

Organizing and Unity Leader Report

(1) Supported Part-time Faculty with Filing for Unemployment Benefits

- Given the decrease in student enrollment and number of sections offered at the 9 state universities and the consequent loss of employment for our part-time faculty, we organized **3 unemployment workshops** in May and August 2020 to help our part-time faculty members navigate the complex application process for unemployment or reduced hours with the Department of Unemployment Assistance. The workshops consisted of a presentation about eligibility, benefits, reasonable assurance and step-by-step instructions on how to file the unemployment form, and an hour-long Q&A session. Over **300 part-time faculty attended** the workshops. We are very grateful to MSCA President CJ O'Donnell, MTA Field Representatives Roberta James and Catherine Santiago, and AFL-CIO Advisor Robert Bower for their help with the workshops.
- Upcoming Unemployment Workshop for Part-time Faculty: May 13th, 2021.
- After consulting several unemployment experts, CJ and Irina co-authored a **step-by-step guide for part-time faculty on how to fill out the DUA form**. We received positive feedback from members who were able to use the guide to successfully file for unemployment.
- To support our members this past year when the DUA locked their unemployment accounts to prevent fraud, we **worked individually with over 200 part-time faculty to unlock their unemployment accounts**. Roberta James, Robert Bower and CJ O'Donnell were instrumental in supporting this major endeavor.

(2) Developed and Implemented Strategy for Recruitment of New Members

- Given that recruitment of new hires in this remote environment is very challenging, we put together a 7-step **state-wide strategy for recruiting new hires to the union**, which included presentation materials for new hire orientation workshops, emails highlighting benefits of union membership, as well as workshops targeted to new hires. These materials were shared with all chapter presidents and implemented at several chapters with very high success rates. We also developed a special campaign focused on our part-time faculty members highlighting the benefits of union membership for adjunct faculty.
- We coordinated the efforts of **5 New Member Liaisons** that supported the chapter presidents' recruitment efforts.
- We worked with the MSCA Treasurer Office to keep track of union membership numbers, as these strategies were developed and implemented.
- Given the success of our recruitment efforts this past year, we were invited to present the MSCA recruitment strategy to other higher education unions at an **MTA workshop** in 2021.

(3) Organized Campaign for State-wide Funding for Public Higher Education

- As part of a coordinated state-wide campaign, we organized a **petition urging our state legislators to commit to, at a minimum, level-funding for public higher education** for this fiscal year in order to strengthen the ability of our institutions to survive the pandemic. This petition was supported by local efforts of individual chapters that organized their own events ranging from an in-person car rally to online Zoom meetings with legislators. Our petition

received 1,000 signatures from our members across the 9 state universities. The campaign was successful, and the Massachusetts legislature voted to approve level-funding plus an additional \$15,000,000 for state universities and community colleges as a result of this advocacy.

- However, Governor Baker vetoed these additional funds, so in January 2021 we organized a **second campaign petitioning our state legislators to override all 11 higher education line-item reductions** that would have slashed nearly \$15 million in funding for state universities and community colleges. Our second petition received over 1,200 signatures having sent close to **2,500 emails to state representatives and senators**. Together we made a big difference, as the Governor's vetoes were overridden by the state legislature with very large margins. This is a **major victory for the state universities**, as the funding cuts would have left our public institutions and our students financially vulnerable during a very difficult year.

(4) Organized Campaign to Add Higher Ed Along K-12 to Phase 2 of the Vaccination Rollout

- We worked with MSCA President CJ O'Donnell to initiate a campaign for adding higher education employees to the Phase 2 for the vaccination rollout in Massachusetts. We worked closely with the MTA, supporting **two petitions** addressed to Governor Baker **that received over 12,000 signatures statewide**. We met with various stake holders and legislators to garner their support, gave presentations at various meetings to help build support for the campaign, organized an op-ed writing workshop and **published several op-eds in local newspapers**. The campaign was successful in a limited way. While we did not gain access to vaccines in Phase 2, we were able to establish several important coalitions that we will be able to build on in future campaigns. The op-eds also created visibility for issues regarding public higher education in the public sphere.

(5) Organized Workshop on Educator Burnout for our Members

- Given the high burnout among our faculty and librarians this past year, we organized a workshop in January 2021 on **The Science of Educator Burnout** with over 50 members in attendance. The workshop helped validate the experiences of our members by explaining the science behind the physical and emotional symptoms of burnout and provided evidence-based prevention strategies as well as practical suggestions for ways that our members can recover from burnout.

Respectfully submitted,

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MSCA Organizing and Unity Leaders