

# The WORD

## Notwithstanding everything: Pick a number, any number by Ellen Schuler Mauk



photo by Kevin Peterman

*NYS Assemblymember Dan Losquadro speaks with FA members (from left) Priscilla Pratt, Kevin McCoy, and Joyce Gabriele. Ellen Schuler Mauk and Kevin Peterman led the group through their packed day's worth of appointments with our elected representatives.*

A term often cited when the New York State budget is finally approved is the word *notwithstanding*, which in common parlance means *in spite of*, but in legislative terms refers to the practice the legislature uses to exempt itself from its own laws/rules.

Those of us who lobby for community college state aid know the term well since for every year but one in the last 38 years, whether community colleges received an increase in state aid or not, the state legislature has *notwithstood* itself from

providing community colleges with the 40% of its operating aid that is required by New York State Education Law Section 6304.

Although we have all heard that community college funding should be 1/3 county, 1/3 state, and 1/3 student tuition, the fact is that in 1974 the state passed legislation that would provide community colleges with 40% state aid of their operating budgets if they became full opportunity colleges. To no one's surprise, all of the state's community

colleges accepted the challenge but only once have received 40% funding since the legislation was signed.

So here's where we find ourselves in 2012: In this current academic year, we are receiving \$2,122/full-time equivalent (FTE). That's \$138/FTE less than we received in 2010-11, which was \$423/FTE less than we received in 2009-10, which was \$553/FTE less than we received in 2008-09. I could continue this to 1999-00 when we

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# The struggle against silence

by William Burns

Anais Nin once commented that “the role of a writer is not to say what we all can say, but what we are unable to say.” Helping with this daunting task is professional assistant Tina Vincenti. Tina tutors at the Ammerman campus Writing Center and has a tremendous impact on students’ writing and their confidence in achieving academic and personal goals.

Tina has been working at SCC in various capacities for four years, but her connection to the college goes back to the late 1990’s as a student. Tina strives to have the same inspiring influence on the students she tutors as her professors had on her.

Tina’s goal as a tutor is to try to get students passionate about the subject of their writing. She motivates students by establishing a serious investment in the words they put on paper. Tina wants students to care about each and every word: the choice and tone of language as it affects the relationship between writer and reader. Getting students involved in their writing is often difficult in a half-hour session, but from the volume

of students who request Tina at the writing center, it certainly seems that her methods of heightening their sense of purpose and meaning in their writing is getting significant results.

experience as possible.

Tina’s tutoring philosophy and practice goes far beyond simply editing and proofreading a paper; she combines personal and professional connections that create a vibrant interaction between fellow writers, learning from and collaborating with each other.

Tina’s holistic methods take into account the person as well as the paper, and students feel empowered and excited when pinpointing the exact word to use or constructing a thesis that perfectly reflects their purpose. As a published author of fiction, Tina understands how demanding and stressful writing can be, so she sympathizes with the students who are searching for the light at the end of a long tunnel. Tina’s commitment to student writing and to her own creative muse helps SCC students to feel a sense of achievement, pride, and value in their work.

For the future, Tina hopes to strengthen her tutoring skills and to bring her knowledge and experience to the classroom as a teacher. Currently an MFA student in creative writing at Queens College, she hopes

to bridge the gap between teacher and student in a more interactive and less traditional type of class.

For Tina, environment has a tremendous influence on learning, and so the more positive, energized, and supportive the atmosphere, the more vibrant, interesting, and critical the writing produced there will be. It is just this kind of energy, vitality, and enthusiasm that Tina Vincenti brings to the writing center, her tutoring sessions, and to the lives of those she inspires.



*Tina Vincenti, a PA who tutors in the Ammerman Writing Center, strives to get students passionate about their writing so they care about each and every word in their papers.  
(photo by Kevin Peterman)*

Tina approaches her tutoring sessions from the perspective that students are not bad writers, just fearful ones, often insecure and uncomfortable with their self-perceived lack of skills and experience. Tina stresses the notion of writing simply and clearly to begin with, leaving the sophisticated effects until later in the writing process. By emphasizing that writing evolves through stages of development and is not a “one and done” deal, Tina strives to make writing as less a traumatic

**The WORD**

Cynthia Eaton.....Editor-in-Chief

Kevin Peterman.....PR Director

William Burns.....Writer

Susan Rubenstein DeMasi.....Writer



# FYI: Highlights from the Executive Council and other news of note

- **Prescription drug claim forms:** 2011 Benefit Fund prescription drug claims must be received by Daniel H. Cook by April 30. To obtain one, go to <http://www.expresscripts.com> and register your online account for your prescription history. You can also obtain one from your pharmacist(s).

The Prescription Drug Claim Form is available at the Benefit Fund office, Southampton 224D, Ammerman campus, or on our website: <http://www.fascc.org/docs/rx2010.doc>. If you need assistance, call Mary at 732-6500.

- **EMHP claims deadline:** Faculty must submit all unpaid 2011 medical claims to Empire Blue Cross by

March 31 to receive reimbursement for covered out-of-pocket expenses.

- **Faculty development deadline:** FA members planning to apply for faculty development and retraining for summer 2012, summer 2013, or the 2012-2013 academic year are encouraged to contact FA Secretary Marie Hanna for assistance in completing the application. Applications are due April 15.
- **Free AFT guide provides advice for college-bound students:** As part of its Just Ask! campaign, AFT offers a brand new guide that you can share with your students or use in your family. It has thoughtful questions and an on-campus visit checklist to help make this important

decision. Download the entire kit for free at <http://www.aftface.com>.



- **Retirees who wish to serve as adjuncts:** Full-time members should remember that, upon retirement, you need to fill out a specific request form to be placed on seniority list if you want to teach as an adjunct.
- **Estee Lauder warehouse tickets:** Contact Anita at 451-4151 for tickets to the April 7 warehouse sale in Melville.

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### Lawmakers urged to increase higher education funding

*Darryl McGrath - NYSUT Communications - March 7, 2012*

Priscilla Pratt has been an adjunct librarian at Suffolk Community College for 14 years, but she joined her union sisters and brothers from the college's Faculty Association for NYSUT's Higher Education Advocacy Day Tuesday for the first time.

This year, as Pratt put it, the need is especially urgent. There's a glimmer of hope that lawmakers are finally beginning to realize how desperately the state's public colleges and universities need more state funding, and Pratt wanted to be part of the effort that turned the tide.

"I felt I really needed to do something this time," she said as paused in a hallway of the Legislative Office Building.

Pratt was one of several hundred NYSUT higher education members - ranging from seasoned advocates to first-time unionists - who spent a day appealing to lawmakers to do better than the executive budget's proposal of flat funding for the state's public colleges and universities. The Assembly and Senate budget resolutions are expected to be released next week.

The State University, City University and SUNY Community Colleges have lost more than \$1.7 billion in state funding since 2008. Of particular concern this year are the community colleges, which have lost nearly \$1,500 per pupil in state funding, adjusted for inflation, since 1971.

"Community colleges have been in the spotlight nationally, and in the state," said Ellen Schuier Mauk, president of the Faculty Association of Suffolk Community College and chair of the NYSUT Higher Education Council who, along with Andy Sako of Erie Community College, represents community college issues on the NYSUT Board of Directors. "I think we need to show [lawmakers] that there needs to be a sustained increase over the next several years - a minimum of \$205 per student for each of the

**EC rep in the news:** Priscilla Pratt, adjunct librarian and Executive Council representative, attended the Higher Ed Advocacy Day in Albany on March 6.

While in the Legislative Office Building, Priscilla was interviewed by a reporter for the article shown at left (available at [www.nysut.org/cps/rde/xchg/nysut/hs.xsl/highereducation\\_17581.htm](http://www.nysut.org/cps/rde/xchg/nysut/hs.xsl/highereducation_17581.htm)).

Priscilla notes in the article that the need for member activism is especially urgent this year: "I felt I really needed to do something this time." (See NYSUT Member Action Center article on page 8 for an easy way to participate.)

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FASCC • The WORD

# A woman's place is in her union: A review of books for Women's History Month

by Susan Rubenstein DeMasi

"I have always been interested in organizations for labor. I have always felt that it was important that everyone who was a worker join a labor organization, because the ideals of the organized labor movement are high ideals. They mean that we are not selfish in our desires, that we stand for the good of the group as a whole, and that is something which we in the United States are learning every day must be the attitude of every citizen."  
~ Eleanor Roosevelt

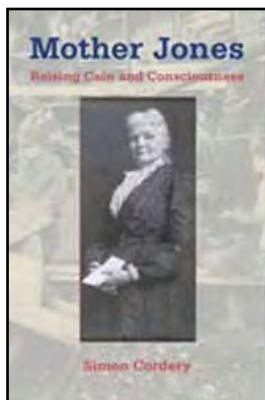
Working in a library, I'm lucky to come upon books about important historical figures such as Eleanor Roosevelt on a regular basis. To help commemorate March as Women's History Month, I thought I'd share some notable publications about women who were champions of labor union causes. Keep a look out for the arrival of these books at the SCCC libraries.



Most Americans are familiar with Eleanor Roosevelt as First Lady of the United States during the pivotal era from 1933 to 1945 but they are far less familiar with her as a proud supporter of the union movement.

In the book *She Was One of Us: Eleanor Roosevelt and the American Worker*, author Brigid O'Farrell outlines Eleanor Roosevelt's union advocacy and support of workers' rights throughout her life, including during her time as First Lady.

Roosevelt was a union member (the Women's Trade Union League and the American Newspaper Guild) and counted among her close friends Rose Schneiderman, an important figure in union history. In a speech in 2007, author O'Farrell said Eleanor Roosevelt "was the first and only First Lady to join a union. She had her union card in her wallet when she died."



If you feel too old to become involved in union causes, just remember Mary Harris Jones, better known to us as Mother Jones. She made her mark in union history later in her life (starting after age 60 and continuing into her 90's) as a strike organizer for mine workers and an advocate for child workers. She was often referred to as "the most dangerous woman in America" by the more conservative types of her era.

According to the AFL-CIO website, Mother Jones was "banished from more towns and was held incommunicado in more jails in more states than any other union leader of the time." *Mother Jones: Raising Cain and Consciousness*, by Simon Cordery, explores the life of this proud rabble-rouser. A shorter account of her life can be found in the history section of the AFL-CIO website: <http://www.afl-cio.org>.



Ellen Dawson doesn't have the name recognition of either Roosevelt or Jones, but this working class hero nonetheless played an important role in labor history. *Strike: The Radical Insurrections of Ellen Dawson* profiles this Scottish immigrant and textile worker who, at the age of 26, took on labor causes and became an important strike organizer during the tumultuous 1920s. She was jailed and beaten for her union activities; for a short time she was vice president of the National Textile Workers' Union of America, the first woman to be elected to such a national position.

Dawson disappeared from public view almost as suddenly as she had appeared, marrying and returning to work as a weaver. According to author David Lee McMullen, she died at the age of 66, most likely from lung disease related to working conditions in the mills. The book's foreword calls it "a profound work that asks us to look deeply at the relationship between gender, radicalism, and power."



## Notwithstanding continued from page 1

actually received \$3/FTE *more* than we're receiving 13 years later!

And none of these figures have been adjusted for inflation based on either the CPI or the Higher Education Price Index (HEPI). If they were, just to reference another number, the state would have to increase our aid by \$685/FTE (adjusted for HEPI) just to make our per-FTE state aid equal in current dollars to what we received in 2008.

A little more math: If SCCC were to receive 1/3 of its current operating budget (less grants, etc.) for the 16,844 FTE students we are currently educating in spring 2012, the state would have to increase its aid by \$1,384/FTE. If the 40% aid requirement were to be honored, the increase alone would have to be \$2,090, bringing the actual state aid to \$4,212/FTE.

Both President Obama and Governor Cuomo have gone on record in their State of the Union and State of the State addresses to draw attention to the importance of the work community colleges do toward getting our economy back to work. At this year's State of the State presentation, Assembly Speaker Sheldon Silver even remarked, "With high unemployment and widespread underemployment, more and more of our citizens are looking to community colleges for a new path to a better life.... Now when these learning centers [community colleges] are so important to our economy, to our companies and to our workers, we must increase our investment in them."

As if to anticipate all of this, State Senator Ken LaValle, Chair of the State Senate Higher Education Committee, was quoted in a December *Newsday* editorial that this should be the year of the community colleges.

Obviously, correcting 37 years of *notwithstanding* state aid in one budget

year is totally unrealistic. But, notwithstanding—as in “in spite of the fact”—that community colleges are being paid a rate from 13 years ago, we are educating a student body with both academic and workforce development needs that have costs and expenses associated with them at 2012 rates. As all of us in the community college academic trenches know all too well, we can't sustain this funding-for-services imbalance.

Yet ways to address it are increasingly limited. Our community colleges are adverse to cap enrollment, reluctant to cut services, and hesitant to raise tuition as the only additional source of revenue. Our local sponsors are equally hard pressed for additional funding and are facing the 2% tax levy cap for all its expenditures this year along with school districts and other governmental entities.

In an attempt to address this funding deficiency with a rational funding approach over time, SUNY is proposing a five-year plan to increase state aid for community colleges toward the 1/3 funding model, including a 2% inflation each year, which would amount to a \$205/FTE increase each year.

Will this approach be enough to provide the funding for community colleges to do what everyone is asking us and what the economy needs us to do? Is \$205/FTE for the next five years the right number? Is \$685/FTE this year the right number to serve as a base for future state aid? Will a rate based on the CPI create a more rational way of funding community colleges?

None of us knows but at least discussions about long-term consistent increases in funding are an attempt to move in the right direction. As President Obama focused on the college affordability problem as a “shared responsibility” at the most recent National Governors Association meeting, he also encouraged states to reverse the trend in reduced state aid



*Executive VP Kevin Peterman speaks with elected officials in Albany. He carried a Gumby figure in his pocket after Governor Cuomo claimed that his flexibility has grown so much as governor, he's “a veritable Gumby.”*

support for higher education when he said, “Nothing more clearly signals what you value as a state than the decisions you make about where to invest.”

Our state legislators have repeatedly indicated that they value what community colleges do for our students and for our local economies. At this point in time, though, the state legislature needs to pick a number—any of the above numbers will do for starters—and develop a long-term plan to insure that the funding needs of our institutions can address the higher education and workforce development needs of our citizens and our state.

And what do *we*, FA members, need to do to make sure that the state legislature is responsive to our needs? It's simple: When the FA sends a request asking you to email or fax your legislator, please do so.

Legislators are keenly aware of the numbers of people who get in touch with them on a given issue—and those are numbers that count too!

photo by Tim Raab/NYSUT

# From soldier to citizen: A win-win situation

by Lars Hedstrom (Professor of Television, Radio and Film; Ammerman)

In my first column addressing the needs of students making the transition from soldier to citizen, I gave some philosophical background to help us address this phenomenon. In this piece, I'd like to continue in that vein, showing how strengthening SCCC's commitment to veterans is a win-win situation.

Our student veterans come with a variety of personal backgrounds and experiences, but they seem to have a common desire to connect with other veterans. For example, these are the words said to me by a Navy chief petty officer who recently separated from active duty after almost ten years of service. "You get me because you are one of us. You served. These kids, my classmates, don't get me. They don't even try. All I want is to develop job skills that will pay the rent and feed my wife and child. I don't need a parade, hearts, flowers—just the nitty gritty stuff I need to earn a paycheck I can be proud of."

When he was done, I simply said, "We can do that!" Let's hope so.

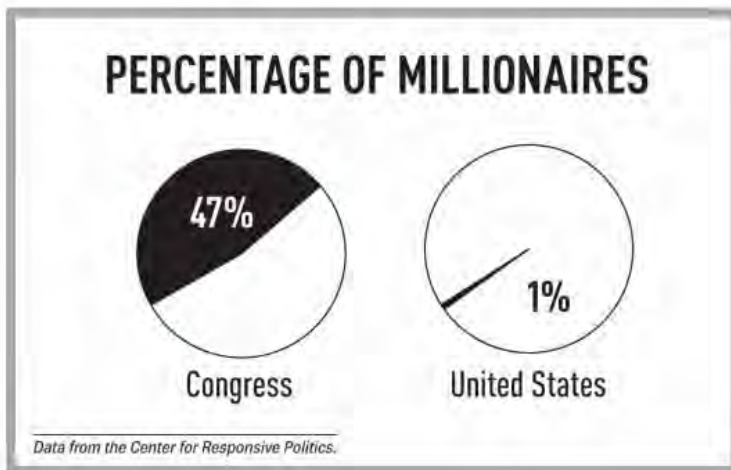
I have less hope for other students who may not speak up for themselves. A colleague shared an anecdote of a student veteran who developed a habit of sitting alone in his car between classes. All he wanted was a quiet place to sit and unwind. The cafeteria was too noisy. The library didn't work. Unfortunately, there's no lounge specifically for veterans to socialize with other vets. These are the little things we can do to help our student veterans make the transition successfully.

In addition to helping our veterans simply because it's the right thing to do, I also want to be blunt about how this benefits the college. If we fail to be proactive here, there's a potential financial gain that we'd be ignoring. The college would miss out on a significant amount of money from the GI Bill. This legislative act pays a veteran's tuition plus a living allowance while in school.

This money could certainly help advance our college mission of being a college of excellence. The additional monies could fund important projects that directly benefit our student veterans as well as all of our other students.

To do so, there are a number of steps we could take, including promoting SCCC to returning vets as they process through the VA Hospital in Northport as I mentioned in my previous article. We could also encourage our elected local officials, county legislators, and state representatives to help promote SCCC as the best choice. Finally, we'd want to make sure that officials within the VA know about SCCC's services and mention our college to all of the vets they are in contact with.

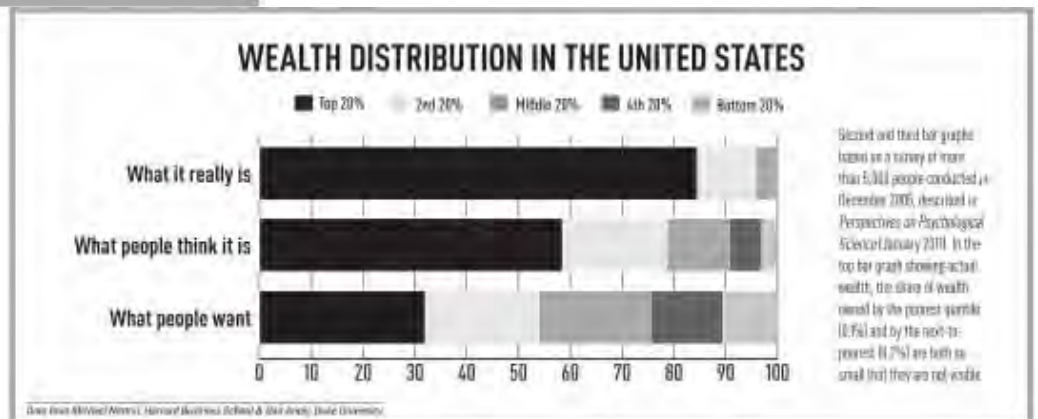
There's much to be done. It's a win-win situation, and I would love to see the college administration take a proactive stance at this critical juncture.



## Wealth inequality in the U.S.

The second and third bar graphs below are based on a survey of more than 5,000 people conducted in December 2005, described in *Perspectives on Psychological Science* (January 2011).

In the top bar graph showing actual wealth, the share of wealth owned by the poorest quintile (0.1%) and by the next-to-poorest (0.2%) are both so small that they are not visible.



Graphics reprinted with permission from the Clarion, newsletter of the Professional Staff Congress of CUNY. Originally published in the Clarion December 2011.

Images or design concepts thanks to occupydesign.org.



# FA celebrates its members and retirees

by Cynthia Eaton

Professional Development Day this year was focused on celebrating the good work done by the faculty and staff of SCCC. It was a resoundingly successful day, with faculty learning a great deal from colleagues in other disciplines and areas of the college.

The FA participated with a booth devoted to Professors on Wheels (see page 12) and with a donated iPad. The lucky winner of the iPad raffle was Giselle Nevola, adjunct PA in the Eastern campus Student Support Services. In the photo at right, Adjunct Coordinator Cynthia Eaton (on left) presents Giselle with her new iPad.



FA members Gwen Branch, Theresa Dereme, Donna Frey, and Mary Ryder organized an Eastern campus fundraiser for Harry Lewis (left) called “Have a Heart for Harry.” The event included a sold-out dinner, a penny auction, a Wii raffle, and a 50/50 raffle. The entire event, held on February 29, raised over \$4,000 to help renovate Harry’s 19th century home to become more accessible (see *The WORD* December 2011).



Executive Council (EC) rep John Burgess served the college well for 38 years as a professor of physical education. Celebrating his well-earned retirement on the evening of March 8 were FA officers and fellow EC reps, among numerous other SCCC colleagues.

Recognizing his years of dedicated service on the EC, especially in terms of political action, Ellen Schuler Mauk presented the avid cyclist with a bicycle bell engraved by the FA. As shown in the picture at left, John was pleasantly surprised by the gift.

# Resolve that nagging feeling: MAC makes political action easy

by Cynthia Eaton

When you're in the thick of a busy semester, Albany can feel like a million miles away. When you're elbow deep in responding to student essays or grading midterm exams, taking even a moment to participate in political action can seem like too much. With the work required to give your all to your classes and your committees, you feel spent.

But you're also tired of the attacks on educators in the media. You know what Occupy Wall Street is all about. You're not oblivious to what people say about teachers and other public employees on various websites—or even in your neighbors' or family members' homes.

You tell yourself, "That's why we pay union dues, right? So our elected FA officers and Executive Council (EC) reps can fight this fight so I don't have to."

Yet a nagging feeling remains. "Well, I also give a couple bucks to VOTE/COPE each paycheck. That should be enough."

Still you're not convinced. You're too highly educated. You know what's happening politically across the nation: public sector employees—teachers in particular—are under attack.

Enter NYSUT's Member Action Center (MAC).

The MAC (<http://mac.nysut.org>) is designed to give you the information you need and to help you take action—quickly and easily. NYSUT knows we're all busy, but they also know that *every single voice* amongst its membership is

absolutely critical.

That's why all of the FA officers and an increasing number of our EC reps are participating via the MAC. Below, EC reps speak out about why you should too.

Michael Boecherer (English, Eastern) says, "I used MAC to fax my legislators because they need to reinvest in higher education. I also shared the link on Facebook to get others involved. I know my students are suffering from the current economic conditions; it is wrong that they have to shoulder so much of the responsibility on their own. The government can, and should, do something to help. No one should have to work multiple jobs in order to afford classes at SCCC."

Jane-Marie Wright (Mathematics, Ammerman) has taken action too. "Unfortunately politicians don't read your words, they weigh them! I just faxed my legislators using NYSUT's Member Action Center. This is a very easy way to let your voice be heard. It literally takes less than two minutes. There are lots of different issues to select from—choose the ones you care about and ignore the ones you disagree with. If I can do it, so can you."

"I've sent faxes and it was easy; it took five minutes to enter my name and address and click on the faxes I wanted to send," Louise Johnston (Admissions, Eastern) chimes in. "Years ago, I thought that sending such faxes would not be that effective but I've found it's not true. It's all about the volume. It's like signing your name to a petition. Politicians will always pay attention to the numbers."

"Why did I participate using the MAC?" Kevin McNamara (Business, Ammerman) couldn't say enough. "It's the same reason I first became interested in politics. I remember being a

twelve year old captivated by the young, charismatic presidential candidate John F. Kennedy. I wasn't alone; a great many young people were also inspired by him. It was an experience similar to Barack Obama today. After JFK was elected I read *The Making of the President 1960* by Theodore H. White—a national bestseller back then and still regarded as the book that sets the bar for political journalism. That book taught me as a twelve year old that everything, and I do mean *everything*, in our lives is affected by the political arena. To dig a hole in the sand and bury your head in it regarding politics is incredibly foolish and intellectually suicidal."

McNamara pauses. "I tell my business students all the time that, unfortunately, money is what creates opportunities or what takes them away from us. It's the absolute truth. Therefore, our politicians are the gatekeepers of a great many of our opportunities. We cannot fail to communicate with them all that we think. I feel that the MAC is a website every one of our FA members should have on their favorites list on their computer and it should be monitored frequently. This website is most informative about critical events that affect us now and in the future. No one should miss the benefits of this website, and everyone should sign up immediately!"

Bruce Seger (Library, Grant) agrees that every single FA member needs to speak up. "Please get involved. Politicians love nothing more than a silent electorate!" Bruce advises us to remember these words from Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.:

History is a great teacher. Now everyone knows that the labor movement did not diminish the strength of the nation but enlarged it. By raising the living standards of

*continued on page 9*





millions, labor miraculously created a market for industry and lifted the whole nation to undreamed of levels of production. Those who attack labor forget these simple truths, but history remembers them.

Doug Cody (Chemistry, Grant), an activist for 40 years, also wants everyone to pitch in. “I have always thought that the more people who get involved with our union the stronger our union can be. In all these years I have never experienced a time when unions are being attacked on a regular basis as we see in the media. If we care about our profession and the impact we have on the future of our country, then we need to be more vigilant and more vocal. I have joined the MAC and regularly visit the site and send faxes. If this is the only action that each every one of us takes, it is certainly better than sitting back idly and doing nothing.”

“I decided to ‘like’ the MAC on Facebook,” says Peter DiGregorio (ETU, Grant) to spread the word even more efficiently. “It was as easy as logging into my Facebook account, going to <http://mac.nysut.org>, and clicking the ‘like’ button. Now I will get all MAC updates automatically in my Facebook news feed. Sending faxes to my legislators is easier than ever. Whether we like it or not, it is more important than ever that educators get involved politically. The MAC is a convenient and easy way to do just that.”

Christina Beard-Moose (Anthropology, Ammerman) is not an EC rep but is an FA activist. “Being politically active has always been a part of my adult life. Since the advent of the internet, even the busiest person can be an activist. All it takes is signing up, signing in, and clicking on the actions in which you are interested. Simple as that.”

Christina smiles. “Then, guess what? Your single voice joins every other single voice and becomes a roar. Let’s go, everyone!”

To answer the question for everyone, and not just those who happened to run into me on campus, “Yes, I was present with the other county union presidents at the meeting called by County Executive Steve Bellone to discuss the Blue Ribbon Commission’s report on the state of the county’s finances.”

Although the county executive knew that the assembled union leaders had all read and heard about the report the commission had delivered the day before, he personally wanted to explain it to us to address questions we had about the report, the assumptions used, and the options available to the county in addressing the issues. He indicated that as much as he didn’t like the fiscal mess he inherited that identified a structural imbalance for at least the last 12 years, he wanted to focus on solutions—and the solutions would have to involve everyone and not just the county workforce.

Explicitly, Bellone asked the unions to partner with him to help find solutions that would address the fiscal needs of the county as well as the needs of the county’s workforce to deliver the public services needed by county residents. He instructed his director of labor relations to contact each of us within the next several days to set up meetings to begin specific discussions about how our bargaining units may or may not be impacted.

As you might have expected, the issue of the EMHP health benefits agreement that is due to expire at the end of 2012 was raised. It was generally pointed out that significant savings may be realized in renegotiating the agreement as well as several options to achieve those savings over time that could diminish the impact on county workers. What was noted was that, given the significance of health insurance issues, we all needed to approach these discussions thoughtfully so that we can arrive at decisions that are

in the best interests of our members as well as the county in general.

The tone of the meeting was strikingly different than meetings we had all experienced in the not too distant past. No one used inflammatory rhetoric or mentioned *layoffs*, *concessions*, or *cutbacks*. Bellone’s approach was serious and respectful of all the individuals in the room—and, of even greater significance, the county executive was respectful of the collective bargaining process as the way to address these issues of grave concern to him and to us.

I have not yet been contacted by the county’s director of labor relations since we are in the second year of our already renegotiated contract to address lower enrollments and lower state and local funding. When I am contacted, I will explain the steps we have already taken to be part of the overall county solution.

Of course, the FA will certainly be part of the health insurance negotiation when it begins. To that end, we will be mindful of the concessions our members have already made in an effort to continue to provide a quality education for our students within the county.

Finally, I will keep you informed as these discussions continue. If you have immediate concerns, please share them with your Executive Council representative or feel free to contact me at the FA office or through email at [ellen@fascc.org](mailto:ellen@fascc.org).

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# What does Tier 6 have to do with us?

by Cynthia Eaton

By focusing on Tier 6 as affecting “the pensions of the unborn,” Governor Cuomo and other proponents seem to be making some assumptions about us. They seem to believe that current educators don’t care about their profession.

The basic premise of “it doesn’t matter because it doesn’t impact me” is clearly a

faulty one. Tier 6 affects all of us. Here’s how.

First, it would drastically reduce the employer’s contribution to 4-7% to members of the Optional Retirement Plan (ORP) and members of the defined benefit pensions (TRS and ERS), which would put our colleges at a competitive

disadvantage with other states in attracting and retaining the best faculty.

Tier 6 hits home for our current FA members in another direct way. Tier 6 would also force new employees not eligible to join the ORP to choose between a severely diminished defined-benefit pension plan and a defined-

contribution 401(k) plan because the new pension requires new employees to pay more and work longer, to receive a smaller benefit. In time, this will have a negative impact on the defined-benefit pension plan, which current employees—including our current FA members—rely on.

Public employees have already made sacrifices to help address the budget crisis. Here in the FA, we agreed to two years of zeros and increased class sizes.

Across the state, public employees have negotiated contracts that include wage freezes, pay lags, dramatic increases in healthcare premiums, unpaid furloughs, and other wage and benefit reductions.

This has resulted in saving millions in tax dollars. And our reward for doing more with less? Doing much more with much less—and apparently *for* much less.



## Tell Albany the truth about pensions.



“I started in the State University system in the 1970s as a graduate student at SUNY Stony Brook. I retired in 2000 with 30 years pension credit. I am grateful for my \$25,000 pension, even if it does not go very far on Long Island. I am deeply insulted when I read the news that it’s OK to reduce pensions for those workers not yet hired. We fought for pensions for future generations, not just for ourselves alone. I am very concerned that if they start privatizing, the pension system will be depleted. This will hurt all of us.”

— Judith Wishnia  
UUP SUNY Stony Brook

Retired public employees have a huge impact on New York’s economy. Public employees generally remain residents of New York State after they retire. Pension payments create a multiplier effect throughout the state’s economy.

- According to a study by the National Institute for Retirement Security, each dollar invested in public pensions by New York taxpayers’ supports over \$11 in total economic activity.
- One person’s pension spending becomes another’s income.
- Retirement expenditures in New York State supported nearly 137,000 jobs in the state, accounting for \$10.5 billion in wages and salaries and \$4.1 billion in tax revenue to the federal, state and local governments.
- New Yorks’ public workforce are also taxpayers. They pay taxes like every other citizen of the State.
- New York’s public retirement systems are huge investors in private companies all over the world; over 80% of the retirement system’s earnings comes from returns on these investments, NOT taxpayer dollars.

**Despite the facts, the Governor has proposed slashing pension benefits for middle class retirees through the creation of a new pension plan called Tier 6.**

Call the Governor, your State Senator and Assemblymember and give them the facts about pensions.

**Tell them to say NO to Tier 6.  
(877) 255-9417**

*A NYSUT ad campaign opposing Tier 6 features the mother of FA member Kenneth Wishnia (English, Grant).*



# Adjunct update

by Cynthia Eaton

## Retirees who adjunct

As more retired full-time faculty decide to continue teaching at SCCC as an adjunct, questions arise about how the seniority of retired full-time faculty compares with the seniority of other adjuncts. These questions can be tricky because, while the contract speaks to seniority as the number of years in one's discipline, seniority is not necessarily an absolute. There are several variables that affect seniority.

For a retiree who is doing adjunct work, seniority is based on the number of semesters that individual taught as a full-timer and as an adjunct in our bargaining unit. If for two members those numbers are equal, the determination of who has greater seniority has to do with rank, date of rank, how many courses they have taught in the discipline (full-time courses plus adjunct/overload courses), etc. Also, if one faculty member taught

in the summers, he or she would get credit for those extra semesters in their seniority ranking, while faculty who didn't teach in the summers would not.

Another issue that might affect seniority is whether the individual has served in an appointed, not elected, administrative position, such as assistant dean (this doesn't include academic chairs who stand for election because they have discipline seniority). If a retiree who adjuncts did serve in an appointed administrative position, the time during which they held that position does not count toward their discipline seniority; however, if they taught overload courses during that time, the semesters and number of overload contact hours do count.

Generally speaking, when full-time faculty retire, most go to the top of their discipline seniority list. However, this doesn't always hold true. For instance, one person may have retired ten years ago

with a large accumulation of hours, but now we have people currently retiring who have even more accumulated years. That is, date of hire isn't the only factor.

One more point that some may not be familiar with: The very first semester after retirement, those brand new retiree adjuncts are assigned the courses that they selected while still full time, based on their full-time seniority. Then, after that first semester, assignments are based on traditional seniority rules of semester and hours in the discipline.

## Upcoming NORA dates

Below are the NORA due dates for the summer and fall 2012 semesters.

NORA process	dates
forms due	March 30
assignments posted	April 20
accept/decline due	May 10

## Faculty Association 2011-12 Executive Council

### Officers

Ellen Schuler Mauk.....President  
 Helen Peterman.....Executive Vice President  
 Marie Hanna.....Secretary  
 Joyce Gabriele.....Treasurer  
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### EC Reps: Adjuncts

Doug Cody.....BIO,CHE,ESS,FPT,PHY,AUT,ELT,ENS,TEL  
 Helen McEntire.....CST,ACC,BNK,BUS,LAW,MKT,BUS,OFT  
 William Schaefer.....ECO,HIS,POL,POA,Counseling, Stud. Act.  
 Frank DiGregorio.....ECO,HIS,POL,POA,Counseling, Stud. Act.  
 Christine Hegarty.....ENG,LIB,COM,THR,RTV  
 Priscilla Pratt.....ENG,LIB,COM,THR,RTV  
 CorrineMorton-Greiner.For.Lang.,ESL,RDG,HUM,ASL,MUS,ART,PHL  
 Kelliann Flores.....For.Lang.,ESL,RDG,HUM,ASL,MUS,ART,PHL  
 Russell David.....Math  
 Sarahjeanne Goldstein.....NUR,HSC,DTE,HIT,CDC,EDU,PED,COL  
 Agnes Lynch.....NUR,HSC,DTE,HIT,CDC,EDU,PED,COL  
*vacant*.....PA/Specialists - Acad. Skills Ctrs.  
 Maureen Sandford.....PA/Spec.-Programmatic, Tech, At-Large  
 MaryAnne Ellinger.....PA/Specialists - Instructional Labs  
 Christopher Gherardi.....Retiree/Guild  
 Charles Grippi.....Retiree/Guild

### EC Reps: Professional Assistants

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 Steve Ortiz-Rios.....Technical Areas/Instructional Centers  
 Deb Kiesel.....Instructional Labs

### EC Reps: Ammerman Campus

Sara Rafferty.....Music/Visual Arts  
 Lisa Aymong.....Nursing/Health & Human Services/PE  
 Darryl Butkos.....Biology/Physical Sciences  
 Jane-Marie Wright.....Math  
 Lars Hedstrom.....Comm./Languages/Reading/Philosophy/  
 Theater/TV, Radio, Film  
 Kevin McCoy.....Library/Central  
 Kevin McNamara.....Accounting/Business Admin./  
 Business Information Systems  
 MariaKranidis.....English  
 Denise Haggerty.....Social Sciences/Criminal Justice  
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 Industrial Technology

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Deborah Wolfson.....Natural & Health Sciences/Math/PE  
 Bruce Seger.....Liberal Arts/Counseling/Library  
 Mohini Ratna.....Liberal Arts/Counseling/Library  
 Peter DiGregorio.....Business & Technology

### New York State United Teachers

Jonathan Rubin.....NYSUT Labor Relations Specialist



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*photo by Victoria Sinacori*



*Anita Greifenstein (FA office manager), Lisa Aymong (co-chair, community outreach program), and Dan Linker (program coordinator, Professors on Wheels) share a laugh with a faculty member as she signs up for Professors on Wheels. During his Professional Development Day keynote address, SCCC President Shaun McKay complimented the FA on our program's success and encouraged the faculty in attendance to sign up for this worthy initiative.*