



AFO and College Administrators Agree to Begin Talks August 27

While it is tempting to look back at our historic recognition election and bathe in the good feelings associated with our overwhelming mandate (89% “yes” votes), the AFO has not been standing still during our short summer “vacation.” Mary Beck (see her member profile in this issue of the *AFO News*) was named interim President by the organizing committee. Also elected to interim officer positions were Glenn O’Kray (vice president), Bill Norris (secretary), and Ron Webb (grievance officer). We have said good-bye to two of our favorite AFT-Michigan staffers—Lynn Marie Smith and Dave Dobbie. Dave has taken a position at Wayne State University and Lynn Marie has taken her energy on to organizing drives at other Michigan campuses. Johnny Mickles, an AFT field representative, has been assigned to work with us in establishing our bargaining strategy and our own Bill Norris has taken a position with the AFT-Michigan and will serve double-duty as our “contract organizer.”

We held our first general membership meeting on June 19 and our second general membership meeting will take place on August 22 (see announcement for details and the agenda). During that first meeting, Mary introduced herself and other key members of the organizing committee including those accepting interim officer positions. She reported that the AFO had sent the administration a “demand to

bargain” letter that led to an agreement to begin talks on August 27, just after classes begin. Mary provided a timetable that will optimistically lead to a first contract by December. Wear your buttons beginning August 27 and regularly after that to show your support for our bargaining team—call 248.977.8897 if you need a button.

Mary also announced that Tom Anderson was instrumental in developing the AFO website (www.hfcc-afo.org) and had been named as chair of the bargaining committee. Joe Sorokac has accepted responsibility for chairing a one-person “constitution committee.” Members were encouraged to visit the website and to participate in an on-line member survey during the meeting and through mailings and e-mails. (The survey closed July 6—results will be reported during our membership meeting.) Based on the preliminary results, Tom and the rest of the bargaining committee have been busy researching bargaining priorities and developing proposals.

These are exciting times for the AFO and Henry Ford Community College. College administrators have shown that they are willing to take us seriously and we are looking forward to working with them toward our common goal of ensuring that HFCC provides students with a high quality education!

General Membership Meeting!!!

**Our next general membership meeting will be
Friday, August 22 @ 3:00 p.m.
in the Hackett Room, H151**

Be there! We need your help to keep the AFO strong!

AGENDA

- **Welcome**
- **Status report**
 - **Accomplishments**
 - **Milestones ahead**
 - **Office space**
- **Report on survey results**
- **Identification and ratification of bargaining priorities**
- **Bargaining committee report**
- **Report on constitution**
- **Discussion, new issues, questions**

AFO Moving to Campus Office

Thanks to some hard by Sherry Morgan and the help of HFCC administrators, the AFO will be moving to an on-campus office. We expect to occupy the office, which is located on the lower level of the Learning Technology Center (room A-024), by the beginning of the fall term. Our office is far from grand, but at least it’s cheap and we will strive to make it welcoming. Mary and other officers want to talk to AFO members about their individual concerns and bargaining priorities and to answer any questions adjuncts may have. (Schedules will be posted on our website.) New members of the AFO are especially encouraged to visit and learn more about our union and our plans.

AFO Committed to Growing Adjunct Unions

If the union movement doesn't grow, it will die. We couldn't have gotten to the point we are now let alone to the place we need to be (i.e. with a good first contract in place) without the support we've received from the American Federation of Teachers. Knowing this and realizing that we have common interests with adjuncts and part-time faculty at other Michigan schools, AFO leaders have vowed to help create a network of part-time unions in Michigan and to contribute to organizing efforts elsewhere. We also want to do what we can to expand the definition of our own bargaining unit and to support organizing drives among any remaining groups of HFCC employees who are not yet represented by a union.

One possibility for a local network is to work with other existing Michigan-based adjunct unions to establish a Michigan chapter of the Coalition of Contingent Academic Laborers (COCAL). COCAL is a loose national network of activists who are pursuing the goal of improving working conditions for part-time academic laborers. We are also interested in providing time and moral support to any fledgling adjunct organizing campaign getting started at other schools.

Our newsletters can be shared widely—ask for extra copies and distribute them to adjuncts at other schools. Anyone reading this working at a college without a labor union for part-time adjuncts who is interested in building one should contact Bill Norris (wmnorris@aftmichigan.org). We are also interested in hearing from the leaders of other groups of organized adjuncts who share our interest in building a Michigan network.

Wear your buttons at the adjunct dinner!

HFCC has invited all AFO members to a "Welcome Back" dinner for adjuncts on Tuesday, August 12 at 5:00 p.m. in the Student & Culinary Arts Center Pavilion. The dinner will be followed by a keynote address and a social hour and division specific activities. This annual event has become a tradition at HFCC and gives administrators a chance to show their appreciation for the many contributions adjuncts make and gives adjuncts a rare opportunity for dialogue and professional development. We encourage you to attend and to wear your AFO buttons as a note of solidarity. Don't worry if you've lost or misplaced your button (or never received one!) - AFO members will be on hand (with the blessings of administration) to make sure you have one.

Member News and Notes

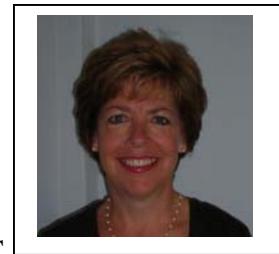
Congratulations to *former* AFO members Paul Fisher, Meena Sharma, and Margaret Waters. Paul (economics), Meena, (sociology), and Margaret (respiratory therapy) were all promoted to full-time positions. As members of local 1650, we hope and expect that each of them will continue to support our efforts to improve working conditions for adjuncts.

Congratulations are also in order for Jackie (Martin) Rochell, a member of the organizing committee and a Political Science adjunct. In May, Jackie published her first book, *Beyond the Colored Line*.

If you have an item for "Member News and Notes" please contact Bill Norris at wmnorris@aft-michigan.org.

This Issue's Member Profile: Mary Beck

Mary Beck, the interim President of the AFO, is the subject of this issue's "member profile." Mary, a Dearborn resident for 25 years, has been teaching child psychology and Life Span at HFCC since the winter, 2004 term. Her oldest daughter (Nicole) was in college by then, and her youngest (Lauren) was soon to start high school. Her middle child, Emily, was already a student at Mercy High School. With her daughters growing, Mary was looking for new challenges. She says she loves teaching child psychology because "I can relate to my students, their families, and the challenges they are overcoming. I was a product of a community college—Monroe CC—and I've never forgotten the teachers that inspired me and got me to believe in myself. We owe it to our students to ensure that working conditions at HFCC are conducive to a quality education."



After graduating from Monroe CC in 1975, Mary went on to Eastern Michigan University where she graduated summa cum laude in 1977, with a major in social work. While working with emotionally impaired children in Redford, MI, she simultaneously worked on a master's degree in clinical psychology at the Merrill-Palmer Institute, receiving her M.A. in 1980. She then spent three years as a therapist with Monroe County Community Mental Health. In 1983, she and her husband, John Dubosh, moved to Dearborn and soon after, Mary started a two-year post-masters training program in couples and family therapy at the Family Institute of Southeastern Michigan. For the past 15 years, she has maintained a private practice in Grosse Pointe Park. Her husband John recently left his long time position as Clinical Services Supervisor at He-gira Programs in Westland to become the new Supervisor of Psychiatric Social Work at Cottage Hospital in Grosse Pointe Farms.

When the AFO organizing committee began to form in the winter of 2007, Mary found herself becoming more and more aware of the "adjunct problem." "I knew we were paid poorly in comparison to full-time staff and that we didn't have a suitable place to meet with students and all of that, but I hadn't realized how much of a struggle it was for those adjuncts who were trying to piece together a living working at multiple colleges. I knew something had to be done and I believed I could help. Nicole was beginning medical school at Ohio State University, Emily was a sophomore attending the James Madison College at Michigan State University, and my baby, Lauren, was a junior at Mercy High School. I had time, grown children, and a supportive husband, so I got involved."

With a history of involvement in the Detroit peace and justice community, Mary proved to be one of our greatest assets during the organizing campaign. Her passion, persuasiveness, and her belief that we would succeed inspired all who worked with her. In recognition of her outstanding leadership, she was unanimously elected interim president of the AFO by the organizing committee.

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