FAN

MONROE COMMUNITY COLLEGE
FACULTY ASSOCIATION
NEWSLETTER

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President's Corner

If you have previously read this column, or come to an FA membership meeting, you have heard me speak of the importance of getting FA members more involved in the union. The union is successful only with the commitment and participation of our members, and that is even more true when it comes to our governing body, the Faculty Council. Serving on Faculty Council provides members with an opportunity to have direct involvement in the work and priorities of the FA. It also provides you with an opportunity for college wide leadership and engagement as you provide a service to your colleagues and to the College.

Our current Faculty Council leadership has developed a new **FA Leadership Pathway** program to engage our FA members in learning more about the union and developing the knowledge and skills necessary for union leadership. We hope to expand awareness of the role of the FA at MCC and to strengthen union values and solidarity among our membership. Ultimately, our goal is to establish a skilled and competent group of union leaders, representative of various FA constituencies, to lead the FA into the future.

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Please join us for the next FA Membership meeting:

March 7 – 3:30pm
Empire Room, Brighton Campus
or Zoom
Join here or
Meeting ID: 871 2017 3588
Passcode: 235174

2023-2024 FACULTY COUNCIL OFFICERS

President, Bethany Gizzi; Professional Staff VP, Phil Oettinger; Teaching Faculty VP, Jennifer Hill; Secretary/Treasurer, Jeff Baker; Teaching Director, Gordon Dutter; Teaching Director, Jim McKenna; Professional Staff Director, Julie Slate; Professional Staff Director, Melissa Santiago; Adjunct Director, Diane Dinkins-Lourette; Adjunct Chair, PJ Ciaccia; Grievance Officer, Bill Horton; Communications Chair, Judi Salsburg-Taylor; Legislative Chair, Joe Scanlon; Equity & Inclusion Officer, April Daniels; Membership Chair, Kevin French; Health & Safety Officer, David Lederhouse; Site Director, Antonia Custodio; Site Director, Tom Gerwitz

President's Corner continued……

Some individuals have already been identified as participants by our current Faculty Council leaders. However, the Leadership Pathway program is open to any FA member who is interested in learning more and getting more involved. If you would like to participate, please reach out to me, Sonja, or any of the Faculty Council leaders.

The future of our union depends on you, and we hope you will take this opportunity to become more involved, to provide an essential service to your colleagues, and to gain so much, personally, and professionally, as leaders.

In solidarity,
Bethany

The FA Leadership Pathway Program

The leadership pathway program will focus on the following:

- ⇒ Union values, vision, & identity
- ⇒ Understanding of the various leadership/officer roles and their responsibilities
- ⇒ FA history and role within the larger organization & culture of MCC
- ⇒ MCCFA as part of larger labor movement – our place within NYSUT, NEA, AFT & AFL-CIO
- ⇒ Weingarten rights & representation of members in disciplinary situations
- ⇒ Membership outreach
- ⇒ Listening/conflict resolution/member advocacy
- ⇒ The role of contract administration & labor-management
- ⇒ Nuts & bolts of negotiations (history, process, how-to, etc.)
- ⇒ Contract Spotlights:
  - Evaluation & promotion
  - Salary & salary equity
  - Grievance procedures
  - Adjunct rights & benefits
  - Retirement

The program will begin with lunch sessions at noon on Fridays: March 22, April 19, May 17. Additional sessions will be scheduled in June, dates TBD.

RSVP to Sonja at slenhard@monroecc.edu

Spring Faculty Council Meetings

March 6, 20, April 17,
May 1, 15, 29, June 12

Faculty Council meetings are open to the FA membership. If you would like to attend a meeting, please contact Sonja at slenhard@monroecc.edu or call x2019.

All meetings are on Wednesdays from 3:15 to 5:00 pm in room 3-115.

Reminder: Winter break is a vacation week for teaching faculty

With Winter Recess next week (February 18-23) it is a good time to remind the College community about the contractual guidelines for vacation days. Article 9 specifies guidelines for the accumulation and use of vacation leave for professional staff. Unlike professional staff, teaching faculty do not earn vacation leave. However, during the contract year, teaching faculty are off contract/on vacation and not expected to work during the winter and spring break weeks.

Teaching faculty might consider adding an auto-reply message to your e-mail during the break to alert individuals that you are off contract. Consider using an auto-reply message, like the one below:

Thank you for your email. I am on contractual vacation during the MCC Winter Break from February 18 through 23. I will respond to your email as soon as possible after that time.

FA Scholarship Committee Updates

The FA Scholarship Committee members have met and finalized the applications for the "Follow Your Dream" scholarship and the Matthew Hachee memorial scholarship. Be on the lookout for announcements in the Daily Tribune in the near future. Links for both applications will be available. We hope you will encourage your students to apply.

Thanks to your generous support of the holiday basket raffle, we raised close to $1800 for the scholarship fund. Donations to the scholarship fund are always accepted at any time. If you would like to donate, please contact Sonja Lenhard at slenhard@monroecc.edu or stop by the FA office (7-205).

Thank you again for your continued support.

Congratulations to our basket raffle winners: Nayda Pares-Kane & Melissa Santiago! (pictured)

FA Scholarship Committee: Sonja Lenhard, Denee Martin, Jessica Barone, Tom Winslow, Andrea Gilbert, Mazie Mizelle, Kathy Baxter, Gabe Armatas

ASK A MEDIATOR

A service provided by the FA Mediation Team

Question:
I have a co-worker who has a hard time when a process or detail changes in the office. While I too find it hard to regularly shift gears, I understand it is sometimes necessary. I'm tired of this person complaining. It poisons the work environment, and they are hard to be around. Any ideas about how to address this or should I just deal with it?

Response:
Remember when it comes to change, one-third of the people will be on board with change and will be the next leaders and managers. One-third of the people are not sure and can go either way once they see what is in it for them. One-third of the people will resist.

1- **Go internal first:** Examine your reaction. Is it valid? Find a trusted friend or colleague so you can discuss the situation. Remember, your response is business-based and not a personal attack. It is to your professional benefit to refrain from gossip or going personal and showing that you are a team player and collaborative in mindset.
2- **Plan:** Before you confront your co-worker one-on-one, plan your conversation and location. Make sure you are calm and have practiced your responses and theirs, and make sure you can have your conversation in private when you are not rushed. I like to bring in coffee, food, or something to have an informal discussion and not in my office, in their office or a neutral location.

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Ask A Mediator continued…..

3- **Initiate a conversation:** Once you have determined that your feelings are valid and you have practiced, try one-on-one communication with your co-worker. Steer the conversation to what is happening at the office regarding new processes or procedures.
   a. Start in a welcoming manner, non-confrontational, matter of fact.... ***I don't know if you are aware of this, but I've noticed that when a process or detail changes in the office, you seem to resist the change***. BE QUIET at this point & do your best to actively listen by summarizing what your co-worker says back to you so that you can find some common ground.
   b. Follow up with....***I know change can be difficult, and I find it hard to shift gears as well, but I have found that if it's necessary and it helps in the long run it actually makes our jobs easier by X,Y,Z.*** Using "I" statements with "feel" "felt" "found" helps to keep the conversation non-confrontational and shows your interpretation of the situation not their behavior.
   c. Show your support... ***Is there something I can help you with?*** You may want to put this first depending on what their response is. Are they in tears, or overwhelmed?
   d. If they respond with a negative, you have brought it to their attention and can escalate to your boss if necessary. They may not be aware of their behavior. If they respond positively, you have shown that you can collaborate and perhaps help turn your colleague's attitude around. This is a really great feeling, by the way!
   e. If your co-worker becomes upset, you can offer to table and discuss at another time…***My goal was not to upset you, it was just to see how I can help...why don't we schedule another time to discuss, I will look at your calendar and send an invite***? Then be sure to follow through. If you are not satisfied with their response, you can take the conversation to a higher level, if necessary.

4- **Engage your colleagues:** "People support that which they help create." If there are any meetings around the change with your peers, see if you can find ways for your co-worker to engage in conversation about the long-term effects around the change. You can say something like ***I know change is hard and we can complain for five minutes and then let's brainstorm solutions***. Then end any negativity within that time or an agreed upon time. I tend to say it with a sense of humor but end the discussion when I say I will end it. By acknowledging and giving people some time to vent, it allows for the emotional response to change and then assists team members to move forward and consider how we can make this change really work to the team's advantage.

Jodell Raymond
MCC/FA Mediation Team

Submit your question via our Mediator Question Form. You will be directed to a form where you can enter your question without revealing your identity. Questions received will be carefully reviewed and selected for inclusion in an upcoming edition of the FAN publication.

If you have an interpersonal matter that you believe requires mediation or conflict coaching, please feel free to email Susan Bender (Spearlberg@monroecc.edu) or call her at (585) 685-6220.

MCC/FA Mediation Team Members: Susan Bender (Pearlberg), Coordinator (VaPA), Elizabeth Baxter (Academic Services), Susan Belair (Anthro-Hist-Poli Sci-Soc), Marj Crum (VaPA), Michael Johnson, (Counseling and Disability Services), Robert Muhlnickel (English and Philosophy), Jodell Raymond (Workforce Development), Jessica Strollo (ESOL/Transitional Studies)

Anti-DEI Legislation: Let New Yorkers not Become Complacent. Let Us Work Together in Wisdom, Compassion, and Vigilance

By April Daniels, FA Equity & Inclusion Officer

As so many of us know, there are fundamental misunderstandings around DEI. The notion exists that DEI efforts are an actual assault on those in historically majority groups or those otherwise holding the most social or political power. In response, there is a rapidly spreading enterprise of censorship and suppression of academic freedom. Since 2023, there have been dozens of bills introduced to restrict DEI efforts in colleges. However, if we take the time together to examine this subject closely, we find that much of the anger we see intensifying in the news and social media arises from fear. Folks in historically majority groups are often fearful that their own hard-earned accomplishments or successes will be somehow diminished if we even merely acknowledge the phenomena of bias or inequity. Or that they will somehow be perceived as personally morally deficient if they are in any way associated with a system that is acknowledged to be inequitable. But this is not the goal of endeavors toward diversity, equity and inclusion, and DEI efforts are not new in the United States. This nation has been moving toward equity in fits and starts for over a hundred and fifty years: The Civil Rights Act of 1866; the Enforcement Act of 1871; the Civil Rights Act of 1875; the Nineteenth Amendment of 1920; the Civil Rights Act of 1957; the Civil Rights Act of 1960; the Civil Rights Act of 1964; the Civil Rights Act of 1968; the Civil Rights Restoration Act of 1987; and the Civil Rights Act of 1991 are significant examples of change that has occurred over time. Evolution toward equity and inclusion through impassioned collective action *is* the history of this nation.

The principles and practices of diversity, equity, and inclusion encourage, support, and protect all people: veterans; people with mental health issues, including post-traumatic stress disorder, developmental trauma disorder, anxiety, and depression; people of color; senior citizens (62-years-and older by U.S. standards); people with low income; members of our LGBTQ+ community; women and girls; Indigenous peoples; people who have disabilities–physical or mental impairment that substantially limits one or more major life activity; people who are formerly incarcerated; people not native-born to a country; and so on.

The fact of the matter is, most of us live within at least one of these groups, and we all certainly know, work with, and love folks in many of them. Fortified with this awareness, during this time of accelerated assault on our core values, we are compelled to acknowledge how critically important it is to seek and uphold diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts in our workplace, which happens to be an institution of higher education.

Please visit this source on anti-DEI legislation, and be sure to click on the DEI Legislation Tracker, where you can learn specifics on each state:
https://www.chronicle.com/package/the-assault-on-dei

Explore our NYSUT Social Justice page to learn more about efforts to maintain, protect, and strengthen the DEI policies and practices we have in place in New York state. This is a helpful site if you need information and support, and if you want to find ways to be more involved. Please take advantage of the "Implicit Bias: Sticks & Stones" workshop, for example.
https://www.nysut.org/resources/special-resources-sites/social-justice/about-nysut-social-justice

Read about a NYSUT member's fight against censorship, as a reminder that though we feel safe in New York State, restrictions are sometimes only a matter of a few votes away.
https://www.nysut.org/news/2023/october/galway

Take action NOW at the NYSUT MAC! Urge legislators in Albany to support the New Deal for Higher Education in New York and invest $4.5 billion in SUNY (*including our three critical teaching hospitals*), CUNY and community colleges!

Our State Needs A New Deal for Higher Education: Quality, Accessible Higher Ed for All A 4.5 Billion Investment in our Future

The New Deal for Higher Education is a $4.5 billion investment in our future. It reimagines a system that helps students seamlessly transition from public K-12 classrooms to the lecture halls of New York state's world-class network of public colleges and universities.

Years of underfunding have led to a steady decline in critical support for students' academic progress and success. Although the last state budget cycle made meaningful investments in public higher education, the need is still great. In fact, many public colleges and universities are forced to raise tuition or make cuts to academic programs and student services to survive — cuts that disproportionately affect low-income and Black and brown communities. Every student deserves access to affordable and accessible higher education. That means public colleges and universities that don't break the bank, and that are located within the local community so that individuals from every stage of life have educational opportunities. New York state must continue to invest in and strengthen our SUNY, CUNY and community colleges.

Additionally, SUNY's three teaching hospitals at Stony Brook, Downstate and Upstate are crucial to training health care professionals, many of whom choose to remain and work in New York. Enhanced education and training at these institutions are key to promoting economic mobility and reducing disparities. Achieving this requires quality, accessible public higher education, backed by operational support, student services and sufficient capital funding to support aging infrastructure and a new and improved facility at SUNY Downstate.

To meet these objectives, our campuses require additional Operating Support; Student Supports; and Public Higher Education Access for All.

Check out all your union membership has to offer!

The Calm app -- recognized as Apple's Best of 2018 award winner, Apple's App of the Year 2017, and Google Play Editor's Choice 2018 -- is the #1 app for sleep, meditation, and relaxation with over 100 million downloads. Whether members have 30 seconds or 30 minutes of time available, the diverse content library offered by Calm includes numerous resources for their schedule and needs.

Members can explore guided meditations and specialized music playlists to help with stress and focus, mindful movement video and audio, relaxing sleep stories, nature scenes and sounds, specific content tailored for children, masterclasses led by experts, and more.

To learn more about how to create your Calm account and access the premium content for free, visit ***memberbenefits.nysut.org/free-member-benefits*** and then click on "Premium Calm Service." From there, you will find detailed instructions on how to create your Calm account along with a helpful Frequently Asked Questions document about the service. You will need your NYSUT ID number to create an account with your email address and password. Your NYSUT ID number can be found on your NYSUT Membership Card or by visiting ***https://www.nysut.org/memberid.***

Once you create your free Calm account on your computer, it is recommended that you download the Calm app for your iOS or Android device. After downloading the Calm app for your preferred mobile device, you can then log in with your email address and password to unlock the premium Calm content.

Learn more by scanning the QR code to the left, visiting ***memberbenefits.nysut.org***, or calling 800-626-8101.

MEMBER BENEFITS nysut Working to Benefit You

For information about contractual endorsement arrangements with providers of endorsed programs, please contact NYSUT Member Benefits.

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