



HFCC Adjunct Faculty Organization News

Help us build a *strong* Adjunct Faculty Organization and a *better* college!

October 2008
Volume 2, No. 2

First Contract Campaign Underway

The AFO has begun talks with representatives of the HFCC Board of Trustees that will lead to a first ever contract with the College. The AFO is represented by Chairman Tom Anderson (see his member profile in this issue of the *AFO News*), Mary Beck, interim AFO president; Glenn O’Kray, interim vice-president; Bill Norris, interim secretary and AFT-MI organizer; and AFO members Sherry Morgan, Dorothy Pelton, and Neam Zalzal. The Board is represented by Elizabeth Davis, Director of Human Resources; Marjorie Swan; Vice President of Business Services/Controller; and Dan Tukel, of Butzel-Long, who serves as primary spokesperson. Anderson speaks for the AFO and Johnny Mickles, the AFT-MI service representative assigned to the AFO, also contributes.

So far, bargaining sessions have been cordial, but the most difficult part of the bargaining process lies ahead. The two teams have agreed upon bargaining ground rules and two sets of what Anderson described as “mostly boiler-plate” proposals have been passed to the management team. Remaining “non-economic” proposals are expected to go to the management team early in October and Anderson expects to receive any counter proposals from them by the end of the month.

On September 19, the AFO presented an overview of the AFO bargaining platform to the management team. All AFO members are encouraged to visit

the organization’s website (hfcc-afco.org) to view the presentation and read the AFO “Statement of Principles.”

Anderson said that “things will really start to get interesting in late October when we pass our economic proposals. The management team needs to know that our members are fully supporting our bargaining platform— that’s the only way we’re going to achieve our goals.”

To help with this objective, a “steering committee” composed of individuals who will take on roles as stewards and members of various standing committees is taking shape. Beck said, “We need a strong organization if we want to improve our salaries, job security, and benefits. The only requirement for membership on the steering committee is a willingness to get involved.” Contact the AFO office (313.845.9707) for more information.

Hold the Date!

The second fall membership meeting of the AFO will take place on Friday, November 14 at 5:30 p.m.

Visit our website for the agenda and meeting details



Tom Anderson, chair of the AFO Bargaining Committee, reaches across the table to shake hands with Marge Swan, HFCC Comptroller.

AFO Executive Board Endorses Obama Members Encouraged to Make PAC Contributions

The November 4 general election is only weeks away and the AFO Executive Board encourages every member who is eligible to register and vote for the candidate of their choice. While the Board respects the right of AFO members to vote for the ticket they believe will do the best job of leading the country, a review of the candidates’ positions regarding higher education issues led to their decision to endorse Democrats Barack Obama and Joe Biden for the offices of president and vice-president and to support Carl Levin’s bid to be re-elected to the United States senate. Other organizations with which we are affiliated—the AFL/CIO, the American Federation of Teachers and the AFT-Michigan—have also endorsed these candidates.

When it comes to the issues that matter the most to members of the higher education community, it is clear that Obama’s positions are more compatible with our goals than is the case with the Republican candidate. For instance, every college teacher knows that a solid secondary education is a foundation for success in a post-secondary classroom. Senator Obama supports reforming and fully funding the No Child Left Behind Act so that “important services can be protected and resources are not drained from programs that support the classroom,” (barackobama.com).

Obama is also on record of supporting an increase to the maximum Pell grant amount to keep pace with inflation while John McCain opposed an annual increase that would have helped restore its purchasing power for low-income and working families. (Continued on back page)

This Issue's Member Profile: Tom Anderson

Thirty-four years ago a young Tom Anderson interrupted his studies at Schoolcraft Community College to hitchhike across the country. Tom didn't have a predetermined travel agenda, but he wanted to see the Rocky Mountains and experience the joy of the open road. (He was probably under the influence of Jack Kerouac!) While camping near Spokane, WA, young Tom found himself among kindred spirits who believed that the nation's environment was being threatened by corporate greed and lax laws. Not one to just sit back and complain, Tom decided to join in a series of protests being staged at the Spokane World's Fair. The demonstrations took an ugly turn when one of the protesters decided to burn an "Expo 74 flag" and authorities reacted by arresting all of the male demonstrators (talk about sexism!) including Tom. That event was Tom's introduction to community organizing.



After returning to Michigan, Tom married Cindy, his wife of 33 years, and completed his studies at Schoolcraft before moving on to Wayne State University. WSU conferred his bachelor's degree in 1980, his master's in 1988, and his Ph.D. in medieval history in 1991. He began his teaching career at WSU as a Teaching Assistant in 1981 and has taught there ever since, including nine years as a full-time non-tenure track lecturer.

Like many of us who have been denied tenure-track positions, Tom has become a "roads" scholar and he currently teaches history courses at WSU, Schoolcraft, and since 1998, at HFCC. Besides teaching world history at HFCC, Tom was responsible for developing a course on the History of Rome from 753 B.C.E. to 500 C.E. (History 238).

Cindy (Tom's wife) worked at the General Motors Fisher Body plant before earning her degree in culinary arts from Schoolcraft. She worked as a chef in various clubs and restaurants before taking her current position as the supervisor of an elementary school kitchen for the Plymouth-Canton schools. Like her husband, Cindy believes that working people must occasionally take matters into their own hands and she was active in the UAW while working at Fisher Body and served as a union steward.

Even though Cindy had been a union activist, Tom has taken his time before deciding when asked to sign a union card. When WSU employees began the process of forming their Union of Part-Time Faculty (approximately a year before the AFO took shape), he had to be convinced that the UPTF was going to be more than a paper tiger. "I don't believe in unions for the sake of unions," Tom said, "I believe in unions for the sake of their members. Once I realized that the UPTF was that kind of an organization, I got involved. By the time the organizing drive at HFCC was underway, I was serving as the chair of the UPTF bargaining committee. When we won our first contract, I was ready to get more involved here as well because the members of the AFO steering committee share my belief that the quality of education depends on treating all employees fairly." That was a fortunate turn of events for the AFO because Tom has brought his valuable UPTF experience to the bargaining table at HFCC. He has worked tirelessly to develop a bargaining position and strategy that will ultimately fulfill his goal of making a real difference in the lives of AFO members. Let him know you appreciate his hard work when you see him.

AFO Endorses Obama; Supports PAC

(Continued from front page)

McCain also appears to favor banks over students. In December, 2005, Obama opposed increases in student loan interest rates in an effort to make college more affordable for students and their families while McCain supported the increases to the benefit of banks and lenders. In addition, McCain has proposed curtailing investments in current and new federal programs for a year, including those that would expand opportunities for higher education. In sharp contrast, Obama has proposed a new, fully refundable tax credit to cover two-thirds of a student's college tuition.

While the AFO is not yet a dues-paying organization, members who support Senator McCain or oppose Senator Obama because of their positions on other issues should be assured that their dues will not be used to support political candidates of either party. However, members will be and are encouraged to contribute to AFT political action committees and these funds will be and are used to support political candidates who take positions that support the union movement and promise to improve the quality of higher education.

The AFT recommends that part-time union members contribute \$20 per year to the AFT-Michigan Political Action Committee. In keeping with this recommendation, we are soliciting contributions from our members. If you believe, as the Board does, that Obama and Levin will be good for America and for higher education, please write your check payable to the "AFT-MI PAC" and forward it to Bill Norris, AFO secretary.

AFO Polo Shirts Coming—Order Yours Today!

If you're into style, or if you just want to show off your membership in the Adjunct Faculty Organization, you will want to order an AFO polo shirt. Our shirts will be navy blue with our logo (as shown on the left side of our masthead) embroidered on the left side. These high quality shirts will be available in all sizes for \$25. Order yours using the form that will soon be available on our website (www.hfcc-af.org). Contact us at afo@aff-hfcc.org or 313.845.9707 for more information.

Member News and Notes

Ventra Asana, an adjunct in the English Department, was elected to the Board of Directors of the Ecology Center of Ann Arbor. Ventra has also started an eco-business, WUE/Workshop in Urban Ecology, which specializes in spiritual formation around Earth-care practices, eco-tourism, and teaching small groups to proactively engage avenues of urban ecology. For more information, she can be reached at ecology-diva@yahoo.com.

The artwork of Wassma Mohana, Arabic language instructor, was exhibited at the Dearborn Heights City Hall and other venues this past summer. Her work has been publicized in both the *Detroit News* and *Free Press* and in August, she was interviewed by MBN-TV.

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

hfcc-af