



N E W S L E T T E R

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Janet Nortrom, Editor

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Happy Holidays!

*The Executive Board And Staff Of Local 212
Wish You A Restful And Productive Vacation*

FROM THE PRESIDENT

Below is an edited version of the speech I was not permitted to deliver at the November MATC Board meeting.

I have the unpleasant task of explaining to you that rather than negotiating with Local 212 in an honest attempt to reach an agreement, the administration has engaged in a game of bait and switch.

Fourteen months ago Local 212 responded to a request from Dr. Cole to open negotiations early to avoid the contentiousness that characterized the previous bargaining. That intent was immediately violated as the administration presented over 60 bargaining demands for the faculty, 43 for the paraprofessionals and 30 for the part-time faculty.

Until this past summer, there was no movement at all by the college. After meeting with the state mediator for several sessions, the administration finally reduced the number of issues, although there were still significant take-a-ways left on the table. I need to emphasize that during these entire negotiations, Local 212's teams have proposed only a limited number of issues, so the vast majority of the time was spent discussing the administration's many take-a-ways.

In regard to the major issues on the table, the administration has repeatedly said that health insurance was their number one priority, and then demanded that employees pay more for their health insurance.

As we have reported previously, we have told the District that we are prepared to have employees pay more, but it is critical that it be done in a way that provides incentives to reduce usage, thus cutting overall expenditures and minimizing insurance increases. All credible studies point to this conclusion.

In this regard, Labor Relations Director Frank Shansky took part in many weeks of meetings with District representatives and helped identify three areas of savings that would have saved the college and taxpayers millions of dollars while effectively reducing health care utilization.

The college did not take us up on trying to implement these savings plans as soon as possible.

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AND IN THIS CORNER...

It's difficult to feel the holiday spirit around MATC.

By now you've probably seen the administration's attempt to spin the events surrounding last month's fiasco MATC Board meeting. Most ludicrous is their implication that they had consulted Local 212 about the legal capacity of the room and the overflow situation prior to the meeting.

Of course this is not true. Union leadership let the administration know about the rally a full 28 hours prior to the Board Meeting. The administration said nothing about either changing its enforcement policy of the room capacity or about an overflow room.

It had plenty of time to set up an alternative, larger site for the board meeting so that all employees and members of the public who wanted to attend could attend.

But of course, we were not Chamber of Commerce honcho Tim Sheehy, nor anti-technical college Senator Alberta Darling, nor a local millionaire looking for taxpayers to fund a pet project. When they want something from the college, the Cole administration asks, "How high can we jump for you?"

Does anyone believe that if they needed a larger room for something, the administration would have failed to find one for them?

The Cole administration has made a principle of NOT consulting the stakeholders in the college about important issues.

ATHLETIC BOARD

For example, after the embarrassing volleyball scandal where the MATC national championship team was filled with athletes who were not really students, Local 212 insisted on appointing members to the Athletic Board.

The administration's response was to send the college attorney to an Athletic Board meeting to claim -- falsely -- that the Constitution of the Board had to be changed to ensure that Board would have no actual power.

Now it's like a junior high school Student Council, where Board Members are allowed to "practice"

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FROM THE PRESIDENT – CONTINUED

They showed **no urgency** in attempting to recover these millions of dollars in savings, thus demonstrating that reaching an agreement was not their real goal, nor was saving money.

The last several weeks have been especially frustrating, as Mr. Shansky has met with District leaders on more than 6 occasions, and on every occasion the administrations only consistent posture has been to follow the philosophy of **bait and switch**.

Specifically, they began by stating they wanted members to pay a percent of the health insurance premiums over and above the costs our members already pay. Despite our belief that paying on premium would only increase health care utilization, and again, despite the fact that the overwhelming amount of evidence (which we have provided to the administration) shows that this is the wrong direction to take in order to reduce health care costs, we made a number of proposals that would have required our members to make contributions that would be taken off their checks, over and above what they already pay.

Every time Frank made a proposal in one of the meetings, the District representatives seemed interested and made verbal counter-proposals. The meetings would end with the District saying they would come back with some kind of counter-proposal. **However, they never once actually presented a counter proposal.** Instead, each time they returned with their original proposal, **as if the previous discussion had never taken place!**

This occurred meeting after meeting. On one occasion Frank was called by the administration and requested to meet right away because the leadership of the college wanted to get the contract resolved. Of course he agreed to meet, only to find that nothing had changed. They had no new proposals.

Week after week it was as if Frank was in the movie "Groundhog Day," where Bill Murray plays a character who keeps waking up to the same day he just completed.

Two weeks ago the Parties met on Monday, and the college promised to come back with a counter-proposal. Instead, two days later, their rep came in and presented the same proposal they had given weeks ago and stated there was no reason to meet anymore because **the administration wanted to go to arbitration.**

24 hours before the November Board meeting which the administration knew would be attended by a large number of employees, they called and asked to meet "immediately" with Local 212. So Frank Shansky and Linda Baehr met with them. Negotiations have continued and they have finally presented some proposals on healthcare with such large out of pocket costs that they know we would never accept them. This is the where we are after 18 months of bargaining!

Recall that just six days ago they told us explicitly that they wanted to go to arbitration.

CONTINUED NEXT COLUMN

FROM THE PRESIDENT – CONTINUED

It seems clear that this administration does not want to reach an agreement with Local 212 even if such an agreement would save district taxpayers millions of dollars. Why else would they have rejected millions of dollars in savings, not only in the joint health care recommendations but in the proposals we have made?

If the administration has told you that it has been trying to reach an agreement with us, it is not telling the truth. If it has told you that Local 212 has refused to bargain on health care, it has not told you the truth.

If the administration has failed to inform you that Local 212 has made numerous suggestions for how to save taxpayers money on employee health care and that the administration has not responded to implement or negotiate on any of those suggestions, then the administration has not been keeping you informed of what has truly been going on in negotiations.

If this board wants a true picture of contract negotiations, we suggest that you invite two members of Local 212 leadership into your closed sessions for part of your discussion.

It appears, however, that the administration's goal is arbitration so that it can take credit if it prevails and blame the arbitrator if it loses. What else could explain the administration's constant baits and switches and their refusal to engage in meaningful bargaining?

We continue to believe that a voluntary settlement can be reached that will save millions of dollars for taxpayers. Remember, we offered to open up our health care agreement **one year ago** to capture savings, but the administration refused. The simple truth is we cannot negotiate with ourselves. It takes two willing partners to achieve an agreement. Up to this point, there has only been one, Local 212.

MICHAEL ROSEN, PRESIDENT

NEW! PERSONALIZED PEER SUPPORT!

For year's ER&D's Peer Support seminar has provided both new and seasoned instructors with much needed support as well as insights and strategies to enhance their skills as educators. For those who may have more specific needs, or don't have the time to spend in a three-credit seminar, we have developed "Personalized Peer Support."

Personalized Peer Support pairs you with a partner of your choosing who will assist you in accomplishing a project that will benefit you and your students here at MATC. Both you and your partner will earn professional development credit for your work. (You cannot be receiving other types of credit(s) or compensation for completion of this project from MATC or any other institution.)

More information will be provided on Coordination Day in January, but feel free to call or email Kevin Mulvenna if you have questions or ideas - mulvennk@matc.edu or 297-7987

**KEVIN MULVENNA
PEER SUPPORT COORDINATOR**

AND IN THIS CORNER - CONT. FROM PAGE 1

democracy by acting as if their discussion means something, when in reality, the administration has no accountability to anyone for any of its decisions.

Oh, by the way, in both 2005 and again this year, the administration tried to keep me from being on the Athletic Board. In addition, it has not called a single meeting of the Athletic Board this semester.

GRADUATION COMMITTEE

Similarly, Local 212 has tried to take a more active role in graduation for the purposes of improving the event and getting more faculty to participate in this important occasion for our students.

The administration's response has been to fail to even request faculty and staff schedules to make sure meetings can be called when 212 members are able to attend. When a meeting was schedule that conflicted with two faculty members' schedules, we requested a change. The response from Archie Graham was to say he'd "try," but then he never got back to faculty, so the meeting was held without our participation.

When I asked that important issues should be on the agenda such as the nature of the processional, the program and the selection of the speaker, Graham's response was that this was a "nuts and bolts committee." In other words, all decisions are made in the President's Office, and the role of everyone else is simply to carry out his imperial commands. Consultation? Hardly.

Happy Holidays! Let's enjoy our family, friends, get some snow to ski on, and hope the administration starts out next year much better than it performed during this one.

CHARLIE DEE, EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT

**ER&D
SPRING COURSE SCHEDULE 2007**

Course	Dates 2007	Times
"On Course" Workshop (1 Cr).	January 11 th , 12 th , 13 th	8:00-4:30
Dedicated Discourse and Dining	Thursdays: Beginning Feb. 15 th	11:30-1:00
Instructional Strategies for the Health Care Educator (1 Cr).	Fridays April 5 th - 26 th	9:00-1:00
Healing Racism (1Cr)	Thursdays March 8 th - 29 th	4:00-7:00
Multiple Intelligences (1Cr).	Tuesdays March 6 th - 27 th	3-6:00
Observing Excellence (1 Cr.)	Wednesdays Feb 21 st , March 7 th , March 21 st	4:00-6:00
Motivating, advising, and retaining students (1Cr).	Wednesdays Feb 14 th , 21 st , 28 th	3:00-7:00
Peer Support (3 Cr)	Mondays: beginning Jan. 29th	4-7:00
Integration of Brain Research into the Classroom (1 Cr).	May 23 rd -24 th	8:30-4:30

PT CORNER



With the semester drawing to a close, this is a very hectic time for many of us. But it is not so busy that we can't pause and reflect on the valuable work that we do here at MATC. As I've said before, we change lives and provide our students with hope and opportunity. No matter what the administration does, we continue to provide our students with the best technical education in the state.

Administrations come and go, but the work we do has endured since 1913. It will continue because we are the engine that makes this such a high quality college.

This has been a very trying year for all of us who are committed to this college and the students we serve. It looks like the folks at the top don't give a hang about the rest of us. Dr. Cole has his big, beefy contract, replete with lifetime health benefits after six years. So what about the rest of us? We're still waiting for a contract; still getting jerked around.

We have a union that is our collective voice. Its strength is up to you, its active and united membership. I am certain that with your active participation, Local 212 will be up to any challenges that we'll face. Your union leadership will continue to do what we do best: listen to you, inform you, fight for you, and mobilize with you. On your part, I hope to see you at the rallies and trust that I can count on you to volunteer when we ask for your help.



An important reminder that needs repeating...

If your class is cancelled, you are bumped, a class is incorrectly assigned, or your load is not filled to the range you requested and someone with lower seniority is assigned a class you requested that you are qualified and available to teach. You must inform your supervisor in writing. Email is fine and make sure you cc me so I am aware of your problem too and can help if necessary. The time the supervisor is notified will dictate the remedy. Remember if you fail to notify your supervisor in writing you are foreclosed from seeking any remedies. (Article III, Section 9 - PT Contract)

In closing...Have a great holiday season, fellow part-timer's! While there are too many of you for me to thank by name, I truly appreciate your efforts and wish you and your families a happy and peaceful holiday.

SALLY A. LINDNER, 6TH VICE PRESIDENT

Hotel Savings for AFT Members

800/996-2087

800/268-2195

800/769-0939

800/682-1071

800/462-8035

800/545-5545

800/889-9706

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AFT members receive 10% off the "best available rate" at thousands of hotels in North America. Call the toll-free numbers listed above and mention your AFT + member ID number 20952. Advance reservations required.

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USLAW CALLS ON CONGRESS TO STOP FUNDING WAR

U.S. Labor Against the War (USLAW), a network of more than 140 unions, held a National Assembly for Peace in Cleveland on December 1-3 that drew more than 1200 people. I was proud to participate as a delegate from Local 212 and a returning member of the steering committee.

Community, peace, veterans, military families, and social justice groups came together with organized labor to demand the immediate withdrawal of U.S. troops from Iraq and a reprioritization of federal spending to meet human needs.

According to Bob Muehlenkamp, USLAW Co-Convenor, the success of the weekend's events reflects the fact that "the labor movement has turned against the war." Mike Murphy of the Cleveland Federation of Labor agreed: "It's high time we end this war and bring our troops home."

The words of Tech Sgt. Robert Barner, a member of the Michigan Air National Guard who served in Iraq in 2004, brought the war home. His cousin, Army Cpl. Walter Howard, was killed in Iraq last February. Barner's unit is about to be deployed again, so his wife Stefani read his speech.

The war, he wrote, has "robbed me of my deep sense of honor at being a member of our nation's military." On behalf of his cousin, and the thousands who have died, we must "demand that our military only engage in struggles worthy of our history, our values, and our name." He thanked us "for speaking out against pointless bloodshed" and promised to "carry your voices in my heart."

Samir Adil, President of the Iraqi Freedom Congress, gave a workers' eye view of the challenges facing Iraq. Adil, who was jailed and tortured by the Saddam regime, opposes the presence of U.S. troops in his country. Unions, he says, are the only progressive, secular force that can lead the way toward peace. "A victory for labor in the U.S. is also a victory for workers in Iraq."

Congressman Dennis Kucinich (Dem.-OH) made a passionate appeal to "hold us accountable." We need to demand that the new Congress act immediately to de-fund the war, he said.

According to Cindy Sheehan, Co-Founder of Gold Star Parents for Peace, the voters get to decide whether troop withdrawal is on the table—not House Speaker Nancy Pelosi. In speaking out against the war, "we have to be the voices of Iraqis and of our own soldiers."

Phyllis Bennis, nationally recognized expert on the Middle East, debunked the "we broke it—we fix it" argument for staying in Iraq.

USLAW voted to mobilize its members for the March on Washington and mass lobby of the new Congress on January 27-29, 2007.

**SUE RUGGLES,
USLAW STEERING COMMITTEE**



**CHECK OUT THE
LOCAL 212 WEBSITE
<http://www.local212.org>**

TAX CUTS FOR THE RICH POISON CONSUMERS!

From the time we were children we have been urged to eat our vegetables. Who can forget how eating spinach made Popeye the Sailor strong?

The Popeye fable may have to be rewritten. Spinach has been identified as the source of at least one of three E coli epidemics in the last three months. Why? Because the federal government cut back on produce inspection to pay for its massive tax cut for the rich—\$42,000 a year for the richest 1% of Americans—and the War in Iraq which currently costs \$7 billion per month.

Operating funds for the F.D.A.'s Center for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition have dropped from \$48 million in 2003 to an estimated \$25 million for next year. Over the same period, the number of full-time inspectors fell from about 2,200 to 1,962. The number of inspections for food safety fell sharply from 2005 to 2006. Meanwhile, the agency's workload has been rising steadily as health-conscious Americans eat more fruit and vegetables.

The Agriculture Department, which regulates meat and poultry, has had success in recent years cutting the number of bacterial outbreaks. It has a food safety budget more than twice the size of the F.D.A.'s, and it has almost four times as many inspectors to monitor far fewer plants. While the Agriculture Department typically has inspectors sitting in meat processing plants — empowered to shut them down to correct safety problems — the understaffed F.D.A. infrequently inspects the plants that package or process fruits and vegetables, and almost never inspects the growing fields until after a crisis arises.

Congress needs to provide the F.D.A. with more money and more inspectors to monitor the safety of fresh produce all the way from field to consumer. It should also abandon the fiction that voluntary guidelines can ensure safe food production and pass some mandatory regulations.

Contaminated spinach, after all, can be deadly, even for someone as strong as Popeye.

MICHAEL ROSEN, PRESIDENT

TAX NOTICE REGARDING PORTION OF 2006 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 1400 members. The total dues paid during 2006 should appear on your final check stub for the year. Please save that for your income tax filing purposes.

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 13.91% of the dues paid by you during 2006 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 BENUM, 2ND V.P. – FINANCIAL

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