



Be Informed...the New York State Constitutional Convention

By Norma Chrisman

“Shall there be a convention to revise the constitution and amend the same?”

Seems like a fairly innocent statement, right?

The statement above will be printed on the back of your election ballot on November 7th . The constitution that it is referring to is the New York State Constitution. The current New York State Constitution can be found at <https://www.dos.ny.gov/info/constitution.htm>. The constitution contains twenty articles regarding topics such as the citizen’s bill of rights, legislature districts, judicial oversight, state finances, education, and conservation of land and natural resources to name just a few.

Specifically, Article I Section 17 addresses the Bill of Rights which addresses labor and the ability to organize and collectively bargain.

[Labor not a commodity; hours and wages in public work; right to organize and bargain collectively]

§17. Labor of human beings is not a commodity nor an article of commerce and shall never be so considered or construed.

No laborer, worker or mechanic, in the employ of a contractor or sub-contractor engaged

in the performance of any public work, shall be permitted to work more than eight hours in any day or more than five days in any week, except in cases of extraordinary emergency; nor shall he or she be paid less than the rate of wages prevailing in the same trade or occupation in the locality within the state where such public work is to be situated, erected or used.

Employees shall have the right to organize and to bargain collectively through representatives of their own choosing. (New. Adopted by Constitutional Convention of 1938 and approved by vote of the people November 8, 1938; amended by vote of the people November 6, 2001.)

Article IX , regarding the Bill of Rights for local governments specifically, refers to the pension system for public school employees in section 3 item 1:

1. The maintenance, support or administration of the public school system, as required or provided by article XI of this constitution, or any retirement system pertaining to such public school system

The current constitution was revised with amendments adopted by the 1938 Constitutional Convention and approved by the voters in 1938. Since 1938, amendments have been proposed, approved by voters, and

implemented as allowed in Article 19 Section 1 and as demonstrated in Article 1 section 17 as listed above.

A Constitutional Convention, as described Article 19 Section 2, would allow for a group of individuals (who will, most likely, be politicians that will be paid and receive pension credits) to revise or replace the entire constitution. Some want to see a convention because they feel amendments are stalled on the floor in Albany. They also want to transform government corruption into government with integrity. Instead, is it more likely that a convention will only add to corruption and gridlock?

With that being said, is it necessary to hold a constitutional convention to potentially re-write the entire constitution when there is already a mechanism in place to allow for Constitutional amendments be proposed, voted upon and implemented? I say not.

Please consider voting NO to CON-CON 2017.

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PREZ DESK



What is a union? Why do we have one? Why do we need one? By Norma Chrisman

Simplistically, a union is an organized group of workers who come together to make decisions about the conditions of their work. A labor union acts as an agent between its members and their employer. The main purpose of labor unions is to give workers the power to negotiate for more favorable working conditions and other benefits through collective bargaining. The union contract, or collective bargaining agreement, contains the employment terms and working conditions of its members. The contract defines wages, raises, benefits and information about how seniority might be used in employment matters, such as retrenchment. The contract ensures that the union and the employer are “playing by the same rules”.

In the past, unions fought for issues such as eight hour work days, child labor laws, sick and vacation leave. Unions are now fighting different types of issues.

People like Wisconsin’s Governor Scott Walker and his corporate supporters want to destroy labor unions — to eliminate the right to choose a union. They want a low wage economy. They want the freedom to pay people as little as possible at their companies — and in the government. They believe if they can break public employee

unions, that they can ultimately eliminate organized labor as a meaningful force in the American economy.

The Supreme Court will soon be hearing as case, Janus versus AFSCME. This is a case that once again raises the question of whether public employees must pay dues even if they disagree with their union’s view point. Much like the Friedrich’s versus the California Teachers Association case in 2016, the union feels that those who do not complete their union membership form should still be responsible for paying dues. The union feels that the dues are necessary to prevent “free riders” from benefitting from union contracts. The non-members, also known as agency fee payers, receive the same contractual benefits such as representation in disciplinary issues and pay increases.

The New York State Constitutional Convention, aka Con Con, vote (as you read on the cover of Panorama) is yet one more stab at breaking unions. Con Con is voted on every twenty years by the voters of New York State. If approved, a new constitution could eliminate the ability to collectively bargain. It could also eliminate the Triborough Law that requires employers to follow the language in contracts that have expired until a new contract can be negotiated.

The PA is also facing our own issues regarding the Fair Labor Standards Act legislation and the College’s interpretation of this law. This is an attempt to drive a wedge between the twelve month professionals and faculty. An attempt that we take seriously.

The PA proudly represents each and every member to protect their rights. We are the union. Without our union, without the power of the Union, we will potentially lose hard-won benefits, locally and nationally.

Panorama’s Editorial Policy

Panorama is the voice of our local. In addition to the PA website (www.mvccpa.org), email, and bulletin boards, Panorama is the 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 of 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 Communication, 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.

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**Kathleen Maxwell
Bernstein
August 18, 2017**

**Mohawk Valley Community
College Professional Association
Mohawk Valley Community
College Adjunct
and Part-time
Association**



Professor Emerita after more than 30 years of teaching, Kathy had been a faithful member of the MVCC Professional Association for all of her career. After retirement, she continued to teach on a part-time basis and joined her colleagues as a founding member of the MVCC Adjunct and Part-time Association. Holding two Master's degrees and expertise in several areas, she made countless contributions to the college and her students through her work in developmental education, placement testing, counseling, English as a Second Language, and the social sciences. She will be dearly missed by all who worked and taught with her and by the many students whose lives she touched. She is survived by her daughter, Dr. Miriam Bernstein, her father, Edward Maxwell, and ten siblings and their families. The Kathleen M. Bernstein Memorial Fund, 221 Carey Road, Newport, NY 13416 has been established in her memory to provide scholarship money to students within the West Canada Valley Central Schools who are interested in pursuing musical education.

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When in doubt...shout!

"I do not love the bright sword for its sharpness, nor the arrow for its swiftness, nor the warrior for his glory. I only love that which the defend"

One of my favorite Tolkien quotes. It speaks soundly to what the Grievance Team does, we are the defenders of the CBA and the enforcers of its language. Over the last 10 years, the Grievance Team has changed, both in personnel and in practice. I came to the Professional Association and became involved in the Grievance Team and became the Chair, well before I received tenure. As scared as I was, I had the support of great leadership, some great mentors, and a desire to learn how to apply the CBA.

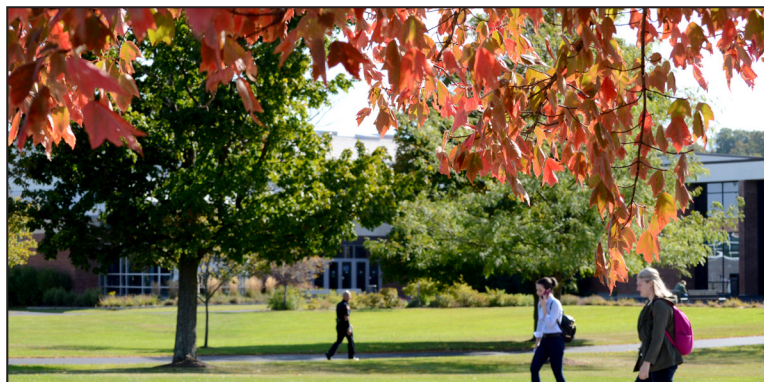
The current Grievance Team consists of:
Tracey Coulson (College Advisor)
Patti Antanavige (Coordinator of Adult Learner Services)
Shahida Dar (faculty)
Michelle Kelly (faculty)
Dawson McDermott (Coordinator of Academic Advisement)

I have had the honor to serve with some great team members, and this crew is still exceeding expectations. Our role on the Grievance Team is when a bargaining unit member has questions about the CBA, needs representation, or believes they have an issue,

we are the ones you can turn to for assistance. The Grievance Team has many opportunities to practice its craft, and many dialogues regarding issues...it's a wonderful learning experience.

So what constitutes a grievance? That is not an easy question, but here are some issues that possibly lead to possible violations. A counseling memo, developmental plans, coordinator agreements, load/overload distribution, student complaints, pay issues, discipline, termination, work place conditions or safety. This list is limitless. Ultimately, the Team's role is to listen to a concern, a question, anything that you feel you need to talk about with someone regarding an event. It doesn't have to be an issue, violation, concern, it could be that one just has a question about an event, situation, or language in the contract.

Ultimately, I am attempting to help you understand, the Grievance Team is here for you. Coming to us does not automatically create friction, we are not vultures flying over looking for a meal. We serve those we defend, and we do so with open hearts and minds. Feel free to stop on by with questions for any of the Team members...slainte!



Brace Yourself PA-rtly Kicks off the PA's Local Action Project Initiative

by Member Engagement Committee

On August 30th, the Professional Association held its first membership luncheon and opening meeting. Members who attended witnessed several new initiatives created by our Local Action Project Committee which included the update and confirmation of member's contact information, distribution of VOTE-COPE materials, and the availability of new PA branded stylus pens.

The idea for this opening event which allowed members to reconnect after the summer semester and hear about updates stemmed from the Professional Association's Local Action Project Committee also known as LAP. This is the second time that the MVCCPA has been awarded a spot in the three year program that challenges NYSUT locals across the state to strengthen their union. Led by the coordinator, Patti Antanavige, the LAP team spent a week in Saratoga Springs in July setting forth a plan to provide a more engaging and vibrant membership.

One of the largest initial changes proposed by the LAP committee includes having dedicated PA Representatives by department disseminate infor-



mation on a more regular basis to all members. In order for this to happen, new PA representatives are being identified and will be asked to attend a general session of the Executive Board Meeting once a month. It is the desire of the LAP committee that this will better inform our members and allow them a chance to give input and feedback through their representatives.

Our LAP committee has proposed and the executive board has adopted the change in one of its committees, Member Services. Member Services has been changed in name and focus to the Membership Engagement committee. Once responsible for distributing information to new members along with planning social activities, Member Engagement will focus on unique ways to get our mem-



bers involved in more activities by looking for new and varied opportunities.

Stay tuned for more news as we push forward with our LAP goals. If you have any questions or wish to become involved, please contact Patti Antanavige, Chair of Member Engagement and coordinator of the LAP committee.

Aaron Fried, Negotiations Co-Chair addresses the membership during the first Brace Yourself PA-rtly.



Don't forget to submit your VOTE-COPE Donation form!

NEW MEMBER PROFILE



Michael Brown

By George Searles

The Professional Association welcomes Michael Brown, an

Instructor in the Health Professions.

Early in his career he spent three years as Staff Therapist/Hemotech on the night shift at Bassett Medical Center in Cooperstown before accepting a position at St. Luke's Hospital, where he spent 17 years as lead tech and staff therapist in respiratory care, the position he recently left to join the MVCC faculty.

Mike is no stranger to labor relations, having served as longtime union rep for the Communications Workers of America (Local 1126) while at St. Luke's. He remains a busy man this semester, teaching Cardiopulmonary Pharmacology and Basic Science for Respiratory Care and putting in eight-hour days of Clinical Practicum at St. Elizabeth's Medical Center on Tuesdays and Thursdays.

A Clarkson University graduate with a B.S. in Biology, Mike also holds an MVCC degree in Respiratory Care. He told PANorama, "I consider it a special privilege to be back at MVCC as part of such an excellent faculty. As a graduate of the program, I look forward to being able to personally contribute to the continuing success of the Respiratory Program, by turning out respiratory therapy graduates second to none in the local and northeast healthcare environment."

When not at work Mike enjoys the outdoors, spending his free time camping, hunting, and fishing.

Mike lives in his hometown of Sauquoit with his wife, Adira (also a respiratory therapist and MVCC alum), and their three young sons.

PA Finances Christine VanNamee, PA Treasurer

The following is a brief overview of the dues structure and a report as to the actual financial results for our prior academic year 2016-2017.

Dues Structure for 2017-18 Dues are paid by all members and include both teaching faculty and professional staff. The bulk of our local union budget is paid for by our membership dues. A portion of dues collected are paid to our affiliates, New York State United Teachers (NYSUT). Our affiliation with NYSUT dates back to 1970 and we receive numerous benefits resulting from that affiliation. The training of our Executive Board members is one of the benefits our dues provides. During arbitration and legal matters, NYSUT's labor relations specialist and legal staff are available to assist the PA as part of the affiliation. In addition, we have the support of a multitude of professionals within the NYSUT office that welcome questions anytime one arises. From a fiducial standpoint, the advice and guidance of those professional members has been invaluable.

Dues that are paid by members are set both statewide and locally. NYSUT dues are set by delegates from colleges across New York State, while local dues are proposed by the PA Executive Board and approved by you, our members. The approved dues structure is then submitted to payroll. Dues structure and changes were last approved at our membership meeting in May and included a small increase only at the state level.

Financial Results for 2016-17 Last year, the membership approved a local budget of \$235,800, which includes pass-through dues to NYSUT. Despite a decline in membership, we underspent our budget by \$19,128.54. This variance is caused primarily by underspending within the Executive Board budget, unanticipated chair release time for the PA Treasurer position, and scheduling delays of new arbitrations which will likely affect our financials in the 2017-18 academic year.

If you have any questions related to the budget or the dues structure, please contact me or plan to attend the membership meeting to be scheduled toward the end of this semester. Thank you for your continued support and I look forward to continuing in my role as Treasurer this term.

In Solidarity,
Christine

New Members Committee Update

Every fall the New Members Committee gets busy trying to find all of the new members of the PA to welcome them to the organization. We make sure members have received their member information binder, and help them sign up for their NYSUT membership which activates some of their union benefits. We try hard to find everyone, but if you know of someone who gets overlooked, let me, or one of my committee members (Alison Doughtie, Rosemarie Pastorella, Jim Sunderhaft, Shannon Crocker, Rialda Shulman, or Brandon Shaw) so we can correct our error!

New Member Reception



Panorama Wordsearch

XSVZIPSEXNTJPMWPUEJ
 LGXYRAMATCOKMAAWPUBW
 PANORAMA A O J I D E J O N X W I
 LHNDQGGQRBNVRTTMESLVQ
 HDOMOBTOHSEHZAGBBOO
 MKISXNHVATIUIJOIWELWJ
 BKT KORZRUIGNTAICRRFP
 KDNCBSJVQTLIAHZFOUSS
 RSEULBQRHUATOGRYNSZD
 XCVITCOCITZEFIFIXFSN
 NQNEHPWIIVDKHOZFHUA
 GIOMUSUOQOQINNSUXDLK
 YRCZGENXYNWAFNZOJZAL
 FKCGRSPGLANOISSEFORP
 EAFPVLJDDL R H S Y F D W I K L

ASSOCIATION
 BLUE
 CONSTITUTIONAL
 CONTRACT
 CONVENTION
 MEMBERS
 NEGOTIATIONS
 PANORAMA
 PROFESSIONAL
 UNION
 UNITED
 VOTE

\$\$ MVCC PA Benefits Trust Fund\$\$ FINANCIAL COUNSELING PROGRAM

By Justin Wilcox

Services Available to Each Member (at no cost):

1. Free financial consultation each year*: Consultations will be held throughout the year on campus. Members can receive up to six hours of time, in person or over the phone or in combination. For more information or to schedule an appointment call 1-888-949-1925. Spouses and/or other family members may attend consultations with you.

2. Unlimited access to Stacey Braun's proprietary website: This password protected website is a useful financial tool intended to address many of your financial concerns. The website contains financial narratives, market data, quotes, charts, portfolio tracking, financial news, financial glossary, financial calculators, links to other useful financial sites and the email helpdesk. To access the site use "money" as your password and "hendrick" as the User ID.

3. Unlimited use of Stacey Braun's email helpdesk: To provide answers to basic financial questions, you have access to qualified professionals via Stacey Braun's email helpdesk.

Topics for consultations include, but are not limited to: Retirement Planning, Refinancing, Mortgages, Debt Management, Budgeting, Divorce, Investments (403B, Pension Advice), Mutual

Fund Questions, Asset Allocation, Establishing Risk Tolerance, Taxes, Inheritance Issues, Gifting, Estate Planning, Savings, Cash Flow, General Education, Elder Care, Social Security, Education Funding (i.e. 529 plans), Second Opinions & Life, Disability and Long-Term Care Insurance

***STACEY BRAUN PERSONNEL ARE PROHIBITED FROM SELLING INVESTMENTS OR INSURANCE PRODUCTS*
STACEY BRAUN IS NOT AFFILIATED WITH ANY 403(B) PROVIDERS**

*Written summaries of consultations containing recommendations are available to members upon request.

**Stacey Braun Associates, Inc.
377 Broadway
New York, NY 10013
1-888-949-1925**

Need Legal Assistance?
The benefits fund has a legal service benefit that may be of assistance to you!

We will also be a will signing day October 31, 2017 Attorney John Calimano will be on campus to assist members in building a will for yourself and or your spouse. John will also be available to discuss any other legal matters that you might have questions on. If you're interested in schedule an appointment to meet with John please contact Justin Wilcox, Chair @ jwilcox@mvcc.edu. Should you have any questions pertaining to benefits through the Professional Association's benefits fund please contact Justin Wilcox, at email above or 315-792-5319.

Hello from the PA Education and Training Committee!

By Melissa Barlett

Our committee got off to an early start this August by presenting some information on the "Benefits" of the PA at the August Institute. If you weren't able to catch the session, but would be interested in some of the links and ideas that were discussed, you can find the presentation file here: <https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/19Z6fyp94bRaSf9iFTq0Ex-PuCeSgtO3xEbnSEwXauI1c/edit?usp=sharing> (link can be embedded or shortened)

Our goal is to help educate YOU on anything that would be useful to your job and/or related to our contract! If there is something that you would like to know more about, please let one of the committee members know, and we will write an article or put together an institute session on that topic. Our committee members include: Liz Doherty, Tamara Mariotti, Bob Mineo, and Rialda Shulman.