



N E W S L E T T E R

Volume 29, No. 6

Janet Nortrom, Editor

March 11, 2005

FROM THE PRESIDENT

AAS Victories

I want to thank the entire faculty for demanding input on the reconfiguration of the Associate of Applied Arts Degree.

The heart of shared governance is faculty control of the curriculum. It is a principle that is well established in the academy at all levels. It is unfortunate, to say the least, that certain technical college presidents and state WTCS staff don't grasp the elementary truth that it is the professional educators who work directly with our students and business and industry that are most knowledgeable about curriculum and student needs.

Because you have insisted that the faculty have a voice in the curriculum redesign, the union has taken this matter up. As a result we have won three significant victories.

1. The State Board established an AAS Working group with faculty membership.
2. The working group has agreed to increase the range of AAS degree credits from 60-68 to 60-70.
3. The state has agreed to add to the general education core such courses as Technical Math 1 and 2 and Communications Skills 1 and 2 that were originally rejected.

All of these positive developments are the direct result of your willingness to speak out, testify at state and MATC board meetings, write emails, letters and even educate your union leadership.

Challenges Remain

Many important program courses such as Math 182, NatSci 199, 108, and 177 are not on the general education core list. They need to be added. If you have not already done so, please let Provost Jim Walsh know which courses need to be added!

In addition, in the revised degree electives are entirely optional. This means students may have no choice at all in selecting credits in their programs. Combined with the cut in total credits, this could lead to an enrollment reduction in physical fitness and wellness programs. These are important courses that help students develop healthy lifestyles, and it is education that is not available to many of our students otherwise. This change would also cost the college FTE's and state dollars.

MATC Funding Under Attack

I also want to thank all of you who have written your Congressional representatives urging them to restore Perkins and AEFL funding and to the Governor urging him to veto Assembly Bill 58. The response has been overwhelming. I believe we will win these battles. If you have not written yet, it is not too late to do so. Information is available on 212's web site, www.local212.org

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AND IN THIS CORNER...

MPS Board Affects MATC

On April 5, the day after we return from the Spring Recess, there is an election. As usual in the Spring Election, the races for Milwaukee Public School Board are crucial for everyone at MATC. This is for two reasons: many of our students come from the MPS, and MPS Board members play a major role in choosing who sits on the MATC District Board.

Four years ago Local 212 members worked hard to get **Jennifer Morales** and **Peter Blewett** elected to the board. This year, both are up for re-election but Morales has no competition. Local 212 COPE has endorsed Blewett as well as **John Hagen** and **Charlene Hardin**.

Blewett and Hardin have been on the school board and have worked hard for greater student achievement and financial accountability. Blewett has done a marvelous job of bringing together a board that was previously divided and antagonistic. He is now President of the MPS Board.

Hagen is running for an open seat. He is a refreshingly bright and articulate police detective with a Masters Degree from Marquette and is married to an MPS educator. He comes from a union family and believes public money should be spent on public schools and not squandered on unaccountable private "academies."

All three are being opposed by a slate of candidates who favor privatizing public schools. It's predictable that the same group of far right-wing financiers from around the country who have spent heavily on MPS races in the past will pour money into Milwaukee to try to get their ideological ditto-heads onto the MPS Board.

Gardner and Thompson Won't Go Away

The campaigns opposing Blewett, Hagen and Hardin are being strategically directed by John Gardner and Bruce Thompson, two former school board members whose contentious ideological extremism drove the MPS Board to paralysis. Voters kicked both Gardner and Thompson out of office, but they're still trying to use the MPS Board to further their agenda of privatizing public education.

Every time you read in the paper about voucher schools' fraud and misuse of public funds – Louis Tucker Academy, Academic Solutions Center, Alex's Academy of Excellence and Mandella Academy – you can thank Gardner, Thompson and their candidates who care more about the ideology of privatization than about educating our kids or protecting public funds from being spent on Mercedes Benzes.

That's why it is so important for Local 212 members who live in Milwaukee to vote on April 5. But no matter where you live, you can write checks to help our candidates.

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FROM THE PRESIDENT
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It is a sad commentary on the values of our political leadership that at the very time the country is facing a large and growing skilled labor shortage, they continue to promote tax cuts for very wealthy (another \$100 billion in the current federal budget) while slashing educational funding. Just ask yourself, how many teachers would \$100 billion allow technical colleges to hire? How many labs would it equip? How many childcare centers would it fund?

In the President Bush's latest budget Carl Perkins, the main federal adult basic education program, is entirely eliminated and the AEFL is cut by 65%. AB 58 the Wisconsin legislature's property tax freeze bill will undermine the only effective revenue stream that MATC has, the local property tax which is already statutorily capped at 1.5%, that is \$1.50 per \$1000 worth of property. This is a rather modest, but very important investment in training our skilled workforce. If we don't train skilled workers, the state's economy will not grow and Wisconsin's businesses will not prosper.

In contrast, Governor Doyle's budget freezes property taxes without cutting tech college funding. It invests in education recognizing that technical education is the key to growing Wisconsin's economy.

MICHAEL ROSEN
PRESIDENT

RETHINKING THE WAR IN IRAQ: AN OPEN FORUM

March 19th is the second anniversary of the war in Iraq. With more than 1,500 U.S. dead, more than 10,000 wounded, and as many as 100,000 Iraqi lives lost, how can we end the violence and find the road to peace?

"Rethinking the War in Iraq: An Open Forum" will examine that question, and offer the opportunity for an exchange of views. Please bring your classes to participate! The event will also be broadcast to the regional campuses.

Wed., March 16, 2005

Part one: 11 a.m. – 12 noon

Part two: 12 noon – 1 p.m.

T-Auditorium

Our featured speaker is **Erik Gustafson**, Director, Education for Peace in Iraq Center (EPIC), Washington, D.C. A veteran of the Gulf War, Erik spent eight months in Saudi Arabia in 1990-91 with the 864th Engineer Battalion, building hospitals, roads and POW camps. In 1998, he founded the Education for Peace in Iraq Center (EPIC), dedicated to improving humanitarian conditions and protecting human rights in Iraq.

Our panelists are: **Rob "biko" Baker**, Field Organizer, Campaign Against Violence; **Katherine Fuchs**, Peace Action, UWM student; **Constance Williams**, MATC International Student Organization; **David Brown**, MATC student, Iraq veteran; and **Derek Ptacek**, MATC student, Iraq and Afghanistan veteran.

The last half of each hour is open for your comments, questions, and discussion.

This forum is sponsored by International Ethnic Fest, the International Student Organization, Latino Student Organization, Black Student Union, AFT Local 212, and others.

SUE RUGGLES
U.S. LABOR AGAINST THE WAR

AND IN THIS CORNER...
CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE

Four years ago our members contributed over \$1500 to help Blewett and Morales upset the privatizers. Let's be generous again to support public education. Get your checks to Michael Rosen or myself. If you have time to volunteer for lit drops or phone banking, call the Local 212 office to volunteer.

Support Libby Burmaster

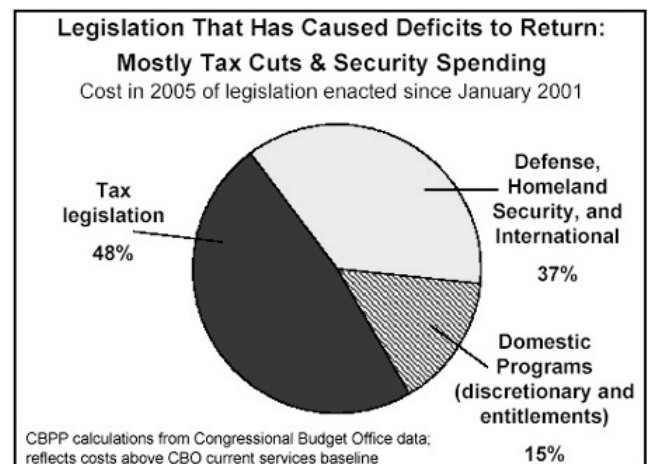
Also deserving support from all 212 members is Libby Burmaster who is running statewide for re-election for Superintendent of Public Instruction. Burmaster not only advocates strongly for public education, but she has also been a huge supporter of technical education and MATC from her position on the WTCS Board. She has helped us tremendously on the AAS Degree issue. Please vote for Burmaster on April 5.

CHARLIE DEE
EXECUTIVE V-P

PUNISH THE MIDDLE CLASS!
PERKS FOR THE WEALTHY!

Isn't it ironic that the United States Congress which has passed two of the most economically irresponsible budgets in history has decided to make it harder for working people to declare bankruptcy? That's right. Despite the fact that 50% of those who file for personal bankruptcy do so because they lack health care and encounter an unexpected catastrophic illness, and others file due to loss of job or family break-up, Congress has clamped down on middle class families. But not on wealthy who through the "millionaire's loophole" can still shield their assets from lenders in special asset protection trusts. Nor is it doing anything about its own river of red ink, a \$412 billion deficit this year that doesn't include the \$81 billion it just requested for funding our efforts in Iraq or the cost (\$2 trillion over 10 years) of the President's plan to privatize social security. In fact, the \$412 billion number would be over \$600 billion if they weren't using the social security surplus to fund other federal activities. Evidently they can bankrupt the country without consequence but if a clerk at WalMart has a heart attack, our well heeled Congress person will insist that the scofflaw pay! The immorality of their double standards is breathtaking.

MICHAEL ROSEN
PRESIDENT



FACULTY ADVISING OF STUDENTS

All of us as faculty members are advisors. We advise our students everyday in the classroom or outside the classroom. MATC has frontline Academic Advisors that help our students decide what they want and are best suited for as a career. After our students select their career goal and enter programs faculty members take over the advising task. Our continuing students need to be 'connected' to their career choice and assisted with all the steps to accomplish the educational experience at MATC. That is where we as faculty members come in ... we are a major key to their getting 'connected'.

**DAVID STINNETT LIAISON
FACULTY ADVISING MEMBER**

What They Aren't Telling You

- Privatizing Social Security would especially hurt women, who make up 60 percent of all Social Security recipients and are less likely than men to have pensions or substantial savings.
- Social Security keeps 42 percent of unmarried older women out of poverty.

**Social Security
FIX IT.
DON'T RISK IT.**

**MATC'S CHILDCARE CENTERS
ARE A GREAT INVESTMENT!**

As you may remember, during last years budget crisis the administration proposed closing all four of our child care centers where your fellow 212 employees care for over 200 of the children of our students, staff, and community. Due to the combined efforts of the parents of the children, students, other concerned community members and our unions the administration was forced to abandon that idea.

In a very close vote the MATC Board directed Dr. Cole to keep all four centers open. A task force was created to look into ways to reduce the college's costs. That task force, under Director Baker's leadership, will soon make its recommendations to the board. While the administration has made no formal announcement about its plans, it is possible it will once again propose closing all of the centers, or some of them. In fact, there is some reason to think it might be positioning to propose keeping only the Milwaukee campus center open. One strategy it might adopt in this battle is to wait until after the semester is over before announcing its intentions. This happened last year and it meant that most faculty members were off campus when the issue hit the fire. No matter what the timeline, we may need your help in keeping our centers and early childhood education program open.

CONTINUED NEXT COLUMN

CHILDCARE CENTERS, CONTINUED FROM PAGE ONE

While the basic issue of jobs is important, there are many other reasons to keep those centers in operation. For one thing, they are used as learning labs by our Early Childhood Education students. Imagine if the college proposed shutting down the Graphic Arts labs, or the Culinary Arts labs? Remember, the enrollment in the ECE program is healthy and growing, not shrinking. This also means FTE's and dollars. Quality costs money because in child care the real investment is in people, not equipment. Well-trained, experience staff cost money to retain, as any number of studies has consistently shown. But they also create quality. Further, our staff play a vital role in training our students. In turn our ECE students take experiences gained in our learning labs out to their worksites, which helps raise the quality of those centers, a benefit for our community as a whole.

The issue of low quality child care is exceedingly real, and has prompted the Governor and the Lt. Governor to take different paths of action to make more centers look like the ones we already have at MATC. The new Star rating system proposed by Governor Doyle, but created by early childhood professionals, establishes the link between salaries and quality. This is why our centers would be among a small handful to receive 5 stars under the new system, the highest ranking possible. This is why Hillary Clinton praised our centers as a national model when she visited in 1997. This should be a point of pride for MATC. We are a vocational institution, and our ECE students get their most important training in our childcare centers. We should have the best centers in the city.

One strategy the administration tried last year was to claim that supporting the centers was a misappropriation of taxpayer's money. Did you know that the Federal Reserve Board of Minneapolis has released a study by one of their Vice Presidents clearly demonstrating that no other public expenditure has a greater economic impact than investing in high quality early childhood programs? Early childhood education has a greater return on investment than any other form of public or private investment!

A UWM study concluded that child care is one of the driving forces in the Milwaukee County economy, more significant than all our professional sports teams combined! Yes, the centers use tax dollars. Good! BTW, so do all our programs as well as the Brewers, the Midwest Express Center and the Pabst Development next door (\$38 million)! What is a better use of tax payer dollars? Building a multi-screen theatre where Pabst used to be or training our city's early childhood educators?

The time may soon come when we need you to be physically present at board meetings. This may happen during your vacation. If asked, please show your support. Don't let financial demagoguery destroy the beacon of quality that our centers are. On the other hand, the administration may decide that the child care centers are a valuable asset to the college which should be kept intact. At this point we don't know. But forewarned is forearmed! Be ready, in case they decide to pull the plug. Remember, a union is a union because we stand together.

**PAT MCFARLAND AND DOUGLAS UDELL
INSTRUCTORS, EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATION**

**TAX NOTICE REGARDING PORTION
OF 2004 DUES THAT ARE DEDUCTIBLE**

Local 212 does not have the ability to keep track of the total dues paid by each of our more than 1700 members. The total dues paid during 2004 should have appeared on your final check stub for the year.

In accordance with Internal Revenue Service code section 633 (e)(1)(A) we are required to report the amount of dues paid by members that relate to lobbying and certain political expenditures. Please be advised that 17.87% of the dues paid by you during 2004 related to lobbying and certain political expenditures and are non-deductible pursuant to Internal Revenue Service code section 162(e)(1). Please consult your tax advisor regarding your individual reporting requirements.

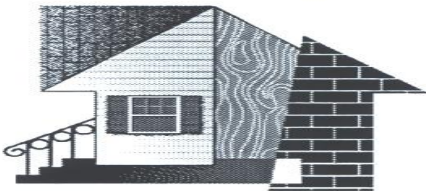
JIM BENEDEM
2ND V.P. – FINANCIAL

CONDOLENCES TO . . .

Dave Belasco, Equipment Repair Department, on the passing of his brother.

Evelyn Merriett, Nursing Center, on the passing of her father.

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3/05

REMINDER!!!

NOMINATIONS FOR LOCAL 212 EXECUTIVE BOARD AND COMMITTEE POSITIONS

**CLOSE AT 12:00 P.M.
ON FRIDAY, MARCH 18TH**

**FOR A COMPLETE LIST OF OPEN
POSITIONS, NOMINATION
FORMS, AND NOMINATIONS
RECEIVED TO DATE**

**CHECK OUT THE LOCAL 212
WEBSITE – UPCOMING EVENTS**

WWW.LOCAL212.ORG

**FOR MORE INFORMATION CALL
THE UNION OFFICE (414) 765-0910**

**JEAN DUELING, JENNIFER MADEJ,
AND DEB THEEL
LOCAL 212 NOMINATION COMMITTEE**

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