Iraq, but also destroys the context for interpreting the site and its materials, with an incalcuable impact on future historical research.

Russell earned his doctorate at the University of Pennsylvania. He has been the recipient of a J. Paul Getty Post-Doctoral Fellowship and the Arthur Kingsley Porter Prize from the College Art Association. Prior to the Gulf War, Russell directed archaeological excavations at Nineveh, Iraq, and now excavates at the Assyrian site of Tell Ahmarin, Syria. He is the author of numerous articles and four books on ancient Assyria, including *The Final Sack of Nineveh: The Discovery, Documentation and Destruction of Sennacherib's Throne Room at Nineveh, Iraq* (Yale University Press, 1998), *The Writing on the Wall: Studies in the Architectural Context of Late Assyrian Palace Inscriptions* (Eisenbrauns, 1999), and *Sennacherib's Palace Without Rival at Nineveh* (University of Chicago Press, 1991).

—Joanne Lukitsh, Massachusetts College of Art

### MCLA's Seider Named Sociologist of the Year

He has produced a play about striking industrial workers in North Adams. He has gathered and ana-



Maynard Seider

lyzed biographies of students in public and Little Ivy colleges, showing how socioeconomic class affects expectations. He has vigorously advocated for faculty as grievance officer, and now as president of the Faculty Association. He has formed alliances with sister unions, students, and community labor groups. And, for 25 years, he has taught sociology at Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts in North Adams.

Recognizing his wide-ranging contributions, the New England Sociological Association on April 26 named Professor Maynard Seider Sociologist of the Year for 2003.

In his windowless office in Murdock Hall, surrounded by packed bookshelves and labor posters, Seider talked about his background and how it has influenced him as a teacher, author and community activist.

"My father belonged to the postal worker's union, and my mother was a member of the International League of Garment Workers Union. So I was familiar with issues working people face."

Growing up in New Haven, Connecticut, Seider graduated with honors from the University of Connecticut, majoring in sociology and psychology. Seven years later he had earned masters and doctoral degrees in sociology from the University of Wisconsin, then moved to California.

But in the recession years of the early 1970s, he could not find a teaching position. After months of searching, he signed up for a factory job, making static shields for transformers. What he learned there about factory life, workers, and management would become the subject of a book published in 1984 and reissued in 1993: *A Year in the Life of a Factory* (Singlejack Books). It would also give him invaluable knowledge and insight as a college professor.

Seider's interest in the sociology of labor continued after he joined the faculty at North Adams State College in 1978. Teaching a course entitled "The Social History of North Adams," Seider led his students in researching local labor history. Much of that had to do with the city's largest employer, Sprague Electric, which closed its doors in the 1980s, leaving thousands of employees without jobs.

"I had done a lot of research on Sprague Electric," he says. He obtained access to archives that documented conflicts between labor and management. Unable to resolve those conflicts, Sprague workers had gone out on strike in 1970. Intrigued by the drama, which affected almost everyone in the city, Seider looked for a way to tell the story. Although he would later incorporate material in academic papers and presentations, this time he turned to the dramatic arts. With assistance from drama professors, students, staff, and a Massachusetts Foundation for the Humanities grant, which provided revision and directing talent, "we turned what was initially a wooden script into a play," Seider said.

In 1994, "The Sprague Years" was performed in the college theater for both students and community. School children came by bus to learn about a pivotal part of their city's history. And former factory workers and management participated in the question-and-answer sessions that followed each performance.

During this time Seider was building community coalitions. Later he used these skills to form alliances with AFSCME and APA, the two other campus unions, building broad campus support on issues affecting faculty, administrators and staff.

Today, as the state college faces unprecedented challenges to its mission, funding and worker rights, Seider continues to articulate the historical role of public higher education—to provide opportunity and access for middle and working-class students. Seider recently coauthored an op-ed essay with Professor

Wayne Klug of Berkshire Community College, spelling out how the governor's reorganization plan would degrade both colleges' missions and educational opportunities. He has also appeared on the local radio, participated in campus forums and picketed throughout the state.

Despite his union and community services, Seider is most at home in the classroom. "He's a wonderful teacher," says veteran sociology professor **Steve Green**. "He has a flair for taking numerous, complicated points and showing students how they tie together. He's also an incredibly compassionate person. And he's a fighter."

-Ben Jacques, MCLA

## Fitchburg's Pam Hill Integrates Arts and Urban Education Into Teacher Education



Pamela Hill

Now in her fifth year working with early child-hood, elementary, and middle school undergraduate and graduate students at Fitchburg State College, Pamela Hill has advised a group of middle school majors on a research project titled "Stare and Share: The Living Museum." This

spring, Hill and her students traveled to a conference in Hawaii to present their work.

For this research project, Hill partnered a college arts festival, pre-service teachers, and students from three area middle schools in an arts-integrated residency. A range of middle school students—at risk, inclusion, and high-achieving students—teamed up with Fitchburg State students to explore the social issues facing young adolescents today. Through a series of creative arts activities, the middle school students identified the issues most pressing to them and then developed a series of performance pieces to present to their peers and the public in order to bring about community awareness, understanding, and solutions to these issues. Issues ranged from "embarrassing parents" to "peer pressure" to "drugs." The college pre-service teachers used a coach/facilitator style of teaching to assure that the choices of issues and how they would be presented were student-centered.

According to Hill, both college students and the adolescents with whom they work "can develop the openness and skills to change the world of which they are often so critical." The Language Arts and Creative Arts become vehicles for building teams, understanding and character, while providing students an alternative route to academic achievement.

Hill's work grows out of years of service with the Huntington Theater Company, where she served as Education Director and developed after school programs for at-risk children under grants from the National Endowment for the Arts and the National Endowment for the Humanities. From there she joined the state's middle school reform efforts where she became a coach to one of the Boston middle schools in the Accelerated Schools Movement.

Known as a vibrant professor, Hill expanded the college Middle School Program and developed an advisory group of regional middle school mentor teachers. Two years ago, working with MTA President Cathy Boudreau, Hill and her students founded an MTA student chapter at Fitchburg State College, which currently has 55 members. Hill, her students and the MTA have sponsored three annual conferences on "What Every Future Teacher Needs to Know."

As Co-chair, with George Miller, of the FSC Graduate Education Program and as an active member of departmental and governance committees, Hill brings a wealth of energy, experience, and intelligence to her students and colleagues. As one of her undergraduate students said, "I don't know where she gets all of her energy and commitment, but she sure does a great job and we are lucky to have her here." Both the MSCA and MTA are lucky to "have her here" too.

—Charles Hetzel, Fitchburg State College