



Jerry Spindel

NEW APPAREL ON BEACON HILL—Sen. *Therese Murray*, chair of the Senate Committee on Ways and Means, displays a T-shirt bearing the “47th” ranking message, presented by *Frank Minasian*, MSCA vice president, and *Sam Schlosberg*, Mass. College of Art chapter president. On May 12 MSCA members packaged and delivered T-shirts to all Massachusetts legislators. See related photo and story, page 4.

2005 Delegate Assembly Doing the Work of the Union

Ben Jacques

Serving as a delegate to the annual MSCA Delegate Assembly, you can’t help but sense how important our organization is to the professional well being of all our members. While not every report sets you on the edge of your seat, and while not everyone agrees on every motion, you soon realize that important work is getting done. You are impressed with the scope, impact and relevance of our union’s activities and gain a deep respect for those who give so much of their time and energy on behalf of their colleagues.

This year at the April 30 Delegate Assembly held at Worcester State, President **Pat Markunas** reported on “our greatest success this year”: the settlement and ratification of the 2004-2007 day unit contract. “This achievement is unique among the higher education unions,” she said, “all of which are still waiting for retroactive monies to be paid from contracts dating back three or four years.”

Markunas continued: “This achievement did not happen without the incredible support of the membership. . . . Every action, individually and collectively, helped.”

In a morning highlighted by reports, sale of the “47th” T-shirts, applause for the Bargaining Committee and MTA consultants, debate on resolutions, luncheon music and presentations, the 44 delegates from nine campuses did the work of the union:

- President **Pat Markunas** urged delegates to thank their legislators for their support of a range of bills and initiatives: from the Senate Task Force’s report calling for major reinvestment in public colleges and universities to the legislature’s reduction of the employee payments for health care insurance.

“This is the most positive thing to happen in public higher education in 40 years.”
President Pat Markunas on the Senate Task Force on Higher Education’s report calling for major investment in the state’s colleges and universities.

bargaining process—in effect, to prevent the governor from having “three bites of the apple.” (see adjacent story and page 3)

- Vice President **Frank Minasian** reported on the successful campaign to introduce legislation to streamline the bargaining process—in effect, to prevent the governor from having “three bites of the apple.” (see adjacent story and page 3)
- After a presentation by Treasurer **Gail Price**, the delegates unanimously approved a FY 2006 budget totaling \$425,160. Dues for the 2,297 members, full and part time, remain the same.

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Trying to Fix a ‘Broken’ Bargaining Process

MSCA Joins Higher Education Unions across the State to Press for Reform of Chapter 150E

No one thought in 1973 when the current public employee bargaining law was adopted that governors would later use it to systematically degrade the contract process for employees in state colleges and universities—with devastating effects on their pocket-books and morale.

At a June 9 hearing on Beacon Hill, educators and union representatives from around the Commonwealth packed the room to say the system is broken, and it must be fixed. Public higher education employees must have the same, unobstructed bargaining process that other public employees have in this state and throughout the nation.

They spoke in support of House Bill 530, which would amend Chapter 150E to allow signed contracts to go directly to the Legislature for review and funding. This would prevent the governor, who already sets negotiating parameters and can later use his veto power, from “taking three bites out of the apple,” said **Catherine Boudreau**, MTA president, speaking before the Joint Committee on Public Service.

The governor’s third bite of the apple has cost higher education employees dearly in nullified and unfunded contracts; faculty and staff have gone years without salary increases, after investing uncounted hours in negotiations with their employer.

“The damage this does to our education system is immeasurable,” MSCA President **Pat Markunas** told the committee, chaired by Sen. **Stephen J. Buoniconti** (D-West Springfield).

“It hurts morale. It hurts recruitment and retention of faculty, and it has a negative effect on the quality of education provided to our students.”

HB 530 would “remove pre-legislative opportunities to stymie negotiations and veto contractual cost items by failing to submit them for legislative action,” Markunas said. (See Markunas’s full testimony on page 3.)

Brad Art, MSCA bargaining chairperson, cited the “grueling process” of negotiating contracts, often stretching over years and seemingly endless meetings. Even when final agreements are signed and ratified, contracts have been returned for renegotiation, or have gone unfunded, he said, noting actions by the current governor and his predecessors to obstruct or delay bargaining and contract funding.

“This is not how collective bargaining works in other sectors,” Art said. “It is not how it should work here.” (Read Art’s full testimony at <www.mscaunion.org>.)

Speakers Counter Kriss’s Objections

The only speaker opposing HB 530 was **Eric Kriss**,

continued on page 3

Consider the Benefits of MTA/NEA Retired Membership

If you're about to retire, or retired, consider this: for only \$35 a year you can keep your membership in the MTA and the NEA.

In the following letter, **John McKeon**, former Fitchburg State MSCA chapter president and liaison between the MTA/NEA and retired MSCA members, explains the benefits.

"There are a number of reasons why retired membership is desirable. If you are currently a member of MSCA/MTA/NEA, you support public education. The MTA and NEA are both strong advocates for public education and actively involved in issues important to retired and active members.

"The MTA supports the elimination of the GPO (Government Pension Offset) and the WEP (Windfall Elimination Provision), which diminish Social Security benefits for public employees, including state college faculty and librarians.

"The MTA supports the revitalization of higher education, and it is opposed to Romney's desire to increase our health insurance premiums.

"The MTA also provides many benefits to its members. For example, there are discounts to over 1,000 nationwide cultural, recreational, and entertainment attractions. Travel anyone?

"If education issues and/or benefits are of interest to you, . . . go to <www.mtabenefits.com> and <www.massteacher.org> to investigate. The annual cost for both MTA and NEA retired membership is \$35, or a lifetime membership for \$325.

"If you have any question, you can email me at <jmckeon@fsc.edu>, or call **Jo Ann Fitzgerald** at 800-392-6175, ext. 8314. Jo Ann is the MTA retired members service specialist."

Retiring from fulltime teaching in 2003, McKeon is an adjunct professor at Fitchburg State College.

MSCA Perspective

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Doing the Work of the Union *continued from page 1*

- Bargaining Committee chairperson **Brad Art** reported on efforts to approve and ratify the 2004-7 contract for day unit members, its current status, and continued efforts for a compensation agreement for the year 2003-4. That process is still in "fact finding," he said. Although the fact-finding report is non-binding, "it is influential."
- **C.J. O'Donnell**, chairperson of the Salary Database Committee, reported on his committee's extensive work to analyze and verify member salaries. "The MSCA is in the final stages of preparing a list of the names of faculty and librarians whose salaries, we believe, were miscalculated under the terms of the 2001-3 agreement," he said. Preliminary reports have been used to review salaries and make corrections.
- **Len Paolillo**, who represents MSCA on the MTA Board of Directors, reported on MTA legislative initiatives to support higher education. He updated efforts to repeal Social Security provisions that penalize Massachusetts public employees. "All of our Congressional delegation have signed on, bringing the total House sponsors to 252 with 17 sponsors in the Senate."
- Delegates heard from **Margaret Vaughan**, chairperson of the Grievance Committee, on the reduction of the arbitration case backlog from 164 to 83 cases, and the option of mediation, which led, in one case, to the resolution of 40 grievances.
- Reporting for the Ad Hoc Committee on Librarian Concerns, chairperson **Nancy George** said a study of librarian salaries indicates continued inadequate compensation. President Markunas said a request has been made to the Council of Presidents for a full study, similar to the Council's highly publicized report last year on state college faculty salaries.
- **David Twiss**, trustee and treasurer of the MTA Health & Welfare Trust Fund, reported on increasing costs of the MetLife dental assistance program, and noted a slight increases in both member and employer contributions, with the benefit level continuing at \$750.

From Higher Ed Funding to the War

The delegates voted to support four resolutions:

- That the Commonwealth make "a long-term, reliable and appropriate investment in its public higher education system, as recommended in the Senate Task Force Report on Public Higher Education"; and that "each political party in Massachusetts include a platform plank in support of this investment in the state's public higher education."
- That the Massachusetts Congressional delegation support House Resolution 35, introduced by Rep. **Lynn Woolsey** in January, "[e]xpressing the sense of Congress that the President should develop and implement a plan to begin the immediate withdrawal of United States Armed Forces from Iraq." Submitting the resolution, MCLA chapter president **Maynard Seider** said: "As a union we should be willing to take a position on national issues. Congress is not being inundated with protests. This war is wrong."
- That the Massachusetts Congressional delegation submit legislation to appoint a bipartisan commission to examine and report on "torture practices carried out by United States soldiers and contractors . . . , including abuses carried out under the U.S. rendition policy."
- That the MTA explore the feasibility of a merger with the Massachusetts Federation of Teachers.

Honored and Remembered

Certificates of appreciation were presented to two former directors for their contributions to the MSCA: **Richard Bisk**, for his active role at Fitchburg State (he is now at Worcester State); and **Edward Movitz**, a founding member of the MSCA, now retired from Mass College of Art.

President Markunas also led the delegates in a moment of silence in memory of **Robert Lee**, former chapter president at Fitchburg State, and **Marjorie Hellerstein**, former MSCA director from Mass College of Art.

Voices from the Assembly

"It was unprecedented for college presidents to come to the table. It helped us break the logjam."

*Bargaining chairperson **Brad Art** on the three-on-three bargaining format that led to contract settlement.*

"It was a great accomplishment. Now we have to follow through."

*Vice President **Frank Minasian** on introduction of legislation to streamline the bargaining process.*

"In Guantanamo, in the Afghan prisons, at Camp Bucca in Iraq, at the prison at Baghdad International Airport, at Abu Gharib...."

*Former Boston State College chapter president **John E. Moon**, in support of a resolution urging independent investigations of United States use of torture.*

"Injury to one is injury to all. That was his guiding principle."
***Maynard Seider**, MCLA chapter president, crediting former Grievance Committee chairperson **Frank Minasian** for over 25*

years of service directing the grievance resolution process.

"A personal priority has been the establishment of health insurance and retirement benefits for hundreds of part-time faculty at the state colleges."

***Pat Markunas**. Higher education union members lobbied in support of Senate Bill 1535 and House Bill 189 at the State House May 12.*



What did I tell you--that after they instituted the post-tenure review, the post-mortem review would be next!

AT THE STATE HOUSE

Trying to Fix *continued from page 1*

secretary of administration and finance under Governor **Mitt Romney**. First to address the committee, Kriss claimed the bill would be “a serious assault on the separation of powers” and would lead to “unsustainable wage increases.”

But speaker after speaker, including other legislators who dropped by to state their support for HB 530, countered his assertions, and said the time for reform has come.

Rep. **John E. Quinn** (D-New Bedford), the bill’s principal sponsor, said it will restore “fairness and reliability” to collective bargaining in public higher education.

Daniel Georgianna, president of the Faculty Federation at UMass Dartmouth, called the current process “dysfunctional,” and said Massachusetts is the only state in which a governor can choose not to submit a signed contract to the legislature.

Kathleen Kelley, president of the Massachusetts Federation of Teachers, reminded the audience that a contract is a shared agreement. “It’s not a union contract. It’s a union *and* management contract,” she said. When a governor is allowed to thwart the process, it harms not just the union members, but the institutions themselves.

Laura Jensen, vice president of the Society of Professors at UMass Amherst, said HB 530 would make the process “fairer and more accountable to all parties involved... and eradicate the serious productivity losses that result from endless bargaining and conflict.”

Joe LeBlanc, vice president of the Massachusetts Community College Council and chairperson of its bargaining team, said the current process “is blatantly unfair. [The bargaining law] is broken and it has to be changed.”



A CALL FOR REFORM—Members of the Joint Committee on Public Service hear testimony from Brad Art, MSCA bargaining chairperson. Pictured are Edward Miller, committee research director; Sen. Stephen Buoniconti (D-Springfield), co-chair; Owen Murphy, aide to Buoniconti; Rep. Smitty Pignatelli (D-Lenox); Rep. James Eldridge (D-Acton); and Rep. William Greene (D-Billerica).

Jeffrey Cook, vice chairperson of the Board of Trustees of Berkshire Community College, said it is regrettable that “we have to come to you, the General Court, to set things right.” He urged the legislators to “do the right thing. We are with our faculty,” he said.

Morale Takes a Hit

Susan Jhirad, professor of English at North Shore Community College, said faculty agreed in a contract three years ago to increase their teaching load in exchange for step increases, “which we’ve never seen.” She said morale suffers among both faculty and students, and she hears colleagues talking about moving to other states.

“Something dies in your commitment to your job when this happens,” she said.

“Morale is horrendous,” said **Donnie McGee**, a Bristol Community College professor. “We cannot retain our nursing faculty. There are 700 students on the waiting list in nursing. The checks and balances system is out of whack.”

Additional speakers included faculty from other campuses and other campus unions. **David Morwick**, president of Association of Professional Administrators (APA), which represents 952 middle managers, and **Andrea Mullen**, representing over 4,500 AFSCME employees in higher education, also urged passage of HB 530.

What’s Next?

Last year, a bill similar to HB 530 received a favorable recommendation from the Public Service Committee, only to die in House Ways & Means.

Given Governor Romney’s refusal to file the MCCC one-year extension for 2002-2003 and his veto of retroactive monies due UMass faculty and staff, APA and AFSCME members, HB 530 has a much better chance of becoming law this year.

Updates on the bill’s progress will be posted on the MSCA website. Should lobbying efforts be needed, MSCA faculty and librarians will be contacted directly.

Hearing of the Joint Committee on Public Service

Testimony in Support of HB 530 - June 9, 2005

**Patricia V. Markunas, President
Massachusetts State College Association**

Chairmen Kaufman and Buoniconti, for the record my name is **Patricia V. Markunas**. I am president of the Massachusetts State College Association, the union that represents 2,500 faculty and librarians at the nine state colleges. I am also a professor of psychology at Salem State College and reside in the City of Salem. I have been involved in negotiations for the state college faculty/librarian union for 20 years and served as the chairperson for the MSCA Bargaining Committee for five of those years.

In September of 2004, the MSCA Board of Directors voted unanimously to support legislation to change the collective bargaining process. On behalf of the Board and the membership of the MSCA, I urge your favorable report on HB 530, which would amend the state’s Collective Bargaining Law (Chapter 150E) to allow our employer to submit contractual cost items directly to the Legislature for consideration.

Simply put, ladies and gentlemen of the Committee, the collective bargaining process for the public higher education affiliates is broken and it needs to be fixed. Our statutory employer of record, now the Board of Higher Education, does not have sufficient legal authority to negotiate in good faith with us and our sister unions. Since 1990, five different governors from both political parties, acting through the Office of Administration and Finance, have stymied negotiations through the use of pre-legislative vetoes and bad faith bargaining tactics. This subversion of the collective bargaining process has demoralized the faculty and damaged our national reputation, causing difficulty in national recruitment and retention of faculty. Ultimately, this will mean great harm to the quality of the education provided to the students of the public higher education system.

The collective bargaining statute as it exists now allows the governor too many opportunities to thwart the bargaining process. Every possible roadblock that a governor could erect in the collective bargaining

process has been actualized over the past 15 years: refusal to provide economic parameters for negotiations, refusal to submit ratified and executed contracts for legislative action, reneging on economic offers made and accepted at the bargaining table, and vetoes of the funding for contracts authorized, ratified and executed by the governor himself or herself. This situation cannot continue.

The proposed amendment to Chapter 150E would not affect the governor’s constitutional veto power over any bill passed by the Legislature. It would remove pre-legislative opportunities to stymie negotiations and veto contractual cost items by failing to submit them for legislative action. It would allow the employer of record, the Board of Higher Education, to negotiate contracts and submit the cost items for their funding directly to the Legislature. In this regard, the Board’s authority would be the same as other state agencies and the judiciary, which have functioned appropriately in terms of the collective bargaining process.

Ladies and gentlemen of the Committee, the members of the MSCA have long appreciated the support afforded by the Legislature to the state’s public higher education system and to its employees. The work of the Senate Task Force Committee on Public Higher Education and the restoration of group health insurance premiums for state employees are only the two most recent examples of this support. Although our last collective bargaining agreement was fully funded, we also appreciate the legislative overrides of gubernatorial vetoes of funding for pay increases and retroactive monies due our colleagues in the other higher education unions.

It is time to fix the problem so that legislative action to remedy the bad faith tactics of the governor is no longer necessary. The faculty and librarians of the state colleges want the collective bargaining process to work in good faith. Amending Chapter 150E to allow this process to work properly is good for our membership, our institutions and our students. Thank you for your consideration of this legislation and my testimony in support of it.

“Has the Governor Acted on Our Contract Yet?”

As we go to press, the governor has not yet acted on the submission of our contract funding to the Legislature for its action. As soon as a decision has been made by the governor, MSCA members will be notified by campus email and on the MSCA website <www.mscaunion.org>. I will not forget to tell everyone, at the same time, about this decision when I know it has been made.

MSCA faculty and librarians should check the MSCA website for the most current information as to the status of the contract funding. Thank you for your patience.

—PVM

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FACULTY/LIBRARIAN SPOTLIGHT

A Place for Coffee and Ideas

Westfield Faculty Center Supports Faculty and Learning

Lou Caton

Until recently, Westfield State College professors who wanted to share ideas arranged meetings at the Student Center, the campus diner, or a location downtown. Like small colleges everywhere, Westfield State did not have a stable, consistent location for teacher gatherings. After years of ad hoc scheduling of meetings, a few forward-thinking individuals began considering the possibility of a faculty center.

Philosophy Professor **Jack Loughney**, one of the founding members, noted: "It is always difficult to distribute needed services among 235 or so tenured and adjunct faculty members."

As soon as **Robert Martin**, Westfield's associate vice president at the time, heard the idea, he was supportive. The argument for a center was a slam dunk: if teachers had a permanent gathering place for hearing each other's ideas, more classroom successes of all kinds would occur.

Originally proposed by Professors **Julian Fleron** and **Phil Hotchkiss** (Mathematics) and **Emily Todd** (English), the center attracted other professors as sponsors and volunteers: **Michael Engel** and **Marsha Marotta** (Political Science), **John Catalini** (English), and **Jack Loughney** (Philosophy).

The faculty members began working with Martin to establish a budget, find a location, and buy the necessary furniture and supplies.

"From the beginning, we wanted to come up with programs that would bring together faculty from various disciplines to share ideas about the work we do—about our classroom experiences, our service, and our scholarly projects," Professor Todd said.

"But we also hoped to build community on campus through social events," she continued. "So right from the start we not only organized 'brown bag' lunch discussions and faculty development workshops but also hosted parties and weekly coffee hours."

The Faculty Center has been in operation since the fall of 2000. At first located in a small room, it has been expanded. Although the current budget of \$2,500 a year is modest, it allows the center to purchase faculty books and academic subscriptions, invite outside speakers, organize social gatherings, and offer "mentoring" luncheons for first- and second-year faculty.

The center became the nexus for many activities: from luncheon discussions on pedagogical concerns to work-in-progress presentations of developing academic research.

Some discussions that have taken place include:

"Creating a Positive Learning Environment in the Classroom"

"Is It Too Late to Teach Our Students to Think?"

"Diversity at WSC: The Dialogue Continues"

"What Do You Do When a Class Turns South?"

"Teaching Life of Pi: Or How to Teach a Novel When You're Not an English Professor"

"Disruptive Students Revisited"

"Strategies for Writing Letters of Recommendation"

"Tax Issues for Professors"

"Plagiarism Revisited"

"Can Faculty at a Small State College Compete Successfully for Fellowships and Grants? Yes!"



A PLACE TO GATHER—Westfield State College professors find their Faculty Center is a comfortable place to share ideas with colleagues. Pictured from left are Phil Hotchkiss, Julian Fleron, Ricki Kantrowitz, Emily Todd, Marsha Marotta, and librarian Corinne Ebbs.

Faculty Center workshops have included "Good Teaching and Learning: How do You Know?" by **Mary Deane Sorcinelli**; and "Using Writing to Help Students Learn: Writing as High Stakes and Low Stakes" by **Peter Elbow**.

Professor Marotta remembers some of those presentations: "What a thrill it was to fill the room for those first brown-bag lunch discussions. We had faculty and librarians, and sometimes administrators, spilling out into the adjoining areas. And what a pleasure it was to discuss concerns about teaching and other issues with professors with different experiences or from different departments. As a new faculty member on the steering committee, I found it a great way to meet people from across campus. I still try to attend every event. I enjoy it, and I learn a lot."

The center has even helped in recruiting new faculty. Psychology Professor **Ricki Kantrowitz**, a current volunteer, stated, "Several job candidates mentioned in their interviews that they looked over the Faculty Center website and were impressed by what was being offered."

Governance of the center is maintained informally by faculty volunteers, who meet monthly to plan activities, sponsor events, and resolve any problems.

For more information on the Westfield State Faculty Center, visit the web page at: <www.wsc.ma.edu/facultycenter>.

—A contributing editor, **Lou Caton** teaches English at Westfield State College.

MCLA Liberal Arts Journal Welcomes Submissions

The Mind's Eye, a liberal-arts journal published by the faculty at Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts, welcomes submissions of scholarly and creative work from other campuses, reports **Bill Montgomery**, managing editor and professor of interdisciplinary studies.

"We accept expository essays, including reviews, fiction, poetry and art," Montgomery says. "Any subject is welcome, but we have a particular interest in the Berkshires."

Founded in 1989 and reissued in 1997 in a new format, *The Mind's Eye* has increasingly published the work of regional writers, as well as faculty artists and authors.

For a sample copy, writer's guidelines and deadline information, please contact Montgomery at <wmontgom@mcla.edu> or 413-662-5516.

To subscribe, send \$7.50 to *The Mind's Eye*, Massachusetts College of Liberal Arts, 375 Church St., North Adams, MA 01247.

T-shirts Tell a Story the Public Needs to Hear

First it was an idea. Then it was a PDF file sent to MSCA President **Pat Markunas** for her advice. Then it was a T-shirt, designed and produced by faculty at Framingham State College, carrying a union label, and the ironic message that Massachusetts, first in baseball, first in football, is 47th in support of public higher education (see photos below and on page 1).

Then it was a question: who would wear them?

That question was quickly answered as the initial order of 400 T-shirts sold out, not only to MSCA members, but to a broad audience.

"I knew higher ed people would want them," Markunas said in a report to the MSCA Board. "I never expected K-12 people to want them. People even wanted them in children's sizes."

The T-shirts were also a big hit on Beacon Hill, as MSCA volunteers distributed them to all senators and representatives. Lobbyists, attorneys, UMass faculty and community college faculty (MCCC) wanted them. They were distributed at the State Democratic Party Convention in Lowell and the MTA Annual Meeting in Boston.

The T-shirts "had a powerful and creative message for everyone who supports public higher education in this state," Markunas said. "Many people working together made the T-shirt project a success, and I thank them all," Markunas added.

MTA is considering producing more T-shirts. For updated information, check the MTA website at <www.massteacher.org>.



BENEATH THEIR ROBES—Framingham State College faculty took their "47th" message to graduation by wearing T-shirts designed and produced by colleagues Jennifer Dowling, Derrick TePaske and Leslie Starobin. MSCA members pictured include (front row) Yaser Najjar, Abdul Momen, Margaret Carroll, and Susan Massad; and (second row) Arthur Nollelli, Alan Feldman, Elaine Beilin, and Pam Ludeman.