



N E W S L E T T E R

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Janet Nortrom, Editor

May 12, 2008

FROM THE PRESIDENT

There has been a lot of discussion recently about MATC's nursing programs.

The LPN program which has been on warning from the state has been given until July to improve the scores of our nursing students on the state licensure exam. If it is not successful, it may be suspended this summer.

In response to the threat to the nursing program, the Health Occupations Division initiated discussions about changing admission procedures. It appears that many health occupation programs will drop their use of waiting lists and begin using a petition process.

The problems experienced in the nursing program can be traced back to the WTCS State Office's decision to implement a state-wide curriculum.

The decision to implement a state-wide curriculum was not based on the educational needs of our students. It was a political decision. The intent was to appease certain Republican legislators who had heard a handful of complaints about the inability of credits to transfer between tech college districts.

The knee jerk reaction of the state office was to develop and implement a state-wide curriculum that reduced the amount of hands on instruction and replaced clinicals with lectures. It has also increased the use of on-line instruction which has exceptionally high failure rates.

At the same time as the faculty was struggling with these ill advised curriculum changes, MATC received a grant to expand the nursing program. We undertook this rapid expansion, including establishing an entire degree at the North campus, without sufficient planning and support. An additional problem is that some top administrators have ordered faculty to readmit students who had flunked out, sometimes more than once. Combined with problems associated with the state-wide curriculum this was a recipe for disaster. Or should I say declining test scores, warnings and potential suspensions.

Some are suggesting that our problems reflect deterioration in the academic abilities of our students. I have even heard some blame MPS.

I see no evidence of this in my own classes, including the students taking 100 level courses.

The petition process is an attempt to save the nursing program and address some of its immediate performance issues. But the underlying problems that led to these developments remain.

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AND IN THIS CORNER...

THE BEST OF US

The end of the spring semester always has a bitter-sweet taste to it. The apple and lilac blossoms are invigorating, as is the prospect of time off for travel and gardening. But there are valued colleagues retiring, and while entering a new stage of life is certainly sweet for them, it's often hard to imagine MATC without them.

I'll greatly miss two of our retirees, Corey Odom and Mike Milliren.

Corey has taught math in the Adult High School (AHS) since 1953. Well, almost that long. My first exposure to Corey was in the early 80's when he opened a Black History Month event in Cooley with his a cappella "Lift Every Voice and Sing," the African American Anthem. "What a presence," I thought, "and, man, he has some pipes!"

Then I remember one of my students in a college transfer English course telling me that the reason he was in college was because of the mentoring he had received from Corey when the student had been in the AHS. "The man changed my life," the student explained.

Corey was always a 212 member but became very active after the administration tried to close the Adult High School four years ago. He was outraged, as we all were, because he knows just how important our high school is to the Milwaukee community, and how many lives have been transformed by it. Subsequently, Corey served proudly and effectively on the 212 Bargaining Team during the recent highly contentious negotiations.

Mike Milliren has a much different presence, than Corey; he's an accountant, after all. Mike was on the 212 Executive Board when I went to my first meeting in September, 1980, and he's served in one union leadership position or another since 1976.

For years he was the First Vice President, in charge of keeping the local's books and developing budgets. He was always a calming force when Executive Board or General Membership meetings got heated, and I've never heard anyone say a negative word about Mike. He simply and quietly projects a thoughtful wisdom that everyone respects and appreciates.

He left the 212 Executive Board eleven years ago but took on the unglamorous but essential job of By-laws Chair. He's also been an unofficial advisor

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FROM THE PRESIDENT CONTINUED

The petition process must be carefully designed. If it is not, it could result in creating an entire set of new problems including excluding students from disadvantaged backgrounds, creaming. It is incumbent upon all of us that the process does not give an unfair advantage to post graduates from four-year universities. That might increase our test scores, but would be an abdication of our responsibility to this community. The petition process can only work if it keeps MATC's doors open to all who have the ability and commitment to becoming health care professionals.

As all of you know gas, food and healthcare prices are rising rapidly. Gas prices have doubled in the last year. So I am happy to announce that Local 212 has been able to balance our 2008-2009 budget without reducing our activities and service and without raising dues.

On behalf of the entire Local 212 Executive Board I want to wish all of you a fun and safe summer.

MICHAEL ROSEN – PRESIDENT

ER&D PRESENTS**BRAIN BASED EDUCATION WORKSHOP:****Top 10 things that every teacher should know**

This workshop will be run by internationally known speaker and educator--Kim Bevill. Kim Bevill is the founder of "Gray Matters", and creator of the National Brain Basics Convention. Her primary focus is bringing the latest neuroscientific research into the hands of educators in exciting and engaging ways. Don't miss this fantastic opportunity!! (1 Credit)

May 22nd and 23rd
Room M616 Downtown campus
8:30 a.m. — 4:30 p.m.

MORE SUMMER ER&D OFFERINGS**Blended Learning (1 Cr)**

June 2nd—June 6th
9:00—12:00

Motivating, Advising, and Retaining Students (1Cr)

June 3rd, 4th, 5th, and 9th
10:00-2:00
1 credit

Writing to Learn(1 Cr)

June 2nd—5th
9:00--12:00

Integration of Simulation Technology into the Classroom (1 Cr)

July 22nd and 24th 9:00-4:00
August 12th and 14th 9:00-4:00

PAUL MANSFIELD

AND IN THIS CORNER... CONTINUED

to both Mike Rosen and me because of his great experience and long institutional memory of both the college and Local 212.

When I teach at West Campus every spring, I share a desk near Mike's, and I'm always impressed at his patient and good humored attention to students who come in for extra help in his accounting courses.

In a farewell letter to the Executive Board, Mike raised a concern that not enough 212 members participate in Local 212 committees and joint 212-administration committees. We should all ponder Mike's words: "Even though the current administration seeks not to involve us, we need to keep pushing for influence. This is *our* school and transient MATC administrators and board members cannot beat us in the long run. We can only beat ourselves."

Have a great summer break, brothers and sisters. If you see retiring members in their final days at MATC, remember to thank them for the great college they've built and the union they've kept strong.

And then take some time between inhaling lilacs and making summer plans to ask yourself what you're going to do next year to replace the Corey Odoms and Mike Millirens of Local 212!

CHARLIE DEE

EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT

CONTRACT ENFORCEMENT

Members of the Grievance Committee work diligently to assure management is following the contract. We can't do it without your help. It is important that you know your contract and notify us when there are violations. Keep the channels of communication open with your supervisor. This often avoids filing complaints or grievances. However, when needed you can count on us to fight hard for your rights.

Ginger Carney is leaving the Grievance Committee after eight years of service at North Campus. Ken Brodzik representing South and Andrew Berns from LAS will not be continuing as Grievance Stewards, as well. We thank them for their work and commitment to the Union. Please acknowledge their contribution when you see them.

For a list of your Grievance Stewards, please check the Local 212 website (www.local212.org) or call the Union office at 765-0910.

MARLENE DOMBROWSKI
GRIEVANCE CHAIR

FAREWELL TO MATC & LOCAL 212

It is that bitter sweet time to say good-bye. For those who do not know me, I have worked the past 32.5 years as an instructor in the Accounting program of our school's Business Division. During that time, I served as the Local 212 Financial Secretary and Financial Vice-President for about 20 years and also as Bylaws Chairperson for the remainder of those years. I served under six different local Union Presidents and experienced six different MATC Presidents.

I can financially afford to retire a little early at this point - simply put because of benefits fought to obtain, and then retain, by the State Federation and Local Union chapter. In my tenure here, many people have come and gone, and I only wish that everyone could appreciate the history of what it took to now enjoy the compensation and benefits of today. These are not forever guaranteed, and need to be protected at every contract negotiation. The "system" and our union have helped me on a personal financial level to properly raise a family and retire in dignity. I have created a long list of activities which I will happily pursue with my increased flexible time. Life does not wait and I would rather error on the side of leaving too early than too late.

So in parting, I say that it's alright to complain, but put equal effort in trying to make your Local Union better. It has to be strong politically and organizationally to withstand the certain assaults to the status quo. It's a member-run organization. Get involved and contribute in whatever way you can.

Fraternally,

**MIKE MILLIREN
BYLAWS CHAIRPERSON**

FAREWELL TO EDITING, BUT NOT TO MATC

After many years as Local 212 newsletter editor, it is time to say goodbye. It has been truly a learning experience about the union and this great college of dedicated colleagues.

Take time this summer and get involved in union activities, the election, global warming and other environmental concerns. Tune into the AFT conferences that many of our colleagues will be attending, as 5 of us did last year. AFT provides all of the latest research based curriculum materials and makes you proud to be an AFT member. Read our Local 212 website and keep active with local concerns.

With peace and joy,

**JANET R. NORTROM
NEWSLETTER EDITOR**

PT INSTRUCTORS TOOT THEIR OWN HORN

Note: This will be a regular feature. If you're proud of something that you have done here at MATC that benefited your students, tell us about it. Sally Lindner

MIRIAM BEN-SHALOM



While I don't teach online classes, I decided to design my own web site for my students. I wanted it to be easy to navigate and easy to read. I also wanted to include information not in the academic

realm which would be useful for students. With lots of encouragement from Sally Lindner and Joe Imperiale, both instructors at MATC, I used the time during winter break to design my site. It took about 65 hours to do this; I included my course syllabi, road maps for the courses I teach, the PowerPoint's I use in class, good URLs on everything from MLA Format to writing a thesis statement, essays for students to read, and other sources of information for students to use. I also included a section-"My Favorite Web Sites"-which has information on scholarships, how to buy inexpensive (but good) food from SHARE Wisconsin, and other items that might be of interest to students. I could not have foreseen that the snows of this winter would make my site helpful in keeping my students up to date and on track! As a result, my classes did not get behind; if students wanted, they could e-mail me rough drafts of papers, etc. It was so much work, but I am glad I did it! It surely benefitted my students, which is what it's all about.

Want to view Miriam's web site? Go to:
<http://ben-shalom.blogspot.com/>

CONDOLENCES TO...

The family and friends of **Robert Poulsen**, retired Computer Science Instructor, who passed away this month

Tom DiCristo, Social Science Instructor, on the passing of his mother.

Barbara Seeger, Basic Skills Instructor, on the loss of her husband.

Nancy Huggins, English Instructor, on the passing of her sister.

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