

PAnorama

UNITED FOR EXCELLENCE IN EDUCATION

MVCC Professional Association Newsletter • Volume XVIII • No. 7 • May 2015



Goodbye Yellow Brick Road

| | |
|--------------------|---|
| PrezDesk | 2 |
| Ben Duerr | 3 |
| Community Outreach | 3 |
| Maimun Khan | 4 |
| Kiddie Campus | 5 |



| | |
|-------------------|---|
| VOTE-Cope | 6 |
| Benefits Fair | 7 |
| Scholarship essay | 8 |
| NYSUT | 9 |

PAorama's Editorial Policy

PAorama is the voice of our local. In addition to the PA website (www.mvccpa.org), email, and bulletin boards, PAorama is a principal vehicle for bringing you, on a regular basis, information on the views and activities of our members.

We welcome articles by, for, and about PA members on union-related issues and concerns as reflected in NYSUT and AFT activities as well as in the purpose and functions of the PA's standing committees: Community Outreach, Education & Training, Grievance, Internal Communications, Member Services, Negotiations, Political Action, and Research and Records.

All submissions are subject to the review and acceptance of the Editor and/or Internal Communications Committee. We do not accept articles that make personal attacks and we reserve the right to edit articles for length. We look forward to hearing from you.

**Publisher
MVCC
Professional Association**

**President
Norma Chrisman**

**Editors
Rialda Shulman
George J. Searles**

**Edition
May 2015
Volume XVIII • No. 7**

**Website
www.mvccpa.org**

PrezDesk By Norma Chrisman

Change is defined as "to cause to be different or to give a completely different form or appearance; to transform." We are definitely seeing and experiencing a change at MVCC. We have seen the Kiddie Campus close after its final semester and many of our friends, who were more like family, lose their jobs. We have seen our campus transform from a family type culture into more of a business model.

Admittedly, the administration had difficult decisions to make when balancing this year's budget and will have more in our not so distant future. Many have voiced concern over some of the decisions and question why and how they were made. What could we have done to help avoid the eliminations that occurred in this budget and in future budgets? While it is hard to not become emotionally involved, it is necessary to step back and look at each decision that was made in a systematic approach. Our team is doing just that and responding as necessary.

Although the administration's decisions may create the perception that our campus family is deteriorating, we are still a family as the Professional Association. We protect and fight for each other through our Grievance and Negotiations teams. We support each other through our Member Services committee, New Members committee, and Benefits Fund. We reach out to and communicate with our members and our community through our Internal Communications and Community Out-

reach committees. We make our views known to our political representative through the Political Outreach committee.



Many of our members are working together to promote our beliefs and support our membership. It is important for us to continue this work. We need your help in doing so. Whether it is attending a meeting, stuffing envelopes, writing an article, or bringing a canned good- WE NEED YOU! If you are not yet a member, why not? I would be happy to meet with anyone who has any questions about becoming a member of the PA. As John F. Kennedy once said, "The American Labor Movement has consistently demonstrated its devotion to the public interest. It is, and has been, good for all America."



Ben Duerr: He Will be Missed

By Norma Chrisman



Any faculty member new to developing an online course probably met with Ben Duerr. His quiet and patient demeanor was a welcome sight for anyone who was nervous about getting a course ready for a semester. He had a way of reassuring even the most technically challenged that they could do

this and that help was only a phone call or office visit away.

Ben could also be seen around campus videotaping events at the request of various departments and centers. He volunteered to complete videotaping requests after the campus videographer position became vacant. Whether it be video-taping the Oneida County Legislature meeting or the Nursing Pinning Ceremony, Ben could be counted on to provide a professional product to the end user.

Many on campus know about Ben's off-campus wrestling character, Bin Hamin. Having studied at Improv Olympic in Chicago, he has used his training there to help evolve the character into a bad guy all while walking a fine line to provide entertainment to his audiences. While not "in character," Ben could also be found assisting his family with the NYS Woodsmen's Field Days and other community activities around the Camden area.

Community Outreach – It's What We Do!

- ★ America's Greatest Heart Run & Walk
- ★ House of the Good Shepherd
- ★ Ted Moore Walk
- ★ CNY Labor Council
- ★ United Way
- ★ FARE (Food Allergy Research & Education)
- ★ Strides Against Breast Cancer
- ★ Toys for Tots
- ★ Rescue Mission
- ★ PA Labor Film Series
- ★ Catholic Charities

PA members care for their community and give back by participating in events, hosting fundraisers, and donating to charities.

We stand united with our members and our community. More help and support is appreciated.

Maimun Khan: A True Professional

Patti Antanavige



Selfless, caring, dedicated. Over the past 16 years, Maimun Khan has always made the students' needs a priority. No matter what capacity she worked in, Maimun showed compassion, empathy, and dedication. She did not consider MVCC a place to work; it was where

she felt at home.

Maimun spent a majority of her career at MVCC working as a counselor. She attended to students in need of guidance, a kind ear, or assistance. No matter what the situation, she approached her job with care. She was masterful at building trust and relationships. I can distinctly remember one student who made significant academic progress after meeting Maimun and was able to graduate. Maimun gave her the confidence and courage to succeed in an environment where she had felt alone and threatened. Maimun provided a safe place for this student to flourish. While this is just one example, there are countless others.

As a member of the MVCC community, Maimun was heavily involved in the diversity initiative on campus. She was an active member on the DGV and International Initiatives Committees, participated in the international festivals, and spearheaded the SUNY Diversity Scholarship on campus. To say she is both passionate and proud of her heritage and respectful of other cultures should be no surprise to anyone who knows her. Her contributions to this initiative went beyond the students. Maimun was a critical component of the DGV dinners that many employees partook of. She opened our eyes (and taste buds) to the blend of international

cuisine and customs that lie within the Mohawk Valley.

In addition to her primary role at the college, Maimun was an active Professional Association member. She most recently served on the Member Services committee and assisted in this year's Spring Fling. Maimun also served on the Political Outreach Committee, attending numerous lobby days in support of the Professional Association. She was heavily involved in the Democratic Party, serving on Michael Arcuri's and Anthony Brindisi's campaigns, and attended the Democratic National Party Conference in 2013.

A major supporter of initiatives in the Mohawk Valley, Maimun currently serves on the Board of Directors for the local chapter of United Way. She has held this position since 2009. Additionally, she is currently serving her second term on the Samaritan Counseling Center Board of Directors. This organization offers psychotherapy and pastoral counseling to those in need. An active community member, Maimun is also involved with Signature 81, an arts organization in the Mohawk Valley.

How do you sum up 16 years of faithful service to Mohawk Valley Community College and the Professional Association? I will paraphrase her words as she departed campus: "This was my home. Please let me know if you or anyone else needs something."

A Thank -You from 'Kerry's Mom'

Kelly McNamara

The decision to close the Kiddie Campus Child Care is well known by now. While I could go on about how this is a huge loss to the college and how important this student service is, what I would like to do is thank the two Professional Association Members that ran the classrooms: Robin Saxe and Terry Kipers. Between the two they have over 22 years combined experience here at the college. They have won numerous awards themselves as well as for their classrooms in their field. They have taught and loved over 385 children as if they were their own.

With their Christmas tree program, they have helped innumerable needy students. They are first to know and help when a family needs more, like the family that recently lost the father and breadwinner of the family. A few words from them and the donations started coming in. Jerilyn George, Director of Kiddie Campus Child Care, remarked, "I have been in the early childhood education field for 30 years and I have never worked with two individuals as devoted to

this profession. Terry Kipers and Robin Saxe are the very BEST! It has been an honor to work with the both of them."

They have been more than the Child Care teachers on this campus; they have participated on committees for the College and the Professional Association,

everything from Member Services Committee and various search committees, to Core Workshop Facilitators and Super Elves for Student Services.

They have helped our students with more than just watching their children but with their education.

"I want to say thank you to Terry who has given my recreation students an opportunity for the last eight years to practice their programming and leadership skills that they learn in class and a chance to implement them on real children. Each year this has been my students' favorite project. We all are truly grateful to Terry for allowing us to do this," said Michelle Kelly, Assistant Professor of Recreation and Leadership Program.



Terry Kipers and Kerry McNamara

The students participating in the Early Childhood Program do their internships in their classrooms, along with observation hours and volunteering. Some of them work in the classrooms once their course requirements are completed.

Finally, let's not forget the faculty and staff they help. With these two professionals caring for our children, we are able to give our best to the students without worrying about our children's well-being. So I want to take this moment to say thank you to Robin and Terry for educating, caring for, and loving the next generation of MVCC students. Please know that we will miss you as colleagues, as friends, as mentors, and that our children will miss you and love you, always.



Kerry McNamara and Robin Saxe at Pee Wee Prom

VOTE-COPE : A United Voice

Norma Chrisman

To quote Bill Spreter from NYSUT's Retiree Council 7: *"You did not crash the stock market, create a mortgage crisis, a gas hike, or layoff millions of workers, yet you are somehow responsible for the recession and the slow economic recovery. I don't believe that and neither do you, but some leaders in power somehow think so. That's why attacks on pensions, social security, Medicare and Medicaid as well as harmful tax caps on schools are the 'solution' according to those same politicians and financial leaders whose policies tanked the economy."*

Note that attacks on teachers and their pensions are occurring in Wisconsin, Ohio, and sixteen other states. Social security and Medicare and Medicaid are being eyed for possible reductions on the national scene."

What is VOTE-COPE? VOTE-COPE is NYSUT's non-partisan action fund that coordinates the voluntary contributions of members. It exists to strengthen the political influence wielded by NYSUT and its affiliated locals. Through VOTE-COPE, NYSUT supports candidates and political committees whose philosophies and actions are consistent with NYSUT's goals that are pro-public-education and pro-labor.

We are asked to contribute to VOTE-COPE every year. What do we get out of it? Our local receives a rebate from NY-

SUT based on a percentage of the contributions solicited from our local for VOTE-COPE. The greater the level of contributions VOTE-COPE receives from our members, the larger our local's rebate will be.

What is this rebate? Each spring, NYSUT mails our local a check that can be used to increase participation in the political process. Appropriate uses for the money include, but are not limited to, funding expenditures for passing school budgets or similar ballot issues, internal communications with members of our local, supporting or opposing candidates for Oneida County offices, education and advocacy aimed at members regarding issues important to our local, and purchasing supplies needed to support such causes.

We need to preserve the future of our schools and the middle class. We need to demonstrate to our politicians that we mean business. We need and depend upon your VOTE-COPE contributions, which can be completed by **payroll deduction** or by check to help us do this.

Please contact our **VOTE-COPE coordinator, Stacey McCall (smccall@mvcc.edu)**, if you have not received your VOTE-COPE form yet or have any questions.

MVCCPA and Social Media

The Professional Association is proud to announce a newly invigorated online social media presence. The PA uses Facebook and Twitter as a hub for union communications, both locally and nationally. We are connected with other NYSUT locals and various community organizations including the NYSUT Action Center, CNY Labor Council, and other local businesses. Be sure to follow the PA for immediate updates on political action and fundraising campaigns, union meetings, and social events. We also function as a resource for all union members by providing a series on national labor history and information on how to get involved.

Invite your friends and other local organizations to follow the sites. You can find us on Facebook at MVCC Professional Association, and on Twitter, at MVCC PA.

The Quality of a Community College Education

By Debra Born

The winner of Professional Association \$1,000 scholarship for 2015 was Debra Born, who attended our January luncheon with her parents. Her winning essay is printed below in its entirety.

Community colleges are revolutionizing the academic world with their signature educations that provide students with the gateway to success in both rising and conventional careers.

Community colleges are unparalleled in their ability to offer affordable, high-quality educations. In an economy where, according to the Federal Reserve Board, student debt is \$23, 710 per New York borrower, relatively inexpensive college tuition is becoming an anomaly. Many students are turning to community colleges as the only way to fulfill their dreams.

These two-year colleges serve the needs of society by offering programs specifically tailored to fit their individual communities. Community colleges retain the bright young minds in their regions who would relocate to attend college elsewhere if their communities did not offer a college. From nanotechnology to cyber-security, cutting-edge community college programs prepare students to enter into flourishing careers in their local communities.

As the two-year colleges add new programs to correspond with emerging careers, the connection from community colleges to the ever-changing pace of the economy gives graduates an edge in a progressively competitive workforce. The link between the colleges and the communities serves as a pathway to quality local careers for graduates. An education at a community college also offers the choice of acquiring an even more prestigious career by continuing that education at a four-year college.

The numerous choices available for degree programs in community college provide students with options that will correlate with both their individual needs and unique job skills.

For students newly graduated from high school, community colleges are the ideal choice. Recent high school graduates are frequently unprepared for the competitive nature of four-year colleges, and merely surviving in four-year colleges is too often the goal. In community colleges, new high school graduates are challenged, not overwhelmed. Students are given the opportunity to improve their scholastic skills to ready them for the more demanding degree program of a higher college. Community colleges serve as scholastic bridges equipping students to thrive in four-year colleges.

The smaller classes of community colleges allow students more chances to participate in class. This translates to the students learning how to express themselves and voice their opinions, a crucial skill for any career which many recent high school graduates lack. Smaller classes also mean that professors are generally more available for extra tutoring, which greatly enriches learning experiences. Community college fosters a spirit of academic excellence and provides students with the skills necessary to high achievement in all fields. Without community colleges, many students with the potential to succeed in prestigious careers would never have the chance to pursue that lifestyle.

The crowning value in community colleges lies in the opportunities for success that they provide students who are otherwise financially unable to obtain a college education. Together, the community college accessibility and quality education create the entrance to a prosperous career that every student seeks. Community colleges intertwine academic excellence with admittance for every student, both academically and financially bolstering communities while providing individual students with a better future.

RA, RA, RA! Happenings at the NYSUT Representative Assembly Alison Doughtie

The annual NYSUT Representative Assembly (RA) took place in Buffalo, NY this year, from May 1-2nd, where Stacey McCall and I joined almost 2,000 other delegates.

Delegates at the RA vote on proposed resolutions, reaffirmations, and occasionally—as was the case this year—proposed constitutional amendments.

As you are probably already aware, one of those constitutional amendments was a dues increase. Another constitutional amendment that passed was to maintain five NYSUT officers (to delete Subdivision 2 of Article VII of the NYSUT Constitution). Proposed amendments to change voting procedures in Articles VII and IX were more hotly debated and would have changed the voting location for officers and for ED (Election District) Directors and Directors at-large from the RA to Election District meetings. Neither amendment passed.

There were 44 resolutions, broken into different categories or committees—Civil and Human Rights, College and University, Educational Issues I, Educational Issues II, Health Care and Workplace Safety, Legislative/Political Action I, Legislative/Political Action II, and Organization. Operating under Robert's rules, delegates within each committee discussed each resolution, voted for or against, and prioritized the resolutions to be brought before the entire Assembly for a vote.

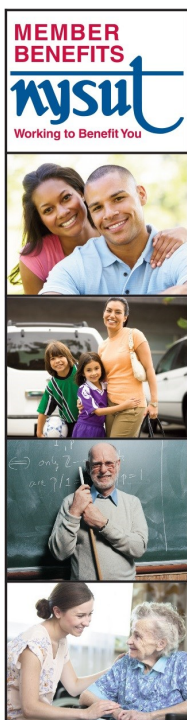
There were four resolutions in the College and University Committee, and all passed (some with slight amendments). The first encourages us, as a sign of solidarity with our colleagues in K-12, not to adopt Pearson textbooks and the second urges NYSUT to work with AFT and the NEA to try to reform the taxation of graduate tuition remission. United University Professions submitted the third resolution, which asks us all to call on New York State to pay its fair share of SUNY's funding; requests NYSUT's sup-

port of UUP's "multifaceted action plan," which includes: a SUNY Student Loan Refinancing Program, a SUNY-employed Adjuncts Loan Forgiveness Program, a Public Higher Education Endowment, a genuine Maintenance of Effort for SUNY, and bringing Opportunities for Success to campuses that invest in services that support student success; and asks that NYSUT help to promote UUP's initiatives on campuses and in local and state political offices.

Often, only three resolutions make it to the general assembly. Our committee was fortunate to have the fourth resolution presented as well. This resolution is specific to New York University and its president, but potentially has a broader reach. Its first "resolved" is "...that NYSUT affirms that higher education exists for the purpose of instruction and research and not for the enrichment of any one person or small group of persons." And a later "resolved" asks "...that NYSUT consider the appropriateness of seeking legislative remedy in cases where not-for-profit educational institutions are used for the enrichment of individuals and to craft such legislation if necessary."

Although the main business of the RA is the resolutions, it is also a time for presentations and recognition. We heard from NY AFL-CIO President Mario Cilento, NYS Comptroller Tom DiNapoli, and AFT President Randi Weingarten. We were introduced to constituency award winners (the Higher Education Members of the Year were Steve London of PSC and Judith Wishnia of UUP), the Teacher of the Year (Charles Giglio), and to the winners of various other NYSUT awards (the PA continued its tradition of being an Abel Blattman winner for our VOTE-COPE contributions).

It was a jam-packed two days of the work that unites us.



Benefits that matter to you!

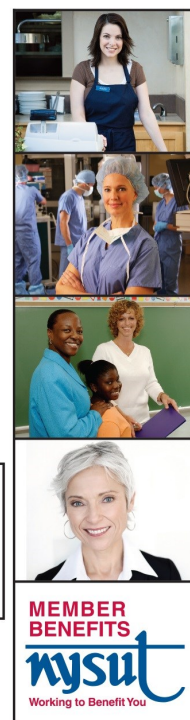
Membership in NYSUT allows you to enjoy the benefits of the more than 40 programs & services endorsed by NYSUT Member Benefits.

These endorsed programs include crucial products that the majority of NYSUT members already purchase:

- **Homeowners Insurance**
- **Auto Insurance**
- **Legal & Financial Services**
- **Life Insurance**
- **Shopping & Travel Programs**

To learn more about Member Benefits-endorsed programs & services, visit ***memberbenefits.nysut.org*** or call **800-626-8101**.

For information about contractual endorsement arrangements with providers of endorsed programs, please contact NYSUT Member Benefits. Agency fee payers to NYSUT are eligible to participate in NYSUT Member Benefits-endorsed programs.



For more than 30 years, the NYSUT Education & Learning Trust has been offering professional development programs created with the NYSUT member in mind -- providing an extensive online inventory with studies to fit your busy schedule.

The Education & Learning Trust offers online, VESi or in-classroom courses for graduate, undergraduate and in-service credit. Professional development training is available for public education issues such as:

- **School Quality**
- **Student Achievement**
- **Achievement Gaps**
- **Teacher Retention**
- **Special Education**
- **Cultural Diversity**
- **Classroom Management**
- **And Much More**

To learn more about ELT programs available and/or register online, visit ***nysut.org/inspire*** or call **800-528-6208**.

